

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIP: OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND?

INFLUENCE OF DISTANCE WORKING ON EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS
OF THE EMPLOYEE-ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP



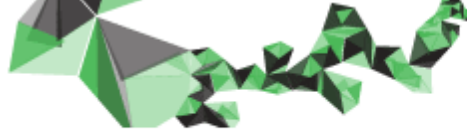
MASTERTHESIS

ZorgAccent

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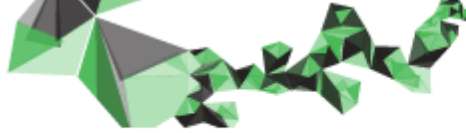
SUMMARY

Recent work environment is undergoing a lot of changes, which pressurizes the employee-organization relationship. As a consequence, organizations on the one hand increasingly want to work on higher levels of this relationship, realizing its value due to desired outcomes. On the other hand, employees' view on the employee-organization relationship and corresponding needs might have changed due to changed expectations on the psychological contract, which bases the terms and conditions of this relationship. Existing literature on the employee-organization relationship however does not incorporate the implications of this development from an employee perspective. One of the crucial aspects in changing organizational forms concerns distance working; instead of working at a centralized location of an organization, employees increasingly work at distance due to technical developments and changing needs in the way people want to work.

This research therefore explored the influence of distance working on employees' perceptions of the employee-organization relationship. Two sub questions were leading: 1) the matter by which the organization gets personified by employees and possible differences among distance workers and non-distance workers in this regard; and 2) the extent to which employees are in need of an expansion of the employee-organization relationship and possible differences among distance workers and non-distance workers in this regard.

A qualitative study has been executed within a large health-care organization. In-depth interviews have been conducted with employees working intramural (within a care home, at a centralized location) and employees working extramural (providing home care within self-managing work teams, at distance), using both direct questions and projective techniques. The results seems to show that there is a significant difference in the extent to which non-distance and distance workers perceive the organization to have a human face. Non-distance workers seem to include organizational members in their perception of the employee-organization relationship and the organization itself eventually is embodied by higher management. Distance workers, however, seem to have a far more abstract image of the organization. They perceive their relationship with the organization far less personal, not including any organizational members. Besides their perceptions on the employee-organization relationship and the parties involved, distance and non-distance workers seem to have entirely different needs with regard to this relationship. According to distance workers, the organization should take merely the role of a facilitator, limiting the relationship to a more transactional level. In contrast, distance workers seem to want the organization to function as an interlocutor, establishing a mutual relationship which merely focuses on relational aspects.

The results provide an understanding of the role particular organizational members play in the employee-organization relationship and the matter to which this relationship then differs from other employment relationships. Organizations are further able to adapt their policies concerning the intercourse with organizational members more specifically to the needs of diverse groups of employees. However, some side notes have to be made with regard to the generalization of the results due to the specific context and sample on which the conclusions of the research are based.



SAMENVATTING

Het huidige werkklimaat ondergaat vele veranderingen die druk uitvoeren op de relatie tussen werkgever en werknemer. Als gevolg daarvan besteden organisaties steeds meer aandacht aan het versterken van deze relatie doordat ze de waarde ervan realiseren gezien de vele gewenste uitkomsten. Aan de andere kant zou de kijk van de werknemer op de relatie en de behoeftes hierin veranderd kunnen zijn; de verwachtingen over het psychologische contract, dat de voorwaarden voor de relatie waarborgt, zouden namelijk ook veranderd kunnen zijn. De bestaande literatuur over de relatie tussen werkgever en werknemer houdt echter geen rekening met de implicaties van deze ontwikkeling op het perspectief van de werknemer.

Eén van de cruciale aspecten in de veranderende werkvormen heeft betrekking op afstandswerken; in plaats van op een gecentraliseerde locatie van een organisatie, verrichten werknemers hun werkzaamheden steeds meer op afstand als gevolg van technologische ontwikkelingen en veranderende behoeftes in de manier waarop mensen willen werken. Dit onderzoek richtte zich dan ook op de invloed van afstandswerken op de percepties van werknemers over de relatie tussen werkgever en werknemer. Twee vragen waren hierbij leidend: 1) de mate waarin de organisatie gepersonifieerd wordt door werknemers en mogelijke verschillen hierin tussen afstandswerkers en niet-afstandswerkers, en 2) de mate waarin werknemers behoefte hebben aan het versterken van de relatie en mogelijke verschillen hierin tussen afstandswerkers en niet-afstandswerkers.

Een kwalitatieve studie is uitgevoerd binnen een grote gezondheidsinstelling. Diepte-interviews zijn gehouden met werknemers die intramuraal (binnen een verzorging- of verpleeghuis, op een gecentraliseerde locatie) en extramuraal (het leveren van thuiszorg binnen zelfsturende teams, op afstand) werken. Er is hierbij gebruik gemaakt van zowel directe vragen als projectieve technieken. De resultaten lijken aan te tonen dat er een significant verschil bestaat in de mate waarin de organisatie een menselijk gezicht heeft in de perceptie van afstandswerkers en niet-afstandswerkers. Niet-afstandswerkers lijken andere organisatieleden te betrekken in hun perceptie van de relatie tussen werkgever en werknemer en de organisatie zelf wordt uiteindelijk belichaamd door hoger management. Afstandswerkers lijken daarentegen een veel abstracter beeld te hebben van de organisatie. Hun perceptie van de relatie is veel minder persoonlijk; er worden geen andere organisatieleden in betrokken. Naast hun percepties van de relatie tussen werkgever en werknemer en de partijen die hierbij betrokken zijn, lijken afstandswerkers en niet-afstandswerkers totaal verschillende behoeftes te hebben aangaande deze relatie. Volgens afstandswerkers zou de organisatie met name de rol van faciliteerder moeten aannemen, waarbij de relatie beperkt wordt tot een transactioneel niveau. Afstandswerkers daarentegen lijken de organisatie meer te willen laten functioneren als een gesprekspartner, waarbij een wederzijdse relatie gevestigd wordt die merendeels focust op relationele aspecten.

De resultaten zorgen met name voor inzicht in de rol die bepaalde organisatieleden spelen in de relatie tussen werkgever en werknemer en de mate waarin deze relatie dan verschilt van andere werkrelaties. Organisaties zijn verder in staat om hun interne communicatiebeleid meer specifiek af te stemmen op de behoeftes van diverse groepen medewerkers. Er zijn echter enkele kanttekeningen te plaatsen met betrekking tot de generalisatie van de resultaten door de specifieke context en steekproef waarop de conclusies van het onderzoek gebaseerd zijn.

PREFACE

"When the organization does its job well up there and I do the same here, then it's complete".
Quote from a participant working extramurally.

I am proud to represent to you my master thesis on the influence of distance working on employees' perceptions of the employee-organization relationship. I started the research with many enthusiasm regarding the subject of my study and the contribution I hoped to deliver. My enthusiasm however increased even more when I experienced the joy of talking to the employees participating to my research and the gratification some expressed by simply interviewing them. The result therefore not only has its effect on the existing literature on the employee-organization relationship and future policies of the organization where the results have been derived from, but also impacted the employees directly by involving them. It truly surprised me how well some participants could illustrate their thoughts discussed in an entire interview by a single, but striking quote or drawing.

With this master thesis I am accomplishing the last part of my college life for now, after having studied communication studies for four years at both theoretical and more practical levels. This thesis will proof my learning at University of Twente, finishing up the master 'Communication Studies' at the faculty of Behavioral Sciences. Preliminary to this research report, several moments of feedback have been inserted, following each stage of the research.

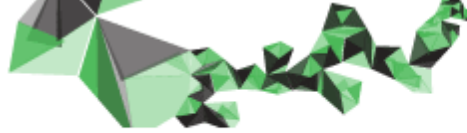
I would like to thank Menno de Jong and Suzanne Janssen from University of Twente for their guidance and recurring feedback. Further, I would like to thank ZorgAccent, Irma Harmelink in particular, for the opportunity to fulfill my research within this organization and the freedom I have been given to execute it from my own point of view. I would especially like to thank the employees who volunteered as participants for my research and the satisfaction it gave me to experience their willingness and enthusiasm. At last, I would like to thank my friends and family who supported me and not only heard my frustrations every once and a while, but also sympathized when needed.

Mariëlle Valk

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1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the research topic, employees' perceptions on the employee-organization relationship (EOR), is introduced. Interesting gaps in the literature on the EOR are pointed out, discussing new developments concerning shifts in recent work environment and the influence this might have on employees' perceptions of the EOR. Next, the research goal is formulated, introducing the research question and sub questions. At last, the structure of this research report is pointed out.

1.1 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EMPLOYEE-ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP

New ways of working, in Holland collectively referred to as 'Het Nieuwe Werken' (HNW), have recently received much media attention. It seems that Dutch employees born after 1980, the so-called 'millennials', find balance between work and private life more important than salary (PwC, 2011). Being able to flex work then has been pointed out as one of the aspects which make organizations more attractive. According to the consultancy, organizations face the challenge to bind and intrigue this new generation of employees. Self labour scheduling, part of HNW and many collective labour agreements, steady becomes more generally accepted in Holland, which offers opportunities to control work times to employees in more place restricted functions such as care takers as well (Abvakabo FNV, 2012). For long, it was up to the employer whether or not new ways of working is possible, incorporating flex working opportunities as a privilege in secondary working conditions (V.A. de Pous, Amsterdam, 2011). Although the current legal and regulatory framework does not hinder new ways of working, a few political parties, CDA and GroenLinks, recently proposed a bill which states that employees have the right for flexible working hours, starting in 2013 (Abvakabo FNV, 2012). This forces organizations to actively work on policies that enhance flex working, which are hardly present so far (Schouten & Nelissen Groep, n.d.).

These new ways of working all refer to a shift from working at a centralized location of the organization from 9 to 5 to working independently from place and time (Hugo Sinzheimer Instituut UvA, 2011). Traditional work forms are being adapted to ones that stimulate an increased work-life balance, the perceived balance between work and the rest of live (Guest, 2002). One of the crucial aspects of the new ways of working has to do with employees no longer having to work on a centralized location of the organization but at distance, at least for a considerable amount of their work time. Technological developments in internet and mobile communication devices facilitate this shift and make sure that employees are no longer tight to their offices and desks (Hennevelt, 2009). As a consequence, employees are less and less physically present and it is no longer self-evident for an employee to be confronted with the physical organization or even to meet or interact with other organizational members, such as colleagues, supervisors or management.

Besides different perspectives on the way people want to work from an employee perspective, changes in recent work environment occur due to organizational changes as well. Organizations are moving more than ever; major mergers and radical reorganizations are no longer exceptional. As soon as one reorganization has been made public, the next one is already devised. Oftentimes, such redesign efforts do not incorporate the implications for the EOR, but the implications are not lost on employees (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Due to such radical changes, the EOR is under a lot of pressure; while organizations might no longer be able to offer the traditional rewards, demands are placed on especially the input of the employee in maintaining this relationship (Sharpe, 2001). As a consequence, organizations, realizing this, increasingly value the relationship with their employees and actively work on higher levels of EOR, given the desired outcomes of a high-quality EOR for organizations (e.g. Dutton & Heaphy, as cited in Ferris, Liden, Munyon, Summer, Baslik & Buckley, 2009). However, distance working might influence the EOR in a way that developing the relationship will be less naturally and should require more effort in order to develop and maintain a more high quality relationship that goes beyond the initial transaction of getting paid for doing the job. Since the literature on the EOR lacks this development so far, some researchers have already mentioned this gap and suggest further research on the implications of the changing work environment and the distance aspect on the EOR (Beard &

Edwards, 1995; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Shore, Tetrick, Taylor, Coyle-Shapiro, Liden, McLean Parks, Morrison, Porter, Robinson, Roehling, Rousseau, Schalk, Tsui, & Van Dyne, 2004; Ferris et al., 2009).

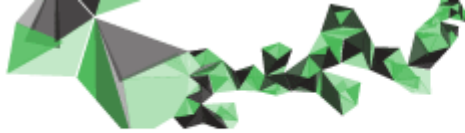
The emergence of new communication channels might be able to contribute the enhancing of the employee-organization relationship, especially with regard to distance workers given the decreased amounts of contact. Never before communication and publication possibilities have been this large scale, versatile and easy accessible; cloud computing is likely to be the most important force in the information society in the 21st century (V.A. de Pous, 2011). Web based media enable both parties, the organization and the employee, to interact and exchange at all times, at any location and therefore overcome great distances that would normally prevent relationships from being established or maintained (McKenna & Bargh, 1999). According to McKenna and Bargh, through the internet people are able to renew and maintain important, already established ties to family and friends who now are far away; this also might hold for the relationship between employee and organization. When it comes to the current practice, several organizations already come up with certain attempts by, for instance, initiating some sort of online community, encouraged by the impressive amount of time people spent on social media in their private life, and stimulate their employees to participate.

However, a thought that has not been addressed so far, employees' perceptions on the EOR also might have changed due to distance working since they are not confronted with the organization that much anymore. At first, the image distance workers have of the relationship and the parties involved, especially the organization, then might fade. Current literature on the EOR keeps being vague about 'the' organization as the opposite party involved in the EOR in general. And more specifically, it has not paid attention to the development of distance working and the consequences it might have for employees' shaping of the EOR at all so far. Insight in employees' perceptions of the organization as the opposite party involved in the relationship and the influence distance working has in this, would create a clearer vision of what this EOR looks like according to employees; what it is exactly that organizations are so willing to work on. It would provide an understanding of the role particular organizational members might play in the personification of the organization and the matter to which the EOR then differs from other employment relationships.

Second, the assumption made here is that organizational attempts in strengthening the relationship also meet employees' needs in the EOR, while their needs also might have changed due to distance working. As a consequence, the organizations' intention to work on more high-quality relationships, might be at right angles to employees' needs. It has not been said that employees, whether working at distance or on location, also respond favorable to certain attempts (Sharpe, 2001). Insight in employees' needs in the EOR then would give an understanding of the matter to which and the way employees want the organization to strengthen their relationship. It would provide practical clues on the way organizations should establish, maintain and strengthen their relationships more successfully in recent work environment, taking into account the implications of distance working on employees' perceptions and needs.

1.2 RESEARCH GOAL

Current literature can be enhanced by exploring the EOR from several perspectives. At first, the EOR can be further explored from a management perspective. Research could be conducted on the influence distance working has on organizations' policies with regard to the EOR, the terms and conditions of the relationship and organizational attempts in strengthening the relationship. Second, research could focus on the consequences of distance working for the balance between work and private life and its contribution to the society. The goal of this research however is to address the current gaps in the literature by further exploring the EOR from an employee perspective since this point of view is especially lacking in the EOR literature, while the developments described earlier might have major implications on employees. It thereby takes into account the influence of the current development of distance working on employees' perceptions and needs. The main research question then is: how does distance working influence employees' shaping of the EOR? Two major aspects are addressed more specifically, leading to



the sub questions of the research: 1) the extent to which employees personify the organization as the opposite party in the relationship and 2) employees' needs in strengthening the EOR. In both aspects, the way distance working might influence this will further be explored in order to understand the implications of this development for the nature of the EOR. This research then contributes to the understanding of the image formation around the EOR from an employee perspective by exploring employees' perceptions on the relationship and the parties involved. It further contributes to the understanding of more successful ways of strengthening the EOR by organizations by exploring employees' needs in the relationship and the extent to which distance working influences this.

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

Following this introduction, a literature review is given further clarifying the EOR by describing its nature and relation to other well-known concepts. Distance working as a key concept in developments in recent work environment is addressed, describing the implications these might have for employees' perceptions and needs in the EOR. Two major gaps in the literature are addressed more specifically, founding the main questions of the research (the extent to which employees personify the organization and are in need of an extension of the EOR, and the influence of distance working). Next, a description is given of the qualitative method used: in-depth interviews are conducted, using projective techniques besides regular questions, with two groups of employees (employees working on location and employees working at distance, within the same organization). The results involve participants' perceptions on the extent to which the organization has a human face, the amount of distance felt in the relationship, the interference of organizational members, the importance of the relationship, the role organizations should play, the terms and conditions of the relationship, the mediating role of contact and attempts made in strengthening the relationship. At last, conclusions and practical recommendations are given based on the differences found between distance and non-distance workers. Finally, the executed research is reflected by discussing the contribution of the research, recognizing its limitations leading to suggestions for further research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains the theoretical framework on which the research is based. At first the concept of the employee-organization relationship is discussed, including its nature, its relation to other concepts and the clarification of the employee-organization relationship as an overarching concept. Next, developments in recent work environment due to changing organizational forms and the consequences of this for views on employment relationships are discussed. Distance, which plays a central role in these changing organizational forms, is further described and clarified. The definition of distance, its relevance on the EOR and the challenges organization come to face because of it are addressed. At last, sub questions are formulated, based on interesting questions derived from gaps in the discussed literature on EOR in relation to the discussed new development of distance working.

2.1 THE EMPLOYEE-ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP

In the past years, much research has been conducted with regard to work relationships, but research on the Employee-Organization Relationship (EOR) increased considerably in recent years. Shore et al. (2004), who have made EOR subject to several studies, define the EOR as 'an overarching term to describe the relationship between the employee and the organization' (p. 292), a general definition that is also applied here. The EOR is different from relationships other publics have with an organization based on two aspects (Ni, 2007): 1) employees enter any relationship with an organization for the one fundamental reason of getting paid and 2) the establishment of an EOR requires some sort of formal contract where rights and responsibilities are specified.

2.1.1 Nature of the EOR

The relationship between employees and their organizations can be described as an exchange relationship, which runs the entire contract spectrum from strictly legal to purely psychological (Spindler, as cited in Gual i Sole & Ricart i Costa, 2001). In a review on the literature on the EOR, Coyle-Shapiro and Shore (2007) conclude that there have been two major views on the EOR with regard to this exchange relationship, which served as the basis for the EOR research: 1) inducements-contributions model and 2) social exchange theory (Blau, 1964).

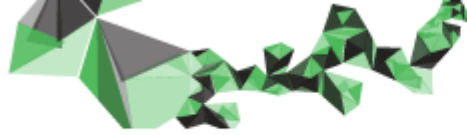
Inducements-contributions model

The inducements-contributions model views the employment exchange as one where the organization offers inducements in return for employee contributions (March & Simon, 1958). On the one hand, employees are satisfied when the difference between the inducements offered by the organization and the contributions given in return is greater. On the other hand, employees contributions need to be sufficient enough to generate inducements from the organization. This in turn needs to be attractive enough to elicit employee contributions, which completes the circle. Coyle-Shapiro and Shore (2007) precede by stating that the inducements-contributions model then is based upon a reciprocal exchange between an employee's contribution and the organization's inducements.

Social exchange theory

Social exchange has played a central role in past research. Researchers have agreed upon social exchange involving series of interactions that generate obligations to reciprocate (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Three aspects are crucial with regard to social exchange: relationship, reciprocity and exchange. At first a relationship is formed by one party offering a benefit to another party. If this other party then reciprocates by giving a benefit in return, a series of exchanges gets created to and fro. This results in feelings of mutual obligations between the parties. Because there is some risk to both parties that the benefits offered will not be returned since the terms and conditions are not specified (Blau, 1964), trust plays a major role in the relationship between the exchange partners.

Although Coyle-Shapiro and Shore (2007) suggest that there might be multiple norms explaining employee behavior in their relationship with the organization, the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) is an established concept underlying social exchange theory and the inducements-contributions model.



According to this norm, both parties adopt a contingent view of the exchange; one party's contributions are based on the other party's previous contributions following an adherence to the norm of reciprocity and the reciprocation of benefits received (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007, p. 13). This norm of reciprocity functions as a moral obligation and performs as a starting mechanism for the mutually beneficial exchange of help; incurring obligations arise as a consequence of helping others and a mutual exchange of rewards will be established (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986). Reciprocating aid, in turn, increases the giving by the original donor (Blau, 1964).

The beliefs with regard to the terms and conditions of the reciprocal exchange relationship lie in the concept of the psychological contract (Shore et al., 2004). The psychological contract has been subject of many studies with regard to the EOR, besides the nature of the exchange in the relationship (Ferris et al., 2009). It consists of both transactional and relational aspects (MacNeil, 1985) and can be seen as the hidden aspect of the employment exchange (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The psychological contract concerns the expectations of the individual employee and the organization on what they have to give and receive from each other (Sims, as cited in Gual i Sole & Ricart i Costa, 2001).

Overall, reciprocity, exchange and mutuality (agreement between dyadic members about the nature of the relationship and its specific terms) continue to play a central role in most relationship conceptualizations, including the EOR. When defining the EOR, Rhee (2004) even extends the role of exchange by stating that the EOR is a connection or association between an organization and individual employees that necessitates repeated communication.

2.1.2 The EOR in relation to other concepts

Although previous research has demonstrated the unique nature of the EOR (Settoon, Bennett & Liden, as cited in Bell & Menguc, 2002; Wayne, Shore & Liden, 1997), other well known concepts like commitment, citizenship behavior, identification, perceived organizational membership and perceived organizational support, have been linked to the EOR. The broad approach in EOR literature confirms the overarching nature of the EOR.

The degree to which those concepts are related to the EOR seems to have much to do with the quality and the intensity of the relationship. A distinction can be made between high-quality and low-quality relationships (Dutton & Heaphy, as cited in Ferris et al., 2009). Low-quality relationships on the one hand, often those that are involuntary, are typically based on economic exchange and have a high chance of dissolving. High-quality relationships, on the other hand, go beyond simple economic exchanges and can have significant implications for the achievement of both individual and organizational outcomes. Along a similar vein, Shore, Tetrick, Lynch and Barksdale (2006) distinguished between two types of exchange: 1) social and 2) economic exchanges. According to them, both social and economic exchanges govern the EOR; social exchange indeed operates on the basis of the well-known norm of reciprocity, while economic exchange is far less intense. In contrast to social exchange, economic exchange focuses on limited and bounded obligations that reflect basic expectations for the employment relationship. In their view, the emphasis of the last is purely on economic agreements, such as pay for performance, rather than implying long-term or open-ended and diffuse obligations.

Distinguishing between high- and low-quality relationships in the EOR is important for two reasons; not only does this imply that there might be a variety in the way employees perceive their relationship with the organization, but the quality of the relationship seems to be of major influence on the outcomes of this relationship as well. The EOR governs the entire relationship between employee and organization with all its interactions and necessary repeated communication (Rhee, 2004), whether being purely economic or highly emotional. Some other well-known concepts like commitment, citizenship behavior and identification, can however be seen as indicators of the quality of this relationship. To organizations, these concepts represent important and desired outcomes of the EOR when the quality of the EOR rises. Therefore it is useful to discuss these concepts and the way they are related to the EOR, based on past research.

Well-known aspects of the EOR

Research on the EOR has come up with many outcomes of the EOR over time; job and performance related outcomes, as well as outcomes concerning affective attachment. Examples of job and performance related outcomes are inhibiting employee perceptions of organizational contract violations, stimulating high job performance and reducing the development of turnover intentions (Tekleab, Takeuchi & Taylor, 2005). Concepts concerning affective attachment (Eisenberger et al., 1986) like commitment, citizenship behavior and identification have been linked to the EOR as well, especially when the quality of the relationship raises. Also, in an attempt to come up with an actual measure of the EOR, which is still lacking in the EOR literature, researchers have tried to approach the employee-organization relationship by developing new concepts like perceived organizational membership and perceived organizational support. These concepts should then give a more concrete understanding of the somewhat vague concept of the EOR by distinguishing specific constructs and dimensions.

Commitment

Especially commitment (employee's identification with and involvement in a particular organization: Mowday, Steers & Porter, as cited in Eisenberger et al., 1986) has been widely acknowledged in past research as an important aspect of the EOR. Tsui, Pearce, Porter and Tripoli (1997) for instance found that employees performed better on core tasks, demonstrated more citizenship behavior and expressed a higher level of affective commitment to an employer when they were working in an overinvestment (by the employer) or mutual investment relationship. Employees' affective commitment is a response to employer defined employee-organization relationships, which can be explained by the norm of reciprocity (Tsui et al., 1997; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Ni (2007) found that especially trust, control mutuality and commitment were important aspects of the EOR which were determined by the multi-dimensional nature of the EOR from an employee perspective.

Organizational commitment has further been linked to a certain degree of quality relationship. Rhee (2004) for instance stated that, because it is the most important factor in building positive relationships with employees, organizational commitment would represent a positive relationship with the organization. Low-quality relationships, on the other hand, can be damaging to individuals and eventually to organizations (Dutton & Heaphy, as cited in Ferris et al., 2009). Ferris et al. (2009), following the inducements-contributions model concerning obligations and entitlements in work relationships, confirm the linkage to organizational commitment. They listed that lack of perceived balance in the relationship, such as exchange inequity, can predict conflict, turnover and also lower organizational commitment as employees seek equity.

Citizenship behavior

Besides organizational commitment, citizenship behavior has been related to higher levels of the EOR. In their research on social and economic exchange in the EOR, Shore et al. (2006) for instance found that an EOR based on social exchange, which is a more high-quality type of relationship, is associated with higher levels of citizenship. This, among other outcomes as in-role performance, and lower absence and tardiness, only holds for an EOR based on social exchange in comparison with an EOR purely based on economic exchange. Coyle-Shapiro and Shore (2007) refer to these findings and suggest that economic exchange to employees might signifies a form of organizational self-interest, which does not operate the way social exchange does because this type of relationship does not require significant organizational investment or commitment. In addition they suggest that, besides important aspects as citizenship and commitment, identification, among others, might be another meaningful aspect of the employee-organization relationship, indicating the quality of the employee-organization relationship.

Identification

Identification then has been defined in relation to the EOR as well, referring to the employee's sense of unity with the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Bell and Menguc (2002) for instance also named organizational identification as an aspect of the EOR. Dutton, Dukerich and Harquail (1994) came up with a theory concerning the way identification is linked to the EOR: when employees experience increasing inclusion and contact with the organization (indicating the attempt of a more high-quality relationship) the perceived attractiveness of the organization increases, which strengthens organizational

identification. This also works the other way around: rising levels of identification, in turn, motivate members to increase their levels of contact with the organization (resulting in a more high-quality relationship). However, although the extent of contact between the individual and the organization is said to be one of the predictors of identification, it has also been said that identification does not require direct contact between the individual and the organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Perceived organizational membership

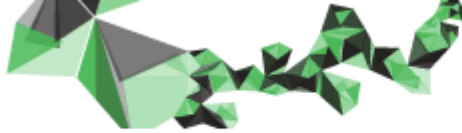
Masterson and Stamper (2003) tried to integrate varied perspectives on the employee-organization relationship by developing the multidimensional construct of perceived organizational membership (POM). They defined POM as 'reflecting an employee's overall social exchange relationship with his/her work organization, comprising the three underlying motives of 1) need fulfillment, 2) mattering, and 3) belonging' (p. 487). The underlying motives and sub dimensions of POM, however, do not necessarily have to be related, according to its creators. They can rely on both the actions of the organization and the employee (need fulfillment), as well as on one of the party's actions (belonging and mattering). According to Masterson and Stamper, the first dimension, need fulfillment, works both through the rights granted to employees by the organization as well as through the responsibilities demanded of employees in return. Therefore, both the organization and the employee play important roles in developing perceptions of need fulfillment. The second dimension, mattering, is engaged through the organization's granting of rights to employees, which makes them perceive that they are valued members of the organization. This dimension therefore relies on the organization's actions. The third dimension of belonging, at last, is engaged through employees' obligations and responsibilities toward the organization. It enables employees to become personally invested in the organization and thus perceive that they have a place within the organization. Belonging thus relies on the employees' actions. The multidimensional construct of POM with its unrelated underlying dimensions, however, has not received much attention in the EOR literature so far. It warrants empirical investigation, the relationship between the dimensions of perceived membership and their relative effect on employee-organizational outcomes in particular (Shore et al., 2004).

Perceived organizational support

A concept that has been discussed far more often, is the construct of perceived organizational support (POS). This construct found a place in the framework of Masterson and Stamper as well, as a sub dimension of mattering. POS refers to global beliefs developed by employees concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, Sowa, 1986). It has been first introduced by Eisenberger et al. in 1986 in order to measure employee beliefs about the organization's commitment to them. The development of the POS construct is an attempt to integrate different perspectives of the EOR, based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960); the EOR is the focus of the perceived organizational support construct (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Tekleab et al., 2005).

Based on the research by Eisenberger and colleagues, Wayne et al. (1997) explained that high levels of POS create feelings of obligation. These feelings of obligation are created not only to be committed to their employers, but also to engage in behaviors that support organization goals. Because employees seek a balance in their exchange relationship, they create attitudes and behaviors that commensurate the amount of commitment received from the organization. POS therefore leads to commitment, as a consequence of social exchange processes, as well as supportive behavior, but does not contribute directly to job performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). The degree to which employees engage in supportive behavior towards the organization is assumed to be influenced by the strength of the employee's exchange ideology. This exchange ideology is based on the degree of acceptance of the earlier discussed reciprocity norm (the degree to which people believe that they should help those who have helped them) in regard to work (Gouldner, 1960); POS would only strongly influence the absenteeism and performance of employees who have a strong exchange ideology in contrast to those with a weak exchange ideology (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

But although POS has received much more attention as a way of approaching the exchanges between an employee and the employing organization (Wayne et al., 1997), POS also limits the view on the EOR to



the employee's side of the EOR. It therefore only forms as a result of employees' relationship with the organization (Zagenczyk, 2001). Classic definitions of the EOR, like the ones focusing more on the psychological contract, consider both employer and employee beliefs about this relationship. Therefore some researchers have come to the conclusion that POS and psychological contracts both assess the EOR on the basis of social exchange, but in different ways. They then suggest that they should be more integrated in future research in order to obtain a fuller understanding of the EOR (Zagenczyk, 2001; Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003; Tekleab et al., 2005). Bell and Menguc (2002) also mentioned POS as an aspect of the EOR, among others. Wayne et al. (1997) compared POS with LMX, a different work relationship regarding the employee and its supervisor. They concluded that although POS and LMX are distinct concepts, they are related to and influenced by one another, one being the antecedent of the other. This might also hold for POS and the EOR.

2.1.3 The EOR as an overarching concept

Based on this review of the literature on the EOR and its relation with other well-known concepts, it may be clear that the EOR is an overarching concept concerning the relationship between the employee and the organization (Shore et al, 2004) that goes beyond particular concepts, such as the ones discussed. Because the overall body of research on the EOR is somewhat piecemeal (Shore et al., 2004) and the contextual environment of the EOR is complex (Ferris et al., 2009), researchers do not seem to have found a general, agreed upon definition of the EOR which can be well operationalized as well. The concepts discussed might serve well as indicators of the quality of the EOR, since the outcomes of the EOR seem to overlap with these concepts when it involves a more high-quality relationship. They then might enhance the operationalization of the EOR in more practical ways. Researchers however have found that they are related, but distinct elements for understanding the EOR (e.g. Aselage & Eisenberger, ..); they do not govern the entire concept of the EOR, only aspects of it. The EOR includes both micro concepts such as the psychological contract and more operationalizing constructs such as POS and macro concepts such as the employment relationship; each having its strengths and weaknesses when it comes to their contribution to the understanding of the EOR, both theoretically and empirically (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Summarizing the literature on the EOR and its underlying theory's, the EOR always involves some form of exchange, its nature either being purely economic or highly social (Shore et al., 2006). Social exchange processes are apparent in several different cultures, which suggests further support for the universality of social exchange and the norm of reciprocity (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2003). The issue of mutuality further also emerged as a fundamental element describing the relationship (Ferris et al., 2009). The concepts discussed seem to come along as the quality of the EOR, the degree to which the relationship is based on high social exchanges, increases. They are, however, not necessarily present in relationships that are based on economic exchanges, and therefore stand alone; the EOR is not dependent on the presence of these concepts.

Further research on the relationship among several common used concepts would have to shed additional light on whether existing constructs truly make a unique contribution to the understanding of the EOR (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2003; Shore et al., 2004). This research however does not focus on the measurement of the EOR and the possible inclusion of certain concepts, but on the way employees perceive and shape the relationship with their organization. The focus then lies on employees' expectations of the relationship.

2.2 DISTANCE WORKING

Developments in recent work environment might have implications for the interpretation of existing EOR literature. Looking at previous work, one may conclude that the EOR is an interesting concept with influential and desirable outcomes, which makes organizations realize that this relationship is valuable. Much of our organizational knowledge and organizational strategies are, however, based on the assumption of a stable and ongoing employer-employee relationship (Beard & Edwards, 1995). But nowadays complete new organizational forms arise due to redesign and changing needs in the way people want to work. When referring to those new organizational forms, many terms emerge, such as virtual work (e.g. Wiesenfeld, Raghuram & Garud, 2001), contingent work (e.g. Beard & Edwards, 1995), remote work (e.g. Staples, 2001) and teleworking (e.g. Cooper & Burke, 2002), here simply referred to

as new organizational forms. One of the crucial aspects which all of these concepts have in common has to do with the fact that employees no longer work on a central location of the organization. Instead, employees work at distance, at least for a considerable amount of their work time. The research here then focuses on this particular aspect of distance working and the way this might influence employees' perceptions of the EOR.

As a consequence of these developments in recent work environment, relationships at work are undergoing a lot of change as work processes are being altered with regard to social interactions, time patterns and geographical location. We therefore need to look outside what is happening to the employment relationship (Sparrow & Cooper, 1998). Since this stable and ongoing employer-employee relationship is no longer self-evident, research should focus on the consequences of changing work environment (Beard & Edwards, 1995). And it should especially focus on the perspective of the employee, seeking ways to improve the lives of individual employees and the communities they live in (Colyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

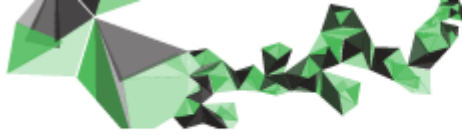
The present studies on the EOR, however, have not incorporated contextual effects such as distance so far (Shore et al., 2004; Ferris et al., 2009), while the implications of these shifts in the way people work are not lost on employees; their perceptions of and responses to the changes in the EOR can contribute to the success or failure of the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Gual i Sole and Ricart i Costa (2001) mention the distinction between 'core' and 'periphery' employees in a new approach to the employment relationship, referring to the developments leading to more employment exchanges rather than employment relationships. According to them, current HRM-approaches only have in mind the 'core' employee. Recent developments in the relationship between organization and employee however have strong implications for current models and strategies, the difference between core and periphery employees in particular.

2.2.1 Moving onto the 'new' psychological contract

In seeking ways of understanding the implications of these major shifts in the work environment for employees, researchers take a psychological contract perspective. The psychological contract might provide an account of why many organizations are currently experiencing difficulties in the employment relationship (Herriot et al., as cited in Holman, 2005). The main thought here is that the concept of the psychological contract has altered radically and that there is a shift from the old to a new psychological contract (Maguire, 2002; Cooper, 2002; Schalk & Freese, 2000; Anderson & Schalk, as cited in Holman, 2005). In this new approach to the employment relationship there is an emphasis on employment exchanges rather than employment relationships (Gual i Sole & Ricart i Costa, 2001). Employability is supposed to be the key feature of this new psychological contract, which has been advanced as the mechanism to restore a healthier balance in the exchange between employer and employee (Pascale, as cited in Sharpe, 2001).

The main idea of the difference between the old and the new psychological contract lies in the distinction between transactional and relational aspects of the psychological contract (MacNeil, 1985). Beard and Edwards (1995) suggested that in contingent work relationships the psychological contract becomes more transactional instead of relational in form, based upon an asymmetrical power balance which clearly favors the employer. Maguire (2002) stated that, because of the more transactional relationship between organizations and employees, relational aspects of the psychological contract might become less important for employees. Examples of relational aspects are commitment to an organization, loyalty and trust in management in return for competent management, opportunity for input and sense of belonging. The role of the organization in the new psychological contract then is subject to debate; what do organizations have to offer to their employees which will become important and valued expectations on behalf of the employee (Hall & Moss, as cited in Maguire, 2002)?

Maguire concludes that the maintenance of the psychological contract, however, still makes a contribution to organizational relationships. Organizations who aim at developing more high-quality relationships should however need to find ways of adjusting the terms of the psychological contract to the needs of the increasingly mobile workforce; a more sophisticated and self-aware workforce may



bring new expectations to the employee's perception of what is owed by the organization in the EOR. In an attempt of enhancing this issue, Maguire suggests that organizations will have to work on the relational level of their relationships for instance by ensuring intrinsic rewards, such as recognition, a sense of achievement and relationships with colleagues. However, then again the assumption has been made that this meets the needs of this new workforce, which lead to this discussion in the first place.

2.2.2 Defining distance

When it comes to distance, several researchers have already challenged this concept in relation to work environment, leading to a set of models incorporating distance. At first, distance can be distinguished into different kinds of distance. Although researchers have not yet reached consensus about one particular model, there are a few returning terms. Psychological distance refers to the degree of perceived similarity between dyads (Napier & Ferris, 1993). Structural distance refers to the actual physical distance (how closely people work in terms of physical location: Ferris et al., 2009), as well as organizational structure (such as the degree of centralization) and supervision structure (the amount of task and social contact between both parties: Napier & Ferris, 1993). This last aspect of structural distance is also specifically referred to as spatial distance. According to Napier and Ferris, the binding factor is the association with the amount of interaction in the dyad associated with these variables. At last, functional distance is described as the degree of closeness and quality of the functional working relationship between dyads; whether the other party is a member of the in-group or the out-group. Napier and Ferris proceed that this dimension is conceptually distinct from the other types of distance, in the respect that it describes the behavioral manifestations of distance in the functional, working relationship between the two parties. In this research concerning distant working and its impact on employees' perceptions regarding the EOR, structural distance is of interest.

2.2.3 Why would distance matter?

Although there has been no research known by the author that particularly studied the influence of distance on the way employees perceive and give meaning to the relationship with their employing organization, results from a number of studies on other specific work relationships on a more interpersonal level seem to indicate that (structural) distance in general does make a difference with regard to several aspects. Avolio, Zhu, Koh and Bhatia (2004) for instance found that structural distance between a leader and follower moderated the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. Howell, Neufeld and Avolio (2005) found that, although not very strongly, physical distance also moderated the effect of transformational leadership on business unit performance; under distant conditions, transformational leadership did not predict unit performance in contrast with close conditions. Because employees working at distance might observe their leader less often, this reduces the opportunities for leaders to reinforce the visionary message and to engage in creative behavior and relationship building with followers. But on the other hand, Howell et al. stated that employees then might attribute more meaning to those behaviors that are observed. Erskine (2007) further found that structural distance has a negative influence on individual performance and results from Hennevelt (2009) show that the relation between leader and member mediates the negative effect of physical distance on job satisfaction. Hennevelt's most important conclusion was that when leaders and members do not often interact in person, investing in a good relationship quality is more important than in traditional settings. Spatial distance as a particular aspect of structural distance has been found to affect agreement and understanding, as well as the performance evaluation process between employees and their supervisors (Napier & Ferris, 1993). Spatial distance also seems to affect supervisor-focused influence tactics; individuals seem to be inclined to engage in influence tactics directed at the supervisor only when subordinates and supervisors work in reasonably close proximity (Ferris, Judge, Rowland & Fitzgibbons, 1994). It did however not seem to have an effect on the supervisor affect towards the subordinate. But looking at these findings, the question raises what makes distance affect work relationships and what would this mean for the EOR and the way employees perceive it? Taking a closer look at the consequences of the new organizational forms might shed some light onto this issue.

2.2.4 Challenges to organizations due to distance

Addressing the entire spectrum of the new organizational forms and its implications on individual, organizational and environmental level goes beyond the subject of this study. An emerging number of studies that did, however, indicate several challenges to organizations with regard to the relationship with their employees in the context of distance working. Two thoughts on the influence distance working might have on the employee-relationship are discussed: 1) distance weakening the relationship, and 2) distance simply creating differing perceptions on the relationship, which is the assumption that founded the research question.

Distance weakening the relationship

On the one hand, previous research provides indications to state that physical distance should mainly weaken the employee-organization relationship. Most research has been done with regard to the advantages of the new organizational forms due the initiators being organizations and groups with large interest for the grow of these work arrangements (Cooper & Burke, 2002, p. 178). A central issue with regard to the new organizational forms, however, is whether the distance and dispersion will weaken the relationship between employees working this way and their employing organizations (Wiesenfeld, Raghuram, & Grud, 1999). An important disadvantage that has been mentioned many times by researchers is concerned with the social isolation of employees, due to the decreased amount of contact with the organization or its members. As a consequence, employees experience a reduced sense of belonging to the organization (Cooper & Burke, 2002; Mann, Varey & Button, 2000; Post, 1995; Van Hauwaert, 2007). According to Perin (as cited in Jackson & Van der Wielen, 1998), 'going to the office' is driven almost as much by personal and social interests as by financial need; employees locate much of their identity in their office influence and relationships. Therefore being 'in the office' is an important social experience. As a consequence, although the degree of social isolation depends on varying individual situations, such as workplace (Van Hauwaert, 2007), organizations may resent the loss of proximity to their members (Cooper & Burke, 2002).

Research from Kiesler and Cummings (2002) on proximity and distance in work groups gives an impression of the contribution physical spaces themselves can make with regard to employees working at distance. According to their research sharing social settings in physical space affects the similarity of employee's expectations and experiences, and influences the likelihood of the creation of a shared territory. As a consequence, distance among workers therefore means that the shared social setting is at a more abstract or symbolic level. But, more important in this case, it also means that the natural tendency to establish territories may interfere with co-workers' identification with the larger collective, since ambiguity of membership reduces group identity (Brown & Wade, as cited in Kiesler & Cummings, 2002). This indicates that employees working at distance of an 'official' building of the organization might not bond with the organization as a larger collective, which might indicate a lower quality EOR.

Another interesting aspect of the research from Kiesler and Cummings concerns the important function of casual, spontaneous contact in establishing relationships. Kiesler and Cummings state that the frequency of spontaneous, informal communication, which occurs when people are in close physical proximity, has a great impact on the strength of social and work ties. This implies that employees working at distance might have more difficulty with, among other things, expanding the breadth of the relationship through a variety of unplanned mutual experiences. Research of Hinds and Mortensen (2005) confirmed the important role of spontaneous communication leading to a stronger shared identity and more shared context.

A report from Post (1995) mentions the overall possible loss of control perceived by organizations; how to maintain discipline and motivation. And, more important in this case, how to integrate employees into the firm and promote commitment to organizational goals and culture. In a review of articles concerning virtual work, Wiesenfeld et al. (2001) address the concern of employees being 'out of sight, out of mind' from their organization, besides the difficulty of relying upon mechanisms as direct supervision as a means of coordination and control. Distance between organizations and its employees may reduce individuals' contact with the organization and the visibility of their membership to the organization. Distance further may reduce the exposure to the organizational structures and processes that facilitate

employees categorizing as organization members. At the same time virtual workers themselves also admit that their organization to them is out of sight, out of mind; virtual work may lead to change or ambiguity of employees' perceptions of their relationship with the organization (Wiesenfeld et al., 1999). It seems that virtual workers feel left out because of the missing of informal organizational rituals, such as gathering with co-workers by the water cooler (Goldsborough, as cited in Wiesenfeld et al., 2001). Interpreting all this, one might conclude that distance might indeed weaken the relationship between the employee and the organization.

Distance creating differing perceptions

On the other hand, there are also indicators that physical distance does not necessarily weaken the relationship between employees and their organizations, but the relationship just might be perceived and experienced differently by employees instead. Working outside the office, for instance, might create a tension between obligations and expectations derived from the psychological contract employees have with their organization and those derived from contracts employees have with their families and communities (Perin, as cited in Jackson & Van der Wielen, 1998; Holman, 2005). When the separation of work and private life is fading, employees' expectations and needs in their relationship with the organization might change. Research from Staples (2001) on the differences between remote and non-remote workers might be a good example of this changed perception. Staples showed that in a remote work environment, cognition-based trust was found to be more important than affect-based trust in contrast with a traditional setting. This implies that managers of remote employees should focus more on activities regarding the demonstration of competence, responsibility and professionalism. Holman (2005) also mentioned the decreased opportunities for social contact for teleworkers, which challenges managers as they normally use socialization into organization cultures as a tool for management control. But on the other hand, one of the solutions to this challenge he gives is that teleworkers might need less socialization initially than a typical worker, besides selecting those employees to be teleworkers whose values are already close to those of the organization,. Many teleworkers namely seem to value autonomy more than other workers except for those situations where it coincides with personal values related to work achievement (Omari & Standen, as cited in Holman, 2005). However, further on Holman brings forward that organizations need to make efforts in socializing more with teleworkers, for instance by including them in social programs and off-site social events. This however is contrary to the suggestion of possible differing needs in the amount of social contact in contrast with traditional workers.

But while intense contact and exposure to organizational structures and processes may be less available to distance workers, employees may nevertheless exhibit identification. Research from Wiesenfeld et al. (2001) on the degree to which virtual workers identify themselves with the organization indicated that, despite the physical distance and lack of contact, virtual workers experience a natural need to belong. And even when this need for affiliation, which differs among people, is low, the study from Wiesenfeld et al. showed that there are other cues that virtual workers are exposed to that suggest that they are part of the organization. An example of these cues is work-based social support, referring to the degree to which individuals perceive that they have positive social relationships with others in the workplace. This means that virtual workers may be more likely to view themselves as a member of an organization due to being socially integrated with other organizational members. This then makes those others view them as members of the organization. Interpreting this, physical distance might not harm the employee-organizational relationship as such, but it does however might shape the relationship differently. Other organizational members, such as co-workers and supervisors, therefore might function as a key source in shaping the employee-organization relationship among employees working at distance due to personification (Levinson, 1965).

2.3 EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS AND NEEDS

Relating the literature on the EOR with developments in recent work environment, one may conclude that distance working might influence employees' shaping of the EOR. Questions remain unanswered, mainly with regard to two major aspects: 1) employees' perceptions of the EOR and the parties involved, and 2) employees' needs in strengthening the EOR, which lead to the sub questions of this research.

2.3.1 'The' organization in the relationship

According to the literature on the EOR, two parties are involved in the EOR, speaking of a dyadic work relationship; the individual employee on the one side and the organization on the other side, both reciprocally exchanging. Research therefore is based on the implicit assumption that the only relevant parties to the development of the EOR are the employee and the organization. It does not consider the role social factors might play in shaping employees' perceptions about the EOR (Zagenczyk, 2001). However, Ni (2007) found that, according to employees, the EOR is a multi-level (interpersonal and organizational) concept for most organizational members.

Individuals do not, in reality, enter into an exchange agreement with the 'organization' as an institution, since the organization is made up on many individuals (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Personification of the organization therefore might play a crucial role in employees' perceptions of their relationship with the organization, especially in those of employees working at distance. Many researchers speak of certain agents, representatives of the organization, as the dyadic partner with whom the employee interacts (e.g. Ferris et al., 2009; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Shore et al, 2004). Levinson (1965) clarified the concept behind this thought and stated that employees tend to view actions by agents of the organization as actions of the organization itself. Employees' tendency to personify the organization makes them attribute actions taken by agents to the extent of the organization itself rather than to the individual motives of the agent (Levinson, 1965). The personification of the organization then represents the distillation of employee's views on all of the other members of the organization who control the employee's material and symbolic resources. Since employees working at distance are less frequently confronted with certain resources and organizational cues (Wiesenfeld et al, 2001), the question who 'the organization' in the EOR is, becomes even more interesting (Cooper & Burke, 2002). In the context of distance working, personification of the organization might increase and the agents representing the organization then play a crucial role in shaping the EOR in a changing work environment.

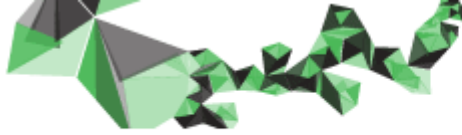
The question then raises who this agent representing the organization is, which has been remained unclear in EOR research so far. Some suggestions have been made with regard to the direct supervisor playing a role in representing the organization. Interpersonal relationships with other organizational members such as coworkers, however, also might contribute to the employee's perceptions with regard to the EOR (Ni, 2007; Zagenczyk, 2001). But although some suggestions have been made with regard to possible agents, past research on EOR has not addressed this aspect properly. This is surprising, because when it is not clear who represents the organization in the EOR, we have to take into account the possibility that other organizational members represent (a great deal of) the organization in this relationship; a crucial aspect in distinguishing the EOR from other work relationships on a more interpersonal level. In order to enhance the EOR in changing work environment, there should at first be more clarity about the perceptions of employees with regard to the personification of the organization.

Sub question 1:

To what extent do employees personify the organization in the employee-organization relationship and does this differ among distance workers and non-distance workers?

2.3.2 Expanding the EOR to a higher-quality relationship

Another question concerning employee perceptions on the EOR raises when looking at research conducted on ways for organizations to enhance higher-quality relationships. Dutton et al. (1994), for instance, stated that when employees experience increasing inclusion and contact with the organization, the attractiveness of the perceived organization increases, strengthening organizational identification. This also works the other way around: rising levels of identification, in turn, motivate members to increase their levels of contact with the organization. Kim (2009) further found that organizations can have high-quality relationships with employees by establishing organic structures, allowing employees to participate in decision making, and symmetrical, as in open, communication systems. The quality of relationships could be enhanced by facilitating participation and communication in all directions and overcoming barriers to knowledge sharing (Marlow & O'Connor, as cited in Kim, 2009). Kim's research further suggests that symmetrical communication is positively related to a desired communal



relationship, because this type of relationship is more related to high evaluation of outcome variables than a primary exchange relationship.

Communication can have an important function beyond the direct facilitation of work (Holman, 2005). Especially when it comes to the common mentioned and earlier addressed disadvantage of decreased contact and social isolation leading to a reduced sense of belonging to the organization (Cooper & Burke, 2002; Mann, Varey & Button, 2000; Post, 1995; Van Hauwaert, 2007). The degree to which this feeling of being left out is present with employees working at distance, may for a great deal depend on the way communication with these employees is arranged (Van Hauwaert, 2007). The arise of new communications channels therefore might enhance the EOR, providing means for increasing contact and meeting the criteria of an organic structure.

Contribution of emerging new communication channels

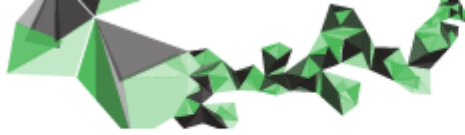
Facing the challenges of a changing work environment, the emerge of new communication channels provide organizations with the opportunity to explore new ways of enhancing the relationship with their employees. Haraldsson (2007) confirms the important role of communication systems by mentioning that, although distance work is not only a function of technical aids, improvements of ICT extend the pool of work that is possible to perform when working at distance (Denstadli & Julsrud, as cited in Haraldsson, 2007). But, more important, improvements of ICT also improves the social situation for distance workers (Börjesson, as cited in Haraldsson, 2007). According to Wiesenfeld et al. (1999), electronic communication is especially important as a predictor of organizational identification among employees who spend a great deal of time outside of centralized office space. More specifically, in their study in 2001 they proceeded by stating that work-based social support can serve as an important substitute organizational cue for employees' view of being a member of the organization. Often this is conveyed through communication. In a virtual context, investing in electronic communication then may be worthwhile. Kiesler and Cummings (2002) further mentioned the opinion of some researchers that electronic communication, over time, allows for sufficient spontaneous communication to support the development of new close ties (Walther, as cited in Kiesler & Cummings, 2002). Kiesler and Cummings themselves, however, are more skeptical with regard to the replacement of face-to-face communication and spontaneous communication for electronic communication. They stated that these technologies do not necessarily encourage communication, because of the lack of real and perceived presence of others and lack of shared social settings. According to them, the effectiveness for physical distance remedies, such as the use of communication technology, will depend on the degree of existing social distance; if existing social distance is high, mediated communication technologies provide a plausible remedy for the lack of close physical proximity.

On the one hand, the rising web based social media might offer a solution. They take away the perceived negative social effects of other electronic means of communication, such as e-mail, which filters out personal and social cues (Markus, 1994). Instead, social media offer all kinds of ways to personalize. Virtual tool use also appeared to have a positive impact on employee creativity (Watt, 2007). Several organizations, for instance, already try to let their employees interact on organization initiated online communities, but these do not always seem to get off the ground.

On the other hand, research from Breuls (2011) shows that employees do not always make use of social media. This is mainly caused by time limitations in finding out how things work. Besides, social media are considered not to be of added value for work issues by the respondents. Furthermore, research from Pieterse (2009) on channel behavior under Dutch civilians shows that people, when given the choice, do not necessarily choose electronic channels. This is remarkable, because the situational constraint of distance seemed to be the most important factor influencing channel behaviors. Instead, they choose to use traditional media often in the first place, due to habitual processes in which no specific elaboration takes place.

Employees' needs

The assumption made here is that employees, whether working at distance or on location, also respond favorable to certain organizational efforts to establish higher quality social exchange relationships



(Sharpe, 2001). This however may not be the case due to possible changed needs with regard to the shape of their relationship with the organization discussed earlier. Ni (2007) found that, according to employees, the EOR is not only a multi-level (interpersonal and organizational) but also a multi-dimensional (job and task related versus human and benefits oriented) concept. This seems to correspond to the distinction between transactional and relational components of the psychological contract (MacNeil, 1985). Ni further states that there are factors on three levels that influence the shaping of the EOR: 1) individual (e.g. types of employees, styles of top management), 2) organizational (e.g. developmental stages and types of organizations) and 3) macro-environmental (e.g. the overall employment prospect). This might go well together with the degree to which the employee favors a low-quality relationship merely based on economic exchange or a higher-quality relationship based on social exchange.

Employees working at distance might, for instance, not want to be confronted with their organization as much as they would if they would work at location, because of the decreasing boundaries between work and private life. Research of Breuls (2011) shows that, during the weekend, most employees either do not want to receive any communication at all or only want to receive communication by phone (text message or phone call). The research also reveals that the situation (day of the week) and the urgency of the message plays a more important role than the content of the message. If the message is solely informative, employees indicated that they do not want to receive any communication. Breuls' outcomes were based on a single case study and on opinions regarding working during the weekend from employees who worked at distance as well as on location. However, a parallel might be drawn between the extent to which employees want to receive communication during the weekends and employees working at distance (e.g. from their homes). On the other hand, one might raise that because interaction with (members of) the organization is less self-evident with employees working at distance, the need of employees to extend the relation with their organization who work at distance might increase.

Overall, as Sharpe (2001) also states, greater attention should be given to the role of context and individual differences, since this would enhance the understanding of when social exchange relationships are likely to have more positive consequences for employee and organizations. In order to enhance the EOR in a concrete way, focusing on employee implications, research should be conducted to ways that seek to improve the lives of individual employees and the communities they live in (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

Sub question 2:

To what extent are employees in need of an expansion of the EOR and does this differ among distance workers and non-distance workers?

3 METHOD

This chapter contains a description of the method used. At first, the setting and sample of the research is clarified. A description of the participants used is given, including the gathering method and selection criteria. The interview method then is pointed out, containing a clarification of the interview topics and used techniques. At last, the method of data analysis is described.

3.1 SETTING AND SAMPLE

A qualitative study has been conducted within a large Dutch health care organization which has many locations geographically spread over a north-eastern region. Its core business involves providing care to elderly people from the first moment they need it until the last. Their products and services therefore reach from health-stimulating wellness services to home care, and eventually to intensive nursing within care homes. In the past few years, the organization has gone through some radical changes, including a merger, several name changes and a reorganization leading to a reduction of the management layers. The reorganization further lead to a redesign of the work environment of home care providers.

Employees now have to work according to the concept of self-managing work teams. This means that employees themselves have to deal with day-to-day responsibility to manage themselves, handle job assignments, plan and schedule work, make production-related decisions and take action on problems (Wellins et al., as cited in Shapiro & Kirkman, 1999). Eventually, the organization intends to introduce this way of working in their intramural line of business (care homes) as well.

In-depth interviews have been conducted with employees working at this organization, since this setting offered a good opportunity to compare distance and non-distance workers. Individual in-depth interviews have been used because the EOR is explicitly concerned with the relationship of the individual employee with the employing organization (e.g. Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Further, Ni (2007) found that factors on the individual level, such as types of employees, can influence the EOR.

3.1.1 Intramural vs. extramural employees

The perspectives of two groups of employees have been explored; intramural employees working at care homes and extramural employees providing home care and therefore working at distance. These two groups of employees have been chosen in order to make a good comparison of employees working at an official location of the organization on the one side, being confronted with all its organizational features, and employees working at distance on the other side, being less confronted with organizational features. In contrast to intramural employees, extramural employees individually finish up their round of clients every day. Because they can look into their planning from their homes through a digital application, they only come into 'the office' (a locally chosen building that mostly consists of just one room) every one or two weeks for a team meeting.

Investigating employees from this organization in particular is interesting, because of the recently introduced way of working according to the concept of self-managing work teams within the extramural line of business (home care). As a consequence, the organization literally distanced itself even further from their extramural employees, differentiating them even more from the intramural employees with regard to the distance aspect. Realizing their loss of grip, the organization recently initiated a web based social medium in order to reinforce the amount of interaction with the home care employees. It did however not immediately turn out to be as successful as expected. The organization wondered how they could stimulate their extramural employees to make more active contributions, without taking into account employees' needs. Investigating these two groups of employees within this particular organization thus is especially interesting for two reasons: 1) the contrast between intramural and extramural employees with regard to the distance aspect, both working for the same organization and performing comparable jobs, and 2) the explicit example of how an organization is confronted with the consequences of such distance.

3.1.2 Participant selection

The participants have been gathered on a voluntary basis. Within the different locations of the organization, posters have been displayed for intramural participants with the ability to sign up for an interview by leaving their name and phone number and/or e-mail address. The original poster used (in Dutch) can be found in appendix A. Extramural participants were approached by sending an e-mail containing more or less the same content as the poster. This e-mail was sent to the different teams with the call up to ask around if there are employees interested in registering for an interview by e-mailing the interviewer. Both intramural and extramural participants were informed about a gift card with a value of €25,- that would be raffled under the participants as a show of gratitude for their participation. Besides that, direct supervisors and coaches of respectively intramural and extramural employees have been approached to ask around in their teams. By these means, a snowball effect was created by which the participants were gathered.

There were three criteria for selection. At first only employees who actually provided care were selected to participate, in order to make a good comparison between intramural (which also contained employees working at supportive departments) and extramural participants (which only contained employees providing home care). Second, employees should not have a temporary contract or a contract based on zero hours, in order to prohibit these new or different forms of contracts to influence the results. Third, employees have been selected who have already been working in self-managing work teams for at least six months. They therefore have already had the chance to adjust possible incorrect expectations with regard to injustice caused by the impact of the change-over itself rather than the actual consequences leading from the more distanced way of working. Although there are no explicit references with regard to possible implications for the EOR, research from Shapiro and Kirkman (1999) links the radical shift towards self-managing work teams to significant influences on resistance, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. This holds for employees working in self-managing work teams for less than six months, when this shift is attended with employees' expectations of receiving unfair outcomes due to this change.

3.1.3 Sample

A total of 35 in-depth interviews have been conducted with 17 intramural employees working at care homes and 18 extramural employees providing home care and therefore working at distance. The interviews took about 60 to 90 minutes. Initially 40 interviews were planned, however five participants withdrew their participation for practical reasons, having to cancel the appointment. Descriptive data concerning the participants can be found in table 1. It can be concluded that both groups of participants were quite comparable when it comes to number of participants, age, tenure and level of education. The participants consisted of mainly women, which is caused by the relatively large number of female employees working at the health care organization. Besides, the average tenure of the participants is relatively high. A remarkable detail is that a large amount of the participants took advantage of the possibility to follow internal courses and education, by which many were able to work themselves up in their function. Further, two participants were members of the works council of the organization.

Table 1
Descriptive Data Participants (n=35)

	Intramurally	Extramurally
Number of participants	17	18
Number of female participants	14	18
Number of male participants	3	0
Average age in years	46 (SD: 5.6)	45 (SD: 4.3)
Average tenure in years	15 (SD: 2.9)	14 (SD: 2.3)
Level of education		
<i>Secondary vocational education, level 2</i>	1	2
<i>Secondary vocational education, level 3</i>	14	12
<i>Bachelor</i>	1	4

3.2 INTERVIEW

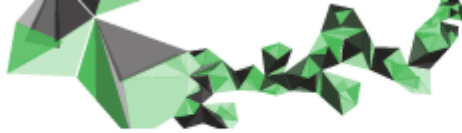
The interviews conducted were semi-structured because of the exploratory nature of the research. Instead of using a formalized format, the interviews were held on the basis of the grouping of topics and questions. This then allowed new questions to be brought up and the tailoring of the interview to the context (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

3.2.1 Interview topics

A few themes guided the interviews, derived from earlier addressed issues in the theoretical framework leading to the two formulated sub questions. The first set of questions introduced the interview by discussing participants' jobs in general. The second set of questions concentrated on sub question 1 (to what extent do employees personify the organization in the employee-organization relationship and does this differ among distance workers and non-distance workers?). It was themed around employees' perceptions of the EOR and the parties involved, examining the extent to which employees personify the organization and the role other organizational members play in this part. A third set of questions introduced the focus on sub question 2 (to what extent are employees in need of an expansion of the EOR and does this differ among distance workers and non-distance workers?). This set of questions concerned employees' needs with regard to the degree of depth of the relationship in general. Another set of questions concerned more specific terms and conditions of the EOR according to the employees; employees' expectations with regard to both parties (referring to the underlying psychological contract: e.g. Eisenberger et al., 1986) and the degree to which transactional and relational aspects are present (MacNeil, 1985). These themes were addressed in order to find out what forms the EOR takes shape and whether or not this differs due to distance working. The last set of questions concerned employees' responses toward organizational attempts in expanding the relationship, in order to explore the extent to which employees feel that the organization should further intensify their relationship. The purpose in the entire interview then was to let participants talk freely around these topics.

3.2.2 Incorporating projective techniques in the individual interview

Besides asking directly by using an extensive set of interview questions, a few so called 'projective techniques' have been incorporated into the interview. This has been done in order to facilitate, extend or enhance the nature of the discussion (AQR 2011). Projective techniques in general are tasks in which stimuli are given to participants in order to enable them to 'project' their own thoughts onto someone or something other than themselves (Boddy, 2005). Because they are somewhat unusual, projective techniques are often intriguing for research participants to complete. It gives them the opportunity to express thoughts and feelings, which can be difficult to express by using only direct and structured questioning (Catterall & Ibbotson, 2000). Adding projective techniques can be very useful given its advantages like stretching the participant's imagination and involvement, overcoming response barriers, and generating rich insights and ideas, (e.g. Donoghue, 2000; Catterall & Ibbotson, 2000),



complementing qualitative research (Boddy, 2004; Donoghue, 2000). Instead of measuring, they are used to uncover feelings, beliefs, attitudes and motivations which may be difficult to articulate (Webb, as cited in Donoghue, 2000). They however do not necessarily have to be aiming at uncovering aspects of personality of great depth (Boddy, 2005). It should be noted though, that, although the theory behind the use of projective techniques is well understood, the practice of their interpretation and its validity and reliability has led to criticism by researchers (Boddy, 2005). In this research, however, only a few projective techniques have been incorporated in order to use them as ways of stimulating the talking by participants.

Projective techniques used

Since there are few generally agreed principles on what is suitable in a certain project, the design of the used techniques has been kept simple, avoiding too much detail or stylization (Gordon & Langmaid, 1988). The projective techniques that have been used during this interview are personification technique, mapping and bubble drawing.

At first, in one of the two personification techniques used, participants had to draw themselves and the organization on a piece of paper in a way that corresponded to their perceptions. The drawing opened up the conversation about the way they picture both parties in the relationship and the extent to which they personify the organization, and their view on the relationship itself. The other personification technique contained the comparison of the organization with a person and the describing of its characteristics, in order to discover the way participants perceive the organization (based upon a case study from Catterall & Ibbotson, 2000), besides using direct questions. Participants were then asked to describe the relationship they would have with the person described, leading to the position taking of the organization in participants' lives.

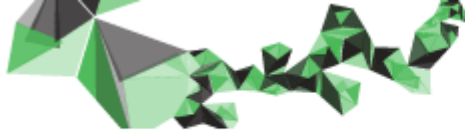
Second, participants were asked to perform a mapping task (drawn upon research from Gordon & Langmaid, as cited in Donoghue, 2000) in which they had to map organizational members mentioned by participants as persons they are more or less in contact with in the drawing created earlier. Participants should base this on the extent to which they perceive these members to belong to the organization or themselves. In that way, participants were able to talk about the matter to which certain organizational members play a role in the relationship they have with the organization and the extent to which these members represent the organization.

Third, participants were asked to perform a bubble drawing task in which they had to fill in the speech and thought bubbles of a cartoon presented to them (Donoghue, 2000). The cartoon contained a person, representing the organization, knocking on the door of another person's working location, representing the employee. Filling in the speech and thought bubbles of both persons in the cartoon provided participants with the opportunity to talk about the subject in the third person. It therefore enhanced the discovery of the way participants respond to organizational attempts in intensifying the relationship with their employees.

After pretesting the suggested set of questions around the topics discussed, the interview guide has been adjusted and optimized. The interview guide with questions concerning the topics and the cartoon used for the bubble drawing task, can be found in respectively appendix B and C.

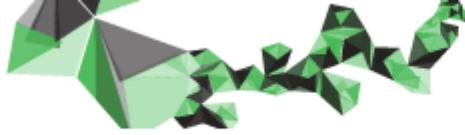
3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The in-depth interviews conducted were recorded, numbered and fully written out afterwards. Observational remarks, such as long pauses, hesitation and tone of voice, were included. Because of the qualitative method, researchers are encouraged to systemize their data as much as possible and develop quantifiable schema's in order to understand the complexity of the data (e.g. Jick, 1979). Therefore per interview, core statements were highlighted and were given a category based on the topic they were talking about. This was done in order to recognize patterns in the answers of participants and give meaning to the data. The categories were not made up in front, but originated spontaneously by looking at core statements. As a consequence, during the analysis, categories have been renamed, data have



been transferred into other categories and categories have been brought together or split up. It resulted in a schema containing all the data in a systemized order, categorized around the topics of interest. The data coming from the answers of participants concerning the expectations they have with regard to the obligations of the organization and themselves in the relationship were further categorized, based on what participants listed. They were then reported in a coding schema. The total set of categories and the coding schema's can be found in appendix D, respectively tables 1, 2 and 3.

Because of the subjectivity of this way of analyzing the data, a second assessor checked upon the categorization. According to Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999), in order to be able to assess the reliability and validity the categorization, researchers should look at the nature of the content. Two types of content can be distinguished: 1) manifest content (content that is observable and easy to detect, such as the amount of times someone blinks with his or her eyes) and 2) latent content (content that is based on underlying elements). In this research, the data consists of latent content, because participants give meaning to images and perceptions they have. These images and perceptions exist in their minds and are based on all sorts of opinions and experiences (underlying elements). Latent content can be further distinguished into pattern content (content that is easy understood because of the commonness and therefore given the same meaning by everyone) and projective content (content that can be well judged on the basis of events/experiences). In this research, projective content is at stake, because the perceptions of the participants can be judged on the basis of events/experiences participants describe in order to clarify their answers. According to Potter and Levine-Donnerstein, a consequence of working with projective content then is that there has to be searched for the deeper meaning behind the manifests. One assessor therefore cannot be seen as objective when interpreting certain content. The interpretation will be reliable if it has been executed by multiple assessors coming up with the same conclusions. In order to determine the inter-rater agreement between the two assessors, Cohen's kappa has been calculated over the main categories shown in appendix D, table 1. Each assessor classified the qualitative data into the categories. Cohen's kappa then was calculated, resulting in a inter-rater agreement of 0,82, which can be interpreted as very good (Landis and Koch, 1977).



4 RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the research are discussed. Perceptions of both extramural and intramural participants on shaping the EOR are described. The results are illustrated by apposite quotes and other forms of data, such as examples of the outcomes of projective techniques used. The results are ordered by the two sub questions formulated regarding the human face of the organization and employees' needs in the employee-organization relationship.

4.1 HUMAN FACE OF THE ORGANIZATION

The first sub question concerned the matter by which the organization gets personified by employees in the employee-organization relationship and possible differences among distance workers and non-distance workers in this regard. This paragraph then contains extramural and intramural participants' perceptions of the organization as the opposite party in the employee-organization relationship involved, the amount of distance felt and the interference of specific organizational members.

4.1.1 Perceptions of the organization

Participants' perceptions of who the organization is as the opposite party in their relationship differed significantly among extramural and intramural participants. Extramural participants indicated they had an abstract image of the organization, not involving any organizational members. In contrast, intramural participants described (and drew) an image of the organization with a human face, including organizational members.

Extramural: anonymous institution

Extramural participants indicated that they had a completely abstract image of the organization. At first, when discussing the parties involved in the relationship, participants mainly explicitly mentioned that they did not see themselves as an individual employee as the one party involved in the relationship. Instead, they view themselves only as part of the entire (self-managing work) team, being a tiny tracing wheel within the entire mechanism. This is somewhat remarkable, because extramural employees might then be part of a self-managing work team, they however indicated that they individually finish up their round of clients every day. Because they can look into their planning from their homes through a digital application, they only come into 'the office' (a locally chosen building that mostly consists of just one room) every one or two weeks for a team meeting. A few exceptions come from participants who work at the highest level within the team. They indicated that, as a nurse, they sometimes felt a loner because they were the only one of that function in their team. When describing the organization, participants came up with diverse abstract images, none of them involving a person. They indicated that the organization to them was just a name, an anonymous institution, a building (sometimes more specifically the building that contains the headquarters or the 'office clerks') or a large fortress containing lots of different departments, illustrated by a large circle containing lots of small circles.

"The way I see it, here, there's a club of people running the store together. And that somewhere out there there's a name attached to it and that there's more, that image of that rest of the organization, well, simply does not exist. Absolutely not."

A lot of them directly mentioned that it was something they did not have any image of. Or it was something that did not mean anything to them, because they simply do not have anything to do with 'the organization' aside from their team, at least not at all directly. Figure 1 and 2 are illustrative examples of drawings extramural participants made.

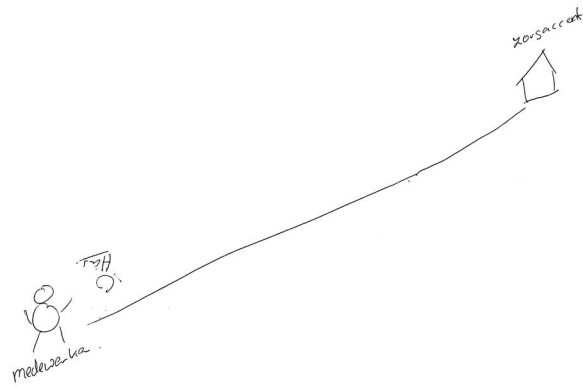


Figure 1

Drawing from an extramural participant: perception of the relationship involving the participant and the organization represented by an anonymous building at distance

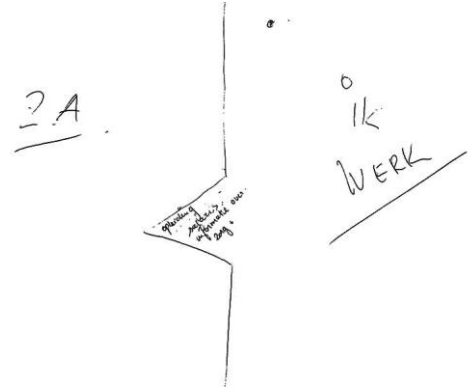


Figure 2

Drawing from an extramural participant: perception of the relationship involving the separation between participant and organization, except for the part needed

Intramural: hierarchy of people

When talking about their jobs and the organization they work at, intramural participants at first mainly referred to the location or, more specifically, the department they work at as their frame of reference. They indicated that they experienced a dichotomy with regard to the organization. On the one hand it felt warm and cozy, referring to their one location and/or department. On the other hand it felt distant and impersonal, referring to the entire organization.

"If the organization is the entire body, the department I work at, containing my direct colleagues and clients, are the arms of the body; that's my ZorgAccent, a piece of my life, of my heart."

In contrast to extramural participants, intramural participants mainly came up with a hierarchy of people, when asked to describe the image they have of the organization. This hierarchy started with themselves, some individually, others in relation to the entire work force (the caretakers). Up next, the different persons were named and placed above themselves in order of level of position applied by the organization, ending by the Board of Directors. It resulted in the forming of some sort of ladder of people. Eventually, when talking about their relationship with the organization more specifically, respondents mainly indicated that they referred to higher levels of management. To them, the absolute top embodied the organization; the ones who create the policies they have to execute.

"They give the organization a face."

A quote from an intramural participant clarifying his description of the organization being a hierarchy of people in different level of position, sheds light on the differences in perceptions between extra- and intramural participants:

"I see the organization as this hierarchy of people, because these are the people that I have to cope with."

Figure 3 and 4 are illustrating examples of drawings participants made.

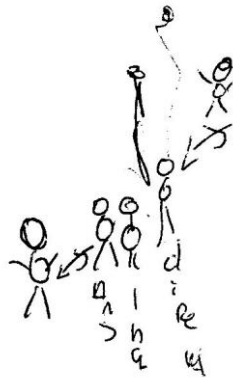


Figure 3

Drawing from an intramural participant: perception of the relationship involving organizational members with other levels of position and the amount of distance felt

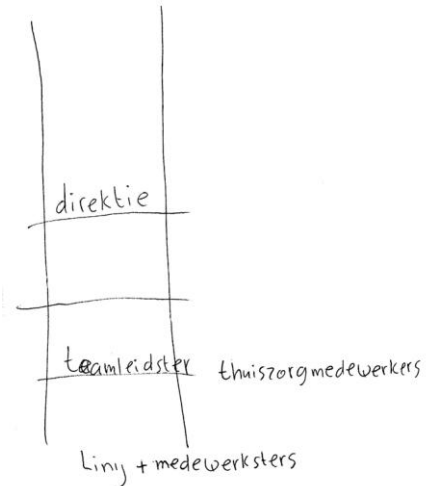


Figure 4

Drawing from an intramural participant: perception of the relationship involving a ladder of organizational members forming a hierarchy

4.1.2 Amount of distance felt

Both extra- and intramural participants indicated that the organization felt distanced to them. The cause of this distance experienced however differs among extramural and intramural participants. Extramural participants referred to them being physically distanced from the organization, which leads to anonymity. In contrast intramural participants indicated that the distance felt was caused by a lack of involvement of the organization, represented by higher management.

Extramural: physical distance

In continuation of the abstract image of the organization hold, extramural participants indicated that their team on the one hand and the organization on the other hand were to entire different worlds apart; they are somehow connected, but with a large amount of distance. A particular participant further clarified this by saying that

"this is partly because of the physical distance, being physically so far away from the headquarters, but also because it is anonymous; I do not have any physic image of someone. This anonymity causes a barrier, the organization does not feel known, in contrast to my team."

Another participant illustrated that the organization "is observing from a distance".

Intramural: lack of involvement

Intramural participants also indicated that the organization, embodied by higher levels of management, felt distanced. But, in contrast with extramural participants, this distance is not necessarily caused by physical distance. Instead, it is merely caused by the experienced lack of involvement of the organization. The intramural participants interviewed for this research also included a few employees who work on a small-scale location where they often work alone. They, in line with extramural participants, indicated that it sometimes felt like they were an island apart from the rest. But, in contrast to extramural participants, they did feel that they belonged to the organization. Another remarkable difference with the answers of extramural participants is that intramural participants explicitly indicate that the distance they feel is undesired, because of this sense of belonging to the rest of the organization.

"There's us, then a whole lot of nothing and far away there's the organization, up that hill. It's there, but you just get the feeling of them saying: just find it out yourself."

A lot of participants illustrated their feeling of being distanced from the organization by drawing a line in between the persons placed in the hierarchy embodying the organization; a line that lengthens according to the distance felt. Some explicitly drew a one-way direction from themselves towards other levels of the organization. Others involved a curve symbolizing the cumbrousness, limited approachableness or barriers experienced.

4.1.3 Interference of organizational members

Introducing the role organizational members play in their relationship with the organization, participants were asked to name the persons they were more or less in contact with. Both extra- and intramural participants came up with mainly three groups of organizational members: 1) colleagues from either the location they work at (intramural) or their self-managing team (extramural), 2) their direct supervisor and 3) higher management. A distinctly, less mentioned group of 'colleagues' contain the supportive departments, with which they only had to deal with in the rare case to make arrangements for some reason. Remarkably, no participant, whether being intra- or extramural, mentioned the 'other' group, intra- or extramural employees, in their answers. Intramural participants only talked about intramural employees and the same holds for extramural participants, the other way around. The exceptions come from two employees, one intramural and one extramural, whose answers at the same time clarified this remarkable finding. According to the intramural participant employees providing home care

"in principle belong to the organization as well, but because I do not have anything to do with them or, for instance, have to have a meeting with them, I do not mention them or involve them in my answers".

Both extra- and intramural participants indicated that they experienced a lot of contact with their colleagues and that these colleagues are very close to them. The contacts extramural participants have are, however, far more limited, since they solely complete their round of clients. Going into the office is no longer necessary; they can look into their planning from their homes using a digital application. Intramural participants further indicated that they experienced a lot of contact with their direct supervisor; he or she feels close to them and can be of influence on the image they have of the organization, being aware of him or her representing both parties in the relationship. Extramural participants experienced a less close bond with their direct supervisor, which in their case functions more as a coach. The coach truly belonged to the organization, but did not influence their image of the organization. Both intramural and extramural participants, at last, indicated that the contact they have with higher management stayed limited to a one-time experience (intramural) or messages read on the web based application, called 'the web'. Higher management therefore feels very far away. Intramural participants however did include specific names of the persons involved in their answers, while extramural participants hardly seem to know who they were talking about specifically. In contrast with extramural participants, intramural participants were unanimous about higher management representing the organization and therefore influenced their image of the organization in their relationship.

Although the answers of extramural and intramural participants showed some similarities now and then on the amounts of contact experience, intramural participants indicated significantly more needs in their relationships with organizational members than extramural participants. This is well illustrated by the relatively limited answers of extramural participants saying anything about their needs, compared to the amounts of spontaneously come up with answers from intramural participants.

Extramural: no need to reduce distances with organizational members

Extramural participants indicated that they do not need to be connected with or have any relationship with other organizational members but their team whatsoever, or reduce existing distances. The contact within their team then should be purely functional. The contacts they have within their team are necessary and important in order to enhance the efficiency of doing their job individually (for instance, knowing particularities about a certain client) and fixing certain things together as a self-managing work team. Therefore, some indicated that contact through e-mail for instance meets their needs. Besides the mainly practical function, some participants mentioned that closer contact also enhances the atmosphere, creating some sociability. They were however consistent about the team itself being enough for them.

"Contact with the rest outside the team is not that important; when true problems appear, it's fine if they approach me, but nothing further."

All but one indicated that they do not need their coach or higher management for instance to come any closer or to be involved with them whatsoever, except for the purely practical function that when they are in need of something specifically. And if so, they will knock on the door themselves at that moment.

"I do not need to have to do with them, I'm not interested in them. As long as they inform me about any fuss coming up, it's fine. And in the exceptional case that I truly do need them, I want them to be there for me."

The few things they did indicate as needs with regard to organizational members were then directed towards the colleagues within their team or with employees working in similar functions in other teams. These were mainly aimed at the ability to deliberate with coworkers about certain topics concerning the way how to handle certain situations in doing their job.

"Working in self-managing work teams does make you see colleagues even less, not having to come into the office anymore to pick up your planning for instance. I kind of miss that though, the informal talking about clients. You do not easily pick up the phone instead, because then you realize that that person might not be working at the moment and you do not want to be disturbing."

Intramural: diverse needs in relationships with organizational members

In contrast, intramural participants did mention all sorts of needs with regard to other organizational members. The amount of answers containing these increased considerably as the position of the person mentioned raised, representing the organization more. At first participants mentioned that they find it very important that the atmosphere among colleagues on the location or department they work at is pleasant and comfortable, including showing appreciation towards each other. Although some indicated that they did not necessarily have to like the other in order to have a good relationship or come at each other's door outside work, they value the relationship with their close colleagues. Some mentioned that they also find it important to be privately involved with close colleagues. Their needs with regard to the relationship with colleagues are however, as with extramural participants, for the main group of participants limited to the direct work environment of the location they work at. This contains a larger and more diverse group of colleagues than extramural participants, though.

"I'm going to resign my membership to the personnel association as well; the organization has become so enormous. I do not have to know who my colleague in Haaksbergen is."

On the other hand, a lot of solely intramural participants mentioned that they value the personnel association. A few also mentioned the reason of coming into contact with colleagues from other departments ("it fraternizes"). Some for instance indicated that that they would want to know who is situated where again, for instance when it comes to supportive departments. Intramural participants further indicated that the relationship with their direct supervisor is also important to them. In their perspective, the relationship should definitely be mutual; participants want to be on speaking terms, deliberating. Openness, honesty and receiving feedback are recurring concepts in their answers. But the relationship with the direct supervisor to them is not enough. They want to be involved with higher management and want higher management to be involved with them as well. They are therefore well aware of the direct supervisor also providing access to higher management, representing the organization.

"I understand that she is not always capable of implementing positive policies only and I do feel that I can talk to her about anything, but I also think that it should be a bit more: do something with it and give feedback. Because I myself cannot go any further."

All but one indicated that they feel the need to reduce the existing distance between them and higher management and evolve in a relationship with one another. Although it does not have to be on a weekly basis or become entirely personal, there should be contact; as long as it's at least there.

"The office of the managing director of the intramural line of business is situated at our location, but we never speak to each other. Come sit with us during lunch break, mix up and get to know

us. The distance determines the image you get, but the barrier should not be that high, so you will easily knock on her door as well when something's going on. It should be more open and a bit more social."

Higher management should show involvement and should know what is going on, not only in general, but also specifically with regard to their department. They should informally drop by every once and a while, have a cup of coffee with them, feel the atmosphere and talk to each other. Both managing director of the intramural line of business as the Board of Directors were named in this matter. This relationship should however also be mutual; participants indicated that they want to know more about what higher management is doing as well. They should for instance show up when the possibility of a conversation is created by the organization; the initiative should come from both the participants themselves (knocking on higher management's door directly) as from higher management (visit them). Feedback, openness and honesty again are recurring concepts in the answers.

"When the relationship with the policy makers is good, you can better understand each other, know the how and the why. It is important to satisfy employees by having conversations and deliberate."

4.2 EMPLOYEES' NEEDS IN THE RELATIONSHIP

The second sub question concerned the extent to which employees are in need of an expansion of the employee-organization relationship and possible differences among distance workers and non-distance workers in this regard. This paragraph then contains extramural and intramural participants' perceptions of the importance of the employee-organization relationship, the role organizations should play, the terms and conditions of the relationship, the mediating role of contact and strengthening attempts of the organization.

4.2.1 Importance of the relationship

The amount to which participants value the relationship with their employing organization differs among participants as well; extramural participants indicated that they are not in need of a relationship with the organization that much, while intramural participants value their relationship with the organization for several reasons.

Extramural: not necessary

Extramural participants already indicated to be less in need of a relationship with specific organizational members, except for their team. They then also indicated not to value the relationship with the organization that much in general. Two third said that they do not need to be involved in a relationship with the organization at all. They do not feel connected with the organization and do not want to be either, its fine the way it is, being distanced.

"If the organization does its job well up there and I do the same here, then it's complete".

According to them, you do not necessarily need to have a relationship with the organization in order to do the job, as you do with the team. Having a relationship would mean that they would have to dick into aspects of the organization more or to be in touch regularly. They would have to know all about what the other is doing, and that's something they do not need. For some, the idea of having a relationship with the organization even is a hardly imaginative, somewhat laughable idea.

"The organization is there to shape the course and point out the way we should work, whether or not you agree with it, and the coach is there when I need him and that's all I have to deal with from the organization. Macro, meso and micro scale. I do not miss anything, would not even know what I should miss. The connection is there with the team, but not with the organization."

The participants who indicated they do value the relationship with the organization, mentioned merely transactional reasons: because of the paycheck and the employment opportunity, personal development, the nature of the job. And, mentioned a lot, *"that little part I need from the organization"* aiming at the facilities the organization needs to provide for.

"Because you simply cannot do it all yourself, that's why you need them."

A few indicated that they find the relationship with the organization important in order to represent the organization towards for instance clients (e.g. being able to give answers to questions).

Intramural: mutual relationship

Intramural participants, on the other hand, indicated that they find the relationship with the organization important and name several reasons for it. A few of them also mentioned that they valued the nature of the work and their colleagues very much. But to them that was not just the only reason for valuing their relationship with the organization as well. Compared to extramural participants, intramural participants mentioned the ability to represent the organization as a reason of finding the relationship with the organization important more often. However, not just in order to answer questions from external people, but because they find it important to stand behind the vision of the organization more from an intrinsic value.

"I work here and then you will have to be able to get along with each other and to a large extent find yourself to be in line with the organization to be able to work in that organization. Together you deliver a product which makes you happy and to me that's a warm house."

Other reasons for valuing their relationship with the organization, only mentioned by intramural participants, are to be taken seriously, to be heard and to be able to let the organization know what's going on.

"Conversation is necessary, which makes you take each other seriously and become involved. It's something that belongs to a relationship."

By having a relationship that includes such aspects, together you will be able to make improvements and make progress. Eventually, mentioned a lot, having a relationship with the organization is important in order to be able to work more pleasantly; to be able to better understand why things happen which prevents you from making a row and do not like things anymore. To stay motivated.

"Now this has to be pulled out of the satisfaction of the clients, not from a pat on the back, because that does not happen."

4.2.2 Organization's role

Consistent with the needs indicated, intramural and extramural participants have different perspectives about what role the organization should play in the relationship with employees. Extramural participants view the organization purely as a facilitator, arranging the things they need. Intramural participants on the other hand want the organization to function as an interlocutor, stimulating a mutual relationship.

Extramural: the organization as a facilitator

Extramural participants indicated that the organization should function purely as a facilitator; the organization is there to arrange things for you. They should provide practical things, such as a paycheck, because you simply need them and for those things you are dependent of the organization. The relationship with the organization to them is truly an employer-employee relationship; purely businesslike. For some, it could just even have been a different organization they would work for. An answer from one of the participants describing the organization imagined as a person illustrates this perspective on the relationship well:

"It would actually be nothing from me; they pay me and that's it. You do not know him, do not know who it is, there's too much distance. But it does not have to become something either. It's work and that's that."

The organization should be the face to the outside world, and should therefore for instance make sure that the brand awareness is there; it should be the obtainer for the team. The organization should be supporting, thinking along, observing and caring. But all of this at a distance. The participants indicated they want to stand on their own feet and solve things themselves as much as possible. And if they truly cannot work it out themselves, they would consult a certain discipline from the organization.

"The organization should of course still take charge of a part, otherwise it would just be our own little business. We should have to decide for ourselves, but still have a rank and file for the

things you need. Because when it comes to certain things, I do not have the legitimate opportunities nor the knowledge, and I do not want them either."

According to the extramural participants, the organization therefore does not have to initiate in approaching them.

"When I need something, I will let the organization know."

Intramural: the organization as an interlocutor

Intramural participants, on the other hand, indicated that the organization should have more the role of an interlocutor in the relationship with its employees. In their perspective, you're doing it together, being a part of the organization. When asked about their view on the relationship, almost all participants indicated that they felt it had become impersonal, which has made it feel distant and superficial. Participants no longer have the idea that they know people and feel like they themselves are just a number, one out of many. They indicated that they thought this was caused partly by the organization growing larger, but also because of the lack of involvement felt; both parties not knowing what was going on with the other.

"It feels as if I'm one out of many, not special to the organization, at the bottom of the ladder. I do not see any involvement. I do not know who I have to approach for what, it's not transparent. Management and the people on the work floor are being ripped apart further and further because of the long lines."

But all of them also indicated that this was an undesired situation. Although some indicated that it should still be a professional work relationship, they would want the relationship to become more personal and open. Oftentimes participants described the clear contrast between the feelings they experience on their own department or location and the entire organization. Their own department or location involving colleagues mutually (many times including their direct supervisor) on the one hand felt friendly, warm and convivial. The organization, represented by higher management, on the other hand felt distant, stiff, dense, hard to reach and rather cold.

"I sometimes do experience appreciation, but they should also just drop by for a conversation. The barrier should not be that high, so you would knock on each other's door more easily. It would therefore never become a friend; if the openness does not come from both parties, then it dies out pretty quick."

Although it does not necessarily have to be in-depth, as some do feel with their close colleagues, they would want to have an open atmosphere. Mutuality, easy accessibility, involvement and conversation were recurring concepts in their answers.

"You should feel more as one."

4.2.3 Terms and conditions

Obligations of the organization

When asked about the expectations participants have with regard to the obligations of the organization in their relationship, extramural participants named significantly less expectations per person compared to intramural participants. In total, participants came up with about 40 different expectations. A large share of the total amount of expectations was mainly mentioned by intramural participants and a forth was mentioned by intramural participants only. Besides, when looking at these expectations by manner of transactional versus relational aspects, it becomes evident that extramural participants mainly came up with transactional aspects. Intramural participants placed more emphasis on relational aspects. Table 2 shows the types of expectations participants mentioned, based on a coding scheme showing the total range of expectations mentioned (table 2 in appendix D).

Table 2

Number of Expectations towards the Organization Mentioned by Participants, Categorized and Ordered by Merely Transactional Versus Relational Aspects.

		Extramural participants	Intramural participants	Total
Transactional	Primary working conditions	19	10	29
	Secondary working conditions	24	12	36
	Job related aspects	42	20	62
	Fit with personal situation	1	5	6
Relational	Attitude towards employees	21	46	67
	Working atmosphere	3	13	16
	Involvement	5	30	35
	Communication and interaction	15	46	61
	Total	130	182	312

Extramural: mainly transactional

The expectations mentioned a lot by extramural participants referred to good working conditions. These working conditions contain the paycheck and the employment opportunity, personnel development, boundary conditions for doing the job (such as receiving a uniform and other resources), guidance and the offering of solutions when a situation appears that the job they do know for some reason cannot be done anymore. And, mentioned only by extramural participants, receiving compensations for made costs and efforts.

"When things are expected from me as an employee, such as printing things out and recharging my work phone at home, it should be compensated. Now I do a lot in my free time at home, but then you do not write down all the time spent."

Another important aspect concerns the equal treatment with regard to the things they are offered by the organization. Everybody should get the same chances when it comes to education or compensations for instance.

"I notice different norms to be practiced, but everybody should get the same opportunities, because it leads to incomprehension and friction mutually. Equal monks, equal caps."

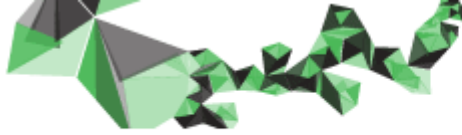
The possibility to knock on the door (from preferably the responsible department directly) when they need something, is also mentioned a lot. This is linked to that small piece they need from the organization mentioned before. Making use of each other's qualities therefore has been mentioned by a few, as well as helping each other out when it comes to telling or asking other teams how they can do the job. In line with the set aside role of the organization, extramural participants also named getting independence and responsibilities a lot as important job related aspects.

"Not too much interference by the organization now that we work as a self-managing work team, or overlaid rules. That freedom, space, I find very important."

Some on the other hand mentioned that the organization however should provide a good picture and brand awareness to the outside world, and should come along with new developments. They should however give new developments a change to be well implemented as well.

"All those changes in a short period of time makes me tired. When new things are implemented, they should get a change as well, not that it's just about to get running and it gets changed again."

They then also expect to be briefed about new developments, mentioned a lot, and be clear about the things that will be expected from them in this matter.



Intramural: mainly relational

Some merely transactional aspects, such as a decent contract and good conditions, personnel development, job security and not having to travel so far, also came along in the answers of some intramural participants as positive aspects. Besides, like extramural employees, a few mentioned equal treatment, a progressive attitude and versatility, responsibilities and a certain amount of freedom in their job as things they valued as well. However, the greater part of intramural participants came up with merely relational aspects when asked what they truly expected from the organization; the matters they thought the organization should offer them.

"If you look at it purely in black and white, it comes down to delivering a product and receiving money instead. That's the arrangement we've made, so that at least has to be good. But if that was the case, then I could have just been a self-employed earner as well. But you work at an organization and therefore you're doing it together. Together you stand by the product. If that relationship then is not good, if there's a hitch somewhere, at any level whatsoever, then I go to work with less pleasure. It has to be correct in the way that I do not have to merry anyone, but I do want an open relationship. I want to be able to approach my team manager, tell her what happened and I want to be taken seriously."

Mentioned a lot by intramural participants was that they expected the organization to offer a listening ear. They expect to be heard and to be taken seriously. They want the organization to be involved, know what is going on, ask their opinion and involve in a dialogue.

"Do not say: you have to, but have a conference and make it work together."

For many participants, having contact, through a straight line, is therefore a must. They want the organization, represented by the higher levels of management, to show their faces, drop by every once and a while and have a chat. This was mentioned by almost all of the participants. Not massively though, but face to face, without formalities.

"What do you mean, a new year reception, why do not you stop by at our department once and have a nice drink."

And although some mentioned they want to keep private stuff private, participants unanimously indicated they want a personal atmosphere which is open and honest. Transparency, for instance about what's going on in the organization, the financial situation, norms and standards and the why of things, was a constant recurring concept in their answers. Besides keeping them posted, another oftentimes mentioned aspect is to receive feedback again whenever they were briefed about something in the past or indicated something towards the organization. This in order to understand the full picture.

"There should however be continuation as well, feedback, also when things cannot be worked out or turned out differently, in order to get an understanding of things and create respect. If you do not hear anything, you just assume that nothing is being done anyhow."

Receiving appreciation is another expectation intramural participants mentioned. They did however not agree about the form by which appreciation should be showed. Some indicated they were positive about the small gifts received sometimes at special occasions, such as receiving a gift for Christmas or cake at the 'Day of the employee'. Others indicated that appreciation should not only be showed at stamped occasions.

"It does not have to be big, it's about them showing appreciation. It does say that they think about me and at least know my name."

Others however explicitly mentioned that they did not see certain gifts as a good way of showing appreciation. Instead, they rather want the organization to show some interest in what they are doing by, for instance, personally (higher management) dropping by. Or they want the organization to show more willingness and enthusiasm for its clients, which is very important to participants. It has been said that the personnel association is seen as a concrete way of showing appreciation towards employees by the organization as well. For some it is even preferred rather than gifts. But the personnel association has also been mentioned separately as something they value and/or expect the organization to maintain.

"No receptions or useless gifts, let them transcribe those compliments personally. I'd rather go out with the personnel association then; you choose to do that yourself and therefore is not at the cost of the clients."

Obligations of the employee

The expectations participants have with regard to their own obligations towards the organization are far more limited in number (about 10 different kinds of obligations), compared to the perceptions about the obligations of the organization towards them (about 40 different kinds of obligations). Table 3 in appendix D gives a coding scheme showing the total range of expectations mentioned. In line with the previous section, intramural participants named more expectations than extramural participant. They also placed slightly more emphasis on relational rather than transactional aspects. This last difference, however, is less evident compared with the previous section.

At first, both intramural and extramural participants indicated they expect themselves to function well and be involved with their clients.

"Delivering quality care, professionally but also socially."

Representing the organization is another aspect mentioned. Extramural participants aimed at being able to answer questions from external people and advertise. Intramural participants, being in the majority, aimed merely at carrying out the vision of the organization. Most intramural participants, however, mentioned things that had something to do with proactive behavior towards the organization; being open, bringing things up and not just play a waiting game and complain, conversing, listening to each other.

"It has to come from both sides; seeing each other more often and dropping by, but also contacting myself. It strengthens and creates more satisfaction."

Intramural participants also indicated that they expect themselves to keep thinking along with the organization.

"Have a sense of responsibility and keep being critical towards myself and the organization. Good communication is essential."

Besides that, some participants mentioned that they should take an interest in the organization, knowing what's going on, and keep developing themselves with regard to their specialism as well. A number of extramural participants on the other hand also mentioned being proactive is what they expect themselves to be, but they merely aimed at indicating their needs. Being amicable, staying developed and thinking along with the organization (both coming from a participant who turned out to be an exception more often) and being flexible (compensated), were additional, though exceptional answers from extramural participants.

4.2.4 The mediating role of contact

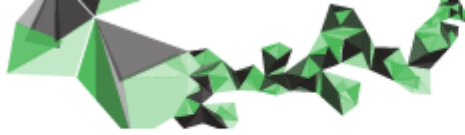
For extramural participants, the mere function of contact then should be purely practical. In contrast, intramural participants indicated they value contact for many reasons, mainly relational.

Extramural: practical function of contact

Overall, two main reasons were mentioned by extramural participants for valuing contact. At first in order to be informed about developments in the organization (new developments being implemented which have something to do with them), but mainly about developments within the team (hearing particularities from colleagues). Second, in order to arrange things you need.

"Good contact is necessary with regard to the people you have to be dealing with in order to arrange things."

Besides, a few mentioned the broadening function of contact; by talking to other people every once and a while, such as employees working in other teams, you will be able to get a broader view on for instance the way to work things out in your own team. Participants indicated that relational outcomes resulting from contact are less or, for some, not at all of interest.



"Contact could create a bond, but I do not need that with the organization."

The exceptional participants that did refer to relational aspects in some way mentioned the examples of personally handing over a certain gesture of gratitude towards the team (instead of just announcing it by mail) and having a physical image of people in the organization, a picture. It would make you understand people better, knowing their faces, and would lower the barrier. They do not need to get to know others though. The digital application extramural participants have to work with, making them able to register their hours, use e-mail, access all sorts of information, read announcements and also socialize and converse through some sort of forum, therefore meets their needs. But, in line with their needs with regard to the organization mentioned earlier, they only use the web whenever they need something.

"The web is a good mean; I can easily check upon it at home. Compared to phone, the web does not disturb you when you're busy doing other things. But I restrict myself to registering hours and staying informed about particularities concerning clients coworkers reported. The web is also important because it contains my pay slip and, if necessary, you're able to help other teams out with questions they have."

Intramural: relational function of contact

In contrast, intramural participants value contact for many reasons. They indicated that contact is important in order to know what is going on in the organization on the one hand. And on the other hand for the organization, represented by higher levels of management, to know what is going on with them.

"And, besides that, that I get confirmed that they know what is going on, because sometimes you just can assume that that's the case, but you do not always know."

Contact further creates mutual understanding, mentioned a lot, and respect, because you know more about the other and his or her motives.

"Contact is very important so your judgment is not just based on what you see and might interpret wrongly".

And because of that, eventually it creates more satisfaction. According to intramural participants, contact further reduces distances between people and levels of people. It lowers existing barriers so that ideas are more easily brought forward. Possibilities open up for having a conversation in which you take each other seriously, and together you can make improvements.

"More contact evidently means more involvement."

Another reason for valuing contact mentioned was that, besides being able to perform better in the way that you will be able to collaborate better, having contact makes it more personal. It creates a sociable work climate which makes you go to work with more pleasure. The personnel association for instance creates an atmosphere that is not strictly businesslike anymore, but not entirely personal either. Contact, at last, makes you feel more like one.

"Otherwise you would be a loner and that does not work."

Intramural participants therefore indicated that they prefer means of communication that are more personal and direct, face to face contact with the people involved. The already addressed informally visiting by higher management is again a recurring concept, besides knocking on each other's door. And although participants indicated they prefer small-scale meetings, they indicated that when the organization arranged some sort of gathering, they should go there too. In their perspective, this opens up another possibility to contact each other.

4.2.5 Strengthening attempts

Finally, a difference can be found in participants' perceptions of organizational attempts in building or maintaining the relationship with them. Extramural participants indicated that they do not need the organization to make certain attempts. In contrast, intramural participants would not only open up to it, but would be enthusiastic about strengthening the relationship as well, valuing the relationship. By showing them a cartoon which represented a situation where the organization knocks on the door of the participant working at his or her location, participants were able to reflect on their thoughts and feelings. A lot of both extramural and intramural participants indicated that at first they would be kind of

surprised, because it's a situation that never truly occurs unannounced. Therefore they would automatically think that something must be wrong. Extramural participants' first response was even more suspicious (*"what is it this time"*), referring to the changes they would then be informed about.

Extramural: no need to strengthen the relationship

The greater part of the extramural participants, on the one hand, indicated that they do not really need the organization to make certain attempts in strengthening their relationship.

"It's fine this way. If they stop by more often a bond would indeed probably be created, but I do not need that from the organization. For me it's enough if they keep me informed about upcoming changes. And if I need them, I will look them up."

Some participants could not even imagine anything like the proposed situation in the cartoon. Or, in a more figurative meaning, how a relationship with the organization could or should be shaped.

"I cannot think of any way they could strengthen bonds. But they do not have to either."

They themselves do not really feel the need to intensify the contact with the organization or strengthen their relationship in another way. However, if the situation occurred, they would be open to it.

"I would perceive it to be neither positive nor negative, but I've got nothing to hide and if it rains I will let them in too."

An illustrating example of extramural participants' view on organizational attempt can be found in figure 5. This figure contains the cartoon presented to them and the filled in thought and speech bubbles (translated). The location name has been left out for confidentiality reasons.

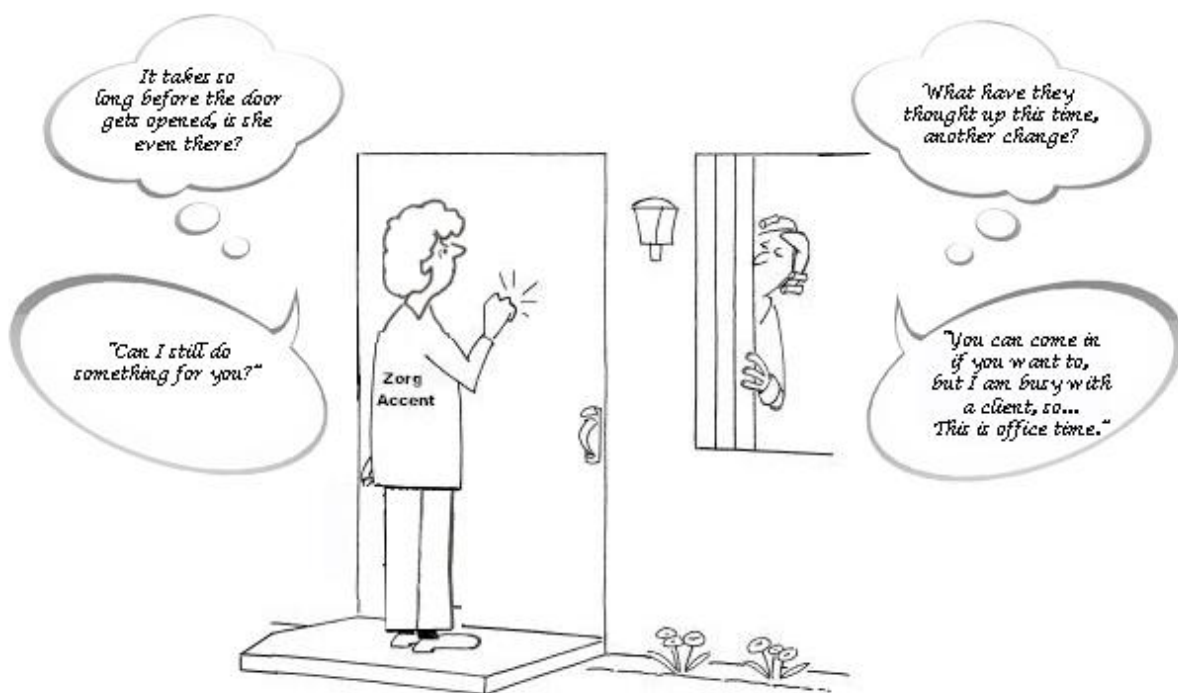


Figure 5
Example of extramural participant's filled in cartoon

Intramural: welcoming organizational attempts

Compared to extramural participants, intramural participants were more easily able to put themselves into the proposed situation. Almost all intramural participants indicated that they would be very positive about strengthening their relationship and welcome it. The organization should not specifically have to

work on a relationship with them on an entirely personal level though. That, if desired, would be more something among colleagues, including the direct supervisor.

"Drinking coffee with the boss should become way more common."

To them, strengthening the relationship is a very important thing to do that should not be forgotten; to be involved with each other and show interest, to form a unit and fraternize.

"It's also important to show your personnel that they are appreciated by putting an interest in what they do. It motivates."

Together you will be able to deliver a good product, as long as that distance gets reduced. They however are conscious about developing such kind of relationship being hard to maintain in a large organization and a process that takes time. But

"it should not be an excuse not to do it. It's something that needs to grow, you did not immediately have that with the team manager either; at first you need to approach each other more often, and they do not have to become friends, but then the personal tint will come automatically."

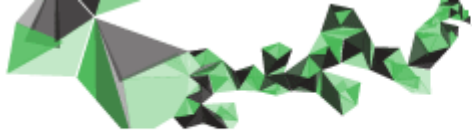
A critical, yet exceptional comment made by a participant however was that the organization should however not ask to much of their employees.

"They should not tire out their employees though. For instance with things only the organization itself thinks it's important, such as corporate design or something like that."

An illustrating example of intramural participants' view on organizational attempt can be found in figure 6. This figure contains the cartoon presented to them as an introduction to the topic of organizational attempts in strengthening their relationship and the filled in thought and speech bubbles (translated). The location name has been left out for confidentiality reasons.



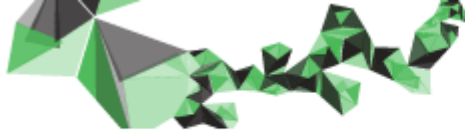
Figure 6
Example of intramural participant's filled in cartoon



Appropriate means for strengthening the relationship

When asked about the means by which the organization in their perception should attempt to strengthen their relationship, extramural participants hardly mentioned anything, because strengthening this relationship was hard to imagine or because they did not feel the need. The few participants that did name something mentioned offering the ability to offer help when you cannot work things out yourself, showing appreciation through gifts, offering more freedom of choice (for instance when it comes to which courses to take), offering information and giving feedback whenever something is brought forward.

Intramural participants indicated that the organization, represented by higher levels of management, should do this by showing their faces more often. Further by mutually contacting each other, directly and without a barrier, based on open communication and conversation. And by giving feedback afterwards as well. Showing appreciation also strengthens the relationship according to participants, whether this is done by giving physical gifts and compliments or just by showing interest. Other means that were mentioned by loners were asking their opinion, being open and offering information, organizing a trip and investigating in personnel development.



5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this research provide insight in the influence of distance working on employees' shaping of the employee-organization relationship. In order to be able to address this research topic properly, conclusions are given per sub question formulated earlier. The first sub questions concerned the matter by which the organization is personified by employees and possible differences among distance workers and non-distance workers in this regard. The second sub question concerned the extent to which employees are in need of an expansion of the employee-organization relationship and possible differences among distance workers and non-distance workers in this regard. At last, practical recommendations are given based on the results of this research.

5.1 HUMAN FACE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Based on the results of this research described in paragraph 4.1, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between distance and non-distance workers in the extent to which they perceive the organization to have a human face. Distance workers seem to have a completely abstract image of the organization. They do not perceive their relationship with the organization to be rather personal, not including any organizational members. Instead, the organization seems to be something they do not have a clear image of, resulting in the portraying of the organization as abstract concepts like an anonymous institution, building, name or bastion. They therefore do not seem to feel personally connected to 'the' organization.

Non-distance workers, however, seem to personify the organization as the opposite party involved in the employee-organization relationship. Although their frame of reference mainly concerns the location or department they work at, non-distance workers include specific organizational members in the perception of their relationship with the organization. Starting with themselves, as an individual employee or in relation to other employees working at the same level or position, their image of the organization follows a hierarchy of people based on their level of position within the organization. The relationships with these organizational members in higher levels of positions experienced then forms the image of their relationship with the organization. Eventually, the persons who are situated in the higher management of the organization, the absolute top, seem to embody the organization. They form the human face of the organization. The relationship with them directly influences the quality of the relationship non-distance workers experience with regard to the entire organization.

The results indicated that the difference in perspective between distance and non-distance workers might be caused by the fact that distance workers, in contrast to non-distance workers, simply do not have anything to do with 'the' organization or its organizational members besides their self-managing work team (in the case of this research). At least not at all directly. Compared to non-distance workers, distance workers experience less contact with organizational members outside their team since they work more independently. It seems that the physical distance between the employee and the organization then causes anonymity and that therefore distance workers perceive both parties to involve two separated worlds; themselves on the one side, working individually (though part of a self-managing work team), and the organization on the other side. Non-distance workers can, however, experience distance as well. But distance then is felt because of perceived lack of involvement of higher management representing the organization in their perception. This distance caused by lack of involvement can still make the relationship with the organization feel rather impersonal. It emphasizes their feeling of belonging to the organization.

5.2 EMPLOYEES' NEEDS IN THE EMPLOYEE-ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP

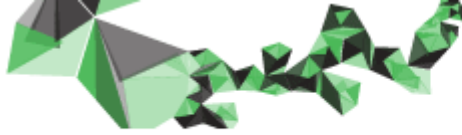
Besides their perceptions of the parties involved in the employee-organization relationship, distance and non-distance workers seem to have entirely different needs with regard to this relationship. Compared to non-distance workers, distance workers seem to find it hard to imagine having a (high-quality)

relationship with the organization and do not seem to value this relationship that much in general. Their needs with regard to their work relationships, including the employee-organization relationship, are limited to practical reasons. Distance workers do not feel the need to involve in more high-quality relationships with the organization in general or other organizational members but their direct colleagues (the self-managing work team) for other reasons, or reduce existing distances. They for instance do not need their direct supervisor (coach in the case of self-managing work teams) or higher management to come any closer or to be involved with them except for the purely practical reason that they are in need of something specifically. And, if so, they will knock on the door themselves at that moment. And if they do value the relationship, it seems to be merely for transactional reasons. In the perception of distance workers, the organization should function purely as a facilitator; the organization is there to arrange things for you. The organizations should provide practical things, such as a paycheck, because you simply need them and for those things you are dependent of the organization. The relationship with the organization to them truly seems to be an employer-employee relationship; purely businesslike. The terms and conditions with regard to the obligations both parties have in the relationship then are limited to mainly transactional aspects; doing your job well and, in return, receive good working conditions, such as financial compensations, employment opportunity and personal development. Besides that, the organization should function as the face to the outside world. The mere function of contact should then be purely practical as well, staying limited to be informed about developments concerning the organization and mainly the team, and to arrange the things you need. Digital means of communication which are fast and easy to access at their initiative then seem to meet the needs of distance workers pretty well. Other than providing certain opportunities to point out their needs to the organization, distance workers do not really seem to need the organization to make attempts in strengthening their relationship.

In contrast, non-distance workers do seem to value the relationship with the organization for several, merely relational reasons. Since they include specific organization members in their perception of the relationship with the organization, they seem to have all sorts of needs in the relationship with its organizational members as well. Although their needs in the relationship with colleagues are mainly limited to the direct work environment of the location they work at, they do would want to know who is situated where in the organization, including employees from supportive departments for instance. The relationship with their direct supervisor further is also important to them, a relationship where openness, honesty and receiving feedback should be key concepts. But the relationship with their direct supervisor to them does not seem to be enough; they want to be involved with higher management and want higher management to be involved with them as well, since they eventually embody the organization in the perspective of non-distance workers. They feel the need to reduce the existing distance between themselves and higher management and evolve in a more high-quality relationship with one another. The organization, eventually represented by this higher management, then should take more the role of an interlocutor in the relationship with its employees. Although it should still maintain to be a professional work relationship, they would want the relationship to become more personal and open. Mutuality and reciprocity are key concepts that should be taken for granted. Compared to distance workers, the terms and conditions with regard to the obligations of both parties in the relationship then involve way more, and merely relational aspects. For them, contact is valued for many reasons. Although the organization should not specifically have to work on a relationship with them on an entirely personal level, they seem to be very positive about strengthening their relationship and welcome it. This then should be done by merely personal means of communication, enhancing the mutual relationship. They however are conscious about developing such kind of relationship being hard to maintain in a large organization and a process that takes time.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this research, distance and non-distance workers should be viewed and approached distinctively in the context of the employee-organization relationship. Organizations wanting to strengthen the relationship with their employees should at first acknowledge that they are dealing with two entire different groups of employees with differing perspectives on who the organization is and what the relationship looks like to them. And two groups of employees with entirely differing needs in



this regard. Organizations then should adapt their policies concerning their intercourse with employees on the needs of these specific groups of employees distinctively.

In the case of non-distance workers this would mean that organizations should at first acknowledge the important influence higher management has on the image employees have of the organization. This is important, since in the perspective of non-distance workers, higher management personifies the organization. They should make organization members situated in higher management levels of position aware of their position as the human face of the organization as well, pointing out the consequences their behavior might have on the internal image of the organization.

Organizations should further focus on establishing open and, most important, mutual relationships with their employees. But also among their organizational members in all levels of position, considering the including of other organizational members by employees in their perceptions of their relationship with the organization. These relationships include relationships in height, involving the direct supervisor and higher management, as well as in width, involving employees working at the same level of position. Although this last one should be limited to the location non-distance workers work at, they should have to provide means why which employees still know who is situated where in the organization elsewhere. Short lines, personal communication and feedback should then be central in these relationships. They should further take into account the relational aspects non-distance workers expect from the organization, mainly being responsible for the terms and conditions of the relationship in their perspective. Conversation should be a key concept in the relationships and attempts should be made to reduce existing distances. Contact then is essential and organizations should maintain their attempts in strengthening their relationship with non-distance workers. Though not necessarily on an entirely personal level, but still by using merely personal means of communication.

In the case of distance workers, organizations should be aware of employees not having a clear vision of the organization. Because the organization is more anonymous to distance workers, for them it is hard to give shape to this relationship. Despite, organizations should not have to put all its effort in reducing existing distances and establishing more in-depth relationships with them since distance workers are less in need of this. Instead, they are more focused on their specific job and, in the case of self-managing work teams, the team they work with is enough for them. Organizations should then consider their role merely as a facilitator. They should focus on creating possibilities for distance workers to easily indicate their needs and allow easy access to these facilities. This should be done by creating short lines, instead of focusing on further intensifying the relationship. They should further take into account the transactional aspects distance workers expect from the organization since these are mainly responsible for the terms and conditions of the relationship in their perspective, the relationship being merely businesslike. Contact then should be used for practical reasons, staying limited to informing them about new developments coming up and procedures around arranging the things they need.

6 DISCUSSION

In this final chapter, a reflection is given on the executed research. At first, the contribution the research possibly has made will be discussed. Next, some critical notes are made with regard to the used research method and the interpretation of the results, which eventually led to the making of some suggestions for further research.

6.1 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTION

From an empirical point of view, this research further adds to previously done research on the employee-organization relationship in two ways. At first, this research gives a better understanding of the EOR from an employee perspective. In existing literature, the EOR continued to be a somewhat vague concept compared to other work relationships. Although it has been said that there might be certain agents representing the organization as the opposite party involved in the EOR (e.g. Ferris et al., 2009; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Shore et al, 2004), researchers have never addressed this topic properly and further explored the role of organizational members in the EOR. This research then has provided insight in employees' perceptions of the organization as the dyadic partner in the EOR and the manner by which the organization is personified by organizational members. Although the results indicate that the organization might be embodied by organizational members situated in higher management in the perspective of traditional, non-distance workers, it can be concluded that the EOR is distinct from other work relationships such as LMX, concerning the relationship between the employee and direct supervisor Wayne et al. (1997). It then contributes to the understanding of the image formation of the EOR from an employee perspective. Besides that, this research sheds more light on employees' needs in the EOR. In past research, the main focus was on the enhancement of the EOR, encouraged by its promising outcomes from an organization perspective. The assumption was made that developing more high-quality relationships also meets the needs of the employee. This research then gives a more thorough understanding of the needs of employees in the EOR and their response to organizational attempts in strengthening the relationship. The results of this explorative research on both issues provide researchers with more concrete clues for further investigating the EOR from an employee perspective as new questions arise. Researchers could for instance address the personification of the organization by employees more thorough by focusing more on the causes and effects of the image formation and the steadiness of this image. Researchers could also shed more light on employees' needs more specifically, for instance with regard to the role of contact in the relationship and the means of communication more concretely.

Second, this research contributes to existing EOR literature by explicitly incorporating context for the first time, exploring the influence of distance working as a key development in recent changes in the work environment on employees' shaping the EOR. The results indicating significant differences between distance and non-distance workers with regard to their perceptions on and needs concerning the employee-organization relationship, could stimulate researchers to further investigate this area of research, which is still relatively unknown. The results for instance indicated that the terms and conditions of the EOR seem to become more transactional rather than relational (MacNeil, 1985) for distance workers, extending the thought of Beard and Edwards (1995). At the same time distance workers seem to feel less emotionally connected to the organization. Considering the universally agreed upon role of social exchange theory, in which individuals strive for balance in their exchange relationships (Blau, 1964), this might question the amount of inducements offered to distance workers by the organization. The results could further give rise to further research on the influence of other more concrete upcoming developments in recent work environments, such as home working, contingent work and virtual work. Differences in employees' perceptions and needs in the EOR might also occur significantly in these types of work forms. Finally, the differences revealed also give rise to further research on the influence of changing work environment on employees' perceptions and needs in work relationships other than the EOR.

From a practical point of view, the results of this research provide organizations with insight into employees' perceptions with regard to the relationship they have with their employing organization and the influence distance working has on this. At first, insight concerning the way employees perceive the organization as the opposite party involved in the employee-organization relationship, can make organizations understand their employees better and create a clearer vision of what this employee-organization relationship looks like according to employees, what it is exactly that organizations are so willing to work on. The results provide organizations with an understanding of the role particular organizational members play in the employee-organization relationship and the matter to which this relationship then differs from other employment relationships. When it comes to non-distance workers, this relationship might to be highly effected by the actions of organizational members situated in higher management, because of non-distance workers personifying the organization. Having this information, organizations can anticipate on this, for instance, by using these organizational members as key figures in working on their relationships. Knowing that distance workers, on the other hand, have a far more abstract image of the employee-organization relationship, not involving organizational members, organizations can become aware of this relationship being more separated from other employment relationships and therefore should be approached distinctively.

Second, with this insight, organizations can be able to adapt their policies concerning the intercourse with organizational members more specifically to the needs of employees, especially when it comes to fast moving developments in recent work environment. The results on employees' perceptions with regard to the matter of importance of the relationship, the role organizations should play, the terms and conditions of the relationship for both parties involved, being either merely transactional when it comes to distance workers or merely relational when it comes to non-distance workers, and the role of contact in this regard, provide organizations with practical clues on the way they should establish, maintain and strengthen their relationships more successfully.

6.2 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

At last, some critical notes are made mainly with regard to the research method and sample used in this research, which has implications for the generalization and interpretation of the results. The executed research concerned an explorative research which functions as a first attempt in providing insight in employees' perceptions with regard to the employee-organization relationship and the influence of distance working in this regard. The limited and specific sample that has been used in this research limits the ability to generalize the results to other organizations, branches and/or work situations. The participants used were all coming from one large organization operating in a specific branch of industry in a specific area. The participants further did not include much variety in characteristics such as gender and type of function. More research should then be conducted on this subject in order to confirm the conclusions formulated here, making use of other research methods than the one used in this research and more diverse samples.

Another reason for using different samples of employees for future research in this area, concerns the linking of the results to concrete new organizational forms including ones where distance working is essential. Because the researched group of employees working distantly have never worked otherwise (unless they have changed their profession in the past), their answers cannot be copied one on one to situations where employees for instance have been working at a location at first and then started working distantly or from their homes, due to changing organizational forms. The intramural participants used in this research for instance seemed to be well aware of the fact that the organization has grown larger and therefore has become more impersonal compared to what is used to be. Extramural participants on the other hand did not get much notice of this development because of the physical distance and the fact that they are working in self-managing work teams, standing on their own feet anyway, and therefore might not need the personal touch intramural participants do. Extramural participants then might not know what they miss out on, because they simply have never worked otherwise. This might have influenced their perceptions and need with regard to the employee-organization relationship. Besides that, although the participants used as a sample of distance workers involved employees who worked on an individual basis, the results may have been effected by their way

of working in self-managing work teams, which could for instance have influenced their needs with regard to the relationships with direct colleagues. Future researchers should therefore focus on more diverse groups of employees from different organizations operating in different branches of industry in order to increase the generalization of the results.

Besides more specific limitations of the research method and sample, this research only takes into account one point of view, the employee perspective. Many other perspectives can be adopted when it comes to the influence of distance working on the EOR. Literature on the EOR can be further explored from a management perspective. Research could be conducted on the influence distance working has on organizations' policies with regard to the EOR, the terms and conditions of the relationship and organizational attempts in strengthening the relationship. Research could further focus on the consequences of distance working for the balance between work and private life and its contribution to the society. The goal of this research however was to address the current gaps in the literature by further exploring the EOR from an employee perspective. The research then has offered a good contribution, since literature on the EOR is especially lacking this point of view, while the developments in recent work environment have major implications for employees' perceptions and needs in the EOR.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

POSTER SPREAD UNDER INTRAMURAL PARTICIPANTS



Zou je mij willen helpen?

Voor mijn studie doe ik onderzoek naar de **behoeftes van (zorg)medewerkers**; Vind je het belangrijk om een intensieve relatie met de organisatie te hebben of hoeft dat niet zo? Waar heb je behoefte aan (bv. veel of juist minimaal contact, met wie en op welke manier)? Wat verwacht je van de organisatie (en van jezelf)? Enz.

Hiervoor ben ik dan ook **op zoek naar 20 intramurale (zorg)medewerkers** die ik eind oktober/november zou mogen interviewen. Je blijft anoniem.

Waarom zou je meedoen?
Door hierover in gesprek te gaan en de uitkomsten ervan aan te bieden aan de organisatie, kan de organisatie beter aansluiten bij je behoeftes en de **relatie met jou als werknemer verbeteren op een manier die bij jou past.**

Zou ik jou mogen interviewen?
Schrijf je naam en e-mailadres/telefoonnummer op deze lijst (of stuur een mail naar mariellevalk1@hotmail.com) en ik neem contact met je op. *Bedankt!!*

Als blijk van waardering verlooft ik een **VVV-cheque t.w.v. €25,-** onder de deelnemers!

Mariëlle Valk
Naast studie werkzaam op de afdeling communicatie

Naam	E-mailadres en/of Telefoonnummer

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

Thank you for cooperating on this interview. The interview will be subjected about your relationship as an employee with the organization you work for, ZorgAccent, and the needs you have in this regard. The results of the research will eventually be offered to ZorgAccent, so that ZorgAccent will be able to adapt your needs and keep working on strengthening your relationship in a way that is also appropriate and useful for you.

I would like to emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers; I would like you to talk freely about your thoughts and opinions from your own personal situation and that you do not withhold because of me as your interviewer. I am just trying to obtain an objective and realistic image of your needs and therefore will make no judgments. Your answers will be remained anonymously and will only be used for the purpose of this research. I do would like to record the interview, so that I can fully write it out afterwards. Is that alright for you? Do you have any questions before we start the interview?

Introduction: employees' job and relationship with the employing organization

At first, I would like to talk to you about your job at ZorgAccent.

1. Can you tell me something about your job? What is it that you do exactly? And for how long have you been doing this job?
2. What are the first thoughts coming up your mind when you think about ZorgAccent as your employer? Are you satisfied with ZorgAccent as your employer? What do you think is positive about it? And what are negative things?
3. How would you describe your relationship with ZorgAccent from an employee point of view? Can you give me an example to illustrate what you just told?

Employees' perceptions of the parties involved

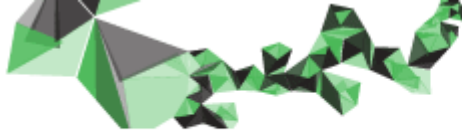
I would now like to take a closer look at the way you perceive the relationship between you and ZorgAccent.

4. Could you, in order to get a clearer image of what we are actually talking about, draw the both of you on this piece of paper; you on the one hand and ZorgAccent on the other hand, from the way you perceive it? Can you clarify your drawing; why did you draw you both this way?
5. If you would have to compare ZorgAccent with a person from the way you look at it as an employee, what character traits would you give to this person? And if you would transfer the person the way you just described him or her to your daily life, what kind of relationship would you have with this person?
6. With whom from ZorgAccent are you experiencing a lot of contact? With whom less?
7. If you would have to include the organizational members you just described in your drawing as well, where would you place them? Why did you place them here? How close to you do you experience them to be?
8. Those organizational members, do they play a role in your relationship with ZorgAccent? In what way? Is the relationship you're having with them the same relationship as the one you have with ZorgAccent, in your point of view?

Employees' needs with regard to the degree of depth of the relationship

Now that we've taken a closer look at the way you perceive your relationship and the parties involved, I would like to talk about the matter of importance of the relationship.

9. Do you find your relationship with ZorgAccent important? For what reason?
10. Would you describe this relationship as an intensive, in-depth relationship? Do you find it important that the relationship is in-depth? What does that mean according to you, an in-depth relationship?



11. What role does ZorgAccent as your employing organization play in your daily job? And what role does ZorgAccent play when you look at your entire life? Should the organization play a bigger role according to you? In what way?

Employees' expectations with regard to both parties (referring to the underlying psychological contract (e.g. Eisenberger et al., 1986) and the degree to which transactional and relational aspects are present (MacNeil, 1985))

Now that we've talked about the extent to which you find your relationship with ZorgAccent important, I would like to discuss what it is exactly that you find important when it comes to your relationship.

12. How important, for instance, do you find contact between you and ZorgAccent? By what means do you get in touch with ZorgAccent? Can you indicate by each of these means how this effects your relationship with ZorgAccent? And what could be the effect of this means on your relationship?
13. What do you further expect from ZorgAccent in your relationship? What position should ZorgAccent take upon you, how should ZorgAccent deal with you? What does ZorgAccent have to offer you in your relationship?
14. What do you, on the other hand, expect from yourself in this matter? What do you have to offer ZorgAccent in your relationship?
15. Can you give an example of what, in our opinion, is minimally necessary in your relationship? Is this a precondition for a good relationship? Are there more preconditions?
16. Are there, on the other hand, things you absolutely do not think is necessary and/or do not need in your relationship with ZorgAccent? Can you give concrete examples of these things?

Employees' responses toward organizational attempts in expanding the relationship

For the last part of this interview, I brought another piece of paper along, containing a cartoon.

17. I've written down the name of your work location on the building within the cartoon, representing your work location. Imaging that you are working here at the moment and you hear someone knocking on your door. The person at the cartoon then, looking outside the window to see who's there, is you. Imaging that the person knocking on your door is ZorgAccent. Can you tell me what you think at the moment you realize that ZorgAccent is knocking on your door by filling in the thought bubble in the cartoon? What would you say? And can you tell me what you think ZorgAccent would think and say by filling in the thought and speech bubbles at the left? Can you clarify why you wrote down what you've written down?
18. Do you find it important that ZorgAccent initiates in strengthening the relationship with you as an employee? What does strengthening mean to you? Do you perceive the intensifying of the amount of contact also as a way of strengthening your relationship?
19. Can you think of an example of a situation where ZorgAccent attempted to strengthen your relationship? What did you think of it? Do you have any ideas of how ZorgAccent could have done this differently or better?

At last

We've reached the end of the interview.

20. Do you have any things left to say concerning the topics we've discussed during the interview?

Thank you for cooperating on this interview. In order to give a good view of the participants I've used for the interviews, I would at last like to report some descriptive data about you: gender, date of birth, function, tenure and level of education.

APPENDIX C CARTOON BUBBLE DRAWING TASK



Cartoon used for the bubble drawing task. The words placed in between the brackets were replaced by the specific name of the work location or team name of the intramural respectively extramural participant.

APPENDIX D CATEGORIES RESULTING FROM DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1

Categories resulting from data analysis

Categories concerning participant's perceptions of relationship		
Image of the relationship	Parties involved	<i>Organization</i>
		<i>Employee (participant)</i>
	Amount of distance perceived	
Role other organizational members	(Close) colleagues	<i>Amount of contact perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of distance perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of representation of organization</i>
		<i>Needs with regard to relationship</i>
	Direct supervisor	<i>Amount of contact perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of distance perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of representation of organization</i>
		<i>Needs with regard to relationship</i>
	Higher management	<i>Amount of contact perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of distance perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of representation of organization</i>
		<i>Needs with regard to relationship</i>
	Supportive departments	<i>Amount of contact perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of distance perceived</i>
		<i>Amount of representation of organization</i>
		<i>Needs with regard to relationship</i>
	Other organizational members	
Importance of relationship	Level of importance	
	Reason for importance	
View on organization's role	Description relationship	
	Role contact	<i>Goal contact</i>
		<i>Means of contact</i>
Terms and conditions relationship	Expectations toward organization	
	Expectations toward employee (participant)	
Perceptions regarding strenghtening attempts	Attitude towards attempt	
	Means of attempt	
	Person(s) initiating	

Table 2
Coding schema resulting from data analysis of the category concerning expectations of organization

	Extramural participants																		Intramural participants																		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35		
Providing salary	x	x	x							x	x										x			x	x						x						
Offering compensations	x	x	x				x	x	x	x																											
Offering facilities for performing the job	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x							x		x			x				x			x			x						
Offering good working conditions									x		x														x		x										
Providing limited travel time				x																x											x						
Making use of each other's qualities																x	x																				
Offering personal development	x		x	x			x	x	x										x						x	x					x	x	x				
Providing job security							x		x					x									x	x													
Providing continuity											x	x				x												x							x		
Providing fit with private situation																				x														x			
Providing independence/freedom				x			x		x				x	x	x	x	x	x				x			x					x			x				
Providing responsibilities	x			x			x			x							x	x			x																
Providing diversity in tasks	x									x											x															x	
Providing ability to knock on the door if I need something				x	x	x	x	x	x					x			x		x							x											
Adapting procedures to specific situation							x	x																			x										
Providing good picture to outside world							x	x																													
Getting along with new developments				x																			x														
Informing about new developments	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x							x	x				x	x	x	x					x	x			
Providing clarity/openness/honesty				x			x	x	x							x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		
Providing feedback							x	x			x	x								x			x			x	x	x				x	x	x	x		
Providing mutuality			x	x	x		x	x									x	x							x	x											
Showing appreciation			x	x	x															x	x				x				x	x		x	x	x	x		
Maintaining personnel association																				x	x				x	x					x			x			
Providing non-massive gatherings			x					x	x		x	x								x	x	x								x		x					
Showing willingness towards clients																				x		x	x					x	x		x	x					
Providing direct communication	x					x				x								x	x		x	x		x		x		x				x		x			
Having enthusiastic colleagues/supervisor									x																	x											
Providing ability to keep things private																							x			x			x								
Providing contact				x						x												x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x				
Knowing what is going on																				x			x			x	x			x				x			
Showing their face											x	x								x	x				x	x	x				x	x			x		
Providing ability to help each other out					x	x																															
Providing personal atmosphere			x														x											x					x		x		
Showing involvement											x	x			x											x							x	x		x	
Offering a listening ear/being heard																									x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x		x	
Providing ability to be taken seriously																										x	x		x					x	x		
Asking opinion																																					
Going around the table (conversing)																													x	x				x			

Table 3

Coding schema resulting from data analysis of the category concerning expectations of employee (participant)

	Extramural participants																		Intramural participants																
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Performing job well		x	x	x	x													x						x							x	x	x	x	
Being involved with clients	x						x	x			x											x	x		x			x				x		x	x
Representing the organization				x			x				x										x					x				x	x	x			
Being flexible								x																	x		x								
Being proactive					x				x	x			x					x		x	x		x		x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Being sociable towards colleagues						x																													
Thinking along																		x		x			x												x
Staying developed																		x		x											x				
Staying informed about developments																				x		x											x		
Being responsible																				x															