



# Insights into Heterogeneity of Temporary Agency Work in Restaurants

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**Abstract:** The term temporary work is an umbrella term comprising a wide variety of atypical employment forms. This study focuses on temporary agency work in restaurants characterized by a third-party involvement in the working relationship. Data was collected through a questionnaire based on the Organizational Commitment and QPS Nordic questionnaires, both of which focus on psychological and social factors at work. Statistical examination revealed three distinct groups, each with its characteristics, types of commitment and work demands. Regular, full-time workers were compared with these three groups of temporary agency workers. Differences were found in these groups. Our findings provide new perspectives to an ongoing debate on temporary work and employee well-being at restaurants.

**Keywords:** *Temporary agency work, organizational commitment, restaurant work, employee well-being*

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## INTRODUCTION

Temporary work can be associated with a variety of different atypical employment forms. In practice, the term temporary work is an umbrella term comprising a wide selection of atypical employment forms (Imhof & Andresen, 2018). This broad definition already involves some difficulties, as it generally fails to recognize temporary workers representing a heterogeneous group with different employment-specific characteristics (Imhof & Andresen, 2018; Pirani, 2017).

In their recent review articles, Imhof and Andresen (2018) and van Rossenberg et al. (2018) proposed to focus future research in this matter on one type of temporary work at the time. Besides, more research is needed on the characteristics of temporary employment relationships and temporary workers' equal treatment. By this, the heterogeneity of temporary work would be taken into account to a fuller extent (Imhof & Andresen, 2018; van Rossenberg et al., 2018). To respond to these calls for future research, this study compares the work demands, role expectations, and control of full-time workers and temporary agency workers in restaurants. Special interest is paid on the temporary agency work characterized by a triangular employment relationship between the rented workforce, temporary work agency, and their end customer company. This research builds upon a questionnaire to Finnish temporary workers. The questionnaire was formed from the three-component model of organizational commitment by Allen and Meyer (1990) and Meyer and Allen (1997) and the general Nordic questionnaire for psychological and social factors at work (QPS Nordic) (Lindström et al., 1997). QPS Nordic has its roots in the "demand-control" model originally formed by Karasek Jr (1979).

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Temporary Work*

Temporary work only lasts for the period specified in the working contract, and nothing is agreed on the continuation of the work. Temporary work is done by outside workers who are often not accepted into the organization's inner circle (Håkansson & Isidorsson, 2012). Multiple assignments and work relationships, and weak bonds among involved organizations and workers define a temporary working arrangement (Galais & Moser, 2009). The terms "temporary work", "non-standard employment", "atypical work", and "part-time work" are used in a variety of circumstances and regarding different forms of work with varying features. The term part-time work includes worker's employment being shorter on daily working hours or only works part of the month or week. Other types of atypical work include workers with on-call contracts, often called "zero-contracts" with no defined work hours, and fixed-term employment. There are also multiple- and self-employed workers, platform workers and homeworkers (De Cuyper et al., 2008; Eurofound, 2017; Felfe, Schmook, Schyns, & Six, 2008; Imhof & Andresen, 2018; Pirani, 2017; Saluy, Prawira, & Buntaran, 2019). This diversity often makes the comparability more difficult with previous results of different types of studies (De Cuyper et al., 2008; Imhof & Andresen, 2018).

The work contract's duration and content is not the only characteristic defining the heterogeneity of temporary work. Usually, the term "temporary work" refers to outside workers that temporary work agencies mediate. The confusion in temporary work and part-time work concepts mentioned before also apply in this case, as terms commonly appear simultaneously and substituting for each other. The temporary agency work employment relationship includes three parties: the end-user company that uses the workforce, the temporary work agency that supplies the workforce and the worker who does the work. The temporary agency is the worker's employer in practice with the relevant responsibilities like paying the salary. End-user companies determine and supervise the work carried out on their premises (Imhof & Andresen, 2018).

The temporary agency work at a workplace can lead to a partition and inequality among different types of workers, the unfavourable temporary agency workers and the more fortunate permanent workers (Felfe et al., 2008; Kauhanen & Nätti, 2015). The temporary agency workers often receive lower wages that are not due to their lack of skills and know-how. On average, temporary agency jobs are usually lower than regular ones and are often supportive work (Forde & Slater, 2005). Temporary agency workers are poorly protected in several European countries. Many court rulings and laws impose that the end-user company should hire temporary agency workers as permanent workers after their continuous employment has lasted for some predetermined time. These rules and regulations do not seem to be complied with or enforced, so in practice, some workers work indefinitely and not for temporary needs through an agency (Håkansson & Isidorsson, 2012; Maroukis, 2016). Because of such obscurities relating to the employment relationship's triangular nature, the European Commission has set a directive to prevent further inequality of temporary agency workers and improve their possibilities to permanent (European Commission, 2018).

Temporary agency work is often used as a flexible buffer of workers that can be adjusted quickly to adapt to uncertain situations or demand changes. On the other hand, it is criticized for bringing instability to employment relationships by giving the agency the power at the expense of workers (Forde & Slater, 2005; Maroukis, 2016). The validity of the argument that temporary working meets a genuine demand for flexibility from workers has been questioned (Cajander & Reiman, 2020; Forde & Slater, 2005). In Britain, for example, the average portion of unwilling temporary agency workers was in 2005, 50% (Forde & Slater, 2005) and in Finland even higher figures were identified in a small-scale, regional study in Finland (Cajander & Reiman, 2020). Temporary agency workers usually think of themselves as the end-user company employees, so unwillingness to be a temporary agency worker is expected (Galais & Moser, 2009). As can be concluded from the literature above, temporary agency workers are often treated as a homogenous group, even though they represent various statuses and roles. Therefore, we propose as our first hypothesis that:

**H1:** *Temporary agency workers at restaurants form a heterogeneous group.*

### *Organizational Commitment*

Another concept addressed in this study is commitment, specifically organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is defined as the bond employees feel toward their organization and desire to maintain its membership. Employees committed to their organization fit in, understand the organization's goals and are willing to exert con-

siderable efforts on its behalf (Felfe et al., 2008; Meyer & Allen, 1997). The organization's mutual commitment and the worker and good working conditions and workplace culture influence workers' job satisfaction, motivation, turnover, and behaviour. This, in turn, provides a competitive advantage to the company improved productivity, better employee attraction as well as manifest through better service quality and customer loyalty and satisfaction (Albao, 2018; Cajander & Reiman, 2019; Felfe et al., 2008; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer & Maltin, 2010; Warrick, 2017).

Temporary agency workers' commitment issues are the concern of the workforce's end-user company because it pays the costs of worker turnover and its effects on productivity, sustainability, and impaired customer service (Felfe et al., 2008; Waldman, Carter, & Hom, 2015). If mutual commitment remains weak, temporary agency workers' contribution to the long-term development of an organization may remain scarce and consequently imperil organizational effectiveness (Waldman et al., 2015). If workers needs are not met, the worker might leave. Outgoing workers take much tacit knowledge about a company with them. It is time-consuming to teach or transfer that knowledge to a new worker, so knowledge retention and mentoring systems are important (Felfe et al., 2008; King & Tang, 2020).

Allen and Meyer (1990) divide organizational commitment into three types: affective, continuance, and normative. Features of affective commitment are that the worker is emotionally attached to the organization, identifies with it, feels kinship with it, and enjoys being a part of the organization. The worker thinks that the organization has a strong value for its own sake, not just its purely economic, transactional value (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Continuance commitment is manifested when there is an advantage, for example, salary, associated with constant membership with the organization, and some kind of disadvantage associated with leaving, like losing the salary. Normatively committed persons believe that staying as a member of the organization is the right and moral thing. They feel internal, compelling pressure and responsibility to act in the way that is expected according to the organization's norms (Ackfeldt & Malhotra, 2013; Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997).

The relationship between organizational commitment and specific workplace behaviour of the worker depends on the career stage. Neither continuance commitment nor normative commitment appears in the same way immediately after entering into a new organization or just before exiting it. In cases which workers are expected to do their work, adjust to organizational change, or overcome difficulties, commitment to the organization and psychological contract is relevant as a violation of the contract will result in a shift to a more transactional, economic one (McDonald & Makin, 2000; Solinger, Van Olffen, & Roe, 2008). Based on the literature above, we propose a hypothesis that:

**H2:** *Temporary agency workers commitment varies based on their role.*

### ***Work Demands, Role Expectations, and Control at Work***

In addition to organizational commitment, other theoretical frameworks used in this study include work demands, role expectations, and control at work. These refer to work characteristics that require the worker to make continual physical, psychological, cognitive, social, organizational, and emotional efforts (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). In terms of practice requirements, work demands have to do with working fast and hard, having too much to do, not having enough time, and having conflicting demands; in other words, being overworked (Lindström et al., 1997). The strain experienced by an employee is expected to be high when work demands are high, and control over one's work is low. This much-used model of these dimensions is called the "demand control" model (Karasek Jr, 1979). Work-related stress can be a problem in customer-oriented fields, like restaurants and hotels, because workers often experience contradictory demands from the company, managers, and customers (Oneill & Davis, 2011).

Understanding one's role within a work organization is very important, as it allows the worker to bring the tacit knowledge and other organizational resources into play. Roles and tacit knowledge grow and develop in cooperation and constant feedback with other members of the organization; these can be valuable tools for strengthening an organization's operational efficiency and sustainability (Campbell, 2016). If the roles are not understood, and a worker cannot act according to expectations, it can confuse. This leads to situations involving role ambiguity, role overload, and role conflict. These are inevitable in service jobs due to workers' close contact with customers and managers (Ackfeldt & Malhotra, 2013).

Role ambiguity is the worker's inability to properly evaluate different behaviour types concerning the goals, expectations, job-related information, performance and after a prolonged period, even the content and relevance of their jobs (Campbell, 2016; Salmon, 2013). Workers whose roles are unclear may be hesitant to act, and thus they are likely to feel incapable of functioning in the organization in a useful and productive way (Bakar & Salleh, 2015; Campbell, 2016; Salmon, 2013).

Role overload occurs when workers face higher demands, responsibilities, and pressures to quickly complete their tasks beyond their abilities to do so (Campbell, 2016). In this way, role overload is quite closely associated with work-related exhaustion. Role conflict is a situation that occurs when a worker must simultaneously deal with many conflicting roles. This can lead to several unfortunate consequences such as weak job satisfaction, commitment, and performance, as well as a willingness to leave (Bakar & Salleh, 2015). Organizations need a clear structure to lessen workers' role problems on the job.

Control at work is control over various aspects of work, including location, scheduling, and tasks. Workers need to feel they can control situations and their environment at the workplace. In the centre of control is freedom of choice; using that freedom, workers tend to avoid bad outcomes. Control at work is an important factor in workers' perceptions of stressors, regardless of the actual level of those stressors. Low perceived control at work is associated with various strains: anxiety, frustration, and physical symptoms such as headaches and upset stomachs (Spector, 2002). In addition to controlling their work, each worker needs to control themselves to get the work done. Self-control problems mean that workers often do not work as hard as possible and end up slacking (Kaur, Kremer, & Mullainathan, 2015).

Work-related exhaustion begins when a worker's resources are insufficient concerning the work's demands or when the worker's expectations of the work environment and its opportunities are not met. Thus, it creates an imbalance between the worker and the work environment. Due to time, prolonged work-related stressors affect workers' well-being and lead to exhaustion, negative emotions, fatigue, tension, and other mental health symptoms. These also negatively influence workers' commitment and service quality (Ackfeldt & Malhotra, 2013; Bakar & Salleh, 2015; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Varca, 1999). The relationship between job demands and stress factors has been studied extensively, and the results support the view that work exhaustion is a response to overwork and work-related stressors, but there are few published studies in which scholars have examined the actual working performance and work stress (Maslach et al., 2001; Varca, 1999). To study the job requirements and their effects on the level of commitment in the restaurant context, H3 and 4 are proposed:

**H3:** *Job requirements vary among restaurant workers.*

**H4:** *Job requirements affect the level of commitment among restaurant workers.*

As concluded in the literature above, temporary agency workers often consider themselves employees of the particular work they are working, not the temporary work agency that has listed them. Despite the discussion of the matter in the literature, there is little consideration if there are any differences in the relationship between the different kind of temporary restaurant workers and the temporary agency. Therefore, H5 is proposed:

**H5:** *Temporary agency workers of a different group at restaurants have diverse relations to their temporary agencies.*

## METHODOLOGY

An online questionnaire survey was designed to meet the objective of this study. A link to the questionnaire, open to all restaurant workers in Finland, was published on the Facebook page of a professional magazine of restaurant industry Shaker. The link was also sent as an email by PAM, the major labor trade union for private service industries in Finland, to restaurant workers who had a valid temporary agency contract and who had given permission to have an email sent to them. Eventually, the email link to the questionnaire was sent to 138 potential respondents. The aim was to get answers from both temporary agency workers and regular full-time workers. It was difficult to estimate the number of responses because temporary agency workers in restaurants and the hospitality industry are very passive to respond; there is no defined respondents' pool. The total number of temporary agency workers in restaurants is impossible to estimate promptly.

### *Questionnaire Survey*

The questionnaire was based on the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) and General questionnaire for psychological and social factors at work (QPS Nordic) questionnaires (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Lindström et al., 1997; Lindström, 1997). The QPS Nordic is well tested and has been used by many organizations. The Cronbach's Alpha value of work demands is .64; control of work is .81; and for the role, expectations is .71 (Lindström et al., 1997). The OCQ is also well-documented and considered reliable. Kanning and Hill (2013) give Cronbach's Alpha values between .82 and .93, and OCQ's original developers give values to affective, continuance, and normative commitment .85, .79, and .73, respectively. However, there is some variation concerning the normative commitment, as it gets lower



reliability more often than the other two. Values as low as .52 have been reported (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Randall, Fedor, & Longenecker, 1990).

The questionnaire had 54 questions. The first three questions were respondents' personal information: age, gender, and place of residence. The next nine were related to respondents' forms of work: working hours/week, type of primary workplace, the form of employment, reasons for working temporarily, and other specifics. After that were 20 questions in which QPS Nordic was applied to psychological and social factors at work (referred to as the common name, job requirements, including work demands, role expectations, and control at work). After the QPS Nordic section were 22 questions from the OCQ to map the commitment of workers.

The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small sample of local temporary agency workers in Northern Finland. The pilot ( $N = 53$ ) yielded Cronbach's Alpha values of .583 (affective), .629 (continuance), and .773 (normative) for reliability of commitment types.

### **Hypothesis Tests**

For testing H1 and 2, the respondents' forms of work and OCQ parts were used. The values given for each question in the OCQ were between 1 and 5, with 1 indicating the least amount of commitment and five the most. Answer options 1-2 and 4-5 were combined, so 3 represented neutrality, with deviation indicating low or high commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Kanning & Hill, 2013; Lindström, 1997; Lindström et al., 1997).

Values given for each question in the QPS Nordic part were between 1 and 5. A higher value in work demands means higher requirements for working fast and hard, having too much to do, not having enough time, and having conflicting demands (high = bad). Understanding one's role within a work organization was brought forth by a low score in role expectations, while a high value indicated the possibility of role ambiguity, role overload, and role conflict (high = bad). A higher value in control at work was interpreted to mean that workers have control over some aspects of their work situations, including location, environment, scheduling, and how tasks are done; a low value indicated lack of control (high = good). In these cases, mean scores were useful for bringing forth the differences of commitment among worker groups. For testing H3 and 4 the grouping arising from H1 and the QPS Nordic parts were used, and correlation analysis was used to examine the relations of worker groups' commitments and job requirements. For testing H5 the grouping arising from H1 was used in combination with the questions: "Is the workplace more important than the temporary work agency?" and "Do you care which temporary agency's lists you are on?".

## **RESULTS**

### **Sample Description**

127 workers responded, 79 (62%) were female and 48 were male (37%). Their ages were grouped in ranges which included less than 20 years (4 [3%]); 21 to 30 years (50 [39%]); 31 to 40 years (42 [33%]); 41 to 50 years (21 [17%]); 51 to 60 years (6 [5%]); and older than 61 years (4 [3%]). Weekly working hours were less than 10 hours (14 [11%]), 11 to 20 hours (25 [20%]), 21 to 30 hours (29 [23%]), 31 to 40 hours (40 [32%]), and more than 40 hours (18 [14%]). One person did not answer this question. Their reported workplaces were bars (41 [32%]), outside service area: bouncer or porter (6 [5%]), food service restaurants (63 [50%]), cafeterias (3 [2%]), fast food restaurants (4 [3%]), and accommodations (10 [8%]). The respondents' forms of working were reported as regular, full-time work (22 [18%]), temporary agency work (67 [53%]), regular temporary agency work (24 [19%]), and part-time and other atypical work (13 [10%]). One respondent did not answer this question. Variables in the sample followed a normal distribution (confidence levels 95%).

### **Temporary Agency Workers at Restaurants**

The H1 was proposed to identify whether restaurant workers form a heterogeneous group. Based on the questionnaire, four groups were identified. Regular, full-time employees work directly for the restaurant and have an employment contract that is valid indefinitely. Temporary agency workers work in a triangular work relationship that involves the end-user company and the temporary agency. They work only temporarily and have a fixed-term contract arrangement. Regular temporary agency workers enjoy the benefits and suffer drawbacks of regular, full-time workers and temporary agency workers. They work indefinitely alongside full-time workers at the end-user company, but their salary payer is the temporary work agency. Of all temporary agency workers, one-third fall into this group in this study. Other atypical workers are those who do not belong into either category and are mainly self-employed gig workers.

### Temporary Agency Workers Commitment to Work

For H2, mean scores of different commitment types were examined for each worker group (Table 1).

Table 1 RELIABILITY AND MEAN SCORES OF COMMITMENT TYPES

Worker Group	Affective	Cronbach's Alpha	Continuance	Cronbach's Alpha	Normative	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean of all Types of Commitment
	Mean Score		Mean Score		Mean Score		
	Variance		Variance		Variance		
Normal full-time workers	3.116 0.166	.798	3.439 0.103	.706	3.083 0.082	.300	3.212
Temporary agency workers	2.714 0.043	.826	3.092 0.022	.730	2.562 0.062	.625	2.789
Regular temporary agency workers	2.929 0.163	.670	3.223 0.104	.788	2.731 0.082	.462	2.961
Other Atypical workers	2.694 0.146	.829	2.696 0.27	.878	3.037 0.107	.191	2.809

Each form of working examined commitment questions, so each worker group had their Alpha values for each commitment. Values greater than .700 were considered reliable. For the most part, concerning affective and continuance commitment, the reliability was acceptable, except for one value. The value for normative commitment could not be considered reliable.

A high effective commitment score indicated the worker had an emotional attachment to the organization and that the worker identified with it, felt a kinship with it, and enjoyed being a member of the organization. A low score indicated that a worker did not like their workplace. A high continuance commitment score meant that a worker wanted to continue working in their workplace and had no intention of leaving. A low score indicated the opposite. A worker reporting high normative commitment was understood to think that staying as a member of the organization was the right thing to do and wanted to act in the manner expected, according to the organization's goals and interests. A low score meant that a worker felt less of an obligation to their workplace.

Viewing the affective commitment levels (Table 1), the highest score was among the regular full-time workers ( $M = 3.116$ ); the next highest was among the regular temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.929$ ), followed by temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.714$ ). The lowest was among the other atypical workers ( $M = 2.694$ ).

The levels of continuance commitment were the most varied. The mean score was the highest among the regular full-time workers ( $M = 3.439$ ); the next highest was for the regular temporary agency workers ( $M = 3.223$ ), which was followed by the temporary agency workers ( $M = 3.092$ ). The lowest was for the other atypical workers ( $M = 2.696$ ).

The normative commitment means the score was highest among the normal full-time workers ( $M = 3.083$ ). The next highest was among the other atypical workers ( $M = 3.037$ ), then regular temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.731$ ). The lowest was among the temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.562$ ).

The mean score of all types of commitment tells worker groups' overall commitment level concerning their workplace. The mean score was the highest among the regular full-time workers ( $M = 3.212$ ); the next highest was among the regular temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.961$ ), followed by other atypical workers ( $M = 2.809$ ). The lowest was among the temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.789$ ).

### Job Requirements Among Restaurant Workers

The H3 sought to examine whether the job requirements differ between restaurant workers' groups (Table 2).

Table 2 RELIABILITY AND MEAN SCORES OF JOB REQUIREMENTS

Worker Group	Work Demands	Cronbach's	Role Expectations	Cronbach's	Control at Work	Cronbach's
	Mean Score	Alpha	Mean Score	Alpha	Mean Score	Alpha
	Variance		Variance		Variance	
Normal full-time workers	3.280 .195	.847	2.381 .324	.849	3.858 .177	.869
Temporary agency workers	3.358 .184	.632	2.856 .524	.706	2.690 .244	.868
Regular temporary agency workers	3.326 .077	.820	2.860 .553	.787	2.600 .267	.882
Other atypical workers	3.178 .072	.943	2.650 .819	.882	2.859 .355	.833

Each of the four restaurant worker groups had its Alpha values for each job requirement (Table 2). The .700 limit was considered reliable. For the most parts, reliability was acceptable except for one (the temporary agency workers' work demands).

Concerning the levels of work demands (Table 2), the differences were minor, with the highest being among the temporary agency workers ( $M = 3.358$ ), the next highest among the regular temporary agency workers ( $M = 3.326$ ), followed by regular full-time workers ( $M = 3.280$ ). The lowest was among the other atypical workers ( $M = 3.178$ ). All were above neutral value 3, so every working group reporting experiencing slight levels of overwork and work-related stressors.

The levels of role expectations varied a bit more. The mean score was highest among the temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.856$ ), and the regular temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.860$ ) had almost the same score. Next was the other atypical workers ( $M = 2.650$ ), while the lowest was among the regular full-time workers ( $M = 2.381$ ). All were below the value of 3, indicating their roles were understood and that workers could act in accordance with their job requirements. Thus, they did not experience role ambiguity, role overload, or role conflict to a significant extent. The levels of control at work varied the most. The mean score was the highest among the regular full-time workers ( $M = 3.858$ ). The next was for the other atypical workers ( $M = 2.859$ ). Temporary agency workers ( $M = 2.690$ ) and regular temporary agency

workers ( $M = 2.600$ ) had almost the same score. Regular full-time workers reported feeling the ablest to control situations and environments in the workplace. Others indicated they did not feel they were able to do so.

## JOB REQUIREMENTS AND THE LEVEL OF COMMITMENT

After the mean scores of each group's job requirements were examined, a correlation matrix was generated for examining H4 (Table 3).

Table 3 *CORRELATIONS OF COMMITMENTS AND JOB REQUIREMENTS*

Correlations		Regular Full-time Workers			Temporary Agency Workers			Regular Temporary Agency Workers			Other Atypical Workers		
		Work Demands	Role Expectations	Control At Work	Work Demands	Role Expectations	Control At Work	Work Demands	Role Expectations	Control At Work	Work Demands	Role Expectations	Control At Work
Affective Commitment	Pearson Correlation	-.229	.002	.684	-.215	.118	.688	-.126	.074	.648	.367	.772	.898
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.306	.992	.000	.086	.344	.000	.558	.730	.001	.218	.003	.000
	N	22	22	22	65	66	66	24	24	24	13	12	13
Continuance Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.433*	.361	-.052	.060	.087	.043	.240	.111	-.192	-.099	.747	.623
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	.099	.817	.630	.487	.731	.259	.605	.369	.761	.005	.030
	N	22	22	22	66	66	66	24	24	24	13	12	12
Normative Commitment	Pearson Correlation	-.097	.004	.571	.085	.453	.429	.189	.247	.509	.268	.631	.742
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.659	.987	.005	.497	.000	.000	.357	.244	.011	.377	.028	.004
	N	22	22	22	66	66	66	24	24	24	13	12	13

Control at work was the most significant influencer of commitments (Table 3), and it correlated positively with affective commitment, with a significance level of 0.01 and a normative commitment with a significance level of 0.05 among regular full-time workers. Similarly, control at work correlated with affective commitment and normative commitment; both had a significance level of 0.01 among temporary agency workers. Control at work correlated positively with affective commitment and normative commitment with significance levels of 0.01 and 0.05, respectively, among regular temporary agency workers. Control at work also correlated positively with all commitments (affective, continuance, and normative) with significance levels of 0.01, 0.05, and 0.01, respectively, among other atypical workers.

The second closest correlation was with role expectations (Table 3), which correlated positively with normative commitment among temporary agency workers at a significance level of 0.01. Role expectations were the most prominent correlation among other atypical workers, correlating positively with all three commitments at significance levels of 0.01, 0.01, and 0.05. Lastly, work demands had only one correlation. This item was positively correlated with continuance commitment among regular full-time workers, with a significance level of 0.05.

### *Temporary Agency Workers Relations to Their Temporary Agencies*

H5 was used to test whether temporary agency workers of a different group at restaurants have diverse relations to their temporary agencies. Most (49 of total 67 [73%]) temporary agency workers thought that the workplace they currently work at is more important than the temporary work agency that has listed them. Concerning the temporary agency workers this was the highest, 83% (20 out of 24) whilst other atypical workers value their workplace (62%; 8 out of 13) more than the temporary agency. Regarding workers who cared which temporary agency's lists were on, only 46% (25 out of 67) of temporary agency workers cared. Regular temporary agency workers had a bit lower caring, 37% (11 out of 24), and 45% (6 out of 13) other atypical workers cared. The majority of any kind of temporary agency and other atypical workers indicated they did not care which particular agency had them listed.

## DISCUSSION

This study's objective and research interest were to compare the work demands, role expectations, and control of full-time workers and temporary agency workers with both groups' work commitments. The differences and similarities between different worker groups were examined and found. Insight from this study can help planning, targeting, and applying measures to increase workers' levels of commitment, productivity, and well-being at work.

As brought out by Imhof and Andresen (2018) and Escortell, Baquero, and Delgado (2020), temporary agency work keeps becoming more common as a mean to outsource staffing challenges, costs, and responsibility elsewhere. The dual perspective on well-being at work and workers' productivity should also be considered for temporary agency workers when taking into account the different groups and their different relations to job requirements and commitment. These help in decision making and direction of the use and magnitude of temporary agency work.

Commitment issues and neglecting one's responsibilities have been and will be difficult, ever-present, complex problem and management challenge for which easy solutions may not be unambiguously found. In the light of psychological contract research, it was suggested by McDonald and Makin (2000) that violation of the contract will



end up to a more transactional, economic one. If either party feels that the other is not fulfilling its obligations, it will lead to weaker motivation to reciprocate on articles within the contract with a sense of moral obligation, which refers to normative commitment.

This study's findings indicate differences among examined groups of temporary agency workers supporting our H1 and 2. Worker groups that are nearest the status of holding a regular, full-time job are the most committed. Salary and security gained from continuing the working relationship are the major reasons for committing to work. Temporary agency workers of either kind are not completely contented with their form of working. Our results parallel with Hünefeld, Gerstenberg, and Hüffmeier (2020), which reveal less job satisfaction of temporary agency workers than permanent employees, but the relation was not consistent. Variances can explain this inconsistent relation inside the temporary agency workers that our study takes into account. As an interpretation following these findings, the best ways to increase workers' affective and normative levels of commitment would be to regularize their work relationship, make their roles clearer and sensible, and increase their control over their work.

Concerning our H3 and 4 on the levels of commitment and job requirements among different worker groups, we highlight similarities between worker groups and significant differences. Job requirements affect levels of every commitment type differently among different worker groups. Escortell et al. (2020) found the combination of high individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence to be sufficient to increase employee job satisfaction, but temporary agency workers need all dimensions to have high job satisfaction. Their terminology and point of view were a little different than ours, but the similarity of results exist. As an interpretation of these findings, we point out that increasing commitment by influencing job requirements is targeted, especially for each group to get the greatest impact. H3 and 4 were thus supported in this study.

As earlier research has concluded, temporary agency workers usually think of themselves as the end-user company employees, not as employees of the temporary agency (Galais & Moser, 2009). Workers primarily choose their workplace, not the agency, and are prone to change it if necessary. In this study, we found out that there are differences in relations with the actual workplaces and temporary agency in different worker groups, supporting our fifth hypothesis. Our findings indicated the less a worker is dealing with a temporary agency; the less the worker feels commitment toward the agency. This can be seen from our study's differences concerning regular temporary agency employees (who work mostly at the same workplace) and temporary agency workers (who switch workplaces more often and deal more frequently with their agency). Paralleling our findings, Burroni and Pedaci (2014) and Chambel and Sobral (2019) propose that longer temporary agency work is associated with lower voluntary for temporary employment, and very short temporary agency contracts work were seen as only transitory experienced by workers. No commitment is to be expected in one way or the other. Members of every temporary agency worker group value their work more than an agency that has listed them. As an interpretation of these findings, more influence and importance in the workers' eyes would be achieved when the temporary agencies take better account workers' attitudes and well-being and pay more attention to the relations with the workers.

## LIMITATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The following considerations should be acknowledged as limitations of this study.

Firstly, this study was conducted in one country, i.e., Finland. Thus, careful consideration should be made when generalizing the results. Based on incomplete sets of information, some 5% of the hospitality industry workers (including restaurants) are temporary workers at some level, while the hospitality industry employed 88,300 workers in Finland in 2018 (? , ?).

Secondly, the weak reliability of normative commitment was unexpected, as the pilot study yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of .773. One major factor in the fluctuation of attitudes and uncertainty was supposedly the COVID-19 pandemic, as restaurants have been associated with suffering from a greater number of economic fluctuations due to the circumstances compared to other industries (Lee-Ross, 1995). The data collection happened partially simultaneously during the advancing of the pandemic. In the data, the last entries reflected the fear of job loss and uncertainties about the future. This effect was most clearly present in normative commitment.

As Solinger et al. (2008) stated, neither continuance commitment nor normative commitment makes sense immediately after entry into a new organization or just before exiting it. In this case, workers might have feared exiting. Other reasons may be the different kinds of work; this became apparent after dividing workers by workplace type. Bar, night club, and porter duties (normative commitment alpha .693) are mainly done at night, while food service restaurant, fast

food, cafe, and accommodation tasks (normative commitment alpha .066) are done during the day. Also, bar, night club, and porter work are more fast-paced, and there are more customers. Workers there are also in closer proximity with customers, and interactions with them are more intense. As an extra result, but not conclusive one for this study, it seems that it is not suitable to bundle up all forms of restaurant and hospitality work, and some partition is necessary. This division would be good to be taken into account.

Thirdly, the sample size could have been larger, but the sample was enough to get results. A study concerning restaurant temporary agency work in Finland responses is sufficient as the focus is on restaurants, not the whole hospitality industry. For example, European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) collected responses of 28,042 employees from 30 European countries and got only 380 temporary agency workers to respond, and that was all industries combined (Hakanen, Ropponen, De Witte, & Schaufeli, 2019).

## CONCLUSION

Regular full-time workers feel they can control their work and how it is performed. This, in turn, affects their attitude about their work and how seriously they take their responsibilities. It seems that reasonable work demands affect the expectations of their continuing work relationship. So, they invest in their work and return expect it to continue.

Based on our study, temporary agency workers commit and feel responsible for their work more when controlling their working conditions. When the roles are mutually understood and they are reasonable, this positively affects normative commitment. Regular temporary agency workers have qualities of both regular full-time workers and temporary agency workers. They have more time to form an effective relationship with the workplace, as they are not forced to change where they work constantly. Regular temporary agency workers also like and feel responsible for their work more when controlling their working conditions. Other atypical workers seem to be less committed to a workplace and do not have feelings of belonging. They also do not expect their work relationship to continue indefinitely. They feel some responsibility to a workplace while working there. The most important factors for their commitment are, in all cases, reasonable and clear expectations about their role, their place at work, and their ability to control their work.

If managers desire to increase worker commitment, well-being, productivity, sustainability, and lower turnover, they must make temporary workers regular workers if there is a real continuing need for labor. As managers know their restaurant's features, they can use suitable measures to increase workers' commitment by affecting the appropriate job requirement for the targeted worker group. These measures depend on the specific circumstances in every restaurant and rely on the manager's expertise. One way to do it would be to reduce worker mobility from one task to another and give workers more control over their work. As workers are the best experts about their job, it would be beneficial to include workers in decision-making about the company concerning their work. For some changes, restaurant owners and temporary agencies might be reluctant, so changing the working conditions might require government guidance and ruling.

For further study, regular temporary agency work phenomena would be recommended and impact of temporary agency workers and their turnover on the end-user companies' levels of productivity, well-being at work, worker commitment, and sustainability. Based on our findings and the existing knowledge on the links between well-being at work and productivity, it would be possible to consider and examine how the change to a more responsible and sustainable way of temporary agency work and how it would be possible.

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