

**CONSTRUCTING WORKPLACE WELLBEING THROUGH
INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION:
Migrant workers in Finnish agency work**

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Abstract <p>The aim of this master's thesis was to research and gain a better understanding of the development of migrant employees' wellbeing at work through communicative practices in temporary agency employment. This was done by analyzing migrant workers' and employment agency representatives' perceptions of the connections between interpersonal communication and workplace wellbeing in their work community. Additionally, the present study seeks ways to support the communicative experiences of migrant temporary agency workers in the Finnish sector of temporary agency work. The presented research question is: 'What perceptions do migrant workers and employment agency representatives have of the links between interpersonal communication and wellbeing in temporary migrant work?'</p> <p>The research was done from a qualitative stance, with semi-structured interviews as a data collection method and constructivist grounded theory (CGT) approach for data analysis. Altogether five interviews were conducted, three with migrant workers and two with employment agency representatives. These individuals were either employed at or recruiting workers for a tourist resort in Finnish Lapland. A model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing was developed through an analysis of the completed interviews. The findings were grouped into six categories which were perceived to construct wellbeing at work through communication. These were termed membership, cooperation, autonomy, support, information flow and continuity. The connections between these categories illustrate that the general experience of workplace wellbeing for migrant workers is built on the collaborative presence of these categories.</p> <p>Overall, the interviewed migrant workers perceived their workplace experiences as positive. The presented findings were shared with a Finnish temporary employment agency working in cooperation with this research. The findings present the employment agency with a review of the migrant workers' experiences who arrive to Finland along with practical suggestions for future communication practices.</p>	
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Tiivistelmä <p>Tämän pro gradu -tutkielman tavoitteena oli tutkia ja luoda parempi käsitys siirtotyöläisten työhyvinvoinnin kehityksestä viestinnällisten käytäntöjen kautta vuokratyössä. Tämä toteutettiin analysoimalla siirtotyöläisten ja vuokratyöfirmojen edustajien käsityksiä interpersonaalisen viestinnän ja työhyvinvoinnin välisistä yhteyksistä heidän työyhteisössään. Lisäksi tutkimuksessa kartoitettiin tapoja tukea siirtotyöläisten viestinnällisiä kokemuksia suomalaisessa vuokratyössä. Tämän pro gradun tutkimuskysymys on: 'Millaisia mielikuvia siirtotyöläisillä ja vuokratyöfirmojen edustajilla on interpersonaalisen viestinnän ja työhyvinvoinnin välisistä yhteyksistä siirtotyössä?'</p> <p>Tutkimus toteutettiin laadullisesta näkökulmasta, tiedonkeruumenetelmänä puolistrukturoidut haastattelut ja analyysimenetelmänä konstruktivistinen ankkuroitu teoria (constructivist grounded theory). Kaiken kaikkiaan haastatteluja suoritettiin viisi, joista kolme oli siirtotyöläisten ja kaksi muuta vuokratyöfirmojen edustajien kanssa. Valmiiden haastattelujen analyysin avulla kehitettiin malli viestinnällisestä työhyvinvoinnista. Tulokset ryhmiteltiin kuuteen luokkaan, joiden havaittiin rakentavan työhyvinvointia viestinnän kautta. Nämä luokiteltiin jäsenyydeksi, yhteistyöksi, autonomiaksi, tueksi, tiedonkuluksi ja jatkuvuudeksi. Luokkien väliset yhteydet osoittavat, että siirtotyöläisten yleinen työhyvinvointikokemus perustuu näiden luokkien yhtäaikaiseen toteutukseen.</p> <p>Kaiken kaikkiaan siirtotyöläiset kokivat työhyvinvointinsa myönteisenä. Esitetyt havainnot jaettiin suomalaiselle vuokratyöfirmalle, jonka kanssa tutkimus toteutettiin yhteistyössä. Tulokset tarjoavat vuokratyöfirmalle katsauksen Suomeen saapuvien siirtotyöläisten kokemuksista sekä käytännön ehdotuksia viestintäkäytäntöihin.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

This master's thesis examines the development of migrant employees' wellbeing at work through communicative practices in temporary agency employment. This is done by analyzing migrant workers' and employment agency representatives' perceptions of the links between interpersonal communication and workplace wellbeing in their work community. In addition, the present study seeks ways to support the communicative experiences of migrant temporary agency workers in the Finnish sector of temporary agency work.

This research was completed with the assistance of a Finnish temporary employment agency interested in the experiences of their recruited migrant workers from the perspectives of communication and wellbeing at work. Consequently, this study provides contributions to the field of human resources, in addition to globalization and migration studies, and intercultural communication. This practical side of the research stemmed from my personal interest in the topic of migrant temporary agency workers (TAWs) in Finland, which is still a little-known area, as very few studies have reflected on it. This is partly since migrant workers have often been regarded as passersby, individuals who merely stop on their way to other destinations. Yet, reports show that these very workers make up a semi-permanent part of the Finnish labor force, often returning to their workplaces seasonally.

Moreover, work-related migration is often offered as a solution for aging populations and dependency ratios, on top of providing much needed help in service and agriculture industries in the current political and everyday discussions. However, temporary agency workers have been indicated to experience reduced workplace wellbeing, have an unclear work identity, and face multiple stress factors at work. Furthermore, migrant TAWs regularly arrive to their work locations in collaboration with multiple parties, including two employment agencies and a client company. These types of notions raise questions related to migrant temporary agency workers' wellbeing at work, as social connections are often represented as an integral part of workplace wellbeing.

As the number of migrant workers in Finland is increasing and TAWs have been illustrated to encounter communicative challenges in their work community, this research sets out to explore these key points further. It argues that it is necessary to gain a better understanding of the development of migrant employees' wellbeing at work in temporary agency employment.

Furthermore, this analysis should be done from a communicative angle, by examining migrant workers' and employment agency representatives' perceptions, because earlier research has indicated communicative practices to involve possible pitfalls in TAE interactions. In addition, the whole concept of wellbeing at work is approached as communicative because the various processes involved in this concept are communicative in nature, such as workplace relationships, organizational identification, and support. Therefore, the following research question is presented:

RQ: What perceptions do migrant workers and employment agency representatives have of the links between interpersonal communication and wellbeing in temporary migrant work?

The first part of the thesis examines two big current trends in the contemporary world of employment, including nonstandard forms of work and work-related migration. This provided analysis offers further insights into the reasons why these trends have been appearing more prominent recently and the importance of the presented research. The following discussion of on the social side of workplace wellbeing illustrates the significance of interpersonal communication at work and links it to the topic of temporary agency employment.

This thesis research was performed from a qualitative stance following a constructivist grounded theory approach, which perceives research interactions as a place for co-construction. For these purposes, semi-structured interviews were held in order to produce a thorough understanding of the participant's experiences from their perspective. Lastly, the study's findings are discussed in further detail along with a revision of literature and concluding remarks.

2 THE CHANGING WORLD OF EMPLOYMENT

Two significant trends in the current world of employment include precariousness of job positions and work-related transitional migration. These movements are considered to be entwined global phenomenon, as according to Pitkänen (2012) economic uncertainty stemming from employment ambiguity and wider economic changes drive people of various skills to migration. Figure 1 below presents the intertwined concepts which are related to migrant temporary agency employment. The following chapters will examine these concepts in more detail, whilst venturing towards the topic of temporary agency employment.

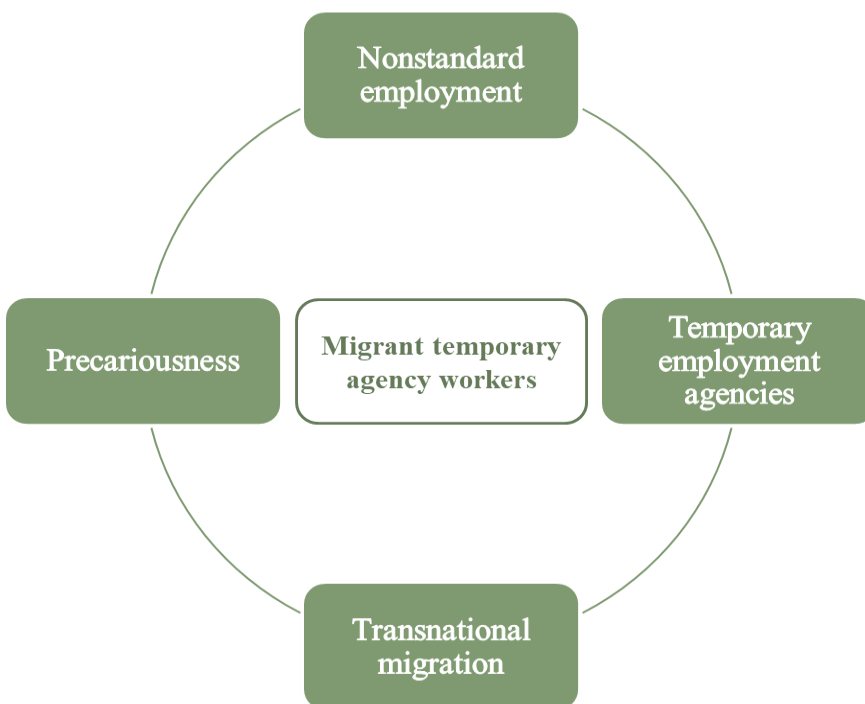


FIGURE 1 Concepts around migrant temporary agency employment

2.1 Precariousness as the new normal

Labor laws have traditionally been based on standard employment contracts which are defined as continuous and full-time agreements, with a direct connection between the employer and the employee (ILO, 2016; Stone & Arthurs, 2013). In contrast, nonstandard employment (NSE) covers a wide variety of work types, which differ from the traditional standard employment in multiple

aspects (ILO, 2016). However, the modern-day development seems to be that nonstandard and precarious forms of employment have been on the rise in the recent decades (see OSF, 2019).

Tanskanen (2012) describes that the development of precarious and nonstandard forms of work, such as temporary agency work, has been attributed to the globalization of neoliberalism. This is because the key features of temporary agency work include deregulation and flexibility, which are perceived to be neoliberal characteristics (Tanskanen, 2012). Continuous changes around employment arrangements have been going on since the postwar period until the current day, in various ways (see Stone & Arthurs, 2013; Tanskanen, 2012).

The termed ‘Standard Employment Relationship’ (SER) was a norm during the postwar period in many industrialized countries and most workers enjoyed a range of job privileges, for four or five decades after 1945 (Stone & Arthurs, 2013; Van Aerden, Moors, Levecque & Vanroelen, 2015). These job privileges included protection against discriminating treatment and uninformed discharges, decent salaries, social insurance and, most notably, a degree of job security (Stone & Arthurs; 2013). Although standard contracts were not universal, they reinforced the norm of job security and if employers did not conform to these standards, they could face social, economic, or legal sanctions (see Stone & Arthurs, 2013). The development of SER was also neither automatic nor universal everywhere, as it progressed gradually in most countries, depending on both historical and political circumstances (Stone & Arthurs, 2013; Tanskanen, 2012).

This described time when SERs were the norm, has been shifting towards a more diverse assortment of contract forms over the past few decades (ILO, 2016; Tanskanen 2012; Van Aerden et al., 2015). The growth of new, precarious, and nonstandard forms of employment has been driven by multiple forces, including demographic shifts, globalization, labor market regulations, economic instabilities, new technology and different management strategies (ILO, 2019; Pitkänen 2012; Stone & Arthurs, 2013). However, it is not sensible to attribute these types of changes to just few phenomena, as they are a sequence of multiple changes. For example, Pitkänen (2012) considers transnational migration and precariousness to be entwined global phenomenon, as global migration can be viewed both as a symptom and a result of the process of globalization.

Stone and Arthurs (2013) contemplate multiple reasons for these phenomena, beginning with the acceleration of international trade, leading to companies responding faster to various market signals, replacing workers with machinery, and separating operations into a chain of local and offshore firms. They also view that businesses frequently operate through local subsidiaries,

franchisees, or distributors when they seek new markets and take advantage of global brand awareness. These types of changes reduce dependency on domestic markets and make companies less responsive to labor pressures both as producers and consumers (Stone & Arthurs, 2013).

Fast and extensive changes in markets and technologies in turn push companies to frequently renew their skills base, which can lead to a global division of labor (Stone & Arthurs, 2013). In these instances, companies relocate low-skill and -wage functions to the developing world, and later relocate more refined operations, preserving only jobs which require proximity to head offices in advanced economies. In the end, a local semiskilled worker can be perceived as a cost rather than an advantage, which leads companies to give up on long-term positions and increase the number of a variety of nonstandard contracts (Stone & Arthurs, 2013).

This overall development of new forms of work means that less and less workers are covered by traditional standard employment. As a result, a greater number of workers experience employment insecurity because it is more evident in nonstandard and precarious forms of work (ILO 2016; Tanskanen, 2012). According to Bolton (2012) it seems that patterns of nonstandard employment are expected to continue and extend. He goes on to point out that the recruitment and dismissal of employees led by organizational demand highlights the appealing aspects of numerical flexibility to companies, but also demonstrates the underlying vulnerability of nonstandard work.

This type of a labor market portrayed by the regularity of freelance work or short-term contracts (as opposite to long-lasting, continuous careers) is sometimes referred to as a gig economy (Doorn, 2017; Graham, Hjorth, & Lehdonvirta, 2017; ILO, 2019). The emergence of gig and platform employment is one of the most recent transformations in the world of employment. One component of the platform economy is digitally mediated employment platforms (Doorn, 2017; Graham et al., 2017). These include web-centered platforms, in which work is outsourced as an open call to distributed groups and location-centered applications, which in turn distribute tasks in a particular region to people (Doorn, 2017; Graham et al., 2017). While digital labor platforms stemmed from technological advances, work on these platforms bears a resemblance to various established work arrangements, simply with a digital tool serving as a mediator. However, as the platforms do not commonly offer actual employment relationships, the blurring status of the employees' contracts and interests are often debated (see Graham et al., 2017).

Overall, the normalization of precariousness has multiple angles and viewpoints to it, as some look at it from a vastly positive perspective, stating that it offers flexibility to both employees and

employers, and provides working possibilities to some groups that cannot hold permanent positions. On the other hand, some view it from a more negative standpoint expressing their concerns over unpredictableness and consequences on employment and income insecurity of various groups.

2.1.1 Forms of nonstandard employment

Different terms around nonstandard forms of work or *nonstandard employment* (NSE) can be viewed as umbrella terms for various employment arrangements which differ from the traditional form of standard employment. One of the most clearly put definitions comes from the International Labour Organization (2016), which outlines NSE as encompassing of four employment arrangements, containing part-time and on-call work, temporary employment, dependent self-employment and multi-party employment (for instance temporary agency work). All of these work types are seen to differ from work that is “full time, indefinite, as well as part of a subordinate relationship between an employee and an employer” (ILO, 2016, p. xxi).

Other terms which are often used alongside of nonstandard employment include precarious, contingent, and temporary employment. The core principles of these terms do not largely deviate from one another, and temporary agency work can be found to be included in all of them. Overall, it can be reviewed that forms of NSE cover work contracts which are usually portrayed by expressions such as transiency and unstableness (ILO, 2016). It should be noted, however, that for some, nonstandard employment is a sensible choice with positive results (see ILO, 2016).

Precarious employment

Standing (2011) defines the term precariat as a category of people working in occasional or unusual employment relationships. He extends his definition by stating that in contrast to other concepts relating to nonstandard work, precariousness means the ambiguity of livelihood and life, which affects both material and mental wellbeing in a broader sense. By this definition, precarious employment differs from other types of nonstandard employment in the aspects of ambiguity and the outcomes it can lead to.

This definition also emphasizes the point that unpredictable and uncertain work prospects offer little or no control on employment hours or circumstances (see ILO, 2016; Kalleberg, 2009; Standing, 2011). This in turn eliminates positions such as fixed-term contracts from the concept of

precarious employment because they are not open ended. Rather, the focus is over on-call work, which can include zero-hour contracts, for example (see ILO, 2016). The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2016) differentiates precarious work from NSE by its insecurity, as there is uncertainty over employment continuity and high risk of job loss. They perceive that a precariat has minimal control and say over their wages, working conditions, or the pace of work.

Temporary agency work can be included in precarious employment in some cases, depending on the amount of contracted work hours. However, temporary agency work that is contracted to last a certain period with regular hours (i.e. seasonal work), should not necessarily be defined as precarious work as it can be planned ahead. Challenges that are related precarious employment are typically characterized by economic uncertainty due to the scarcity and precariousness of wages and social security from occasional employment relationships (Standing, 2011).

Contingent employment

Contingent employment is often used interchangeably with NSE, as some of the works describing it employ comparable definitions for it (see Bolton, 2012). Bolton (2012) describes contingent employment as a variety of work practices that allow short-term employment and workforce flexibility. According to him, this type of contract relationships often offers partial employment security, payment on work basis and variable working hours.

Scott and Lewis (2017) differentiate contingent labor arrangements from other forms of NSE by expressing that contingent employment is not typically considered to be someone's career or part of a career. In their description it appears that contingent employment should be categorized as a subcategory of NSE. They discuss the matter of contingency further by stating that even though contingent employees might have some similar characteristics with individuals in other nonstandard positions, such as working alternating hours, their employment differs from these arrangements regarding organizational status.

Contingent workers are not regarded as complete organizational members, but rather guest members because of their predetermined date of departure or the expectation that they will leave after completing their fixed duties (Scott & Lewis, 2017). This is seen to limit workers from accessing decision making, socialization activities and membership since they remain distanced from other members of the organization. Temporary agency workers are defined as contingent employees as they have an employment agency working as an intermediary between them and the

client company, which consequently restricts them from being full members of the client organization (Scott & Lewis, 2017).

Temporary employment

Temporary work refers to a position where the employment contract is restricted to a specified duration based on the requests of the client company (ILO, 2016). Temporary employees can be called by various terms, such as contractual, seasonal, and casual workers depending on the employment circumstances (ILO, 2016). Temporary employment is distinguished from other forms of nonstandard employment by its non-continuity, as temporary contracts are not open-ended (ILO, 2016).

Temporary agency work can fit under the criteria of temporary employment, as TAWs can have fixed-term contracts that are seasonal for example (see ILO, 2016). However, not all temporary employees find work through employment agencies, but for the purpose of this research, the focus is on temporary agency workers recruited through an employment agency. Before looking into temporary agency work specifically, it is beneficial to first examine the circumstances around nonstandard employment in Finland and how it has changed over the recent decades, as it sheds light on the demand and drive for migrant workers in Finnish temporary agency work.

2.1.2 Finnish working life in transition

Although precarious and nonstandard employment forms have been on the rise around the world, their growth in Finland has still been fairly slow (Tanskanen, 2012; OSF, 2019). Tanskanen (2012) describes that even though historically speaking the development rate of new forms of work in Finland differentiated from other western countries, it is now possible to view some transition characteristics in the current working life.

In the Official Statistics of Finland (2018a) review, it is shown that full-time employment has continued to be the most common form of employment throughout the years, as over half (63%) of all employed people were working full-time in 2018. Nevertheless, the total current number of part-time workers accounts for almost a fifth (17%) of the complete Finnish workforce (OSF, 2018a). The report shows that under a fifth (16%) of all employment contracts in Finland were temporary in 2018, which means that almost every fifth person is undertaking work that can be

considered temporary. One other notable fact the report shows is that two-thirds (65%) of all the temporary workers would want a permanent job, as the lack of permanent work was the main reported reason for temporary employment.

Overall, temporary agency workers make up approximately two percent (2%) of all employees in Finland (OSF, 2019). While temporary agency work is still a marginal form of work on the Finnish labour market, the number of TAWs has grown since 2014 somewhat yearly according to the Official Statistics of Finland (see Table 1) (OSF, 2019).

TABLE 1 Average number of temporary agency workers in Finland from 2014 to 2019

<i>Year</i>	Total average number of TAWs	Male	Female
<i>2019</i>	46 000	24 000	22 000
<i>2018</i>	43 000	23 000	20 000
<i>2017</i>	41 000	24 000	17 000
<i>2016</i>	38 000	22 000	16 000
<i>2015</i>	31 000	15 000	16 000
<i>2014*</i>	29 000	14 500	14 500

*The reported number of males and females is half of the total worker count (Official Statistics of Finland, 2014-2019).

The reports also indicate that the amount of temporary, part-time, and temporary agency workers already constitutes a noteworthy portion of the Finnish workforce and the numbers are increasing annually. TAWs are employed by various industries, such as the service industry and manufacturing and engineering industry. In the year 2019, temporary agency work was most common in accommodation and food service occupations, where TAWs made up six percent of all employees (OSF, 2019).

The Finnish labor market is also currently under a deficit of workers as the number of people leaving the labor market has risen sharply since the so-called ‘large age groups’ or ‘baby boomers’ have retired (Ruotsalainen, 2012). At the same time, the age groups entering the labor market have declined since the 1980s (OSF, 2020). For example, when observing 20- and 60-year-old individuals in 2018, the number of people leaving the labor market (69,800) was 10,200 individuals

higher than the number of people entering the labor market (59,600). According to the Official Statistics of Finland 2020 population forecast, the number of people leaving the labor market will remain at more than 70,000 until 2026. Changes in the population projections between the years 2019 and 2040 can be examined in Figure 2 below.

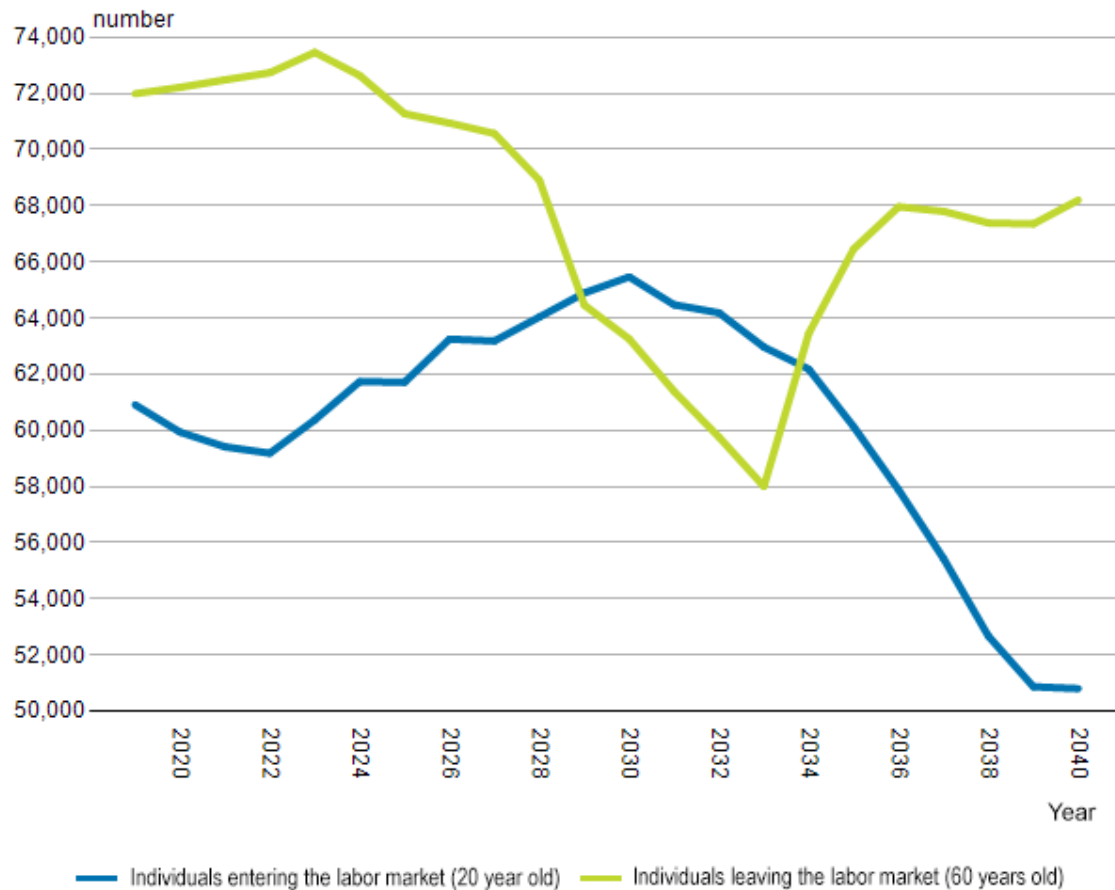


FIGURE 2 Prediction of individuals entering and leaving the labor market in Finland (Official Statistics of Finland, 2020)

Migrants and immigrants are often offered as a solution for minimizing the dependency ratio in populations both in Finland and in other countries (see OSF, 2018b; Simon, Belyakov & Feichtinger, 2012). The population dependency ratio is the ratio of the non-working-age to the working-age, and it is mainly a question of describing the age structure of the population and its changes (Simon et al., 2012). The ratio is usually calculated so that all under 20- and over 65-year old individuals are defined as non-working-age and hence, the rest of the working age population is within these limits in international literature (see Simon et al., 2012). However, there are a few exceptions to this, as for example in Finland, it is defined as the ratio of those under 15 to those

over 65 (see OSF, 2018b). Because migrants are seen as a necessary aid for the current working life, work-related migration is also very present in the current political and everyday discussions (see Ahokas & Kotamäki, 2019; Helander et al., 2016). These discussions examine what could be done in order to further motivate and facilitate work-related migration to Finland.

2.2 Work-related migration

Generally, the term migration involves the “process of moving from one place to another” (IOM, 2019, p. 29). Contrary to common belief, a migrant does not necessarily have to be an individual who migrates outside of their own nation state. In fact, the prevailing global form is that people continue to live and migrate inside the country which they were born in (IOM, 2019). Migrants themselves can be categorized in various ways, as they can be temporary, seasonal, long-term, irregular, posted, and moving back and forth for various reasons (Pitkänen, 2012).

Because of this, there is a wide array of terms which are attached to the individuals who migrate outside of their home region. Generally, migrants can be allocated into larger classifications based on the motivations or reasons for migration, such as labor or economic migration (see Bartram, Poros & Monforte, 2014). Labor migration is most often known as a situation where migrants are motivated by an opportunity to enhance their economic situation by working in another country either permanently or temporarily (Bartram, Poros & Monforte, 2014).

Different terms that are linked to the act of migration can also have largely different meanings attached to them. Migrants, expatriates, and immigrants who can all be classified as labor migrants, are used and understood in separate contexts for example. The distinction between a migrant and an immigrant can already be perplexing, as they are sometimes used interchangeably and sometimes as two separate terms (see Torkington & Ribeiro, 2019). When considered as two separate terms, *migrants* are perceived as individuals who move to another region, but whose residence is not necessarily permanent and *immigrants* as people who seek permanent residence in the region they migrate into (Torkington & Ribeiro, 2019).

Additionally, although *expatriates* are usually defined in a similar way as *migrant workers*, meaning that they are people who migrate because of employment, they are oftentimes viewed as more acclaimed, highly-skilled workers sent out on business ventures (see Cranston, 2017; Mucci et al., 2019). For example, high-tech specialists can be termed “citizens of the world” with a

primary goal of seeking professional opportunities which maximize their earnings and savings (Pitkänen, 2012). Meanwhile, migrant workers are usually seen to be engaged in so called “3D jobs” (dirty, dangerous, and difficult), which are often entry-level and industry jobs that provide lower income with higher risk (Mucci et al., 2019).

If a migrant worker generally moves on temporary and repetitive basis, he or she can be said to take part in circular migration (Bartram, Poros & Monforte, 2014; Newland, 2009). In these instances, the migrant worker relocates between home and host regions for the purpose of employment. One of the driving forces for work-related circular migration is the lack of workers in certain regions, which means that workforce must be contracted from elsewhere. In these instances, migrant workers assist with the lack of workers that would arise if outside hire was not possible (see Helander, Holley & Uttana, 2016).

This research examines the perceptions of transnational or international migrant workers, who are defined as individuals who migrate outside of their home country in the pursuit of work (see Bartram, Poros & Monforte, 2014; Pitkänen, 2012). However, for clarity and coherency, from this point forward the shorter term ‘migrant worker’ is applied. The following chapters discuss employment agencies and their services, and how particularly migrant temporary agency workers can find work through them.

3 TEMPORARY AGENCY EMPLOYMENT

Temporary employment agencies (TEA) are generally described as an intermediary between the hired workers and the firm in need of labor (see Amuedo-Dorantes, Malo & Muñoz-Bullón, 2008; Countouris et al., 2017, ILO, 2016). These agencies screen and recruit available workers without necessarily having a specific job description or a position prepared as a reference for the hired employees (Amuedo-Dorantes et al., 2008). Hiring out an agency workers refers to an employment situation where a company in a need of workers, *the client company*, makes a contract with another company, *the employment agency*, for the hiring of a *temporary agency worker* (Hyytinen, 2012; ILO, 2016). In this arrangement the employment agency is the temporary agency worker's (TAW) employer, but the contracted work is performed at the client company and the TAW also works under the supervision of the client company (ILO, 2019).

Tanskanen (2012) clarifies that the employment agency is responsible for paying the agency workers salary and taking care all the other responsibilities that belong to the employers' side. The client company on the other hand is responsible for guiding and instructing the agency workers (see Tanskanen, 2012). More critical viewpoints towards TEAs, such as Scott and Lewis' (2017), refer to them as labor inventories from which companies can search and draw workers when needed. In their view, employment agencies make last-minute employment models possible, as it would be hard to make rapid staffing decisions without them in case of sudden changes in employment levels.

However, Holst, Nachtwey and Dörre (2010) also distinguish a method of hiring agency workers, where the positions have no determined end date and instead the workers constitute a partially permanent part of the client company's workforce. The use of temporary agency workers is also at times seen as a constructive characteristic, as Amuedo-Dorantes et al. (2008) give an optimistic evaluation conveying that employment agencies allow client companies to have adaptable employment levels and decrease cost on different aspects such as training, taxes, social benefits, severances, and salary management. Nevertheless, these missing aspects are sometimes seen as the very dilemma in the use of temporary agency workers (see Tanskanen, 2012).

In the modern-day era, various employment agencies in Finland provide services aimed specifically at recruiting international talents, integration training and helpful guides for migrants and immigrants in the pursuit of a job (see Barona, 2020; Kipinä, 2019; StaffPoint, 2020). This is also true on a larger scale in Europe, where specialised international recruitment agencies tap into

the current modern employment trends and recruit workers from all over the world (see EU Recruitment, 2019; Tiger Recruitment, 2019). Different international and domestic employment services are not always privately owned and operated, as there are public cooperation networks, such as EURES (European Employment Services). EURES is an agency, which enables employment mobility, maintains a database of jobs and presents a practical way to find and apply for jobs in the EU, the EEA and Switzerland (EURES, 2020). The network's partners consist of both private and public employment services, employers' organizations, trade unions, and other relevant labor market actors (EURES, 2020).

3.1 Temporary agency workers

Some common general features of temporary agency workers usually include a small amount of work experience and young age (see Hyytinen, 2012). The locations where the agency workers usually work at have a big turnover of both workers and project sights (Hyytinen, 2012). The largest difference in temporary agency work in comparison to regular employment comes from the fact that the worker has two different employer parties, the employment agency, and the client company (Gosset, 2006; Mitlacher, 2008). This multiple-contract-party employment relationship adds more challenges for overall communication with the worker, whose job satisfaction and wellbeing depends on how well it is handled (Gosset, 2006; Mitlacher, 2008). In the case of migrant temporary agency workers, there is a high possibility that another additional party is included in this arrangement, as several workers find employment through private or public employment networks.

Because there are so many routes a temporary agency worker can take while applying for work abroad, he or she might essentially end up with up to three different contact companies during the contract forming process (see Figure 3). One example of this type of situation would be that a future migrant TAW sees an advert for a position in Finland for the winter season. This advert can be posted by a local, domestic employment agency working in cooperation with another agency in Finland. In this setup, the migrant TAWs relationships with the domestic employment agency is primarily for recruitment purposes. This is because the worker first goes through the different details of their future contract in his or her domestic employment agency, but the actual employment contract is realized with the target country's employment agency. This employment agency is then

responsible for the employment relationship with the migrant TAW. The migrant worker is subsequently employed at the client company, which has contractual relations with the (target country's) employment agency. Ultimately, this means that the migrant TAW performs their work at the client company but is employed for the employment agency. Figure 3 below represents the relationships between the four likely parties involved in the employment process of migrant temporary agency workers. The possible placement of these types of migrant TAWs in Finland is further discussed in the following chapter.

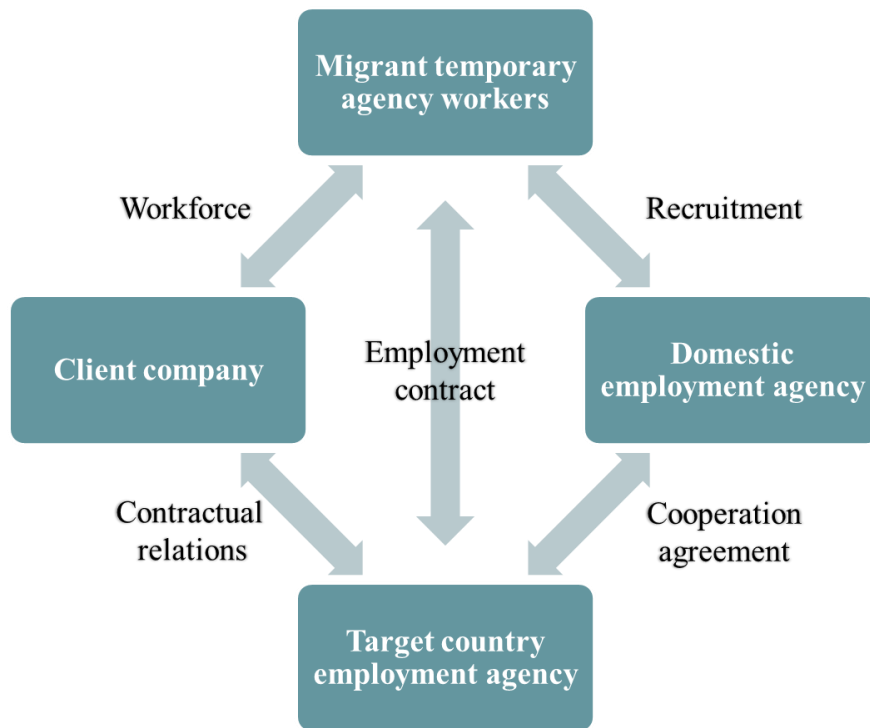


FIGURE 3 Connections in multiparty migrant temporary agency employment

3.2 Migrant temporary agency workers in Finland

In Finland, migrant temporary agency workers are commonly utilized in workplaces that are cyclical in nature (see Kuittinen, 2020) and have entrance-level jobs (see Helkkula, 2014; Strömmer, 2015, 2016). This means that oftentimes TAWs are employed at companies that are tied to seasonal changes and require frequent adjustments to staffing levels. This is especially true in Lapland, where tourism around winter holidays is highly amplified (see Business Finland, 2019;

Kuittinen, 2020) and depends heavily on weather conditions. In these types of cyclical positions, the hired migrant agency workers who arrive from outside of Finland are also oftentimes simply known as seasonal workers.

In an article by Helsingin Sanomat, Kuittinen (2020) writes that around 5,000 to 10,000 seasonal workers arrive to Lapland every winter. However, because there are no statistics on seasonal tourism workers, it is hard to predict an exact number. The same article, which features two larger Finnish employment agencies, estimates that the proportion of migrant seasonal workers is around 10 percent of all seasonal workers working in Lapland and that it is growing annually. Another example of migrant seasonal workers in Finland comes from agricultural work, where migrants are hired to be berry pickers during the summertime (see Helander et al., 2016). In these instances, however, the seasonal workers are not always hired through an employment agency.

One group which also makes up a sizable percentage of migrant workers in Finland is foreign students (Helander et al., 2016; Maury, 2017). Students usually return to their home countries once they have completed their studies in Finland, as their studies are restricted to the duration of their degree program (Helander et al., 2016). Foreign students also commonly work to support their residence in Finland and to meet the requirements of their permits (Maury, 2017). According to the Centre for International Mobility (2016) the number of international students has more than tripled in the last ten years in Finland, increasing from 6,000 to around 20,000 by the year 2014.

According to a recent report from Statistics Finland (2015), almost half of the respondents with a foreign background employed in part-time positions worked part-time because they had not found full-time employment despite their aspirations to do so. This portion was clearly smaller in the Finnish population, just under a third (Statistics Finland, 2015). The study was organized with a random sample of individuals aged between 15 to 64 years old with a foreign background. In this report, the term 'foreign background' was categorized to individuals with parents, or with only one known parent, born outside of Finland. However, this means that the group also covered individuals born in Finland, people who had already been granted Finnish citizenship and those who had lived in Finland for various periods of time (Statistics Finland, 2015).

The report also states that typical employment relationships for migrants and immigrants include part-time and fixed-term contracts, temporary work, shift work, atypical evening, night, and weekend work. Another notable aspect according to the report was that social dimensions of the workplace were generally viewed positively by workers with a foreign background and support

from the work community were seen to promote unification (Statistics Finland, 2015). This suggests that it is important to highlight the social qualities in the workplace, even if the hired workforce is working on a seasonal or temporary basis.

People with foreign backgrounds were also more active in their job search than those with a Finnish background and used a variety of channels for their search (Statistics Finland, 2015). However, the report shows that language skills were perceived to be the biggest obstacle to finding employment. This corresponds with Strömmer's (2015, 2016) observations, where she noted that migrant and immigrant workers often work peculiar work hours in jobs outside of their original expertise because of language barriers. This means that migrant and immigrant workers are generally eager to work and search jobs from a wide selection of professional fields (see Statistics Finland, 2015; Strömmer, 2015, 2016). Even if the acquired job is not seen as an exact match for the individual, it can be viewed as a steppingstone in one's career in the new community (see Helkkula, 2014).

Helander et al., (2016) state that particularly the case in seasonal work, many temporary workers are in Finland exclusively with the intention to work. Because of this, they discuss how some of the working conditions for individuals who are employed for short periods of time have raised concerns in Finnish trade unions, as the unions feel that the part of the state is more unclear compared to the trade unions or employers. The significance of the employment contract type is altered by the worker's partial social rights and uncertain residence status, which also increases the worker's reliance on the employer (see Helander et al., 2016; Kononen, 2012).

Some possible reasons which have been listed for the peculiar status of migrant agency workers include the absence of specific policies around temporary agency work, a passive attitude from the different worker's unions and the stance of employer administrations (Kontula, 2010; Tanskanen, 2012). Overall, the precariousness of migrant labor sometimes prevents workers from accessing options such as worker's unions and receiving different permits and welfare benefits such as national (KELA) insurance cards (see Helander et al., 2016).

The precarious nature of the contracts migrant TAWs have in Finland also means that the documentation and research which highlights social aspects of migrant workers in Finland is still scarce. Furthermore, temporary agency workers are not necessarily differentiated from other forms of temporary work in research and statistics. Helander et al. (2016) also note this in their research expressing the challenges of compiling consistent figures on work-related migration as a significant

amount of temporary work is performed with no requirement of a work-centered residence permit. What is shared in the estimations, however, is that the amount of work-related migration has been rising in the recent years (see Helander et al., 2016; Statistics Finland, 2015). Nevertheless, there is related research which investigates the different challenges and possibilities temporary agency work offers.

3.3 Working for temporary employment agencies

When looking into international research around temporary agency employment, one is faced with almost an overwhelming criticality towards the subject as agency employment is commonly presented as a field of overlooked workers. Undeniably, a large amount of the research around temporary agency work has regularly investigated the constraints that agency work produces for TAW's (see Ervasti et al., 2014; Kauhanen & Nätti, 2015; Mauno et al., 2015). These types of studies also often compare the experiences of temporary agency workers to long-term employees, to see if there are any differences.

In contrast, studies exploring the potential side of temporary agency employment usually arise from a business angle, focusing on the possible flexibility and monetary gains it provides to companies (see Håkansson, Isidorsson & Kantelius, 2013). They are also notably scarcer in numbers compared to studies which take a critical stance towards employment agencies. These studies also rarely highlight the temporary agency workers' side. The next chapters examine the challenges and prospects linked to temporary agency employment by drawing on examples from international studies, while aiming to provide an objective overview of both sides.

3.3.1 Challenges of temporary agency work

Findings from researchers focusing on the challenges of temporary agency work include aspects such as depression disability episodes, reduced wellbeing and work quality with involuntary agency work, higher rates in fatigue and turnover, less orientation training, and increased likelihood of work accidents (Ervasti et al., 2014; Kauhanen & Nätti, 2015; Mauno et al., 2015). Critical studies often compare fulltime workers to TAWs, concluding that a feeling of differentiation and

lack of possibilities between these worker groups can lead TAWs to feel like second-class workers (see Drury, 2016).

Research which focuses explicitly on work wellbeing and quality examines factors such as training and professional possibilities, opportunities to learn at work, career insecurity and independence at work. The absence of these indicators in temporary agency work often reoccurs in various studies in a negative light (Jordan, 2003; Kauhanen & Nätti, 2015; Tanskanen, 2012; Vorell & Carmack, 2015). However, studies examining the wellbeing of TAWs also often offer mixed results, as there are several distinctions for both the definitions of wellbeing and temporary employment types (see Bosmans et al., 2015; Imhof & Andresen, 2018).

Differences in results could also partly be explained by the voluntariness of temporary employment, as Kauhanen and Nätti (2015) found that the perceived work quality is weaker with compulsory part-time and temporary work when comparing different contract forms with perceived work quality. In their study, involuntariness referred to workers expressing that their motivation for doing part-time or temporary work was that they could not obtain permanent employment. This is a noteworthy observation, as over a half (65%) of temporary and a quarter (25%) of part-time workers are employed involuntarily in Finland because they have not been able to find a permanent employment (Official Statistics of Finland, 2018). However, there have also been studies of temporary agency employment which have found no correlation between volition and perceived workplace wellbeing (see De Cuyper & De Witte, 2008).

As agency employment is mostly seen as temporary, some TAWs feel that it is stage in their life which they are going through (HPL, 2018). The precarious form of these contracts has been criticized for the way it rationalizes unusual working conditions based on momentariness (Helkkula 2014). The precariousness of agency work has also been seen to affect the workers possibility to access additional training sessions and other ways to learn at work, which in turn influences the perceived work wellbeing (Jordan 2003; Kauhanen & Nätti 2015; Tanskanen 2012; Vorell & Carmack 2015).

It also creates concern over whether uncertain career possibilities unintentionally confine the agency workers in a cycle of precarious work. For example, Ervasti et al. (2014) observed temporary agency employment in relation to depression disability episodes and found that agency work prolonged return times to work after depression episodes when compared with continuous employment. Other studies have found that TAWs sometimes receive insufficient guidance in their

work orientation period (Hyytinen 2010), which is a sign for concern, as practical training and job autonomy are believed to be some of the foundations of wellbeing at work (see Kauhanen 2016; Kauhanen & Nätti 2015). It has also been suggested that agency workers face more work-related accidents compared to permanent workers, which could be due to less orientation training and time spent at the workplace (see Hintikka 2011; Amuedo-Dorantes 2002).

Overall, a lot of researchers have focused on the problematic side of agency work. In their findings, TAW's face different challenges, which are seen to be related with the temporary contract type. Nevertheless, some studies also note that these types of flexible contracts can also create different possibilities for temporary agency workers, which are examined in more detail in the next chapter.

3.3.2 Prospects of temporary agency work

Even though most researchers have taken a critical stance towards temporary employment, some studies have also assessed and considered the potential side of TAE contracts in different scenarios. These include aspects such as easy hiring, freedom and flexibility for both employers and employees, increased likelihood of finding work, opportunities for permanent hiring, re-entering the workforce after retirement, greater incomes for migrants arriving from lower-wage countries, and opportunities for gaining experience and learning in different positions (Håkansson, Isidorsson & Kantelius, 2013; Ichino, Mealli & Nannicini, 2005; Leisti, 2018; Preenen et al., 2015; Sullivan & Al Ariss, 2019).

From the temporary employment agency's perspective, prospective findings include flexibility and swift employment for both the client company and TAWs. For example, Håkansson et al. (2013) analyzed the strive for numerical flexibility from the perspective of the client company and the employment agency. In their analysis they found an exchange process where the client company gains access to 'stable flexibility' while redirecting instability aspects to the employment agency. In this type of scenario, the client company pays for flexibility of tailor-skilled workers and the employment agency charges for the instability of delivering temporary agency workers on demand (Håkansson et al., 2013). Employment agencies are also believed to provide a steppingstone towards regular employment for workers and be a factor in cutting unemployment periods (Ichino, et al. 2005). This is another angle that employment agencies often utilize to market

themselves to client companies, as they can offer a swift recruitment process for suitable applicants and an increased visibility of job postings (see Barona, 2020; VMP, 2020).

Studies focusing specifically on the benefits which agency employment can offer for TAWs are still scarce, however. Some studies discuss the options that temporary employment can offer to individuals who are currently outside the workforce. For example, Sullivan and Al Ariss (2019) discuss different career options after post-retirement and consider part-time and seasonal contracts as one option of re-entering the workforce. Temporary agency work is also often the first job opportunity for several younger individuals as over a third of TAWs in Finland are under the age of 25, and hence the sector serves as a gateway to working life for many young people (HPL, 2018).

When analyzing different factors that support development and learning in temporary agency workers, Preenen et al. (2015) found that workers who plan their careers and promote their achievements and skills learn more at their work positions. They perceive that employees who are motivated to make career advancements and have the adaptability and competencies to pursue them, will learn more in their work because they are involved in challenging pursuits. These types of findings imply that temporary agency employment does not continually lead to a cycle that sets up workers in precarious employment, but on the contrast can lead to further career advancement.

The last viewpoint focuses on the monetary gains that migrant workers can obtain from their agency employment, which is undeniably a significant motivator for economic migration. Leisti (2018) wrote in an article by YLE that the salaries certain migrant TAWs make in Finland can be four times higher than the pay in their home country, along with the differences in working hours and evening and night pays. De Cuyper and De Witte (2008) provide an excellent overview of all the listed potential reasons one might have for engaging in temporary agency employment (see Table 2 below). For example, voluntary incentives for agency employment include flexible timetables, additional time with family, extra income, new skills, and less office politics for the workers.

TABLE 2 Motives for engaging in agency employment (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2008)

Voluntary reasons	Involuntary reasons
Allows for long breaks as and when needed	Can be used to obtain permanent jobs
Allows for extra free time with family	Offers a filler between jobs
Provides a prospect to increase personal or family's income	Cannot find suitable permanent employment
Offers an opportunity to obtain new skills	Cannot find full-time permanent employment because of a lack in necessary qualifications and skills
Creates an opportunity for various types of work in several organizations	
Includes a smaller amount of office politics	
Involves less responsibilities	

Even though there are various potential employee benefits which can arise from with being a TAW, it is quite notable that there is largely more critical research on temporary agency employment. There is also a prominent shortage of studies which examine the perspectives of TAWs from a communicative standpoint and how they view their employment. The next section provides an overview of how wellbeing at work can be observed from a communicative standpoint and discusses different communication concepts.

4 WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION AND WELLBEING

This study examines the concept of workplace wellbeing as a communicative phenomenon. For this purpose, it examines interpersonal communication practices which can arise in international TAE environments. Because some terms, such as social interaction and interpersonal communication, are at times used interchangeably (see Berger, 2014), it is important to explore the specific communication terminology at hand. Similarly, terms such as diversity and cultural differences have multiple meanings attached to them (see Lahti, 2020). For this reason, it is useful to clarify how these various terms are used in this research. As this study involves a range of communication contexts and situations, which include both face-to-face and technology-mediated communication, the term of interpersonal communication will be used as an umbrella term for these different social interaction forms.

4.1 Interpersonal communication and relationships

Earlier models representing communication oftentimes simply view it as mean of transmitting information from one person to another (see Stewart, Malayan, & Roberts, 2001). Contemporary definitions characterize communication as social interaction, which is inherently social and cooperatively achieved (Nevile & Rendle-Short, 2009). In these definitions, communication is not simply a transmitter of information in interaction, but a mean for participating in and producing social life. Baxter and Braithwaite (2008) also discuss interpersonal communication in a similar manner, describing it as a symbolic process including two or a few individuals where meanings are produced and negotiated. Overall, in most current definitions of interpersonal communication, individuals discuss meanings, identity, and relationships in person-to-person interaction.

Relationship-centered models of interpersonal communication emphasize understanding the role of communication in developing, maintaining, and concluding relationships (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008). There are several theories around the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships (see Knapp & Vangelisti, 2005). For example, Altman and Taylor (1973) see that the development of relationships begins by revealing or disclosing attitudes and later on personalities, inner nature, and true selves. This process is done reciprocally between the

relationship parties and the catalyst in the development of relationships is self-disclosure. Commonly, theories around relational development explain that relationships are likely to grow and develop gradually as people become emotionally closer to each other.

Although some interpersonal relationships remain longer than others, they are characterized by repeated and patterned interaction over time, meaning that they are longstanding, unlike acquaintanceships, for example (Sias, 2009). Interpersonal relationships are also illustrated through a sense of connection beyond what is perceived in an acquaintanceship and usually the experienced connection is stronger and more emotional with closer relationships (Sias, 2009). In this research, interpersonal communication is understood as a process where individuals can discuss and create meanings, identity, and relationships. These relationships then build over time and occur in various settings, whether it is at work, education or in free time activities. As this master's thesis examines wellbeing in an employment context, the focus will be on relationships which take place at work. The context of workplace relationships will be examined in more detail in the following sections, following the concept of workplace wellbeing.

4.2 Workplace wellbeing as a communicative process

The concept of workplace wellbeing has been discussed in various ways in various disciplines, with other similar contexts including terms such as job satisfaction and quality of working life (see Tanskanen, 2012). Depending on the discussed term, Tanskanen (2012) notes that the discussions around wellbeing at work begin at the earliest during the 1960's, ranging all the way to the 2000's in different areas. Kauhanen (2016), who examines the Finnish landscape of workplace wellbeing, marks it as a relatively new notion forming around the 2000s. He continues that the idea of maintaining workers abilities was formed in the 1990s in Finland, with these practices also being defined in the occupational health care law.

The overall job quality of an employee is seen to be created by a set of characteristics which promote the wellbeing of the worker and as a result, the concepts of *wellbeing at work* and *job quality* are perceived to be linked (Kauhanen & Nätti, 2015). Because of this, they are sometimes used in very similar context. Work-related wellbeing has been studied in various disciplines, and because of this, there are also several indicators for what wellbeing at work is or how the perceived quality of employment should be studied (see Kauhanen 2016; Pennanen, 2015; Tanskanen, 2012).

For example, Tanskanen (2012) divides possible indicators into subjective and objective measurements, with objective measurements being more utilized by economist and subjective measurements by sociologists. He lists key subjective indicators of work quality to include aspects such as job satisfaction, professional skills, and opportunities to implement and develop oneself at work. These are seen to be based on the individual's perceptions and opinions. Objective indicators on the other hand, include the duration of employment and compensation, for example, and which are understood to be independent factors from the employees (see Tanskanen, 2012).

Some of the definitions of work-related wellbeing try to frame a universal definition that suits all occupations. For example, Kauhanen (2016) divides wellbeing at work in to six different foundations, which consist of working ability and health, work environment, opportunities for professional growth, performed work, community skills and social relationships, and lastly, leadership and information flow. Similarly, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2015) groups the quality of employment into seven categories. These include employment income and benefits, security and social protection, safety and ethics, skills development and training, working hours and balancing life with work, social dialogue, and finally, workplace relationships and motivation.

When observing specifically the temporary agency employment environment, Mitlacher (2008) frames the quality of work into three larger settings. These consist of the nature of work, work prospects, and compensation and benefits. Nature of work includes the worker's social relations, health and safety issues, integration, trust, and identification at work. Job prospects cover personal growth and employment security and duration, while compensation and benefits include payment, fringe benefits and any additional rewards. While Mitlacher's (2008) definition is aimed at the quality of work, it centres around the most crucial points mentioned in most research covering temporary agency employment.

What is notable about several comparable definitions of work-related wellbeing, is that they list aspects which incorporate explicitly communicative features, such as social relationships and flow of information. Therefore, it could be argued that these listed wellbeing and quality at work aspects are inherently communicative. Sias (2009) expresses that this is because many of the procedures that we view as organizational are communicative, as they include social interaction. She gives examples of different interactive organizational practices, such as decision-making, conflict management and everyday dialogue at the workplace. Mikkola (2020) takes a similar

stance towards work-related wellbeing, seeing it as being constructed through workplace interaction. She perceives workplace communication as a resource for sustaining healthy working conditions and mental wellbeing at work. She also sees that supportive communication and relationships at work generate resources, which enhances employees' knowledge of managing work-related stress and reinforces their sense of acknowledgment.

In her study, Pennanen (2015) similarly divided various workplace interactions that affect wellbeing at work into four different communicative categories. These include belonging (*kuuluminen*), collaboration (*yhteistyö*), influence (*vaikuttaminen*), support (*tuki*) and knowledge management (*tiedonhallinta*). This study takes a similar stance, as it sees work-related wellbeing as a communicative phenomenon that is constructed and maintained through social interactions in the work community (see Pennanen, 2015). Therefore, workplace wellbeing is perceived as a state of being that is directly related to communication. Thus, this study examines the processes of interpersonal communication which can support wellbeing in workplace contexts, such as relational development, emotional support, and constructing a shared organizational identity. These types of interpersonal communication processes are examined in more detail in the following chapters.

Communication research which investigates matters relating to workplace wellbeing from a migrant agency employment standpoint is still somewhat scarce. However, there are a few studies which examine agency employment and wellbeing with interesting communication perspectives. For example, Vorell and Carmack (2015) examined different coping strategies which temporary medical workers employ when dealing with different stress factors. They view coping as a communicative experience, as it necessitates interactions with others in order to relieve the experienced stress. Coping strategies, more precisely, were defined as the methods that individuals utilize to attempt to decrease or remove external and internal demands and harm which burdens and potentially endangers their wellbeing. In their study, respondents utilized four major coping strategies, which included taking control, taking care of oneself, socializing and being indifferent.

Vorell and Carmanack (2015) were interested in the coping strategies of TAWs because it had been found that there are stress factors and identity questions which are common for temporary agency workers, regardless of the field they are working in. These stress factors include lack of organizational resources and respect, uncertainty of employment length, and absence of social connections. If temporary agency workers do in fact experience common stress factors regardless

of their work field, it is important to provide the necessary means and channels to alleviate this experienced stress. From an interpersonal communication viewpoint, supportive communication practices and workplace relationships have been seen to offer emotional support, decrease dissatisfaction and turnover and deflect job-related stress (Mikkola, 2020; Sias & Cahill, 1998).

Mikkola (2020) defines supportive communication as a form of social interaction that creates resources that can be used to cope with emotional effects and solve situational challenges, thus promoting employee wellbeing, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Support can be offered in emotional or informational form, meaning that a co-worker might help a colleague by letting them vent out their emotions or by offering knowledge which helps to control stress and uncertainty (see Mikkola, 2020). As many of the performed jobs at any workplace depend on the individuals working collectively and disclosing information, in these situations the nature of a workplace relationship matters (Drury, 2016). Further support from employing organizations has also been seen to increase organizational commitment by making temporary agency workers feel supported and valued (Chambel & Sobral, 2011). In a good social environment, workers also gain relations to information and dedication towards common objectives through supportive relationships (Drury, 2016).

4.3 Workplace relationships

Workplace relationships are usually referred to as all interpersonal relationships in which people participate as they carry out their work (Sias, 2009). These include various relationships at the workplace, such as peer-coworker, supervisor-subordinate, romantic relationships, friendships, and customer relationships. Workplace relationships primarily occur for the objective of making work process goals possible, which highlights the task-orientated role of communication (Mikkola & Nykänen, 2020). These relationships do not always necessarily require face-to-face interactions, as they can be established and sustained in digital settings as well (see Fay & Kline, 2012; Ledbetter, 2014; Sias, 2009).

Mikkola and Nykänen (2020) view workplace relationships as a vital resource for accomplishing work processes because they act as the basis for cooperation. They reason that it would be difficult to achieve both personal and social goals, such as workplace wellbeing and satisfaction, without them. From this perspective, supporting functional workplace relationships is

similarly necessary for attaining organizational results, whether it be for the organization, work groups, or employees. When seeking to build functional relationships at work, Mikkola and Nykänen (2020) see that the primary goal should be to becoming aware of one's own communication behaviour. Expressing appreciation, creating a collaborative environment, accuracy and sincerity while conveying information, discussing disagreements, and managing expectations are mentioned as some of the building blocks of functional workplace relationships.

On an individual level, relationships formed and maintained in the workplace are particularly significant, because individuals are expected to spend a large amount of time interacting with their coworkers, sometimes even more so than with friends and family (Sias, 2009). This might be experienced even more intensely by migrant workers who perform temporary, contracted, and seasonal work, as they spend extended time periods closely tied to their work communities (see Kontula, 2010). Workplace relationships also have specific underlying meanings attached to them because co-workers tend to adapt themselves to each other and assess these relationships based on the fact that they are working together (Sias & Cahill, 1998).

People also spend a lot of time thinking and discussing about work, even when they are elsewhere, and largely identify with what they do for a living and who they work with (Sias, 2009). Therefore, it is not surprising that in many ways our workplace relationships also define who we are. However, relationships at work are also often involuntary, meaning that employees rarely get to choose who they have as coworkers or in their work teams (see Pillemer, 2018). This is notable since everyone must work together in the workplace, including colleagues who might appear distant or disagreeable.

Consequently, managing situations such as these becomes a question of boundaries, rules, and norms, which are achieved through interpersonal communication. As mentioned earlier, relationships are created and established in recurrent communication, and agreed norms become established as the relationships evolve, which is also the case for workplace relationships (see Mikkola & Nykänen, 2020). For example, when coworkers discuss perceptions of work duties, these views reflect on and shape the relationship between these colleagues. This means that workplace relationships are constructed both through the communication practices and culture of the organization and vice versa (Mikkola & Nykänen, 2020).

As proximity has been perceived as one of the enablers in relational development, especially at the beginning of relationships, some earlier literature contemplated whether strongly technology-

mediated environments could foster prosperous workplace relationships (see Sias & Cahill, 1998; Sias, 2009). However, it has been since uncovered that even fully technology-mediated communication environments offer the possibilities for developing profound and meaningful relationships (see Ledbetter, 2014).

Nevertheless, discussions on proximity and technology-mediated communication are viable points to consider in the case of agency employment as well, as TAWs can work at different locations depending on their contracts. This means that the geographically closest work-community groups for temporary agency workers may vary from coworkers, client company managers to recruitment agents. This consequently suggests that TAWs might have less interactions with some of the other groups, which in turn might affect relational development in the long run. As good relationships are considered one of the corner stones of wellbeing at work (see Kauhanen, 2016), communication with colleagues and supervisors are important factors to examine in these types of environments. This is especially true in agency employment, as the triangular employment relationship increases communication efforts with workers (see Mitlacher, 2008; Gosset, 2006).

4.4 Technology-mediated communication

Modern workplaces can be seen to be strongly dependent on various communication technology solutions in their daily operations (see Siitonen & Aira, 2020). Undoubtedly, many of the practices referred to in this research, such as mobile work, geographical distribution of the workforce, and international employment depend on different existing technical solutions. In practice, solutions such as mobile applications for employees can increase the accessibility of information for large groups of people and allow them to further contribute to content creation in their community.

In modern work environments, these types of digitized solutions are used to coordinate various work processes, such as customer service and human resources management, for example (see Claggett & Karahanna, 2018). This is also the case for the employment agency examined in this research, which manages an application and a website for workers that can be utilized to input working hours, receive information, and send messages. Communication which takes place in these applications or other digital communication methods is generally referred to as *technology-mediated communication*, or digitally mediated communication (see Yao & Ling, 2020).

Additionally, the platforms which facilitate social interaction and information transfer digitally are known as *digital communication environments* (Sivunen & Laitinen, 2020).

Sivunen and Laitinen (2020) identify that digital communication environments support different types of organizational communication, such as interpersonal relationships and organization-wide communication opportunities, which provide users with information about wider associations. In their view, communication technology can be perceived as a tool for relational development, support, and relationship maintenance between organizational members. Undeniably, in workplace contexts employees regularly establish relationships in technology-driven settings, and these relationships typically achieve similar objectives as relationships maintained primarily in face-to-face encounters, such as organizational commitment (Fay & Kline, 2012).

Bordi, Okkonen, Mäkinemi and Heikkilä-Tammi (2018) propose that employing digital communication at workplaces can work both as a resource and a demand for workers. In their view, resources provided via technology-mediated communication can assist and motivate workers, while demands may entail extra exertion and effort. More specifically, when technology-mediated communication functions as a resource for employees, it can support efficient communication, provide flexibility in location, and facilitate various interactions between employees (see Bordi et al., 2018, Sivunen & Laitinen, 2020). Examples of these types of resources can include a wider range of contact opportunities with flexible hours when seeking information. Consequently, the provided resources are associated with wellbeing at work (Bordi et al., 2018). However, technology-intensive work environments might also pose different challenges for employees, such as adaptation of new communication tools, expectations of continuous connectivity, and technical problems (see Bordi et al., 2018).

Organization-wide level communications (i.e. intranet), can conversely be seen as tools for information management, because they allow large amounts of information to be shared with many people simultaneously, while also providing a platform for employees to produce, store, and integrate information (Sivunen & Laitinen, 2020). Thus, employing various communication channels can support the improvement of information exchange and the quality of communication between all parties involved at the work community. In this way, different forms of technology-mediated communication can provide access to a wide range of contacts and grant individuals with more social and emotional resources and sources of information. Consequently, it should be viewed

as beneficial for companies working in dispersed environments to make use of modern information technology solutions in order to include all employees in different social channels and ensure adequate opportunities for information collection for each employee.

4.5 Diversity and language at work

The larger contexts reviewed in this thesis, such as labour migration and internationally operating employment agencies come hand in hand with a variety of linguistic settings and mobility of workers. As with other concepts discussed earlier, international workplaces, diversity and cultural differences have been defined in numerous ways in earlier literature and the meanings attached to these terms can vary greatly.

For example, Lahti (2020) divides and unpacks the prior uses of the term *diversity* into two different categories: objective, and subjective diversity. She explains that objective diversity is referred to as external indicators of difference, which are embodied in broad social category labels such as nationality, gender, or ethnicity. These external differences are considered determined facts, and therefore, group membership in these social categories is also a given. Contrarily, subjective diversity concentrates on personal and shared experiences of difference and the practices which produce differences amongst organizational members in local settings (Lahti, 2020). Out of these two categories, objective diversity has been the more prominent in earlier research.

Yet from a critical standpoint, an approach that views diversity as fixed traits can lead to a confining reasoning that people and their characteristics do not develop over time. However, in the modern world, large amounts of people migrate to different nations than the ones they are born in, learn and utilize multiple languages and work in various locations. A fixed outlook can diminish many of these learned and shared experiences, shrinking individuals to simplified references which have been allotted for them (see Holliday, 2016). Because of this, more modern definitions around diversity and interculturality, have begun to view the diversity of working life in a way that encompasses more flexible and wider range of social groups and categories. These types of definitions not only make it possible to understand diversity more comprehensively, but also to look for methods of communication that do not invoke unnecessary stereotypes or classification.

Comparably, Luring (2011) asserts that *cultural differences* should be understood as socially organized and negotiated in a local setting, rather than being independent truths. Undeniably, earlier

research has largely proposed culture as a handy explanation for everything surprising, out of the ordinary, or challenging in interactions, although other aspects such as language proficiency might have been the underlining reason for various experienced issues (Lahti, 2020). Organisational diversity has been portrayed in a similar manner with two different ways of discussing it, the first one seeing diversity as a challenge and the other one as a resource for corporations (Lahti & Valo, 2017; Lauring 2011).

More in-depth conversations on diversity are important ones to have however, as employees in today's workplaces often work and interact with people from various backgrounds. These backgrounds do not automatically mean different nationalities and first languages, but extensively different experiences and qualities. This is especially true in the case of temporary agency employment, as it is a pathway for people from many walks of life. As earlier studies have implied, employment agencies can employ people from a very young age, highly skilled professionals, retired individuals, and persons with different nationalities. This means that in temporary employment, working with individuals who have a different background from your own is often an everyday regularity.

Research which touches upon temporary agency work from a cultural perspective has focused on language learning and interpersonal relationships at work, for example (see Strömmer 2015, 2016; Lahti & Valo 2013). Strömmer (2015, 2016) encases that a great percentage of migrant workers in Finland are highly educated individuals, who have arrived for their university degrees and scholarships. She also highlights that many migrants end up undertaking cleaning work instead of being employed in their actual field of expertise because of different regulations, language barriers and high cost of living.

Another study in the Finnish landscape also found that migrant agency workers avoided unnecessary interactions with their Finnish colleagues because they were perceived as problematic because of linguistic capabilities (Lahti & Valo, 2013), which sounds alarming if migrant TAW's do, in fact, face the same challenges in their work as native agency workers do. Migrant agency workers could even experience higher levels of conflict when it comes to wellbeing and identity. One of the reasons for this would be that they cannot necessarily secure connections and relationships with their colleagues and supervisors because of language barriers and peculiar work hours (see Strömmer 2015, 2016). These notions call for further examination on how various

interpersonal communication practices can be perceived to affect workplace wellbeing and its linkages to migrants in temporary agency employment.

4.6 Summary: Temporary agency employment and workplace wellbeing from a migrant workers' perspective

Research stemming from a communicative standpoint with an emphasis on migrant temporary agency employment is still quite lacking. Overall, communication research has focused on different strategies that are applied with temporary agency workers, how they build worker identity and social connections, and what kinds of workplace stressors and coping strategies agency workers have. More precisely, TAWs have been found to be confused about their supervisors and who to turn to first, creating a confusing work identity and to experience workplace stressors relating to these problems.

These types of findings raise questions relating to temporary agency workers' wellbeing, as earlier literature often presents social connections as an integral part of wellbeing at work. Moreover, research on temporary agency work has either largely presented challenges related to workplace wellbeing or been done from a business standpoint. Because of this, it is important to explore how the workers themselves perceive their workplace wellbeing. It is also valuable to examine these perceptions alongside with the employment agency's side, to see whether these differ from one another, consequently indicating any disconnect between the parties.

Deeper understanding about temporary agency employment dynamics might additionally lead to more efficient collaborations at the workplace. As the number of both TAWs and migrant workers in Finland is increasing, it is important to find ways to support their workplace wellbeing if there are indeed various difficulties which agency workers face. Furthermore, work-related migration is often offered as a solution for the aging population and dependency ratio of Finland, on top of providing much needed help in the service and agriculture industries. For this reason, further enquiries about migrant workers' perceptions of TAE environments are essential, as earlier literature show that workplace wellbeing is connected to lower turnover, consequently increasing everyone's willingness to stay and return for following assignments.

As more and more individuals are expected to take part in temporary agency employment and earlier research has illustrated TAWs to encounter communicative challenges in their work

community, this research sets out to explore these aspects further. It argues that it is necessary to gain a better understanding of the development of migrant employees' wellbeing at work in temporary agency employment. Furthermore, this analysis should be done from a communicative angle, by examining migrant workers' and employment agency representatives' perceptions.

5 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

5.1 Research aim and questions

The aim of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of the development of migrant employees' workplace wellbeing through communicative practices in their work community. This is done by examining employment agency representatives' and migrant workers' perceptions of the links between interpersonal communication and workplace wellbeing. The present study also seeks ways to support the communicative experiences of migrant temporary agency workers in the workplace. It poses the following research question: *What perceptions do migrant workers and employment agency representatives have of the links between interpersonal communication and wellbeing in temporary migrant work?*

For this purpose, this thesis examines the perceptions and accounts of interpersonal communication practices at work, which are applied in Finnish employment agencies. Interpersonal communication practices at the workplace involve different elements such as interactions and connections in both face-to-face and technology-mediated communication. Perceptions of these practices are then utilized to further examine communicative concepts around workplace wellbeing. This provides the means to understand how migrant temporary agency workers perceive communicative experiences in their work and how these experiences reflect on their perceived workplace wellbeing.

This study's position is that of social constructionism, which can be explained as the social or communal construction of knowledge and concepts (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). It centers on the concept that meanings are created in coordination with others rather than separately within everyone, meaning that people create the social world and their understanding of it through words and actions (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). Constructivists concentrate on joining in the participants' world of meaning and action, while realizing that what we see, how, when, and to what degree, is not straightforward (see Charmaz, 2014). For this purpose, this study utilizes a grounded theory approach, following Charmaz's constructivist orientation (see Charmaz, 2014). As Charmaz's version of the theory diverges from that of Glaser and Strauss' original grounded theory, it is important to clarify the underlying assumptions of Constructivist Grounded Theory.

The epistemological stance in CGT (constructivist grounded theory) perceives research exchanges as a place for co-construction, which can support in bringing forward an thorough understanding of experiences from the participant's perspective through a more flexible method for interpretations of shared experiences or negotiations of meanings (Priya, 2019). According to Flick (2018), this version of the theory highlights the fact that researchers do not merely obtain insights in the field but also actively seek them out. He expresses that their tools, interpretations, interests, and practices during the process both determine and influence the research and its conclusions. These influences on the study's subject and the produced insights are identified as something, which will also be at stake. Recognizing these influences makes grounded theory research more reflexive and up to date (Flick, 2018).

The methodological framework of grounded theory is perceived to be suitable for studies with the intention to look at little-studied phenomenon or issues (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006a). As the subject of this research had not yet acquired a lot of scientific inquiry in the area of communication, CGT was seen as a good option for the study. Other considered but omitted methodological possibilities for this research were phenomenology and to a lesser extent, interpretive description. For example, phenomenology's orientation for particular timeframes or moments was considered as a potential risk of missing information about broader periods or prior developments of experiences. More precisely, potential missed information could include what preceded interview participants experiences, occurring outcomes, and what other factors played into these experiences. In the case of interpretive description, considerations on the level of interpretation lead to the exclusion of the method. More specifically, CGT was chosen based on its perceived strengths, including the development of a model which would remain close to the collected data.

Grounded theory is a data-driven method; however as mentioned before, it is impossible to completely rule out the researcher's previous experience and theoretical parsing tools (see Charmaz, 2014; Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006a). These are seen to inevitably affect the analysis to some extent. Saaranen-Kauppinen and Puusniekka (2006a) reason that the completed study would also remain as a separate entry from previous studies and scientific discussions, if it is not linked to them in any way and only adheres to the analysis of data. With grounded theory, an intermediate form of inductive and deductive reasoning can be discussed, called abduction or theory-relatedness (see Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006a).

In *abduction*, the thinking of the researcher plays a major role while accepting that thinking and reasoning do not arise in a vacuum without any theoretical equipment and clues. Understanding this point is central to conducting research, as results are always contextualized, and subjectivity is inevitably present in research (see Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006a). These ideas emerge in Charmaz's (2014) thoughts as well, as she states that grounded theorists must engage the literature in their field critically and comparatively in relation to the actual project. For example, Charmaz emphasizes that the initial literature review is not the same as the final version of the literature review. The latter must be written to fit a specific aim, which in the case of this study is to present the constructed grounded model and arguments of the research. Finally, in abduction the formation of theory is possible when observation making involves some guiding ideas or clues (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018).

5.2 Data collection method

This research is done from a qualitative stance, to investigate how different interpersonal communication practices are perceived by both migrant temporary agency workers and employment agency's representatives. Interpersonal communication practices at the workplace involve elements such as the extent and quality of interactions and connections in both face-to-face and technology-mediated communication. More specifically, this can mean descriptions of how often individuals are in touch with each other and what channels they utilize, what sort of topics they discuss about and how could the nature of these interactions be described as.

This study utilizes semi-structured interviews as a data collection method, as it was perceived as an optimal choice for data collection. More specifically, interviewing was seen to allow for in-depth accounts of the interview participants experiences and emotions, which suits the stance of this research. As stated by Silverman (2013), interview interactions are essentially spaces in which both parties are constantly doing analysis, meaning that both speakers are engaged and collaborating in meaning making and producing knowledge. This was also the case in the conducted semi-structured interviews, where the interviewer and interviewee constructed descriptions of communication practices, interactions, and wellbeing at the workplace together by discussing these subject matters.

Furthermore, interviews were viewed to provide a relaxed space for the workers to explain their views, as they were held in person apart from one employment agency representative's videocall interview. More specifically, the interviews took place at the employees' workplace, meaning that the workers did not have to make additional arrangements in order to participate in the interviews. The interviews were conducted during the workers' free time, meaning that for some, the interviews were held before their shift and for others, on their day off. This was perceived as an optimal choice for the workers, as they spend most of their time at their workplace.

The aforesaid points were considered in comparison with other data collection strategies, such as questionnaires, observations, or other forms of structured interviews. However, observations were perceived to hold a lack for the workers own experiences and personal explanations. More specifically, as workplace relationships and interactions hold different meanings for each person engaged in them, these accounts would have been omitted in observations. Personal explanations offer valuable insight of the workers' own individual assessments, which in turn are crucial for understanding a broader spectrum of viewpoints. On the other hand, questionnaires were seen to limit the scope of answers and remove the possibility of making specifications if the interview participants would not have understood what was asked.

Semi-structured interviews usually follow certain central themes and guiding questions. Silverman (2013) also illustrates this by stating that qualitative interviews commonly contain arranged, informal questioning models where the aim is to allow the interviewee to set the pace. This type of a setting allows the interviewees to answer in a diverse way, which also what this study aimed at. The prepared set of questions are used as a guide for the conversation and changes from these guidelines are not seen as problematic, on the contrary, they are often encouraged (Silverman, 2013).

Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018) mention that methodologically semi-structured interviews emphasize individuals' interpretations, the meanings they give, and how these meanings are developed through interactions. Silverman (2013) takes a similar stance, stressing that interviewees document their past in a way that suits them, emphasizing certain elements and while moderating others. He continues by explaining that the interviewer is inviting a reflective 'rewriting of history' from the respondent. This is also the position in this study, as it compiles accounts of personal perspectives from the interview participants.

In this study, in-depth semi-structured interviews were designed to gain understanding of the construction of wellbeing at work through communication in the temporary help industry. This is done by examining migrant workers' and employment agency representatives' perceptions of the links between interpersonal communication and wellbeing at work. The themes of the interview questions included matters related to earlier researched communicative indicators of workplace wellbeing, such as organizational membership and support, and interactions at the workplace. Questions were formatted to reflect similar topics for both the recruiters and migrant TAWs, so that the answers of both groups could be compared for any inconsistencies. It was later pondered whether including two different groups was necessary. However, this proved to be a reasonable choice, as both groups presented relevant findings for the study.

This study was concluded with the assistance of a Finnish employment agency, which was interested in matters relating to workplace communication and the workplace wellbeing of its workers. The temporary employment agency was chosen on the basis that they illustrated employing migrant workers on their website and offering different instruction programs for migrants and immigrants in search of employment. The research idea of this thesis was presented to the employment agency with specific conditions for the possible interview participants. The employment agency in turn sought for migrant workers interested in participating in the study based on these criteria and forwarded their contacts to the researcher. In the end, the individual interviews were scheduled with each person interested in participating in the study.

In total, five interviews were conducted, and each interview lasted about 45 minutes. The interview themes were examined from the viewpoint of the migrant temporary agency workers and employment agency recruiters. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and additionally, one Finnish interview was translated to English. Considerations on the interviewing language were made since the interview participants were not native English speakers. However, all the interviewees worked in a service-oriented field and used English as their professional language and during their free time. Additionally, the interview participants expressed that they felt skilled enough in English, and therefore, English was viewed as a suitable choice for interviewing language. Four of the interviews were recorded face-to-face and one via online videocall. The final transcribed data was anonymized so that no interviewees or organizations could be recognized from the used transcripts.

5.3 Data set

This study's migrant interview participants were employed in the Finnish Lapland during a winter season. Overall, their work was performed in different tourism and hospitality positions, taking place in a hotel environment. Two of the other interviewees worked in employment agencies, which recruit and advise workers for the tourism sector in Lapland. Names of any establishments or specific locations will not be disclosed for the sake of securing the anonymity of interview participants. The area of Lapland is the northernmost region of Finland, which has a long winter season coupled alongside with an access to several calm, natural outdoor activity settings. These aspects are often strongly promoted in association with Christmas in Finnish tourism marketing (see VisitFinland, 2020).

This aforesaid setting is important to mention in the case of this study, as it differentiates the migrant employees' workplace from other types of TAE environments. For example, TAWs who are employed in bigger southern cities for cleaning work can oftentimes work alone during their shifts (see Strömmer, 2016). The participants of this study however, worked alongside multiple colleagues but in a more rural setting. This means that the interview participants could be assumed to have more colleagues at work, although with less access to connections outside of their workplace because of long distances. For example, a journey to the nearest larger town might mean a two-hour drive or train ride. Many of the hotels in Lapland, as well as the one in this study, are focused on winter activities such as downhill skiing, snowboarding, hiking, snowmobiling, and skiing. These activities are marketed towards both international and Finnish customers.

This research made use of purposive sampling, which allocates choosing cases that illustrate features or processes in which the researcher is interested in (Silverman, 2014). Sandelowski (2000) sees the objective of purposeful sampling as acquiring cases which are considered information-rich for the purposes of the research at hand. For this study, this meant selecting participants on different bases. Firstly, some of the migrant worker participants were chosen on the basis that they had already worked at the current workplace during previous seasons and could therefore account for extended events and experiences. Secondly, some of the migrant worker interviewees did not have previous experiences in the current workplace and thus they accounted for newer perceptions. All aforementioned interview participants were current employees of the

Finnish employment agency. Thirdly, the final interviewees consisted of employment agency recruiters, who gave insights from the employment agency’s side.

Overall, the study’s sample included two employment agency recruiters and three migrant temporary agency workers who gave insights about their experiences of the different interpersonal communication practices in migrant agency work. According to Silverman (2013, 2014) each qualitative studies sample size ultimately depends on the research problem. He continues that it is important to think critically about the examined population and choose a sample carefully on this basis. Croucher et al. (2015) also express that it is not easy to define when you have held enough interviews and the point of data saturation is a matter of judgment. They continue by stating that this point is reached when the researcher notices that the participants seem to repeat themselves.

In the case of this study, different conditions which were deemed as important to observe were set in advance to safeguard a variety of important viewpoints. As several of the interview participants shared similar views of their experiences, it was seen that a level of data saturation was researched and the gathered data offers insight into the experiences of migrant agency workers in seasonal positions in Lapland. However, it is also reasonable to note that since migrant workers are employed in a wide variety of arrangements overall, the level of applicability of each study’s data should be viewed based on these arrangements. Apart from one Finnish agency recruiter, the selected interviewees were Polish. The research participants were between 24 to 36 years old. The interviewed migrant workers were employed in a hotel located in Lapland, which in the data excerpts is simply referred to as a “Hotel”. Each of the migrant worker participants also had previous international working experiences. Table 2 introduces each interview participants gender, position (i.e. TAW or agency representative) and main responsibilities at work.

TABLE 3 Research participants

Research participant	Gender	Position	Main responsibilities
RP1	Female	Returning TAW	Waitress
RP2	Male	Returning TAW	Bartender
RP3	Female	New TAW	Waitress
RP4	Male	International employment agency representative	Recruitment supervisor
RP5	Female	Finnish employment agency representative	Recruiter

5.4 Analysis

The analysis part of this research was done following Charmaz' (2014) example of coding and constant comparative method, while utilizing ATLAS.ti 8 to code data. ATLAS.ti is a software for data management and qualitative analysis, which allows researchers to analyze and code several transcripts at the same time, merge similar codes together and display their relevancy after coding.

Willis (2007) summarises one of the most used data analysis frameworks in grounded theory, constant comparative method, in six recursive steps. The process is begun with data collection, which is followed by data organization into units such as events, sentences, or paragraphs. The third step is associating comparable units and developing data categories. Afterwards, relationships, associations, and links are explored between these categories. This is followed by the development of more comprehensive accounts from these categories and their relationships. The final step is to repeat the entire process, while comparing data with data. More detailed examples of this process are described and illustrated in the following section.

5.4.1 Initial coding

According to Charmaz (2014), coding is the process of categorizing parts of your data with a tag that summarizes and accounts for these different segments. The approach in CGT notes that researchers choose and construct the codes that they use, meaning that researcher play a role in the analysis process even though a grounded theory approach is often viewed as a more detached one (see Charmaz, 2014). The coding and data analysis of this study followed the Constructivist Grounded Theory coding process illustrated by Charmaz (2014). In her book *Constructing grounded theory*, Charmaz' (2014) divides the coding process in to two phases, termed *initial* and *focused* coding.

She explains that through initial coding, researchers study fragments of data, such as words, lines, incidents, and segments. She urges researchers to stick closely to the data during this initial coding process. In Charmaz' (2014) view, grounded theorists should attempt to code for actions and meanings rather than topics, as it reduces the tendency of taking conceptual leaps and taking on existing theories before completing the required analytic work. She gives examples of employing action codes such as “*Receiving friends' help in seeking care*” or “*Being admitted to*

hospital” rather than their short topic code versions of “*Friends’ support*” or “*Hospitalization*” (p.122-123).

The method of coding which this study employs is called *line-by-line coding*, which means naming each line of your data (Charmaz, 2014). Charmaz (2014) advises different strategies for the line-by-line coding process, which include dividing up data into components or properties, identifying underlying actions, exploring for unspoken assumptions, illuminating implied meanings and actions, crystallizing the importance of different points, assessing data with data, and identifying data gaps.

An example of the initial coding process in this research can be found below in Table 4, where one of the interviewees talks about how happy she feels at the workplace. An earlier discussed practice of a common language use in her workplace resurfaces during her contemplation. The underlying implications attached to the mentioned actions are perceived to be the inclusion of others and being mindful towards coworkers. These were then assembled into the categories of membership and cooperation during later analysis. These and other findings are discussed in more detail in the findings chapter.

TABLE 4 Initial coding process

Data	Initial coding
Oh yeah, I feel happy about my workplace.	Describing positive feelings about the workplace
Yeah, it's hard work when we are busy, but the point is we are like put here, all of us, and everybody's trying to do the best.	Describing work stress Analyzing work morale Emphasizing group effort
So, you can see no one is like leaving, you know, and just go somewhere; "Sorry" and then you are just alone here. No, we support each other and with all the stuff here.	Describing support network Emphasizing group effort
Maybe that's why- because all of us, we are different. So maybe that's the point, you know.	Analyzing rationales for own and others' actions
And also, all of us using English don't make somebody like feeling bad.	Using a common language to include everyone Using a common language not to hurt anyone
Obviously when I for example- like my colleagues, Finnish colleagues, they are together, they spoke in Finnish but when I get in, they change like immediately the language for English	Recalling an inclusive instance of common language use Balancing the use of multiple languages

5.4.2 Focused coding

The second phase of the coding process, focused coding, refers to the use of the most significant and/or frequent earlier codes to screen and analyze data (Charmaz, 2014). It is a matter of reviewing initial codes and determining which codes make most analytical sense in categorizing the data completely and incisively. Once solid analytical directions have been identified through initial coding, focused coding can be done to synthesize, analyze, and conceptualize larger data segments (Charmaz, 2014). In practice, this meant working through earlier codes and examining for related, comparable codes that can be assembled under a code that explains several actions simultaneously.

For the focused coding phase, Charmaz (2014) recommends assessing which codes best describe the data, what comparisons of codes suggest, do the codes uncover data gaps and finally, what kinds of categories do these codes imply. During the focused coding process, earlier code groupings were further developed into conceptual categories, which was done by comparing and connecting relevant categories. For example, the category of membership was perceived as the feeling of belonging to a certain community and the connections attached to it. Table 5 below shows how some of the initial codes in this category were further developed in the focused coding phase and grouped under final concepts.

TABLE 5 Moving from initial coding to focused coding

Initial coding	Focused coding	Final Concept	Category
Using a common language to include everyone, {...} not to hurt anyone, balancing the use of multiple languages	Recalling inclusive instances of common language use, Harmonizing the use of multiple languages	Use of a shared language	Membership
Reviewing common social activities, commending the centrality of social activities, participating in social activities	Participating in and sharing central social activities	Central social activities	Membership

Altogether, the focused coding process lead to the formation of 18 final concepts and six communicative workplace wellbeing categories termed membership, support, cooperation, autonomy, information flow and continuity. The main notions of these categories will be briefly presented here while a more in-depth presentation can be found in the findings section. Table 6 below presents the 18 final concepts, termed constructive practices and communicative issues, and

their links to the workplace wellbeing categories. These final concepts were utilized to build the communicative workplace wellbeing categories, and consequently, the created model.

TABLE 6 Constructive practices and communicative issues in each wellbeing category

Category	Constructive practices and communicative issues	Association
Membership	Use of a shared language	Views of community and uniformity
	Central social activities	
	Connections extending beyond contracts	
	Everyone is a newcomer	
Support	Providing multiple contact channels	Perceived accessibility of emotional and informational support
	Confronting long distances	
	Ensuring proper level of contact	
	Gestures of kindness and compassion	
Cooperation	Instructing new employees	Feelings of cooperation and participation
	Mindfulness towards others	
	Working in unison	
Autonomy	Discretion over opinions and tasks	Perceived self-government
	Promoting professional growth at work	
Information flow	Ambiguity over who to contact	Passage of information from one party to another
	Experiencing language gaps	
	Absent or vague information	
	Arriving separately	
Continuity	Establishing stability	Observed consistency and stability

The model building process of this study followed Charmaz’ (2014) notions on CGT and theorizing. She mentions that not all researchers employ CGT with the specific objective of creating a theory. This is also true for this study, which developed a model of the process of constructing workplace wellbeing from a communicative angle. Charmaz (2014) describes the process of theorizing as one that directs researchers to see possibilities, create connections, and raise questions. By analyzing the specifics, it is then possible to understand the phenomenon under study.

For the research at hand, inquiries were focused on the associations between established codes. Each final concept was developed based on the earlier disclosed focused coding process, and the categories depending on the distinct links between the codes. For example, all the practices which were understood to strengthen feelings of attachment to the work community were gathered

under the classification of membership during the category formation process. Likewise, the category of support was formed of the practices which were linked to the perceived accessibility of emotional and informational support. Furthermore, the outer category of continuity was observed as consistency and stability in the communicative practices, unfolding throughout the other categories. More detailed descriptions of each the categories presented in the model and their components can be viewed in the following discussions section. However, before this, it is beneficial to review possible ethical concerns and their impact on the study.

5.5 Ethical concerns

This section discusses the different ethical concerns that were considered throughout the research process of this master thesis. As mentioned before, the participants of this study were found in cooperation with a Finnish employment agency. The criteria for the participants was that there would be some individuals who had longer experiences of temporary agency work in the agency and some who were newer to the workplace. Each research participant was contacted before the interviews by email or by phone so that the research could be described in more detail and to work out suitable time schedules.

It is reasonable to ponder the contribution of the employment agency in three different aspects. Firstly, as the research participants were gathered in cooperation with the employment agency, other sampling methods besides purposeful sampling were limited. However, access to the very specific group of migrant temporary agency workers was considered to be limited in other ways. Additionally, purposeful sampling was considered as a reasonable choice for the research at hand, as it allowed for choosing specific cases which were deemed important for the research question.

Secondly, the interviewed migrant workers may not have been as willing to convey more negative observations about the agency's practices or their general wellbeing as they could have been if they were randomly selected from a pool of employees. This is because the participants were suggested by the employment agency, and thus the employing organization can possibly identify the interviewees. However, this was reviewed in advance with both the employment agency and the interview participants. It was emphasized that the purpose of the study was not to expose any of the participants and that all interviewees should be encouraged to express any views as they could assist in improving future communicative practices.

Thirdly, one must also contemplate that the research participants might be more inclined to agree on the suggested research when it is proposed to them in assistance with their employing organization. This is when the aspect of voluntariness comes in, which is discussed in more detail below. The participants of this study were informed of the study's topic and themes before the interviews both in a written form and verbally. Each interviewee was given a consent form to sign, which they also had time to examine beforehand as it was also sent to them via email in advance. This form explained in detail their right to get more information on the study, interrupt participation or cancel consent at any time during the study. With these measures, the interviewees were given time to consider their participation in the study, which aimed to emphasize the voluntariness of their involvement.

It was also seen to be important to give the participants time to familiarize themselves with the research, as most of the interviews were held in English and the respondents were not native English speakers. However, all interviewees worked in a service-oriented field and used English as their professional language, and consequently the interview process went very smoothly. Four of the interviews were recorded face-to-face and one via online videocall. Throughout the study process, the researcher was the only one working with the recordings and transcriptions. All files related to the research were stored in a password protected computer and an external storage. Both the recordings and transcriptions of the interviews were destroyed after the research was finalized. The signed consent forms were also stored by the researcher until the end of the study. All data samples used in the study were anonymized, including names, places, and organizations. Thus, any discussion of data is presented in a way where the identities of participants and employing organizations cannot be recognized.

Attaining informed consent, voluntary participation, the right to withdraw, protection of participants, and evaluating potential benefits or risks are some of the most prominent measurements which most researchers agree on when it comes to ethical concerns (Silverman, 2013). In the case of this study, potential advantages include improvement of communication practices which in turn can foster future workplace wellbeing of both employees and employers at the workplace. This study was also shared with the cooperating employment agency, so that the agency's representatives could examine the research and possible data extracts.

Possible weighed risk factors included recognition of individual organizations or employees, which was minimized by thorough anonymization. As Finland has several temporary employment

agencies operating in the sector of Lapland, the risk of recognition for either the organization or its employees should be marginal. The individuals interviewed for this study can, however, possibly recognize their coworkers as their positions are mentioned in the presentation of the data set. The interview participants were aware that factors such as their job position or age can be presented in the data in a general way. The participation and helpfulness of both the interviewees and the employment agency is greatly noted and appreciated.

6 FINDINGS

The aim of this thesis was to gain a better understanding of the development of migrant employees' workplace wellbeing through communicative practices in the temporary agency work community. This was done by examining employment agency recruiters' and migrant workers' perceptions of the links between interpersonal communication and workplace wellbeing. The study also sought ways to support the communicative experiences of migrant temporary agency workers in the workplace.

Overall, the migrant workers workplace wellbeing was seen to be positive, as the workers perceived most of their workplace experiences as positive. A model of communicative workplace wellbeing was developed through an analysis of the completed interviews. The findings are grouped into six categories which are perceived to construct wellbeing at work through interpersonal communication. Although these categories are described separately, they are not exclusive from one another. On the contrast, they often work together with one component facilitating the other. Furthermore, the close collaboration of these categories illustrates that the overall workplace wellbeing of migrant workers is built on the collaborative presence of these categories.

More precisely, these categories were developed based on 18 individual discussed factors, including both constructive practices and communicative issues. The presented interpersonal communication practices can be seen to either build or obstruct the experience of wellbeing at work, depending on how these practices are implemented at the workplace. The found communicative workplace wellbeing categories are defined as membership, support, cooperation, autonomy, information flow and continuity. A model on how these categories are associated with each other can be viewed in the following section (see Figure 5).

6.1 Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing

The developed Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing (Figure 5) illustrates the presented interpersonal communication concepts which collaboratively construct communicative workplace wellbeing. The model encompasses six concept categories, labeled membership, support,

cooperation, autonomy, information flow, and continuity. The inner categories of the model are all connected to the outer sphere of continuity. Each component of the model is described in more detail with interview excerpts in the following sections.

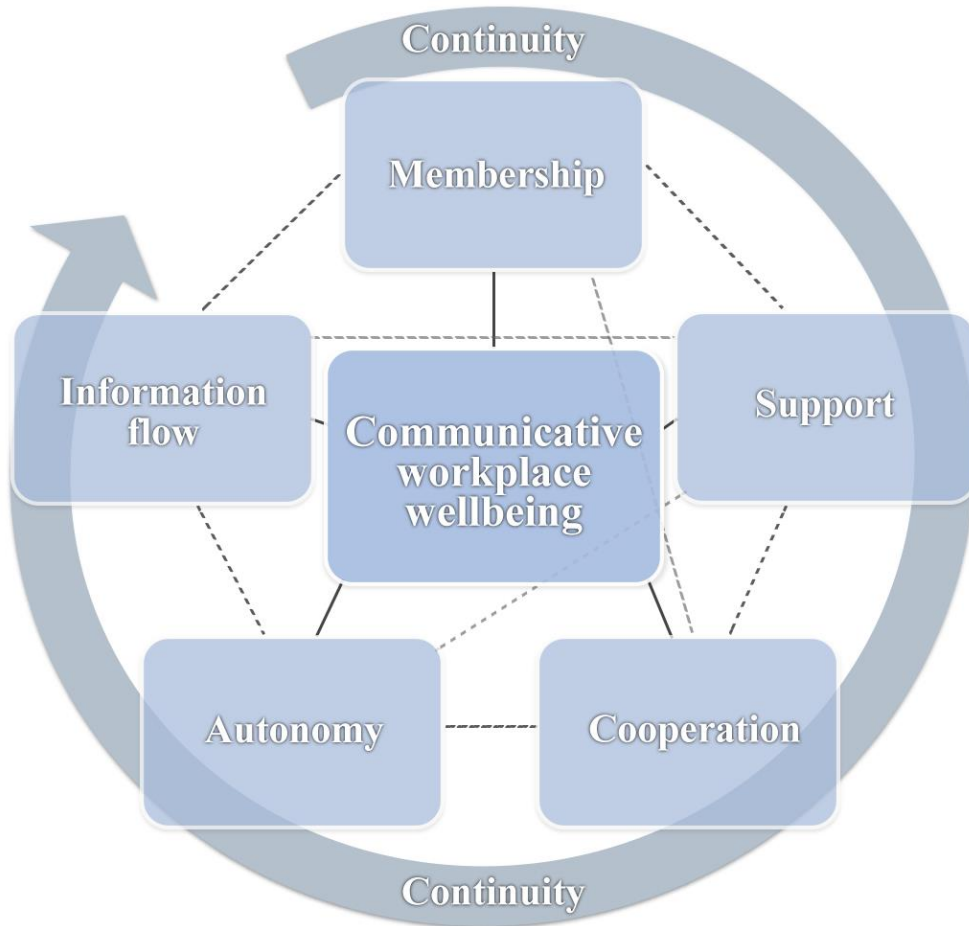


FIGURE 4 Circular Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing

The model also reflects the associations between these categories, as they are not excluded from one another but rather collaborate with each other. This is because the practices and factors mentioned in these categories can in belong to and affect other categories as well, thus illustrating that the workplace wellbeing of migrant workers is constructed through a collaborative existence of these categories. In practice, this means that *membership* in the work community can additionally facilitate the workers' access to *support* at the workplace, for example. These types of examples will be illustrated with examples within each category. Each category also encompasses the earlier depicted final concepts, which are similarly examined in more detail.

6.2 Categories of communicative workplace wellbeing

Each workplace wellbeing category was based on the factors found to affect interpersonal communication at the workplace. These factors included elements such as connections, social environments, channels, and languages which were at play at the research participants' workplace. Each factor can either be seen to construct or hinder communication in the workplace and consequently, the employee's wellbeing at work.

6.2.1 Membership

The concept of membership is understood as a feeling of belonging to a certain community and the connections attached to it. In the case of this study, this involves the practices which strengthen the feelings of attachment to the *work community*. In the TAWs' multiparty relationship, the work community includes both the employment agency and the client company, and the members employed in them.

The experience of workplace wellbeing is built through social interaction, where the feeling of membership in the work community arises. The factors found to contribute to the feeling of membership were categorized on the basis that they promoted views of community and unification. These factors included the custom of a shared language use, the centrality of social activities, different contract lengths and the feeling that all arriving workers are newcomers. These factors and their implications are further discussed in the following sections.

A shared language

One of the everyday practices described at the migrant employees' workplace was that a common language should be used whenever several first language speakers are present. This meant that the common language spoken at the workplace was English and in other instances, the used language should be switched to English whenever it was seen to be essential. These types of actions were largely perceived as a positive gesture indicating cooperation and consideration, which raised feelings of inclusiveness at work.

Earlier accounts from returning migrant workers also conveyed some feelings of difficulty and disconnect from other coworkers when the practice of a common language use was not yet so

prominent. This further implies the importance of having a shared mean of communication at the workplace. One of the new arriving workers for the current season gave examples of her feelings on common language use in a positive manner, indicating that the use of a shared languages is regarded as a considerate and inclusive gesture towards others. She gave an example of how first language speakers of Finnish and Polish can speak in these languages when they are together and switch to English when other language speakers are present.

Q: Do you feel happy in your workplace? Why?

(...) All of us using English don't make somebody like feeling bad. Obviously when I for example, like- my colleagues, Finnish colleagues, they are together, they spoke in Finnish but when I get in, they change like immediately like the language for English. (...) The same like when I'm talking with my friends in Polish because it's my native language, you know, but anyways, like if someone is coming to our house and speak English, all of us we speak English.

The returning migrant workers also described their earlier years working for the employment agency and how the situation around language use had slowly shifted from mostly Finnish to mostly English with the increase of international workers. Both workers express facing some difficulties when communicating with their coworkers during their first season, noting that they had to converse separately from other coworkers afterwards. Nevertheless, they also conveyed understanding that it was easier for others to communicate in their first language, even though it hindered them.

Q: What happened within your first few days at your workplace? Who introduced you to everything and how did it happen?

(...) The first season, there wasn't like so many foreign people like now. I think there was only me, one, one guy from Moldova, and another worker from Poland - all the rest, of course were from Finland. Nowadays it, it looked like almost fifty-fifty. (...) the speaking language here was Finnish. So, if I... if someone needs to speak with me, they after had to ask me in English, but mostly people were speaking Finnish. Nowadays I mostly hear English here.

Q: What languages do you use at work?

(...) Our first season here was really difficult because we were only foreigners. Yes, both of us and then one guy from- one guy from Moldavia and he's working here quite long- like seven or eight years. And first season was like difficult to communicate with everybody in English because they were using Finnish. 'Cause it's the mother tongue so it's easier for them. But the next year is like last year and this... is in English... it's the basic.

These types of accounts prompt a question of what it means to use one language over another in certain situations. Even if it is not intentional, using one language over another when you have the option of a common language can lead to feelings of alienation for others. Because of this, workers should be encouraged to use a shared language when they engage in any social activities with coworkers.

Central social activities

One of the apparent factors taking part in the formation of membership in the work community was the centrality of social activities. In practice this meant that a large amount of the offered social activities were located at the interviewees' worksite and the employed workers both saw and partook in these activities regularly with their coworkers. These were activities which all employees performed together to get to know one another, which in turn facilitated the development of workplace relationships between the workers.

All interviewed migrant TAWs mentioned the fact that once they were at their workplace, either working or spending free time, they had a very high chance of meeting their co-workers or they had already planned to do so beforehand. One of the new workers mentioned that the centrality of social activities meant that most employees were both working and spending their free time with coworkers, thus accelerating familiarization between workers. This factor in turn facilitates the formation of workplace relationships and therefore, gaining membership in the work community.

Q: What kind of interactions do you have with your colleagues?

We spend a lot of time at work and we also spend time after work because in Lapland we don't have like a lot of opportunities. So, obviously you- we have to be like in the good relations with all employees because then we can do for the bowling. And we have also like the WhatsApp group, like all of us, we are in there and we are just going together for the bowling or for the party.

(...) so, if co-workers and then you spend [time] after you work, with another- the same people, it's very quickly to know one another and like some of them, we are also live with them. (...) everything is around here. The most common place when we can know each other is this Pub over there, in the front of the Hotel. So, usually we just go there to like spend time together.

The interviewee continued her discussion on the matter, further emphasizing the fact that her life was currently focused on the workplace. Although she took a long time in order to arrive to work, she felt that because all the social activities and her colleagues were located there, it was worthwhile. The interviewee also points out that because all her colleagues are at the Hotel, she

feels that she always has support in her workplace, and because of this, she does not feel as lonely as she might otherwise. In this example it can be viewed that membership in the working community also provides access to support at the same time. This association can be observed in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing between the categories of membership and support.

Q: What about outside of work? What kind of contacts and interactions do you have?

(...) you live here, you know like... Your life is around this Hotel, because the most activities you can do here, it is here. Yeah, I walk like the five kilometers here but when I'm coming here obviously, I can get like the coffee, I can sit down, and everybody is coming here and asking; "Oh hey, how are you today?" So, you don't feel here lonely. You are not here lonely. If only you feel like "Okay something is different". You... always, always someone is supporting here.

Connections extending beyond contracts

The contracts lengths that migrant TAWs sign with employment agencies can vary greatly with each worker. Some of the workers might only work for a few weeks during the peak of the season and some up to multiple seasons, returning for each winter. These differences can reflect onto the workplace in matters such as building workplace relationships and employee orientation, for example. In this section, contracts lengths and employment times were linked to contacts and relational development, while employee orientation is discussed later under the section of different arrival times.

Employees with more experience at the workplace can offer a security net in various workplace matters and in the long run, build valuable relationships with each other. One of the returning workers portrayed the amount of his colleagues by reflecting on his friends from earlier seasons. He also mostly stayed in touch with his current coworkers, who had been employed at the organization for a few seasons. Indeed, the extent of the perceived work community was defined by the migrant workers on different levels, but overall, it always included direct coworkers and employees of the employment agency.

Q: How many colleagues do you have at work?

(...) I think ten... ten of my close friends are working here. Yeah, because some of them are from the last seasons. We know each other.

Q: So, was there are a lot of new workers this season?

I would say that half of the previous season stayed, and half is new.

Another interviewee noted that the amount of both customers and coworkers differs during the season. During the peak of the season the migrant workers had more colleagues at work, while also serving more customers. This means that the amount of social contacts the migrant workers have also fluctuate throughout the season.

Q: Who do you meet at work – colleagues, customers and so on?

(...) Like it goes in- in waves. Yeah, so it's- it's exactly the same with people who are working here, because in December it's more of us, than in January, it's less of us. Some people are coming only for three weeks. (...) Some people are coming for the whole season, some are for two months, so it's not like everybody is spending whole year here.

Another employee, who was a new worker at the workplace, gave an example which illustrates that this fluctuation does not mean that people do not have time to form in-depth relationships with each other. In her story, a new worker who had just arrived for the busiest part of the season had been surprised at how well the other workers had gotten to know each other after such a short time. The other workers appeared quite familiar with each other in her point of view after working together for only one month.

Q: How well would you say that you know your co-workers?

I can tell you something interesting, like we got also the one girl from the Russia, she just come here for the two- three weeks to help us, each other, in the restaurant for this most busy time. So, we knew each other, like co-workers, like one month and we went to the Pub together, all together. And she was so surprised because she asked like "How long do you know each other?". And we are like "Maybe one month?" and she was like "Oh, I'm so surprised, you look like, you already know each other for the while". So that's the- that just shows you the picture, how it is here.

Keeping in mind both interviewees' answers, it is notable that the amount of returning workers is quite high, with half of the workforce returning despite the temporary nature of their contracts. Naturally, longer contracts could be assumed to provide more opportunities to connect and develop relationships with other members in the work community, thus supporting networking at the workplace. However, it seems that even with short contracts which differ from each other,

the workers were able to develop strong interpersonal relationships with their coworkers. This is perceived to be because the workers resided in a tight social environment, connected to the centrality of work, free time, and home, with the added vision of continuity of work for following seasons. These factors are also examined further in the following sections.

As developing strong relationships with colleagues encouraged workers to return to the workplace for following seasons, it was valuable to offer possibilities for teambuilding on a regular basis. Workers with shorter contracts can also return to the workplace for following seasons when they experience strong feelings of membership at the work community. This association between membership and continuity at work can also be seen in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing.

Everyone is a newcomer

The interviewed workers portrayed a feeling of unity and similarity with their co-workers in relation to the feeling of being new at the workplace. This meant that all new arriving colleagues were considered to be newcomers to both Lapland and the workplace, regardless of their nationality or other background facets. Supporting new, arriving workers is crucial in multiple aspects such as providing access to the work community, creating long-term connections, and maintaining employees in the long run to reduce turnover.

For example, one of the returning migrant TAWs recalled her feelings when she arrived as a new worker, describing how she felt coordinate with one of her fellow workers who arrived at the same time as her. She believes that this is one of the reasons why people feel connected to each other at the workplace, as new workers arrive on the same level, with everyone being new and unfamiliar to the environment.

Q: Who would you consider to be your main contact person or company right now?

(...) It's really hard to compare because one is our direct employee- so I mean the Agency's Representative and then the Restaurant Manager- we are having such a contact with each other that, you know, I think that connects this, the people... that it was her first season [Finnish restaurant manager] and our first season. So, we met each other in the same level.

These types of accounts project an image of unity, which is partly based on the novelty of the work environment for everyone, wherever the workers come from. Another interviewee who was a new worker at the site, discussed how her Finnish coworkers also arrive from elsewhere to work

in Lapland during the winter season. She explains that the Finnish workers also migrate back and forth between their hometowns and Lapland for work.

Q: Do the Finnish workers also live here or near this Area? Or are they also people that come from somewhere else?

They are coming from somewhere else. We don't have like the typical Lappish people - I don't know how to call it. Some of them like live in the Jyväskylä or in the South West Finland. Most of the Finnish like in our like section- They are coming from the South Finland, so to North Finland, to the Lapland, for six months. And they are coming back to South of Finland to get job there again.

In this example, the interview participant expresses a view that Finnish workers can also be regarded as migrants, since they migrate to the working area in Lapland in a similar manner to the international workers. A sense of similarity between all workers was seemingly one of the factors playing part in their relational development and membership, which facilitated communicative relationships and interactions.

6.2.2 Support

All practices which were perceived to facilitate the accessibility of emotional and informational support at the workplace were gathered under the category of support. Emotional and informational support was be provided through both face-to-face and technology-mediated communication. Factors found to build a supportive environment for employees included offering multiple contact channels, confronting long distances, level of contact, and gestures of consideration and good will.

Providing multiple contact channels

In this section, the employees expressed that they felt that it was easy to seek help and information from the recruitment agency and the client company whenever needed, as multiple practical contact channels were provided for them. These contact channels which were provided for the workers conveyed both feelings of easiness and encouragement. One of the returning workers praised the employment agency's response time with different enquiries and the amount of ways she had to contact them. Another interviewee, who was a new worker at the workplace, had a similar opinion of the employment agency's contact channels and the quick response times. These seemed to

demonstrate consideration from the employer's side and deflected possible future problems which could evolve if left unchecked.

Q: Is there any way that you would improve the interactions between the workers and the employment agency?

No, I think that it's like... a lot of ways to communicate. So, as I said you have a phone so you can call them, you can make a message, you can write an email and during the work time you're getting the response immediately... Like in the evening of course, they are not responding but then the next day from the morning you are getting the response and then you are having these like meetings here once a month. So, I think it's, it's, it's a good thing. How it should be.

Q: In what ways are you in contact with the recruitment agency?

Oh, it's very easy to contact with them. It's yeah, it's really useful. They're coming here like once per month. So, if you have like the big issues or you feel might talk about it something wrong you can talk like face-to-face. If it's something like not really important, but you are interested something you can just text, email. And you'll... at the same day usually get answered questions.

Having the possibility of contacting and asking for detailed questions from the employment agency was also seen as a necessity for the migrant workers. This was because having a local source of information had proofed to be a significant help in matters relating to law and taxation issues, for example. A certain level of ease and appreciation was attached to the routine where the employment agency provided information relating to these issues through different methods, especially if the migrant workers had not necessarily realized to ask for it beforehand. These methods could include traditional emails or more practical guidance through appointments, for example.

Q: How valuable do you think these interactions and contacts are that you have with the recruitment agency?

I think that for every foreigner working abroad it's really necessary to have somebody who is- who knows everything about the... let's say law, or how is it going or what have you prepared. Like, I remember when we first time came here, they told us; "Okay, so, you have to apply for the Finnish personal number, you have to register yourself as in foreigner office, you have to apply for tax cards". And we were getting all those emails like; "What you have to do, how you have to do". For example, it's better to make an appointment, and here you have three months for this. So, they are really- they were really helpful from the beginning when we were like coming here.

Confronting long distances

On the flipside, the long distances in Lapland presented some challenges for different interpersonal communication practices. As some services are located at different cities far away from the actual worksite, matters such as good collaboration and interaction came into play. To tackle these aspects at the migrant workers' workplace, the employment agency made directions for the workers in advance and informed them to set some time aside for these appointments. In these types of situations, extra direction was a necessary practice as inattention or errors could cost time, money, and multiple trips for the migrant workers.

One of the employment agency representatives emphasized and exemplified the differences of separate areas by discussing how arrangements are a lot easier to handle in the capital area when compared to Lapland. She noted how especially tax matters were simpler to take care of in one area versus traveling from one town to another.

Q: Are you happy with the way things are organized in relation to the migrant workers coming to Finland?

(...) When you come to Helsinki, for example, if they arrive to Helsinki, that's where Helsinki International House is, which is... Yeah, you can handle tax card things and matters like that quite conveniently. But of course, Lapland always has these distances and other things.

On the migrant workers side, one of the returning workers also gave an example how they had experienced some problems between different insurance procedures between public and private insurances. The interviewee and her fiancé had gone to public healthcare while their insurance was covered by a private company which is located 30 kilometers away, as they had not realized they were covered separately. However, the employment agency was currently advancing and helping them solve the matter. This example also exemplifies the important association between support and information flow in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing, as this matter had most likely slipped past the returning migrant workers (see Figure 5).

Q: Is there anything that the employing organization could do that would make you happier?

To be honest, I don't know... Maybe there is some- like we are having now the problem with the insurance, that we have the insurance, which is covered by the private company, which is in like a town 30 kilometers away from here. But then with the normal insurance, you have to apply for the Kela card. So that's- that's the thing that it wasn't said from the beginning and we didn't know that. So, that's- that's the thing that we are- we have to do right now, because we don't have this card. But yeah, everything goes like exactly it should go. So, we wrote a message and then there was a call,

then everything was like: “Okay, so, we're gonna go on this day and we're gonna figure it out”. “We're gonna do this, this, this and this”.

Long distances also came up in the other factors, often emphasizing how the different social possibilities offered for the migrant workers are largely centered at the workplace. In these instances, it is helpful to ponder the level of contact, which is provided for the migrant workers, so that difficulties relating to long distances can be minimized.

Ensuring proper level of contact

The interview participants also discussed on what level the migrant workers and the employment agency representatives are in contact with each other. On top of providing possibilities of having communication through different contact channels, it is important to make sure these channels are utilized and that they offer enough complexity for proper conversations.

One practice which was praised by all migrant workers was the practical help provided by the employment agency in taxation matters. In these instances, the employment agency had arranged appointments at the tax office with a group of workers. Consequently, the employed TAWs felt relieved that they did not have to seek information and arrange these matters by themselves as they had in-depth support available for these more complex questions.

Q: In what ways are you in contact with the recruitment company?

(...) I think it's very nice from the point that every time while we are coming here, they are asking how is it going so far? Is there some problems? Do you have some questions? And if anything appears, we can always call to the recruitment company or write an email or write a message and they are always answering. So, it's like really helpful within some problems.

Even, they are, you know, not in words, but they are taking you by hand then going by... For example, to- when we are going to the Tax Office, we just go all together. They made an appointment, and they have the group and let's meet at eight o'clock. For example, we are going to another town to the Tax Office. And they are all with us so it's really helpful. That you can't- like you don't have to do it by your own, like, you don't have to search the internet; “what to do now”, “how to act”. You can just ask somebody from the recruitment company (...).

Another practice which was discussed by both the workers and the Finnish recruitment agent was the arrangement of a “pop-up office” by the employment agency once a month at the Hotel where the migrant workers were stationed at. These occasions were considered as a chance to have a more in-depth, personal conversations about possible problems and future plans. One of the

returning workers reviewed how sometimes the workers might need more chances to be in contact with the employment agency as it depends on the individual situation of each worker. She gave an example of how she had discussed future employment arrangements during the employment agency's visit to the Hotel and appeared pleased with the possibility of making such arrangements.

Q: Can you give an estimate of how often you are in contact with the recruitment agency?

I think it's more- more like per month. It depends on the situation because sometimes you need more contact and sometimes you are just going to write that everything is fine and that we don't have any problems and so on... I know that there is a... there is- we are having this writing that and written the message that every once a month they are spending like one or two hours in the Hotel. So, if you have any problems, you can come and meet with them personally.

(...) you can ask for the further cooperation. Like I don't know... "We want to work here during the summer. So, what offers do you have?" And then they are like "okay, we're going to make some research for you what we can prepare". So, it's all about the future or the problems, the "how is it going?" ... Kinda like the basic stuff.

These types of contacts also enable the workers to think about and make plans at the workplace for the future. Therefore, they are important for the sake of positive return rates and providing a feeling of continuity for the workers. These contacts also facilitate further relational development between migrant workers and employment agency recruiters, leading to more personalized relationships.

Gestures of kindness and compassion

Demonstrations of kindness and compassion at the workplace allowed people to show that they care and are willing to help through a positive mindset. These different gestures were both appreciated and held in high regard by the migrant workers. In these examples, empathy and care towards the employed TAWs was seen to increase harmony in the work environment and alleviate any challenges they possibly faced.

One of the returning migrant workers discussed how he felt appreciated at the workplace and that there are plenty of different factors which contributed to this. He described how the migrant workers received a loyalty program which includes discounts and presents from the client company and the temporary employment agency. These gestures then contributed to building and maintaining a positive impression of support and appreciation from the employment agency.

Q: Is there anything that the employing organization could do to make you happier?

I think it all depends on your expectations but I'm totally fine. They- we get some loyalty program that every month we get some euros to spend on different things. We do have discounts in- in Hotels, (...) and it's kinda of a present from, from the company. We all- every year we get the present for Christmas, which are really nice and practical. (...) I think that they are, they are doing... I don't feel that they could do something more for us. I feel like they appreciate me and my fiancée.

From the employment agency's side, the Finnish representative described carrying a little bit more responsibility and concern towards the employed migrant workers. She explained that this was probably because she saw the migrant workers directly when they arrived for work, which lead to a more personalized connection between the agency's representatives and the migrant workers. These types of descriptions illuminate that workplace relationships which extend beyond superficial and formal levels can contribute to experiences of kindness, warmth, approachability and caring. They also showcase how the employment agency recruiters can have a more caring and individualized connections with the migrant TAWs.

Q: How responsible do you feel about the recruited migrant workers?

Well of course, although our hiring company is sizable and there are many of us doing this job, then of course in these places where you are like face-to-face with those who come in for work, so you see them when they arrive, so of course things personalize a little bit then too. So that yes- yes, of course, you carry a little bit more responsibility or concern about them.

6.2.3 Cooperation

Cooperation at the workplace was understood as cooperative and participative practices, which could include both workers and management. It included communicative practices which enabled and encouraged each side to understand each other's actions, needs, and troubles, therefore facilitating cooperation at the workplace. These practices also assisted workers to envision common goals for the work community. The found cooperative factors consisted of practices such as instructing new employees, mindfulness towards others and working in unison.

Instructing new employees

Each new arriving employee is trained for the various practices at the workplace. As returning temporary agency workers had already gone through this process, they could offer both assistance and support for new workers during their orientation period. The importance of cooperation is

especially emphasized at workplaces where employees change frequently. With good orientation, new employees can feel that they swiftly become part of the work community. A comprehensive introduction to the workplace therefore builds a solid base for further cooperation and relationship building and is connected to providing membership for the new arriving workers. This association between cooperation and membership is also presented in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing.

All interviewed employees looked back on their introduction to the workplace with pleasant memories, highlighting how they felt taken care for. One of the arriving workers accounted how she felt like the “junior” at the workplace when she arrived. This and later examples also notably illustrate how the returning workers are viewed as the “seniors” at work who have already built up tenure from previous seasons. Therefore, the categories of cooperation and continuity can also be seen to be collaborate in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing.

Q: Do you remember what happened within your first few days? Who introduced you to things and how did it happen?

(...) they took care of us. Like they took us for the kind of junior here. Like to show us all the places, how they work, what they are doing. But they also respond like many people they- they come back here from the last season. So, they knew about it already. So, it was very easy (...).

In this case it also notable that returning TAWs provide support for the arriving workers, as the returning migrant workers recall their first season and how they were introduced to the workplace. The returning workers note that they are now providing the same instruction as they were given in their earlier years of working for the employment agency, which similarly projects the same type of tenure also considered in the earlier account. In this example, the association between cooperation and support is presented, alongside with continuity once again, as can be seen in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing (see Figure 5).

Q: What happened within your first few days at the workplace? Who introduced you to everything and how did it happen?

(...) So, I was working with one Finnish friend and yeah, he was telling me everything; “So, this is the buffet and this we are preparing...”. He was like literally walking with me or I was walking with him and he was telling me everything, how it works and so on. And I think that right now it is working exactly the same as people who are working here longer. So, for example, it's us - because it's our third season, then we are telling every new person how it's working and they know that they can ask for it if they really feel they need some help.

The returning workers also advised newer employees to ask for further help when they felt the need to do so. The second interviewee, similarly a returning worker, described seeing himself in the new arriving employees. He depicts helping his new coworkers in terms of questions related to salaries and payslips. He portrays his incentive for these actions being that he remembers how he was acting when he first arrived at the new workplace and that he can reflect this in the arriving workers.

Q: What kind of matters do you discuss usually with the employment agency? Can you give examples?

(...) I contact them [employment agency] and it used to be that I was asking about my salary: “So, what is on, what is- what is that certain position? What does it mean?” Now of course, I know after a few years, but for the first time just I only saw the numbers as like random letters, and now of course, I know everything so it’s just about... Yeah- now I’m helping my friends, new friends. Because now we see how we were acting the first season here.

Mindfulness towards others

Mindfulness at work was achieved by reflecting on one’s own expressions and being receptive to listening to others. One of the returning workers gave an illustrative example of how the workers at the workplace reflected on how they should phrase matters to each other in order to sustain a good atmosphere at work. She portrayed the atmosphere at her workplace as a more relaxed environment compared to a regular, straight, and strict work ambience. The tone of the conversations was made lighter by utilizing more playful and lighthearted exchanges. She pondered that this probably why the cooperation at her workplace was operating so well, as the workers did not feel anxious or stressed about messing up due to the good atmosphere.

Q: Can you describe the atmosphere at work?

(...) It's not like so straight and strict that: “We are at work” and so on. But we were joking a lot, we are having fun a lot. Like all these things that we have to do at work. So, you know, we are having some... selling items or to improve something, or to change something or to remember about something. It's always said like in a- in a nice way or in a funny way or in jokes way. That you're like; “Okay, I'm going to do it, no worries, no problem” not like in a; “Okay guys, you- you messed up, you have to do this, this, this...” and then you’re saying; “Okay...”. It's- it’s really like that's why the cooperation is working so smoothly.

Another one of the interview participants considered the rationales why all coworkers should be in good relations with each other in the Lappish environment. In her opinion, these aspects

should be motivated by the fact that the workers must spend a large quantity of time in close quarters whether it be for work, free time and for some, at home. Because of this, it is important to be able to air things out if necessary. She noted that naturally some setbacks between coworkers can happen, as people are rarely contented all the time. However, in these instances, respectfulness towards coworkers should be essential.

Q: What kind of interactions do you have with your colleagues?

(...) So, it's not just your colleagues at work, you spend also time after you work with them. So, it should be like good relations. It's like all of us we have to love each other but be respectful [to] each other. And yeah, like kind of good relations, but if something's wrong yeah, we can talk about it. "I do not like you" or whatever, but you have to work with them. Because you have to spend [time], you know, workplace and after work, because in the work it's not like all of us- we have like beautiful mood every time: "We are so happy". Sometimes you can make some troubles or if something worried you, obviously you are not happy at work at all, you know. But after work you can talk about it.

Both examples portray the importance and motivations behind being mindful towards coworkers and their thoughts and feelings in the more concentrated environment of Lapland. As the temporary agency workers social connections are largely centralized at the workplace and there are not so many opportunities for socializing outside of the Hotel, the significance of the workplace relationships is amplified and increased. In these instances, the location of the migrant employees' workplace was also seen to affect the way in which workers perceived and reacted to each other. Because the examined TEA environment was located at a resort far away from other town centers, the way in which individuals developed interpersonal relationships and interacted with each other at work was informed by this fact.

Working in unison

Workers made unified efforts to work together and be supporting and show gratefulness towards their coworkers. They realized how others had helped them and were grateful for these contributions. Working in unison also created an understanding of the shared goals at work and what one's own contributions to the workplace were. In practice, this was demonstrated by different practices such as employees carrying out tasks listed for them even if it meant overtime. This was done in order to be considerate towards others with the understanding that it would be inconvenient for others to handle extra work left over by someone else.

One of the returning migrant workers described this type of situation as she was discussing here typical day at work. Towards the end, she described that it is important for everyone to remember what should be done before their shift ends so that everything is ready for the next shift. During busy days however, the workers might not get everything done before their scheduled shift ends. In these instances, the workers felt obligated to finish their own work as leaving it undone would burden other coworkers. This portrays an image of both respectfulness towards colleagues at work and an aspiration towards unified goals and practices at work.

Q: Can you tell me about your typical day at work?

(...) everybody just remembers what needs to be done to- to prepare it for the other shift, which is coming. It's always so nice that the next shift is coming, and everything is pretty. So, sometimes you have to stay longer because we are staying like you can't leave when everything is not done. Because it's not nice for the others. So, it's like, I don't know, half hour longer to just prepare everything for them that they can do their own stuff, not like finish your work.

Another worker described the unified efforts of the TAWs employed at the Hotel from the point of view that the recruited employees are all in the same boat during hectic moments. Therefore, everyone should aspire to do their best and support each other at work. This reflection of one's own and others' efforts at the workplace, also illustrates how the workers understood the importance of cooperative and supportive interactions. The interviewee emphasized how no one is left alone at work without support because of this understanding. In these examples, the connection between cooperation and support is highlighted again, which can be viewed in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing.

Q: Do you feel happy in your workplace? And why?

Oh yeah, I feel happy about my workplace. Yeah, it's hard work when we are busy. But the point is we are like put here, all of us, and everybody is like trying to do the best. So, you can see like no one is like leaving, you know and just go somewhere; "sorry" and then you are just alone here. No, we support each other and with all the stuff here.

6.2.4 Autonomy

Autonomy at work was viewed as an environment where the workers perceived that they could be self-governing at work regarding their own ideas and assignments. In this category, the workers expressed a possibility of voicing opinions, having discretion over job tasks, and visualized

professional growth at work. This experienced independence at work consequently had a positive effect on the return rates and the overall contentment of the migrant employees as they felt trusted in the workplace. This section is strongly linked to the category of continuity, which will be discussed more later on.

Discretion over opinions and tasks

One of the returning workers discussed his thoughts on positive job autonomy by describing a feeling of freedom regarding voicing ideas and revising his work assignments. He perceived that he had the possibility of disclosing everything that he deemed necessary at work and added that he did not feel like he had any labels, which he should fit into. Rather, his position was flexible alongside him so that he could express creativity in his work. The interviewee also pinpoints that this particular side of his work is what makes work enjoyable for him and leads him to feel valuable at the workplace.

Q: How supported do you feel in your workplace?

I feel quite important. Like I... I can say mostly everything what I need to say, that is the... I don't have any labels. This is very important for me when I feel that something is going bad or we can improve something, add something... then I can always say it to everyone. I can do- I don't have tied hands in my work. So that's what I can- I can improve some things. Let's say for example, I can create a drink that I want to sell per certain days. And I can- I can sell it easily. Yeah, that's- that makes my job nice. It's really flexible. So, I can always ask for days off when I want to, need to have a days off or sometimes when I really need to change my shift with someone else because I have something important to do, then it's completely fine to do it. That's- that definitely makes my working place nice.

Experiencing a level of autonomy regarding tasks at work was also be connected to the concept of trust at the workplace. This means that the client organization trusts the employed workers in that they will take care of their work assignments in a proper manner and make right choices overall. From the employees side, the desire for autonomy at work seemed to go hand in hand with the wish to be of value at the workplace, which in turn was accomplished by allowing the employees to openly utilize their skills. This type of unrestricted atmosphere was built by open dialogue between colleagues and supervisors, whether it was on the matter of shifts or tasks.

This means that building autonomy at work involved multiple interpersonal communication practices in the work community, including cooperation, support, and information flow. These can also be seen in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing. Concurrently, the examples

portray how the categories collaborate in the presented model. For example, providing an opportunity for a coworker to change his or her schedule and be flexible in this way, was also viewed as a gesture of kindness and compassion, which is similarly mentioned under the category of support. Equally, rearranging shifts and assignments were also categorized under the practice of working in unison, which is referred to in cooperation.

Promoting professional growth at work

Professional growth can happen ‘on the go’ by working and learning at the same time or through different opportunities which give an initiative to develop different skills necessary at work. These opportunities can be viewed as spaces for the employees to learn more at work, for example through colleagues providing and sharing knowledge at work. It is also important to provide an environment where mistakes are seen as an occurrence which can be improved upon in a positive matter. One of the returning workers already touched upon this in an earlier excerpt, reviewing how mistakes are handled and discussed at their workplace. She emphasized that feedback is worded in a way that is not overly critical, which makes reacting to the instructions easier.

Q: Can you describe the atmosphere at work?

(...) to improve something, or to change something or to remember about something. It's always said like in a- in a nice way or in a funny way or in jokes way. That you're like; “Okay, I'm going to do it, no worries, no problem” not like in a; “Okay guys, you- you messed up, you have to do this, this, this...” and then you're saying “Okay...”. It's- it's really like that's why the cooperation is working so smoothly.

One interviewee who was new at the workplace contemplated the different motivations to return to a workplace from the angle of getting to know both your work responsibilities and coworkers over time. She felt that with familiar workplaces you experience less stress and management when compared to new environments, due to the fact that you can facilitate your work along your tasks and coworkers.

Q: Would you like to come back here and why?

(...) because it's always like that if you are working for the one company, at the same place like five years. You feel more you can do it; you know, you don't feel like this stress or like someone is pushing you. Because you know each other with your colleagues and you feel like okay, I can do it because last year it was the same, you know what I mean like? And when you get to the like the new place, yeah, you feel like you are just more being careful, how to keep here and how to be okay with all the people.

Spaces and opportunities for professional growth were also seen to also manifest through different tasks and positions, where employees could try out new responsibilities. A successful realization of autonomy also encouraged continuity at work, as the workers expressed their wish to return to the workplace for upcoming seasons. The second interviewee, who had returned to the workplace for his third season, highlighted this by voicing his inclination to return to the worksite, as long as it continued to provide him with the possibilities of growing up and progressing in different areas.

Q: Would you like to come back here and why?

(...) if the place gives me a possibility of growing up and, and some progress in many- many, you know, areas then definitely I'm able to come back here for another season.

As mentioned earlier, this type of autonomy was further supported by allowing the workers to gravitate towards the tasks which they find most enjoyable and by creating opportunities for voicing ideas and opinions. For new workers, this also good from the point of view that the moment of their arrival is usually the most effective for obtaining new ideas and critical feedback. This is because new, arriving workers can see the workplace and the practices applied in it with fresh eyes.

6.2.5 Information flow

Information flow was perceived as the passage of information from one party to another in the work community. Information flow was linked to the employees' desire to know about issues related to their work, organization, and work community. Because of this, missing or difficult to find information was perceived as hindering, and therefore impeding the experience of wellbeing at work. Additionally, it is important that communication flows not only from management to employees, but vice versa and from one coworker to another. Various factors were perceived to possibly either hinder or assist the flow of information at work. The factors found to affect information flow were ambiguity over who to contact, different arrival times, language gaps and absent information.

Ambiguity over who to contact

Because of the multiple-contract party situation, it was assumed that migrant workers might have questions upon who to turn to and in what matters. However, the participants in this study had found their own way to navigate this matter by categorizing different questions and who is responsible for managing them. For example, questions related to contract matters were mostly forwarded to the employment agency while practical matter related to work were handled at the client company.

The first interviewee who was a returning migrant worker, explained that she did not feel like she had experienced any difficulty in differentiating who is responsible for different matter. She illustrated this by describing that even if she asked a wrong person about a certain matter, she would then be redirected to a right person who would then know how to answer her.

Q: Is there any confusion since you have two employers? Over whom to contact and identify with?

No... because I know that if it's something about the basic work here, you can ask your- the restaurant manager, if it's something about the restaurant. But for example, in when it's something about the insurance or, I don't know, some like law things, I- you can come and ask, like I'm coming for example and asking the restaurant manager. And she's saying that: "To be honest I have no idea but if you're going to call to the recruitment agency then they will tell you everything". And that's how it works.

In this example, there is attention on the importance of friendly and supportive interpersonal interactions at work. When colleagues and supervisors demonstrate helpfulness towards you and direct you to the right source of information, this type of support provides a base for a free discussion where questions are encouraged. Offers of support also indicate that there is always someone friendly to ask for all workers, which in turn can reduce feelings of loneliness.

Conversely, one of the interviewees saw that it is best to make sure all matters are handled through the employment agency, no matter the subject, as she had had some bad experiences in her previous job positions. She also expressed that she preferred this method as she did not see the restaurant manager at the workplace so often. She further disclosed that in her other agency employment placement, the problems had related to extra working hours which had not been included in her contract. As these extra hours had not then been counted, this led to her making sure that she checked everything with her agency representative.

Q: Who would you consider to be your main contact person and company currently?

(...) obviously, the recruitment agency is the- you should talk with them first, in my opinion. That's why I always contact with them and I skip like the main manager, like the manager of the restaurant. Because, you know, like we can talk about the schedules or something but it's- I don't know how to say, because like I know some of the people from that place who- they are really in touch with the- with our restaurant manager but I'm not. So, I'm not saying like we have like bad connection, we just don't talk to each other because we don't see like very often. So, I always go like to the recruitment agency and I call them, or text them or I talk to them face-to-face.

(...) I got some issues before like when I was in my Previous Job, so I'm trying to avoid it and always ask the recruitment agency before. It's like I remember when I was working in my Previous Job and the main manager asked me to stay longer- like longer than my contract supposed to finish. And I said "Okay" and obviously I texted to the recruitment agency. But I didn't get my new contract (...).

The matters related to the possible challenges around responsible contact parties had also been noticed from the employment agency's side. The Finnish agency representative gave an example of how arriving migrant workers might ask their restaurant manager about matters related to compensation. In these instances, the employment agency had then been advising the workers further in their questions and the different roles of the organizations.

Q: Have you noticed any confusion from the migrant workers over whom to contact in different matters?

It is true, of course, that they get confused like at the beginning, what is our role and then what is the role of the Hotel [client company] and who is responsible and for what. And then they ask the manager of their restaurant that why they have been paid in this specific way. And then again, we must of course advise them this way.

These examples illustrate how probable misunderstandings are in multi-party communication situations while also demonstrating how helpful interpersonal interactions can mitigate these types of misunderstandings. Nonetheless, they similarly advocate for clear and concise guidelines for all involved parties responsible for each matter.

Arriving separately

The different arrival times of new migrant TAWs was seen to possibly cause some workers to miss initial information from the agency's side. This raised questions on how to make sure that all necessary information was provided upon arrival. The Finnish employment agency representative discussed in more detail how the migrant TAWs arrive to different cities on separate times, which

might lead to some of the workers missing initial orientation. These types of situations then led to the temporary employment agency working on to try and catch up on the missed information.

Q: Are you happy with the way things are organized in relation to the migrant workers coming to Finland?

(...) They do not arrive as a one big group on the same day. It's like everyone... first one comes to a specific city, the second to another and the third one to the next town by train. Some will arrive a little later or come in the middle of the season and then they will miss parts of the initial info pack, because they were not like part of those big orientation days. But then we try to catch up on it.

Of course, these instances cannot be avoided in the field of temporary agency employment as fluctuations in employment levels are common. To address possible issues relating to different arrival times, the employment agency had gathered information which was been perceived to be well established and important in order to provide good insight and knowledge in a quick manner for new workers. Additionally, returning employees encouraged new workers to seek advice from colleagues, informed them on where to find further information and provided guidance in everyday matters. Nonetheless, these accounts also lead to additional inquiries on what could be done to further guarantee all arriving workers with similar knowledge of the workplace.

Experiencing language gaps

Having multiple languages present at work can affect the accessibility of information for some. All crucial information should therefore be translated when a workplace acquires new additional languages. Consequently, updates in provided information can result in differences in materials and translations. In these instances, it might become tricky to keep track of what information is provided and in what language. Otherwise a lack of proficiency in the dominant language at the workplace can affect aspects such as receiving insights about different events and procedures at the workplace.

Translations which can be viewed as particularly important are various safety signs and notices, as these relate to health and safety requirements, for example. Fortunately, any deficiencies in these matters did not surface in the interview participants' answers. The discussed issues mostly related to the employment agency's application and information related to taxation, compensation, and insuring procedures. For example, one of the new migrant agency workers expressed a little

disappointment towards the agency's mobile application because only some sections were provided in English while the rest was in Finnish.

She held positive interest towards provided materials such as the employment agency's newsletter, although receiving it appeared, to some extent, pointless to her as she could not read the information since it was only in Finnish. This illustrates how the migrant workers can also express interest in the wider work community and the information and networks related to it, but a lack of knowledge in the primary language can lead to a more reduced access to information. This connection between information flow and membership is also illustrated in the Model of Communicative Workplace Wellbeing.

Q: How often would you say that you have interactions with the recruitment company?

(...) it's just once a month, like... Usually like when I get my payslip and something like I'm curious what's there because our payslip is in Finnish. (...) and also, like the we have the recruitment agency's [mobile] application. When we put our hours, mine is in English, but sometimes when you got like the information there or something, like the news editing is in Finnish. (...) some of them [news] maybe is interesting. If it would be better if it's like in English, you know. In fact, the- all the application is English, so what is the point to send me something in Finnish you know?

The issue of some communication channels and materials only existing in Finnish also exemplifies how language can work as a mean for social exclusion. This type of exclusion might occur when migrant workers are prevented from learning more about their client organization or employment agency and consequently, socializing into the larger work community. In a lot of cases, this type of exclusion might take place unintentionally.

Some issues related to language gaps had also been noticed on the employment agency's side. However, some topics were also considered problematic to translate, such as the earlier mentioned taxation matters. The Finnish employment agency representative expressed that this is because there are various issues which affect both the number and percentage of taxes. Moreover, in many cases, the procedures around tax policies also differ in several countries, making it harder to predict and explain the taxes to the arriving migrant workers.

Q: Are there any special characteristics to recruiting and working with migrant workers?

(...) I feel like they are a bit tricky for us Finns also to do, the tax stuff... and let alone explain it in English and considering that you don't exactly know yourself how it's even going to pan out.

Absent or ambiguous information

Not receiving or misunderstanding information was seen to lead to various types of shortcomings, as catching up on these types of inaccuracies might take up resources from both sides. The employment agency representatives and migrant TAWs reviewed how unclear or missing information can be especially problematic for the workers.

From the international employment agency's side, representatives advised more cautionary procedures when providing information for the departing workers, as incorrect information was seen to cause possible material and mental harm for the workers. This was because they perceived that outbound migrant TAWs need to make multiple arrangements to prepare themselves before leaving abroad and consequently learning about misinformation and having disappointments after already arriving in the destination country could lead to more emphasized consequences than when compared with local TAWs.

Q: How responsible do you feel about the recruited migrant workers?

(...) when there is a new recruiter coming to this project, we always tell them that if you will do, I don't know, not a good match, in case of the domestic projects... Well, it might happen. Always- it always can be of a kind of some misunderstandings, in the- in the end of the process or in the process. However, if you will send someone and you will not provide him -to abroad, somewhere long distance- It will cost them, because and this is also important issue, because someone who will go abroad they have to spend a lot of money for travelling. So, buy a ticket, flight tickets, up on something that's, second option is to buy some food, etc. to prepare themselves, actually.

(...) So, it takes them [migrant workers] a lot of time and money to prepare themselves. So, if you will not be honest with them, not be... you will provide them with bad... not- not correct information, you will- well you can, you may have hurt them a lot, and it... that is why we have to be much more sensitive, much more careful with such kind of project.

The arriving migrant workers also noted the challenges related to ambiguous information from their side. Although most information provided for them had been precise and correct, there were still some small matters which had gone unnoticed. One of the new workers discussed how taxation and insurances between her home country and Finland differ, and how this had come as a surprise to her. The interviewee further pondered that for someone whose main motivation for working abroad is financial, these types of monthly monetary losses can be quite challenging.

Q: Do you consider you get all the necessary information you need?

I got like the main information, everything was really like the email, like step by step by step. Perhaps some of them, you're just curious that Finland is... you have the- not the tax rows. For example, like

in my country, so... They for example, like I didn't know I was supposed to pay like the retirement tax. I told like this tax, the general my tax, but then I saw like my pay- first pay slip. It was like the tax and it was like the retirement tax and something like the insurance blah blah and they didn't say about it before, you know, but they should do it. Like they should... more pay attention for the people who are not Finnish. Because we don't know this stuff. Obviously, they give - that they explain you everything, but like if someone is just coming here for the money and not like to be like the part of the Finland, obviously can get much... you know, like because... yeah if someone is just taking care of money and just come here for the money, obviously like losing like 300 euros or 400 euros is quite different.

It is noteworthy to compare these challenges of providing accurate information for workers arriving from different countries to the workers side of receiving it, as this was similarly mentioned the earlier examples mentioned in language gaps. It indicates that the employment agencies are expected to have quite extensive knowledge around taxation and insurance procedures internationally as well, unless these matters can be conveyed in a way that is universally understandable. Common guidelines which offer wide-ranging information might still not convey enough information for some and for others it might be too extensive.

The Finnish employment agency representative touched upon this point by pondering whether the right information was actually provided but got lost in the initial overflow of messages. In her opinion, the employment agency tried to gather all necessary points of information, updating it along the way as they learn new things which might be important. However, she also felt that some of this information might then have been lost because it was sent while the future migrant TAWs were still in their home country.

Q: Are you happy with the way things are organized in relation to the migrant workers coming to Finland?

From our side we are trying to tell everything as clearly as we can at that point. But, of course, now that we are gaining more and more experience here, because the numbers are only going to grow, then there will always be things ahead that the ones coming from abroad should know and otherwise. So, that we just have to gather more and more still, everything possible to it [initial info]. But then, of course, it feels at times that when that information is provided while they [migrant TAWs] are still there in their home country, then maybe parts of it will go missing there. So, what has already been told and otherwise.

6.2.6 Continuity

Continuity was perceived as a feeling of consistency, stability, and future possibilities at the workplace. It was seen to allow the migrant workers to visualize continuing professional position at work, despite their seasonal and short-term contract arrangements, which in turn facilitated the return rates of the workers. Continuity at the workplace was also accomplished through developing interpersonal relationships which lasted beyond a single employment relationship. Migrant workers advanced in their careers, achieved seniority, and developed relationships regardless of their short contracts.

As the examples mentioned in this section can also be found throughout the earlier mentioned categories of membership, support, cooperation, autonomy, and information flow, the following examples will be re-examined from point of view of building continuity. Additionally, different motivators for continuing and returning to agency work are further examined from the point of view of migrant workers.

Establishing stability

In the category of membership, it was noted that the amount of returning workers was quite high, with half of the workforce returning despite the temporary nature of their contracts. It was perceived that workers were more likely to return to the workplace for the following seasons when they experienced feelings of membership at the work community. These feelings were constructed through building connections in the work community despite differences in contract lengths, meaning that relational development was enabled through various factors. This in turn lead to individuals forming close workplace relationships which continued throughout multiple seasons. Factors which facilitated the relational development between workers included central social activities and inclusiveness towards all workers.

Additionally, various support practices provided insight about the contact channels migrant workers had for reaching the employment agency, and the level of contact these channels provided. More in-depth channels, such as pop-up offices at the migrant workers' worksite provided a mean for the workers to discuss future plans with the agency. Furthermore, the kind gestures provided by the employment agency on top of earlier positive experiences also undoubtedly performed as a motivator for the migrant workers to feel safe to return for another season. This was illustrated in a description from a returning worker, who portrayed discussing possible problems, status updates,

and future employment in the employment agency in person, when they were visiting the Hotel the migrants worked at. These inquiries were then met by the employment agency, which searched for possible placements for the workers, further demonstrating cooperation between the parties and signaling continuity for the workers.

Q: Can you give an estimate of how often you are in contact with the recruitment agency?

(...) there is- we are having this writing that and written the message that every once a month they are spending like one or two hours in the Hotel. So, if you have any problems, you can come and meet with them personally. (...) you can ask for the further cooperation. Like I don't know... "We want to work here during the summer. So, what offers do you have?" And then they are like "okay, we're going to make some research for you what we can prepare". So, it's all about the future or the problems, the "how is it going?".

Examples of previous positive experiences which were described in more detail by the migrant workers included their instruction to the workplace. In these accounts, the workers highlighted how they felt taken care for. The instances also illustrated how returning workers had built standing from earlier seasons, with arriving workers being described as juniors and returning workers being recognized as the advising seniors. These examples portray how good orientation periods build a solid base for cooperation overall, leading to positive feelings and atmosphere at work. Moreover, building continuity and procuring returning workers who can provide this sort of orientation and support for the arriving workers is equally important. This both clarifies and highlights the circular nature of the relationship between interpersonal communication and workplace wellbeing.

Q: What happened within your first few days at the workplace? Who introduced you to everything and how did it happen?

(...) And I think that right now it is working exactly the same as people who are working here longer. So, for example, it's us - because it's our third season, then we are telling every new person how it's working and they know that they can ask for it if they really feel they need some help.

In the category of autonomy, the interviewed migrant workers discussed experiencing professional growth and having discretion over opinions and task at work, which was depicted as one of the motivators for returning to work during upcoming seasons. The whole category of autonomy was seen to be highly linked to continuity as possibilities of self-government and progress at work allowed the interviewed workers to envision themselves at the workplace in the

future. The experienced autonomy at work also signaled trust for the workers from the employers' side, which in turn provided employees with feelings of value.

Q: Would you like to come back here and why?

(...) if the place gives me a possibility of growing up and, and some progress in many- many, you know, areas then definitely I'm able to come back here for another season.

The category of information flow conversely showcased some possible obstacles which hindered the passage of information from one party to another in the work community. The migrant workers told accounts about how they had learned to differentiate between who to contact in various matters, asked for clarification if information was provided in a language they did not understand or if they could not find it themselves. These matters were fortunately lessened by the amount of possible contact channels and the level of communication the employment agency had with the migrant workers. However, in order to facilitate all employees access to the work community, it is important to assist information flow at the workplace and tackle the abovesaid issues. Effective information flow at the workplace allows employees to further socialize into the work community, consequently providing stability and continuity for them.

Additional motivators for migrant temporary agency work

Another angle which provided noteworthy insights was the perceived external motivators migrant workers had for engaging in temporary agency employment abroad. The migrant workers discussed their motives for applying and continuing in their placements. For example, one of the new arriving migrant TAWs explained that since she had just graduated and is quite young, she was looking for brand new experiences when it came to employment. The dreamlike description of Lapland had caught the eye of all the interviewed migrant workers amongst other job postings and images. These descriptions included both natural phenomenon such as aurora borealis and the different activities offered in the Lappish environment.

Q: What led you to apply for this job?

(...) But you know, when you're 24 and you are after study, you just expect something more to do. That then on the other hand, you can look like it's Lapland, most of the people they are coming here from the another world to see the aurora borealis, like the snow you know, slopes and these all these Lappish activities and I'm saying that "Okay that's my place".

From this viewpoint, workers who want to engage in employment abroad might already be more inclined for receiving new experiences and consequently, international temporary agency employment. In this retrospect, the employment agency can be seen to benefit from some popular stereotypes of Lapland which are most likely globally recognized. The exotic location and description of the employment position can then consecutively become a driver for many interested applicants. Nevertheless, the employment agency had successfully both conveyed an appealing image for the future migrant workers and most importantly, matched this image, which can be seen in another review from one of the returning workers.

He similarly describes how he was looking for a unique offer from the beginning and how the position from the employment agency differed from other offers. When further questioned whether this description mentioned in the offer matched his experiences about the workplace, he explained that it was even better than he expected. This type of amazement was also portrayed in the other interviewees' answers, as some of them seemed to question whether these types of positions were even a real possibility. These types of genuine and accurate stories from migrant workers who have returned to their workplaces for multiple seasons can also work as motivators for possible future workers, as they can be utilized in the employment agency's job postings.

Q: What led you to apply for this position?

I was, you know, scrolling to find something very, very different. And... Yeah, that- the offer would come- come up and it was written the questions: "Do you want to see the Santa Claus?", "Do you want to see the Northern Lights?" One by one. Especially when it is... all the other offers were almost the same. And that was something that I definitely stopped by. "Yeah, why not? Why not? I really want to see. I wanna see Santa Claus, I wanna see Northern Lights. Let's go."

That was the first like, in the- in the beginning. Like first three or four random questions. That definitely make you focus on that. And then quickly describing the offer "So, there's a winter hotel in the center of Lapland". And that "we are looking for" and the words mention the positions. "If you feel like you like winter, you like winter sports, you like the atmosphere of nature, please send us your applications".

Q: Do you feel that this description matches the actual experiences you got here?

Yeah, yeah - definitely. It's- it's even way better. I didn't... I didn't expect it.

From this viewpoint, providing interesting offers and delivering on them is important for the sake of procuring engaged workers. The interviewed international employment agency's representative also discussed the specific characteristics for migrant applicants, which reflected

how the migrant workers had answered as well. According to him, many of the applicants include younger individuals and couples, who were perceived to be ideal candidates, as they were prepared to work for longer work assignments. Furthermore, the employment agency representative discussed how compensation is still a significant motivator for many migrant workers, as there are differing wage gaps between separate countries. However, he also noted that there is still a large variety of candidates even though some traits might be more common than others.

Q: Are there any special characteristics for recruiting migrant workers?

Well, when you would like to ask me about the- let us say “role model” of those kinds of candidate. I will tell you that there is a big variety. We can find people very young, just no other [experience] than the schools, willing to start their job experiences abroad and also those who used to work locally for many years and they are they are willing to switch a local company to some kind of, yeah, other ones. So, there is no... not- not a one specific model.

(...) The most important group is the couples, actually, so people that are willing to go for the longer period. They want to earn some money because of sometimes in yearly form. So, it is mostly they are willing to go from, I don't know, three- up to three months, up to two years, more or less.

7 DISCUSSION

This research investigated the construction of migrant temporary agency workers' wellbeing at work through different interpersonal communication practices. This was done by examining a temporary employment agency recruiters' and migrant workers' perceptions of the links between interpersonal communication and workplace wellbeing. This chapter considers the presented findings related to the research question alongside with the conclusions of the literature review. The research question in this study was:

RQ: What perceptions do employment agency recruiters and migrant workers have of the links between interpersonal communication and wellbeing at work?

The interviewed migrant TAWs and employment agency representatives discussed how they viewed different communication practices in their work community, and how these were perceived to relate to the wellbeing of migrant workers. Overall, the migrant workers perceived workplace experiences were positive. They viewed that the various interpersonal communication practices affected the perceived membership, support, cooperation, autonomy, information flow and continuity at the workplace. These categories were closely associated with each other, therefore indicating, that the overall workplace wellbeing of workers was built on the collaborative presence of these categories.

More precisely, these categories were developed based on 18 individual discussed factors, including both constructive practices and communicative issues. Constructive practices included the use of a shared language, central social activities, and considering everyone to be a newcomer at the workplace in the category of membership. Additionally, providing multiple contact channels, confronting long distances and the obstacles they possibly posed, ensuring a proper level of contact, and demonstrating gestures of kindness and compassion were seen to provide the migrant workers with a supportive environment. Cooperation at the workplace was built by instructing new employees, being mindful towards others and working in unison with coworkers. Furthermore, having discretion over opinions and tasks at work, and promoting professional growth gave the migrant workers a sense of autonomy.

All of these practices were perceived to be important for allowing the workers to have future aspirations at the workplace, and consequently, continuity. In fact, the research participants

described that around half of the temporary agency workers return to their workplaces seasonally, despite the temporary nature of their work, indicating that the workers appreciate their workplace and the communication practices employed in it.

Considering these findings diverge from many of the earlier studies examining wellbeing and quality of work in the environment of temporary agency employment, it is useful to compare these results and discuss possible reasons for the observed differences. The results also present largely different findings from other types of migrant workers experiences, where migrants are in atypical employment arrangements which suppress them various ways (e.g. Mucci et al., 2019; Piller & Lising, 2014). Overall, the categories of membership, support, cooperation, autonomy, and continuity offer new findings from the perspectives of overall temporary agency employment and migrant workers. In the case of the information flow category, there are findings which relate to earlier research and new findings relating directly to migrant workers.

Communicative practices constructing wellbeing at work

Membership

When discussing the concept of membership and its relation to wellbeing at work, it is noteworthy to mention that the migrant workers perceived themselves and everyone at the workplace as part of the same group, with everyone being a ‘migrant worker’ despite their nationality. There was no observed formation of cliques or other hinderances in their work community. Rather, the workers wanted to facilitate and make interactions easier with their coworkers by using a shared language at the workplace. On top of this, central social activities gave workers various chances for developing interpersonal relationships with one another. This perceived centrality also likely tackled the issue of most workers having dissimilar contract lengths, thus allowing workers to form close relationships which lasted onto following seasons despite their temporary contracts.

Pennanen (2015) offers comparable and interesting insights in her work regarding nursing staffs’ perceptions of the importance of interactions for wellbeing at work. While the specific medical work environment is not as related for this study, her research question is highly compatible with the research at hand. For example, the presented category of membership can be compared to the category of belonging (*kuuluminen*), which Pennanen (2015) defines as belonging to a work community or peer group, or being left out of a community or group, and lastly, opting

to remain out of groups. In this category, having access to a work community or a peer group could provide support and recourses at work, whereas being left out of these groups without the intention to do so, undermined one's workplace wellbeing.

However, if workers chose to remain outside of these groups from their own will, it did not obstruct their feelings of wellbeing as the workers did not perceive to construct unnecessary or divisive subgroups. This perspective on subgroups is an interesting one to observe, as the interviewed migrant workers of this study discussed how they perceived everyone to be part of the same group. This consequently was viewed as one of the reasons why cooperation between the workers was working so well, increasing the employees' perceived wellbeing. This perspective could also shed some light on the found differences on wellbeing from earlier studies, as some studies have found the formation of subgroups or 'cliques' at the workplace to cause detrimental exclusion for others (see Pillemer, 2018). More precisely, in various other studies temporary agency workers have been noted to feel like the outsiders in their work community, with limited access to recourses and social connections at the workplace (see Drury, 2016; Vorell & Carmack, 2015).

Additionally, Mitlacher (2008) discusses how in the aspects around social relations, integration, trust and identification, TAWs have been observed to have shorter and more transactional contracts, on top of little communication with supervisors and other core employees. This distinction between 'regular', 'full-time' standard employees and TAWs has also been highlighted in other previous studies (see Kauhanen and Nätti, 2015), with some studies specifically choosing to focus on the negative experiences of separation between these groups (see De Cuyper, Hardonk & Vanroelen, 2015). From the perspective of this study, it is therefore important to examine how do the elements of location and seasonality factor into the mix, as it distinguishes the examined workplace from other organizations where TAWs might be considered a shifting minority. The seasonal nature of the migrant workers' employment environment and the aspect that the observed client company mostly employed TAWs overall, most likely diminished the probability of workers forming subgroups at the workplace, whether it be between the TAWs or fulltime employees.

This was also presented from the point of view of the workers when they described how their life was currently very focused around their workplace, because their social contacts followed them from work to free time, and for some, to home. This in turn fast-tracked the development of relationships at work even though some workers had shorter seasonal contracts than others. Overall,

aspects such as *seasonality, location and high number of employed TAWs* could therefore lead to the lack of subgroups, which in turn can be viewed as a factor which caused differing findings on membership and wellbeing from earlier research. Because short and uncertain assignment durations have been marked as one of the challenges in temporary agency employment (see Mitlacher, 2008; Vorell & Carmack, 2015), these aspects should be investigated further in different types of settings. Nevertheless, one probable explanation for this could be the aforementioned close-knit social environment experienced by the workers despite their short contracts.

As mentioned before, in the case of this study, the remote location of the workplace enhanced the relational development between the employees, on top of extending their relationships outside of the immediate work environment. However, it should be noted that this might not always be a positive factor for the workers, as some colleagues might face difficulties and disagreements in their workplace relationships. Consequently, living together and continuously seeing each other might escalate these types of challenges. It might therefore be an important aspect to consider and prepare for in job placements, which are located at more remote settings. The interviewees in this research illustrated an understanding regarding this aspect, as they considered their work location as one of the main motivators to be in good relations with others and to sort out possible issues.

Support

In earlier research considering TEA environments, the concept of support or the lack thereof has been viewed from the approaches of not being considered being a full part of the work community and knowing who to contact, for example. These have been seen to possibly cause problems in providing necessary resources for TAWs (see Gosset, 2007; Mitlacher, 2008; Vorell and Carmack, 2015). These types of results can also stem from feelings of differentiation between temporary agency workers and other employee groups or simply not having coworkers - in other words, working alone. However, the findings of this study present a different illustration of the support migrant TAWs have in their work community, with the migrant workers describing many supportive communicative practices they found helpful and crucial in their work.

In this research, the concept of support was considered as a significant factor in the development of wellbeing at work because the interviewees reviewed its role in multiple contexts. For example, the practices of providing multiple contact channels and ensuring a proper level of contact, are very dissimilar with Mitlacher's (2008) observations about TAWs having small levels of social relations, integration, trust, and identification. These differences can also occur due to the

seasonal, but contracted nature of the migrant workers environment, where the migrant TAWs stay in the same remote workplace for the whole duration of their employment. In this environment, the workers shared the same workgroup for the whole season, and thus had more opportunities to develop relationships with one another.

This naturally differs from TAE positions where the employed workers frequently shift between workplaces. In these types of positions TAWs have been found to suffer from various stress factors, including a lack of social connections and recourses (see Gosset, 2007). Overall, the practices of providing multiple contact channels, confronting long distances, ensuring a proper level of contact, and demonstrating gestures of kindness and compassion are certainly useful practices to employ in any temporary agency employment environment, not just with migrant workers.

This is because supportive communication practices will provide the workers with necessary recourses to deal with work-related stress and issues (see Mikkola, 2020) and consecutively, further socialize employees to the workplace while fostering wellbeing and return rates in workers. Many of these supportive communication practices were made possible by utilizing technology-mediated communication in the TAE environment. This meant that the migrant workers were able to easily contact the employment agency and share their everyday struggles with the agency's recruiters if necessary.

The addition of migrant workers to the workplace might also mean that the temporary employment agency provides more attention and support to the received workers. This can be viewed in one of the employment agency representative's answers, where she discussed feeling additional concern for the arriving migrant workers. She also described how the employment agency learns more about essential information for the migrant workers with each year, meaning that the observed employment agency in this research had a clear incentive to facilitate and support its workers in the future as well. This suggests that there may be differences in employment experiences depending on whether only regional workers or, in addition, migrant workers are employed as well.

Cooperation

The concept of cooperation in the context of temporary agency employment has not yet been examined in more detail in other research. In the case of this study, cooperation was understood as cooperative and participative practices, enabling, and encouraging each party to understand each

other's actions, needs, and troubles. These types of actions were perceived to facilitate cooperation and common goals at the workplace. In previous research, TAWs have usually been presented as the outsiders in their employment environment (see Drury, 2016). This could stem from the diversity of TEA contracts, as some workplaces only partly utilize temporary agency employees alongside full-time workers (see Kauhanen & Nätti, 2015), while others rely solely on TAWs who work by themselves on individual assignments (see Strömmer, 2016).

From these standpoints, aspects such as cooperation in everyday temporary agency employment might not come up as often. However, in the case of this study, cooperative communication practices facilitated the inclusion of new workers while also providing the grounds for employees to work together towards shared goals. The interviewed workers discussed viewing their own past experiences in comparison to their coworkers' circumstances and what they would consider helpful in certain situations. These types of actions allowed the workers to understand their coworkers needs, be mindful towards others and avoid possible conflicts at the workplace. Considering these findings, cooperative practices at the workplace should be further investigated in TAE environments.

Autonomy and continuity

Work-related autonomy was perceived to increase feelings of value and facilitate further professional aspirations in the employment agency. More precisely, the interviewed migrant workers described experiencing professional growth and having discretion over opinions and tasks, which were consequently described as important factors in promoting the return rates of migrant workers. On top of this, from the viewpoint of continuity, migrant TAWs discussed seeking new experiences and being impressed by the work offer from the employment agency, generally differentiating it from other postings. These narratives could indicate that the migrant TAWs were employed in job positions which they perceived as exceptional.

This connects to Veltman's (2016) notions on *meaningful work*, where he identifies dimensions which capture meaningfulness, including assimilating elements of an employee's life to work, developing or exercising capabilities, providing a purpose and producing something of enduring value, for example. Most of these can be seen in the migrant workers' descriptions, as they recount having flexible roles and distinct experiences from other ordinary jobs available for them, partly because they were able to make use of various winter activities at work. From this

perspective, experiencing autonomy, continuity, and meaningfulness in one's work could factor in providing different results in this study.

In the case temporary agency employment, the concepts of autonomy, continuity and voluntariness have been examined as a question of whether choosing to be a TAW affects workplace wellbeing. However, there has been mixed findings in this type of research. For example, Kauhanen and Nätti (2015) found the perceived employment quality of involuntary part-time and temporary employees' to be lower in relation to indicators such as autonomy, job insecurity and possibilities to learn and grow at work, when contrasted to other temporary workers. They refer to the state of involuntariness as a situation where the worker had been unable to find permanent employment. However, in contrast De Cuyper and De Witte (2008) found that volition is unrelated to turnover intention and job satisfaction. Furthermore, having a choice was seen to reduce organizational commitment in TAWs. Because of these types of mixed notions, it could be productive to examine the concepts of autonomy, continuity, and meaningful work further in the environment of temporary agency employment.

Communicative issues undermining wellbeing at work

There were also some hindering factors mentioned by the participants, including ambiguity over who to contact in various matters, experiencing language gaps, and absent or vague information. These factors related to the category of information flow, as they hindered the movement of information in the work community. In fact, the category of information flow reflected some of the earlier mentioned communication obstacles in temporary agency employment and the multiparty employment relationships.

For example, Gosset (2006, 2007) describes that questions over control and responsibility are fairly common in temporary agency employment, meaning that TAWs are often conflicted over which organization's (employment agency, client company) instructions they should follow. However, in this study, the migrant workers had separated the responsible party simply through trial and error. This meant that the workers had found out who was responsible for various matters through asking and experiencing, and in turn, advising coworkers when needed. These experiences highlight the importance of supportive and friendly interpersonal interactions at work as they assist employees both in information seeking and in socializing with others. When help and support from colleagues is readily available, workers will not experience as significant information gaps,

loneliness, or isolation at work. This way employees can also still find the correct information in the end even if they approach the incorrect contact party.

Nevertheless, these sorts of examples illustrate the possible misunderstandings which are linked to communication between multiple parties, while also advocating for clear guidelines for responsible parties for each matter. For example, when the employment agency is responsible for contract related matters (i.e. compensation and employment length), it might be a good idea to emphasize this for all arriving workers. Likewise, matters which are directly linked to the client company and the work performed at the worksite could be illustrated with some examples. With such guidelines, employees, and representatives from both the client company and employment agency can have more clear and concise communication with each other.

Additional issues which surfaced in the category of information flow were the questions around language gaps and vague information. These related more closely to the specific experiences of migrant workers, as there was a level of imbalance in the provided materials around different languages, which affected the migrant workers access to additional information in the larger work community. Competence in English language and in complicated matters such as taxation was also perceived as a possible challenge from the employment agency's side. This was due to the difficult nature of explaining complex matters in one's second language, while not wanting to provide incorrect information. These in turn lead to further contacts and questions from the migrant workers with the employment agency.

More complex subjects such as international taxation and insurances also advocate questions related to the responsibilities between the employers and employees. It might be a good idea to give some encouragement for all arriving workers to check how taxation and insuring policies differ in the destination country, as it might prevent possible surprises along the way from the migrant workers and ease some explanation workload from the employment agency's side. Additionally, it might be a good idea to pinpoint the different roles well in advance because uncertainty about who takes care of what can lead to misunderstandings later down the line. Nevertheless, it would undoubtedly be beneficial to provide additional opportunities for the migrant TAWs to gain information about the larger work community with an English newsletters, if possible, as the workers only accounted for receiving the newsletter in Finnish. The information provided in the newsletter might lead to additional insights about different possibilities the employment agency offers and further motivate workers to return to the workplace.

8 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis examined the development of migrant employees' workplace wellbeing through communicative practices in temporary agency work. A large body of these shared practices were deemed as helpful and constructive, indicating that the migrant TAWs perceived their experiences at the workplace as positive. The findings categorized six communicative workplace wellbeing categories termed membership, support, cooperation, autonomy, information flow and continuity. The results also advocate that the work environments of temporary agency workers should be understood as separate settings. More precisely, it was recognized that the employment locations and positions of migrant TAWs most likely influence the experiences and social connections that they have at work, which in turn affects their workplace wellbeing. Because temporary agency employment covers such a large amount of contract types, research which examines these environments should therefore also reflect these individual settings.

8.1 Limitations and recommendations for future research

The results of this study showcase that more research around migrants employed in temporary agency work is warranted and can provide insightful findings. This is because earlier research ventures have reached results which show adverse effects to be linked with temporary agency employment and workplace wellbeing. Moreover, the practices which were perceived positively by the migrant workers in this study can be compared with other studies covering similar objectives.

However, because international research around the concept of temporary agency work does exist but lacks common definition, it would be advisable for future researchers to state all notable factors involving their research participants' work environments and contracts. The fact that the reference point for temporary agency workers changes with the analyzed employment agency, migrant employee type (i.e. migrant, expatriate), employment continuity, and work assignment was noted in the earlier discussion as well. These factors add to the task of building comprehensive research and comparable references. This limitation was also the reason why relevant literature was searched from a broader scope but limited to be suitable for the research on hand.

Overall, the validity of qualitative research is often assessed by queries of thoroughness and whether the reached results and conclusions are ‘accurate’ (see Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006b). It should also be noted that in studies based on the framework of social constructionism, a pursuit of a single truth is not really an endeavor but rather in these instances’ *validity* is understood as credibility and persuasiveness. More precisely, this means how well the researcher’s constructions match those created by the interviewees and how well these interpretations are delivered for others to understand (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006b). These notions mirror those of Charmaz’ (2014), with both scholars stating that the examined phenomenon can never be described as fully in the report as it appears in the research situation or to the researcher.

Although there are some conflicting views on using more traditional notions of validity and reliability in qualitative research, there still exists unanimously accepted methods to increase these (see Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006b). For example, during the analysis process it is beneficial to make justified and transparent coding choices and categorizations. To achieve this type of transparency, all analysis steps were described as precisely and thoroughly as possible, in order for this process to be more clear-cut for all readers. Interview recordings are also thought to increase reliability, as they allow researchers to thoroughly analyze all materials and compare these for further observations (see Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006b).

As of data collection methods, it should be noted that interview excerpts should not be viewed as an objective view of reality at the workplace (see Silverman, 2013). This is because they are perceptions from each migrant worker, who are accounting for their individual experiences as they recall it. Hence, other workers might have different perceptions of the examined communication practices. It is also reasonable to note the position in which the interviewees were in because they were approached in cooperation with the employment agency to participate in the proposed research. Therefore, the temporary employment agency knew about their participation in the study. This in turn might have informed the way in which they discussed their working life in the conducted interviews.

As mentioned earlier, the study’s sample included two employment agency recruiters and three migrant temporary agency workers. The sample conditions of the research were designed in advance based on the environment under study and the positions which were deemed as valuable (see Silverman, 2014). As the interview participants shared similar views of their experiences, this was perceived as a level of data saturation (see Croucher et al., 2015; Silverman, 2014).

Consequently, the findings are seen to provide insights into the experiences of migrant workers in seasonal positions in Lapland. It should be noted, however, that since migrant workers generally work under very different arrangements, the applicability of these cases to other settings should be considered in the light of the similarity of the employment arrangements.

Another limitation which is advisable to keep in mind is that models are constructed simplifications of more complex processes, meaning that they can never produce a complete understanding of phenomena (see Charmaz, 2014; Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006b). They work to make these processes more comprehensible and streamlined. This is especially true considering the complex nature of workplace wellbeing and the multiple perspectives it can be studied from. This is true in this research as well, because even though the categories included in the constructed model are listed individually, they should not be seen as separate entities but rather flexible sections that collaborate with each other.

Taking these aspects into account, it is seen that the study provides new information on the experiences of migrant workers employed in Finland and Lapland. This is considered as an indicator of the successful completion of the set research question. This thesis also provides an overview of the current employment landscape in Finland in which migrant workers are employed in. For future research, interesting endeavors can include questions which inspect how seasonality, location and other contractual factors affect the examined TAWs perceived wellbeing. On top of these, further inquiries in the contexts of cooperation and meaningfulness of work in the temporary agency employment environment could provide more insights, as these have not yet gained much research. Additionally, further studies on migrant workers in the temporary agency employment environment should be performed, as there are very little of them to date. This could include comparative research between migrant and local temporary agency workers, for example.

Inspections of migrant employees' workplace wellbeing in relation to the found communicative categories could also be compared to other scenarios to see whether these are applicable to them as well. Explorations of multilingual language practices in TAE settings could yield interesting results as well, as matters around language use were also broadly discussed by the interview participants of this study. Lastly, as earlier studies and the results in this study have indicated TAWs to have differing views over their supervisors and responsible contact parties, it could prove helpful to study the process in which the employment agency and client organization negotiate over this factor.

Proposals for future research:

- *The effect of seasonality and other contractual factors in the TAE environment in relation to workplace wellbeing*
- *The contexts of cooperation and meaningfulness of work in temporary agency employment*
- *Further studies of migrant workers in temporary agency employment, for instance, comparative studies between migrant and regional workers*
- *Migrant workers perceived communicative workplace wellbeing in other scenarios*
- *Multilingual language practices in temporary agency employment*
- *Exploring how the employment agency and the client organization negotiate “being the boss”*

8.2 Implications

This final section discusses the theoretical and practical implications of the presented findings. From a theoretical standpoint, this research provides a new model for the process of workplace wellbeing from a communicative perspective. This model can be employed in research that seeks to examine the concept of wellbeing at work from a communicative standpoint. Furthermore, as the model is built from the perspective of migrant workers, the factors discussed in it can be suitable for work environments that employ workers from abroad or fall into the category of nonstandard employment.

The results of this study also found contrary results to previous studies linked to temporary agency employment and workplace wellbeing, indicating that additional research around these topics should be made. From the perspective of examining migrant employees' experiences at workplaces, this research also found mainly positive results. As the results presented in this study show, the challenges migrant workers pondered and discussed about, mostly related to language gaps and different procedures employed in international insuring and taxation. This illustrates that in the context examined in this research, cultural differences played no significant role. As Lahti (2020) discussed, even though utilizing culture as an explanation for differences might seem like an easy answer to complex questions, it is not often the correct one.

This leads to another point of consideration which is on the view of differences and difficulties. It could be questioned whether a viewpoint which looks for differences and challenges is a constructive one. It should be regarded as more reasonable and constructive to embrace the similarities individuals have when aiming to build workplace relationships and community, rather than to seek differences. This type of reasoning was also showcased in this study, as the migrant workers discussed how they felt coordinate with co-workers who arrived at the same time as them, spent free time together as a big group, and felt that everyone was a migrant worker in Lapland - regardless of one's nationality. These types of notions can also be reflected to Holliday's (2016) views, where he sees the value of thinking and talking about cultural differences in discovering common ground. In this way, we can take interest in other people not as simplified references but as individuals.

On the side of practical implications, this study includes useful insights for the employment agency as they recruit more migrant workers in the future. As mentioned before, this study was shared with the cooperating temporary employment agency so that they can gain further knowledge of their migrant employees' experiences. Practical considerations for the collaborating temporary employment agency in the case of migrant workers include many positive, constructive practices, which they already employ. These constructive practices can be utilized as guidelines for other worksites which also employ migrant workers.

Additionally, the found communicative issues undermining workplace wellbeing can be viewed from the point of development, to see what can be done to increase migrants' wellbeing at work. Both constructive communicative practices and communicative issues stemmed from the discussions with the interviewed migrant workers, which were used as the basis of the following practical suggestions. These future suggestions for temporary employment agencies and client companies employing migrant workers were collected into the table below (see Table 7).

TABLE 7 Suggested communication practices for organizations employing migrant workers

<i>Suggest using a shared language at the workplace, as this was regarded as a considerate and inclusive gesture towards all workers. A lack of a shared language was viewed to lead to feelings of disconnection from colleagues.</i>	<i>Support workers' discretion over opinions and tasks. Feelings of autonomy provide a possibility to disclose opinions and ideas. It also contributes to the workers' feeling of value and deflects confinement to a work title.</i>
<i>Provide central social activities because they present workers with opportunities of meeting co-workers.</i>	<i>Promote professional growth at work, so that workers feel like they can learn through</i>

<p>This subsequently facilitates relational development and deflects possible feelings of loneliness.</p> <p><i>Look for similarities rather than differences, as it establishes unity in workers.</i></p>	<p>experience and visualize themselves at the workplace in the future.</p> <p><i>Provide instructions over whom to contact in certain situations. Visible instructions assist clear and concise communication between all involved parties, deflecting potential confusion.</i></p>
<p><i>Provide suitable contact channels and ensure a proper level of contact, since they provide feelings of easiness and support. They also facilitate future work plans and prevent possible issues.</i></p> <p><i>Confront long distances in advance to prevent potential losses in time, income, and trips. This can mean setting time aside and making different appointments in advance (i.e. for taxation affairs).</i></p>	<p><i>Gather essential information for workers arriving separately from initial orientation periods, so that employees arriving individually will face less information gaps and confusion.</i></p> <p><i>Check provided English materials and offer further links (i.e. insurance and taxation) as these facilitate access to the broader work community, news, and compensation information, for example.</i></p>
<p><i>Demonstrate kindness and compassion. Empathy and care can increase feelings of value and harmony in the workplace.</i></p>	<p><i>Facilitate continuity for workers through stable interpersonal interactions because they enable employees to visualize a future at the workplace.</i></p>
<p><i>Instruct new employees to the workplace because it provides orientation and support for new workers and seniority for returning workers. It also establishes a base for cooperation and workplace relationships.</i></p>	<p><i>Recognize and reward employees' commitment and earlier working experience because recognition from employers was perceived as a motivational and a supportive action.</i></p>
<p><i>Instruct employees to be mindful and work in unison as these actions can cultivate a relaxed atmosphere for work and feedback, while also creating a sense of shared goals and one's contributions to the workplace.</i></p>	<p><i>Consider obtaining statements from leaving and returning migrant workers for future job postings. These create job descriptions for potential migrant employees and provide an opportunity to gain further insight of earlier employee experiences.</i></p>

These interpersonal communication practices were seen to facilitate the migrant workers socialization into the work community, support their experiences at the workplace, and construct their workplace wellbeing. Overall, several of these presented communication practices already took place in the examined workplace, while the rest include possible future suggestions for the employment agency and client company. This means that while the experiences of migrant workers were largely perceived as positive, there are still more opportunities to provide further support for them.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview questions - Migrant temporary agency workers

Introduction

- What is your age?
- What is your education?
- What is your current job position? What does that entail?
- How would you describe your career stage?
- What languages do you use at work?

Recruitment process

- Can you briefly tell me about your previous international work experiences?
- What led you to apply for this job?
- How was your current work placement described to you?
- How do you feel this description matches your experiences of the actual job?
- Who was your main contact person and company during recruitment?

Interactions between the temporary employment agency and the workers

- In what ways are you in contact with the employment agency?
- How often do you have interactions with the employment agency?
- What kind of matters do you discuss with them?
- How valuable do you consider these interactions or contacts?
- Do you consider you get all the necessary information you need?
- How would you improve the interactions between the workers and the employment agency?

Interactions between the migrant workers and their colleagues

- What happened within your first few days here at your workplace? Who introduced you to everything and how did it happen?
- Who do you meet at work?
- How many colleagues do you have at work?
- What kind of interactions do you have with your colleagues?

- How well do you know your co-workers?
- How often do you meet your colleagues outside of work?
- Do you feel like you can state your ideas and opinions at the workplace?
- Can you describe the atmosphere at work?
- How much are you in contact with customers? How do you feel about these interactions?
- Outside of work, what kind of interactions and contacts do you have?
- What languages do you use at work?
- Can you tell me about your typical day at work?
- Who would you consider to be your main contact person and company currently?
- How supported do you feel in your workplace?

Closing segment

- Do you feel happy in your workplace? Why?
- If you have had a bad or a good experience at work, who would you confide in?
- What could the employing organization do to make you happier?
- Would you like to come back here? Why?

Interview questions - Employment agency recruiters

Introduction

- What is your age?
- What is your job position? What does that entail?
- What languages do you use at work?

Recruitment process

- Can you talk me through the process of recruiting migrant workers?
- Does the process of recruiting migrant workers differ from recruiting locals?
- Are there any special characteristics to recruiting and working with migrant workers?
- How are the work placements described to the migrant workers?

Perceived role

- How responsible do you feel about the recruited migrant workers?
- Do you feel more responsible with migrants than with locals?
- How much do you think about the migrant workers wellbeing?
- How do you see your role in relation to the migrants? Are you their supervisor, contact person, employer, or something else?

Interactions between the employment agency recruiters and migrant workers

- In your workday, how much are you in contact with the migrant workers?
- Do you contact the workers, or do they contact you?
- What kind of channels do you use to contact the workers?
- What kind of matters do you discuss with the workers?
- How are the migrant workers introduced to their workplaces?
- Do you see the migrant workers outside of work?

Closing segment

- How could the interactions between workers and the employment agency be improved?
- What kind of feedback do you receive from the migrant workers?
- Are you happy with the way things are organized in relation to the migrant workers coming to Finland?

APPENDIX 2: CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

CONSENT FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

I have been requested to participate in an interview for the following study: Migrant workers in Finnish agency work: Constructing workplace wellbeing through communication

The study is part of a master's thesis at the Department of Language and Communication Studies, University of Jyväskylä, Jyväskylä, Finland. The thesis is expected to be published in the spring of 2020. The goal of the master's thesis is to gain insight about the experiences migrant agency workers have with relation to interactions, contacts, interpersonal relationships and networks at work. The research tries to understand how these practices relate to job satisfaction, wellbeing and return rates to agency work.

The interview will be recorded and transcribed. The transcription will be translated if it is not already in English. The recording will be destroyed once the master's thesis is finished. The researcher is the only one working with the recordings and they will not be played to or shared with anyone. Part of the data can be visible in the form of short transcribed extracts in the published master's thesis. However, all examples will be anonymised, and any discussion of the data will be presented in a way where the identities of participants and employing organisations cannot be recognised.

I have received sufficient information about the study and the handling of personal data. The content of the study has also been described to me verbally. The statements were provided by the researcher, Liisa Loippo. I have had enough time to consider my participation in the study.

I understand that it is voluntary to participate in the study. I have the right to get more information on the study, interrupt my participation or cancel my consent at any time and without explanation during the study. Interruption of participation or cancellation of consent for the study have no negative consequences for me. **With my signature, I confirm my participation in the study and permit the matters mentioned above.**

Signature

Date

Printed name

Consent received

Signature of the consent recipient

Date

Printed name

The original signed document remains in the archive of the scientist-in-charge and a copy is given to the research subject. The consent is stored as long as the data is in a format that includes identifiers. If the material is anonymised or discarded, there is no longer need to store the consent.