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Exploring the Role of the Employee-Organization Relationship on Voluntary Employee Turnover Intentions

Potential Exchange Agents

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ABSTRACT:
An organization's agents' actions largely influence the way employee experiences the relationship with the organization. This relationship can either have a positive or a negative influence on employee turnover intentions. If an employee decides to leave the organization voluntarily, this can cause the loss of valuable skills and knowledge and increased costs to the organization. To avoid these and gain competitive advantage organizations must avoid voluntary turnover and thus improve the relationships between employees and organizations. As an organization is an impersonal entity it has not been clear whom the employee mirrors their relationship to, when discussing the relationship with the organization.

This thesis is exploring the relationship between employees and supervisors or senior management and their different effects on employee turnover intentions. The theoretical framework of this study forms from previous research on the employee-organization relationship, utilizing the social exchange theory and leader-member exchange theory, and previous research on employee turnover. The data for the empirical part was collected through 10 semi-structured interviews with employees from five different organizations between the ages of 35 to 60.

The findings reveal that EOR affects employee turnover intentions differently, whether regarding the supervisor or senior management. Regarding communication in an EOR, supervisors are hoped to be closer and more individualistic whereas senior management is hoped to be open and communicate with groups collectivistic. Trust is the biggest aspect behind employee turnover intention in EOR. With the relationship with senior management, trust is more apparent through respect. Senior management should respect employees as experts in their field of work. Supervisors need to show trust in matters, give employees autonomy and support them in the decision-making process. For more satisfaction and commitment to the relationship with the supervisor, it is vital for employees to feel that the supervisor is actively promoting their benefits. Senior management is more connected to the organization's values and strategy. To minimize voluntary turnover, it is crucial to openly communicate values and strategy if changes occur. The findings show that the relationship with the supervisor as an agent of the organization is more important regarding employee turnover intentions. The supervisor is also more personalized than senior management. Senior management is seen as a more organization-kind entity through its values and strategy. The relationship still holds value when considering turnover intentions. Regarding the findings of this study, it contributes to both EOR and turnover literature.

KEYWORDS: EOR, voluntary turnover, employee, organization, supervisor, senior management

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1 Introduction

In an employment relationship, the employee's behavior is largely influenced by the employee's relationship with the organization and the characteristics of the organization (Che, Zhu & Huang, 2022). Organizations need to spend more time identifying different individualistic characteristics to improve organizational performance and achieve goals more easily (Che, Zhu & Huang, 2022). The competitive environment in organizations greatly impacts how the employee-organization relationship (EOR) is perceived and what this relationship affects both from the perspective of the organization and the employee (Li, Jia, Cai, Kwan & You, 2020).

The way organization’s agents, managers, interact with their subordinates can either have a positive or negative impact on their subordinates' intentions to leave. When the relationship between the employee and the manager is negative, the employee is more likely to want to leave the organization (Elanain, 2014). When the relationship is poor, communication, trust, satisfaction, commitment, and other benefits of the relationship are scarce. This results in negative emotions toward the manager and could have a direct impact on the organization (Kristof-Brown et al, 2005). In such cases, employees seek better relationships in other organizations, as they try to resolve the issue. These kinds of relationships are not ideal and can cause voluntary employee turnover (Elanain, 2014).

In the modern business scenario, there are plenty of job opportunities available to employees, and thus, voluntary employee turnover can pose serious problems for organizations (Kang & Sung, 2019). When employees leave an organization voluntarily, it can lead to a loss of valuable knowledge and skills, as well as increased costs for the organization. These costs can be direct, such as those associated with hiring and training new employees (Collins & Smith, 2006). Moreover, there can be indirect costs related to reduced employee commitment and customer dissatisfaction (Kang & Sung, 2019). The knowledge and skills possessed by employees often hold substantial economic and competitive value for organizations, and therefore, it is critical to manage them strategically to achieve the organization's objectives (Lee, Hsu & Lien, 2006).

1.1 Motivation for the study

Employee-organization relationship has been studied a lot, and it has been the subject of research by human resource schools for the last decade (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2017; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Tsui, Pearce, Porter & Tripoli, 1997). Due to the more competitive and changing work environment, other perspectives on the subject are needed so that it is possible to obtain comprehensive research information (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2017). A good EOR improves competitiveness both from the organization's point of view and increases commitment from the employee's point of view (Che, Zhu & Huang, 2022; Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

However, it has been studied that more and more employees are not as emotionally committed to the organization as they used to be because the shareholders of the organizations put pressure on productivity instead of long-term relationships (Eisenberger et al., 2019). This pressure leads to employees experiencing more work stress than at present, and thus their well-being and job satisfaction suffers (Frone, 2018).

Psychological contracts and relationships between organizations and employees are critical to the organizations and their representatives. Prior research has mainly focused on supervisors as agents of organizations in the relationships, but it is important to include other organizational agents to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic (Shore & Tetrick, 1994). Although supervisors and employees have the closest relationship in the organization, it is important to also study the relationship formed with other agents, such as senior managers (Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). It is important to understand with whom the employee feels they are in a relationship, i.e., to whom they mirror the organization as the other party (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

According to the literature, the relationship and quality between the employee and the organization have been found to impact how the employee perceives the organization they work in and whether they voluntarily want to leave the organization (Elanain, 2014). However, since there is not much literature and studies on the differences in the relationship between different agents of the organization and the employee on the employee's voluntary turnover intention, this study meets that need.

1.2 Research question and objectives

This study aims to find out how the relationship between the employee and the organization affects the employee's voluntary turnover intentions. More precisely, the study investigates how the organization is perceived, and whether there are differences in whether the employee, as an agent of the organization, focuses on their immediate supervisor or senior management. The purpose of the research is to expand the understanding of how different perceived relationships with the organization affect the employee's intentions to leave the organization voluntarily. The purpose of the research is to create tools for organizations so that they can develop their relationships with employees to reduce voluntary turnover.

Research interviews are used to find an answer to the main research question:

1. Does the relationship between the employee and the supervisor or senior management affect the employee turnover intentions differently?

The secondary research question, which is used to support answering to the main question, is:

2. What factors affect the quality of the relationship between the employee and the organization?

The objectives of the research are:

1. Describe the concept and the importance of the employee-organization relationship for the organization to prevent voluntary employee turnover.

2. Describe the link between different agents in the employee-organization relationship and the employee's turnover intentions.
3. Start a discussion on the topic and create tools for the phenomenon.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

The research includes a literature review and an empirical section, divided into five main chapters. The first chapter of the study describes the background of the study, the aim of the study, and the structure of the study. The second chapter of the study describes the theoretical background for the study. The second chapter reviews the literature relevant to the research, focusing on the literature on employee-organization relationships and employee turnover. The second chapter also introduces the theoretical framework, which is built for the research with the help of the theoretical background.

The third chapter presents the research methodology. The chapter focuses on how the empirical part of the research was done. A qualitative research method is implemented in the research, conducting semi-structured interviews with ten interviewees to search for meaningful answers to the research goals. The collected material is analyzed using content analysis, the process of which is also described in paragraph three. The third paragraph also evaluates the reliability and validity of the research.

In the empirical part of the study, chapter four discusses the results obtained from the study. Based on these, at the end of the fourth chapter, a revised theoretical framework is also presented, which has been modified by the research results. After this, the last chapter presents the theoretical contribution and managerial implications of the study and discusses the limitations of the study. Also, suggestions for future research will be presented.

2 Theoretical background

This chapter on the theoretical background will first define the terms of organization and employee-organization relationship. The chapter will discuss different elements of a relationship, the nature, and actions to create a relationship. Furthermore, details are provided about potential relationship parties. Secondly, two theories important to the employee-organization relationship are presented for a holistic understanding of the relationship. Thirdly, it discusses employee turnover and factors that can lead to turnover intentions. Finally, wider research will connect employee-organization relationships and employee turnover.

2.1 Employee-organization relationship

Employee-organization relationship (EOR) or organization-employee relationship is a term that aims to describe the relationship between an organization and an employee on a general level (Shore et al., 2004). Men and Stacks (2014), also defined EOR as the degree to which an organization and its employees trust one another, agree on who has the rightful power to influence, experience satisfaction with each other, and commit themselves to the other. EORs are important in connecting human resources to strategy and concrete results that affect the organization's performance, productivity, and success (Kang & Sung, 2017; Men, 2012).

An organization is an organized entity where people use elements that can be considered the foundation of the organization. Making decisions is essential for the formation of an organization. Decisions are made regarding other members of the organization and the entire organization. These decisions concern how to act, what to aim for, and how to achieve these goals. The organization also has concepts of membership, hierarchy, rules, organizational control, and positive and negative sanctions. A formal organization has all these elements in its operation, although the elements could also be used separately to form a partial organization. (Ahrne & Brunsson, 2011).

Literature and research related to EOR have increased its popularity among researchers, as there have been many changes in business relations in recent decades (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Several theories have been used behind EOR to make the relationship easier to understand. A social relationship always includes interaction, and interaction creates obligations (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Trust is required from the parties, when one offers an advantage, it is possible that the other party does not return the advantage. In social exchanges, the nature or timing of benefits is not specified, but the commitment to the relationship nevertheless creates reciprocity (Shore et al., 2006).

Over time, the relationship can become one where the exchange partners trust each other based on the interaction and believe that they will receive benefits in return for the input. In an EOR relationship, an individual employee is often satisfied when they get as much benefit as possible from the organization in return by investing relatively little themselves, i.e., there is a bigger difference between these two components (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). From the perspective of the organization, the contribution from the employee's side needs to be large enough so that the organization can give incentives to the relationship, and at the same time, the incentives must be large enough that the employees are ready to make a sufficient contribution to achieve them (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

In terms of the success and competitiveness of organizations, employees are in a key position (Nahapiet & Ghohsal, 1998). Employees have such relationships with other employees, managers, and customers, as well as knowledge about the organization, without which the organization could not strive (Nahapiet & Ghohsal, 1998). Managing employees and EOR is important for the organization because employee resources are invaluable to many organizations.

EOR includes six major components that can be used to determine the quality of a relationship. These do not discuss how the relationship between the employee and the organization should be built, or what parts it consists of. The components were developed by Hon and Grunig (1999, p.3). These characteristics can determine what the quality of the relationship is perceived to be:

(1) *Trust* - The trust between the parties in the relationship and its level in each other.
(2) *Control Mutuality* – The parties' agreement on how much influence they legitimately have over each other.
(3) *Commitment* – Creating value for how much time and energy the parties think should be spent on the relationship and how it should be managed and maintained.
(4) *Satisfaction* – The parties' satisfaction with how the other party has met the expectations of what was expected of the relationship in advance.
(5) *Exchange Relationship* – One party gives benefits to the other, and the other party is expected to do so in the future.
(6) *Communal Relationship* – Both parties produce benefits for the other because they are concerned about the welfare of the other party.

The relationship between the organization and the employee can be approached from four different perspectives. These are based on how much the organization encourages the employee in the relationship and how much the employee invests in the relationship. It has been studied that if an organization invests a lot in EOR, that is, EOR is a mutual-investment (a large incentive from the organization, but also a large investment from the employee) or an over-investment (a large incentive from the organization, but a small contribution from the employee to the relationship and its creation and to maintaining it), the EOR effects are positive, for example, in terms of employee trust and commitment, and based on the organizations' low turnover rates. However, if EOR is a quasi-investment (i.e., the organization does not or only slightly encourage the employee in the relationship and the employee does not invest in the relationship) or under-investment (the organization does not invest much in the relationship, even though the employee invests in the relationship), the results are opposite. (Shaw et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2008).

Organizational influences on EOR quality and outcomes are large, but how the employee perceives the interaction of the relationship is also affected (Shaw et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2008). In the targeted EOR, which is a mutual investment, the employees enjoy the benefits of the organization and a permanent sense of security, while the organization benefits in that the employees are committed and loyal to the organization.

EOR should also consider the environment in which the relationships are created or exist. The flourishing of the internal and external environment or, on the other hand, challenges and changes affect how EOR is implemented and functions (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). In a changing environment, the focus is on change, so EOR inevitably shifts focus along with the changes. Organizations also compete today with different competitive advantages, which are often more temporary, as the cycle time of many products and services is getting shorter (Galbraith, 2002). Environmental management pressures may charge how much time organizational agents must devote to EOR investment (Galbraith, 2002). This reorganization based on the environment affects not only the organization, but also the employees' image of EOR, and reacting to the changes can cause the success or failure of the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

Both parties' investment in EOR has remained relatively unchanged over the past 25 years. Today, organizations are expected to achieve more short-term goals, which has been suspected to lead to EOR not being invested in the same way anymore and emotional investment in relationships being minimized (Eisenberger et al., 2019). However, at least for the time being, EOR has not changed its form, even though the environmental goals have become more and more profit-oriented. This does not mean that the environment and the changes taking place in it do not have a role in EOR and how it is perceived.

Middle management or the closest supervisor is often seen as the representative of the organization. The supervisor can act as an agent of the organization in the EOR relationship, in which case the state of the EOR relationship is reflected between the supervisor and the employee (Zhang et al., 2008). However, the organization consists of several possible agents, i.e., potential exchange partners. Often when the relationship between an employee and an organization is studied, there is no certainty as to which exchange partner the employee refers to when answering questions about the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

In EOR, the employee usually sees the organization through human traits and characteristics (Babchuk et al., 1963). Employees form a relationship with the organization by picturing the organization's actions as the actions of the organization's representative (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). In EOR studies, assumptions are therefore made that employees see the organization as one human factor, i.e., they bundle all possible agents of which the organization is made up into one human characteristic, which they personify into one of the organizational agents (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

According to Coyle-Shapiro and Shore (2007), personification happens more easily if the employee feels that the agent works in line with the organization's goals. Employees can also feel that their relationship with the organization consists of several individual relationships with different organizational agents (Babchuk et al., 1963). However, personification has not been extensively studied outside of EOR research, so there is still no comprehensive evidence on organizational personification, how it is done, and to whom it is targeted. It is assumed that persons acting in the roles of leaders adopt the relationship and implement EOR with the interests of the organization in mind. Still, they may consciously or unconsciously make decisions that are more in line with their interest or the group they feel they represent than the interests of the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007).

The relationship and trust built by supervisors are of great importance in how employees perceive trust in the organization. When supervisors give employees support and encourage them to move forward, employees often feel that the organization is supportive of them and employees feel more committed to the organization (Zeb et al., 2023).

It can be more difficult for middle management and immediate supervisors to act in an EOR relationship, considering the interests of both the organization and themselves (Hallier & James, 1997). They often act as both parties to EOR, employee, and employer, so their role can be more challenging concerning EOR than that of senior management. Middle management (supervisors) may strive to act in their interests as well as those of employees, which may not be fully aligned with the interests of the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). Middle management forms personal bonds with employees and wants to please employees as well, in which case they may no longer act rationally (Liden & Graen, 1980). This personal element can cause employees to see their relationship differently when it comes to different agents in the organization.

The senior management can also act as a representative of the organization. However, employees do not as often personify senior management as agents of the organization. This is since often when senior management communicates with employees about, for example, the organization's goals, the communication concerns the entire staff and not so much an individual employee. Senior management does not come as close when forming a relationship with an employee as supervisors and middle management appear to the employee. In their communication, senior management often does not imply the obligations and incentives of the individual employee, and therefore forming and building an interactive relationship can be more difficult for the employee. Consequently, the employee often does not see the senior management as the primary agent for the relationship formed with the organization. (Tekleab & Taylor, 2003).

However, the management style of senior management has a bearing on how EOR is perceived by employees. If the leader is present, and they are perceived as close and encouraging, it is easier for the employee to form a relationship with them as an agent of the organization. On the other hand, if the senior management is distant and unreachable, i.e., there is a large gap between the employees and the senior management, it is more difficult to form a relationship. The leadership styles and characteristics of senior management have similar features and effects on EOR as the closest supervisors. (Ni, 2007).

To establish trust, internal communication is important (Falkheimer & Heide, 2015). Trust is one of the strong elements in EOR. Internal symmetrical communication in intra-organizational relationships is used to generate and develop ideas, rather than to manipulate the thoughts or behavior of the other party to the communication (Kim, 2021). The organization's willingness to listen and respond to employee concerns is referred to as two-way symmetrical communication (Kim, 2021). The purpose of this is to build mutual communication and promote employees' understanding of the organization and its wishes and goals. Internal communication has a great impact on EOR quality (Ni, 2007).

Even when a crisis occurs in an organization, communication is important. During crisis communication, the quality of EOR is particularly important, because a good quality of the relationship better ensures that the crisis is easier to manage and it usually reduces misunderstandings during crisis communication (Falkheimer & Heide, 2015; Mazzei & Ravazzani 2011). EOR also affects how fast the organization's performance can be restored after a crisis (Kim, 2021). The relationship between employees must be of high quality both with immediate supervisors and senior management so that after setbacks it is easier for them to recover and return to a normal work rhythm faster (Kim, 2021).

Several studies emphasize the importance of internal communication in forming and maintaining EOR (Kim, 2021; Ni, 2007). Employees may have preferences, for example, regarding what kind of communication channels they prefer or what they like the most. However, face-to-face communication cannot be replaced by communication through other channels (Kim, 2021).

Listening, as part of communication, is of great importance to what kind of EOR is formed. Listening is an important component in how a supervisor listens to their subordinates and in how employees are listened to at the organizational level. Both are important in terms of the relationship (Quin & Men, 2021). When listening, it is important to process what has been heard and understand it, as well as respond to the speaker and not forget the purpose. Listening plays a role in how an open and effective relationship can be formed between the employee and the organization (Quin & Men, 2021). This also affects what kind of attitudes the employee has towards the organization.

The organization must also have a certain understanding of what their closest stakeholders, the employees, expect and demand from the organization. It is not realistic for an organization to form a similar relationship with all employees. Although employees who are often located closer to the organization are more likely to feel emotional attachment and evaluate their relationship with the organization as stronger, it still does not mean that the relationship with all employees cannot be good and mutually satisfying. The organization must have an understanding of what certain employees and employee groups expect and demand concerning the organization. (Ni, 2007).

2.1.1 Social exchange theory

The central theory in EOR is usually social exchange theory. The theory of social exchange was originally developed by Blau in his book published in 1964 and discussed in later editions. For EOR, the positive effects on the relationship based on the theory of social exchange, such as trust and the creation of a high obligation between the parties of the relationship, are especially important (Shore et al., 2006).

According to the theory, in a social relationship, one party does the other a favor, and they can expect some form of return from it (Blau, 2017). However, the timing and form of the return may be unclear, which creates an opportunity for the other party to prove that they are worthy of trust. To be considered as a social exchange, the exchange must be reciprocal. One party may have different attitudes toward the other. The parties can be independent of each other, i.e., the results are based on the actions of only one party (Shore et al., 2006). The parties may also be completely interdependent and thus the results are entirely based on the efforts of the other (Shore et al., 2006). However, the basis for a social exchange relationship is mutual dependence, i.e., the results of the relationship are based equally on the activities of both parties (Blau, 2017). Without mutual dependence, the relationship cannot be characterized as a relationship of social exchange (Shore et al., 2006).

Unlike a social exchange, in an economic exchange, the relationship of the parties is not necessarily long-term or requires emotional attachment (Shore et al., 2006). Economic exchange is often more impersonal and does not require as much investment as social exchange (Shore et al., 2009). Only the social exchange relationship tends to generate a sense of personal gratitude, duty, and trust, which the economic exchange relationship does not even try to generate (Shore et al., 2006).

Individual differences also in social relationships must be considered. When it comes to more personal relationships, individual differences are a factor that cannot be ignored. According to the theory, although an individual may see the social exchange and relationship as a sign that the organization has invested in EOR, another individual may see the exchange relationship with these open obligations in the long run as too hard of personal and emotional risk (Eisenberger et al., 1987). Similarly, others accept a purely economic exchange better as part of the business, while some may see it, because of its impersonality, as exploitation of the employee (Eisenberger et al., 1987).

In some organizations, a more aggressive culture may prevail, where the profits and individual performance typical of the economic exchange relationship are more valued. In aggressive cultures, exchange relationships and EOR are not necessarily invested as much, and they are seen as an extra effort around profit orientation. This may make it more difficult for employees to form long-term relationships with the organization. In the absence of long-term relationships, employees often judge the organization's reliability through each event. This also reduces the willingness to even form a longer-term relationship with the organization. (Zhang & Jia, 2010).

In the structure of organizational commitment, there is strong theoretical support from the EOR literature for the importance of social exchange relationships. Commitment describes how emotionally attached an employee is and how they identify with the organization (Hom et al., 2009). These are related to how good the social exchange is between the organization and the employee. Social exchange involving high mutual obligations and long-term relationship building and trust reduce employees' intentions to leave the organization (Hom et al., 2009). A mere financial exchange harms commitment, and it does not reduce the employee's intentions to leave the organization due to the impersonal quality of the economic relationship (Shore et al., 2009).

Trust, which is one of the cornerstones of EOR, is most likely to develop between parties to a social exchange when there are as few binding contracts or major negotiations as possible (Jeong & Oh, 2017). This provides an opportunity for each party in the social exchange to demonstrate that they are worthy of trust (Shore et al., 2009). Trust and its earning can be considered a kind of intrinsic social reward that serves as a basis for the relationship between partners (Ferrin et al., 2007).

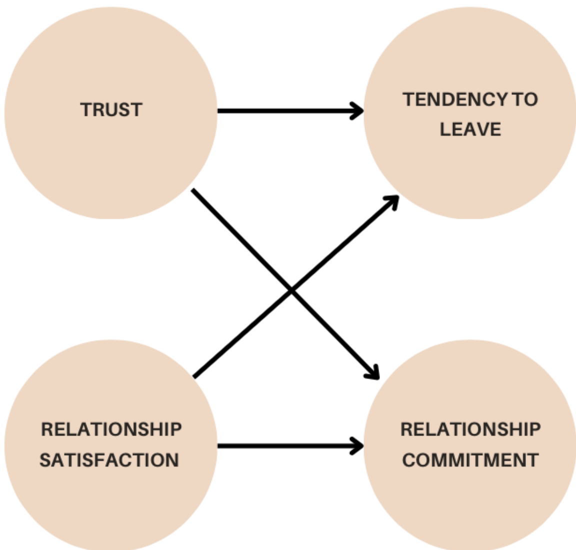

Figure 1. Social exchange theory (Jeong & Oh, 2017).

An economic exchange that functions without a greater emotional connection does not generate much trust. According to EOR, economic exchange only has a short-term basis. In addition, the incentives, financial and material, present in this exchange are normal and mandatory according to business practice, the neglect of which can have legal consequences for both the organization and the employee. (Shore et al., 2009).

The development of EOR and social relations is also largely influenced by the kind of power and influence the parties have over each other. Whether other potential exchange partners are available, also affects the development of the relationship and its long-term duration. If there are potential other exchange partners from whom equally valuable resources could be obtained, a similar or equally high-quality relationship may not develop if it develops at all. (Emerson, 1962).

Social relationships can also be characterized by three other dimensions instead of reciprocity. Sahlins (1972) derived three dimensions in his theory to describe the theory of social exchange and social relations, the immediacy of return, the equivalence of returns, and the degree and nature of the interest of each party in the exchange. The immediacy of returns includes the timing within which the partner is believed to fulfill the corresponding obligation. The equivalence of returns means how equivalent the goods or exchangeable are in the exchange relationship. The interest of each party in exchange again describes how the interests of the parties operating in the exchange relationship are divided, whether they pursue a common interest or their interest.

The dimensions form a continuum of reciprocity on which the quality of the exchange relationship can be placed. Reciprocity can be generalized, balanced, or negative. It is typical for generalized reciprocity that the obligation towards the other party is vague in terms of when a return can be received, and it also reflects trust and common interest. Balanced reciprocity is again characterized by the fact that the exchange is returned immediately, reflecting the mutual benefit of the exchange partners. Negative reciprocity is sometimes the opposite of both. In it, giving is replaced by taking, and the exchange partner purely pursues their interests with complacency. (Sahlins, 1972).

There are also differences in terms of social exchange and EOR, whether it is an individualistic or a collectivist culture. In a collectivist culture, where teams are valued more closely than individuals, it is even more important to gain trust and positive actions from the organization. In countries with a collectivist culture, the relationship between the organization and the employee is often even further away from an economic exchange relationship than it is in countries with individualistic cultures. In addition, in collectivist cultures, good gestures, rewards, or displays of trust shown to the team are seen as more important in terms of EOR development than the benefits shown to the individual from the exchange relationship. (Zhang & Jia, 2010).

In social exchange theory, the social relationship in the workplace is also influenced by culture in general. The national culture is believed to influence the organizational culture, in which case management styles are often in line with the national culture. With the examination of national culture, it is, therefore, possible to study which characteristics organizations and employees invest in when creating relationships at workplaces. (Zhang & Jia, 2010).

2.1.2 Leader-member exchange theory

Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) considers leadership as a process that arises from the interaction between the member (employee) and the leader. The theory is based on the fact that, because of interaction, different levels of relationships are created between the supervisor and the employees. These relationships can appear in two different forms: internal group and external group relationships. Internal relationships are largely based on respect, trust, and reciprocity between the leader and the member.

External relations, on the other hand, are based only on formal relations and the job description defined in the employment contract. (Kalliomaa & Kettunen, 2010).

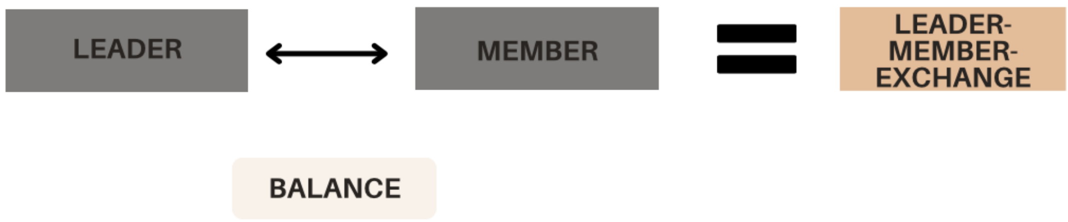

Figure 2. Leader-member exchange.

Members can be positioned in one of the groups, depending on what kind of relationship they form with the leader, as well as how they can accept different responsibilities in their work and how interested they are in the possible responsibility given (Martin et al., 2023). The members belonging to the internal group get more influence, information about the organization's affairs, and more attention from their leader (Kalliomaa & Kettunen, 2010).

Leaders do not necessarily approach all their subordinates in the same way but develop and maintain individual interaction relationships with those they lead (Isotalus & Rajalahti, 2017). The employees in the organization are not only included in the inner circle and the outer circle but the relationships between the members and the leaders are also formed individually (Kalliomaa & Kettunen, 2010). Due to leaders' limited resources, leaders allocate their own and the organization's resources, such as time, support, and tasks, selectively and individually to their subordinates. According to the LMX theory, this quality of exchange between the leader and the member can vary from high to low (Isotalus & Rajalahti, 2017).

The formation of the LMX relationship begins even before the parties have necessarily met in person. Past relationships and encounters are important for how relationships develop in the future (Ballinger et al., 2009). Therefore, it already has some kind of basic assumptions before the first meeting. Also, in the early stages of relationship formation, trust is essential for the usefulness of relationship development (Kangas, 2013). The leader must have confidence in the employee's ability and willingness to perform the assigned tasks successfully and thus meet the leader's expectations (Kangas, 2013). In addition, trust is needed from the employee already in the beginning that the leader will meet their expectations and provide the necessary resources if the tasks are completed (Kangas, 2013).

A high-quality exchange and relationship are characterized by respect, attention, mutual trust, support, and less control over work tasks. A low-exchange relationship is more characterized by special formality, more hierarchical management from top to bottom, less support and weaker trust between the parties, and meager remuneration. The relationship between the leader and the employee usually falls somewhere on the continuum between the extremes of these two exchanges. The theory emphasizes the importance of communication because the quality of relationships and communication in relationships are strongly linked. (Isotalus & Rajalahti, 2017).

The characteristics of a close leader-member exchange are that the parties of the relationship are not afraid to show their true feelings and be themselves (Fisk & Friesen, 2012). Parties can have shared emotional experiences, which points to a high-quality relationship (Fisk & Friesen, 2012). Inauthenticity in a relationship is more common when the parties of the relationship are unknown to each other or a person with whom the quality of the relationship is weak (Fisk & Friesen, 2012). Low-quality relationships are experienced by those who belong to the outer group, have a bad relationship with their leader and perform their work with external motivation (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). They usually only perform the work tasks that are necessary for their role, and the interaction in the relationship is usually minimal and one-sided (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). In this type of relationship, communication is often only related to work tasks and performance, and neither party gets much from the relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The basic idea in this theory is that the relationship between the leader and the member affects the organization's results. In studies based on the theory, it has been found that a high-quality relationship between the leader and the employee has a positive effect on employee satisfaction, performance, productivity, commitment to the organization, and evaluation of the manager's performance, and reduces employee turnover (Akgunduz et al., 2023). In turn, a worse relationship is reflected in employee burnout, defensive communication, and turnover, as well as weakening communication satisfaction, performance level, and commitment to the organization (Isotalus & Rajalahti, 2017).

The LMX theory found that a leader should strive to create a high-quality relationship with all their subordinates. Based on this, the idea of building leadership was developed, where the idea is how a leader could build a high-quality relationship with all members. Even if this is not always possible, the leader has an obligation to allow all subordinates to create a partnership with the leader (Isotalus & Rajalahti, 2017). By enabling this, it is possible to increase high-quality relationships in the organization, which contributes to the result created by the organization.

According to Isotalus and Rajalahti (2017), there are three stages in building LMX. In the first stage, the leader and the employees are almost strangers to each other and only act in a way that belongs to their work roles. The hierarchy and rules of the organization define the interaction of this rather formal relationship. Those being led strive to fulfill the leader's requests and wishes. In the second stage, it can be characterized as familiarity. The parties are starting to build a more functional working relationship between them. They start sharing information related to both work and relationships. This phase can also be considered a test phase when it is possible to return to the initial situation or move towards partnership. The third and last step is a partnership. At this stage, the leader and the member have the opportunity to influence each other, and they share a lot of information related to work tasks and other matters with each other. There is mutual respect, trust, and commitment in the relationship. The parties can show each other both criticism and support, which strengthens them and the interaction between them.

Two people who are strangers to each other have become partners through an acquaintance, which is to the advantage of both.

In a high-level LMX relationship, the level of subordinate skills is also assessed as high. It has been found that subordinates who form high-quality LMX relationships are often skilled in their subordinates' skills as well. In this case, the subordinate knows how to behave in the organization in a way that promotes its operation, i.e., is at the same time polite, conscientious, loyal, and participating. A subordinate who is skilled in subordinate skills feels responsible for their activities as part of the organization and works towards a common goal to promote trust in the leader-member relationship. (Keskinen, 2005, pp. 19-21).

2.2 Employee turnover

In a simple definition, turnover means the transfer of individuals to and from the service of the organization (Lee, Hsu & Lien, 2006). It is very common that when discussing employee turnover, it mainly means employees leaving the organization, i.e., in practice, only individuals resigning or being fired (Lee, Hsu & Lien, 2006).

Employee turnover can increase the organization's benefits as well as disadvantages, depending on the reason and why the employee leaves the organization (Kang & Sung, 2019). Positive consequences can be the displacement of poor performance, the increase of potential new technology or knowledge and skills, the reduction of labor costs, the preservation of relations with old employees, or the increase of staff advancement opportunities (Lee, Hsu & Lien, 2006). Negative effects can be increased financial costs, loss of know-how, loss of productivity, reduced service quality, lost business opportunities, and increased administrative tasks (Lee, Hsu & Lien, 2006).

In today's business environment, the opportunities for employee mobility are extensive, and therefore the voluntary turnover of employees from the organization causes great problems for the company (Nguyen et al., 2022; Kang & Sung, 2019). Employee turnover is a major concern for management in today's work environment. Employees voluntarily resigning and leaving the organization causes costs for the organization. Costs can be direct, such as those related to employee recruitment and training (Collins & Smith, 2006). In addition, the costs can be indirect, related to, for example, the weak commitment of employees to work or customer dissatisfaction (Kang & Sung, 2019).

Since knowledge and skills reside in people, organizations must retain valued employees and the intangible capital they provide to the company. These skills often have great economic and competitive value for the organization, so it is important to manage them strategically, like other financial assets, to achieve the organization's goals (Lee, Hsu & Lien, 2006). Based on the employee's behavior, it is also possible to predict whether they will stay in the organization or leave it. Possible predictions that the employee is leaving the organization are thinking about leaving, the intention to look for new job opportunities and alternatives, and their comparison with the current job (Regts & Molleman, 2012).

Figure 3. The employee turnover decision process (Mobley, 1977).

Turnover intention is the last step in the main turnover chain (Figure 3), where the employee decides whether to leave or stay in the organization. The employee starts the decision-making process when they recognize their desire to quit the job and/or the organization for a specific reason or several reasons. Based on the desire, they then make assessments about what kind of costs and sacrifices there would be if they decide to leave their job. If these costs and sacrifices are estimated to be relatively small, the employee starts looking for new jobs, this phase can also start directly if the cause is external, such as a family member moving to another place. Alternatives are then compared to the current position and if the employee finds a better match while searching, there is a higher chance that they will leave the organization. (Mobley, 1977).

2.2.1 Types of employee turnover

Employee turnover is predicted by many variables that vary depending on the situation. In general, predictive factors can be found in four categories, which are the characteristics of the employee (age, education, gender, family), the characteristics of the current job (safety, skill development, job satisfaction, and independence, and work stress), the nature of the current organization (supervision, salaries, and benefits) and external conditions (the employment rate). (Griffeth et al., 2000).

The reasons why an employee leaves their current work can vary depending on whether the employee is leaving their position within the organization to another location, or whether they are leaving for another organization entirely. Employee turnover should therefore be seen as a two-step process when an employee not only leaves their position but may also change their work orientation (Fields et al., 2005).

Reasons for an employee to leave their job can be unavoidable or avoidable. Unavoidable turnovers can be the death of an employee, career changes, family moves, or the need to take care of children at home (Fields et al., 2005). Reasons for avoidable turnover can be, for example, low general job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and higher work stress (Fields et al., 2005). Within these two categories, two more categories are possible in either chain of events: involuntary and voluntary turnover (Gessesse & Premanandam, 2023). In involuntary turnover, the employer dismisses or lays off employees concerning the organization, so leaving is not up to the employee (An, 2019). In voluntary turnover, on the other hand, employees resign, i.e., they decide to end their relationship with the organization themselves (An, 2019). The difference between the two above is who has started the process of employee turnover.

Involuntary turnover

Sometimes laying off or dismissing an employee goes against the organization's values, and all kinds of employees want to be held on to until the end, whether it's profitable or not. However, layoffs and dismissals are a legal process, and it is profitable if it is desirable to maintain or improve organizational performance (Meier & Hicklin, 2007). Redundancies are often related to wrong hiring decisions made by the organization or performance-related problems (Shaw et al., 1998; Stumpf & Dawley 1981). Employees are fired when the organization expects results that the employee is unable to provide for one reason or another (Stump & Dawley 1981).

Dismissing an employee who performs poorly in their duties and hiring a new employee with a better skill level than the dismissed employee can have a positive effect on the organization's performance (Boyne & Dahya, 2002). However, if there are a lot of layoffs or even for risky reasons, the costs of replacing employees can be greater than the benefits, since it can create an atmosphere of fear of layoffs (Meier & Hicklin, 2007).

Organizations can benefit by dismissing significantly underperforming employees. However, it should be noted here that the cost-benefits of dismissal are greater than the cost disadvantages of retaining the employee (An, 2019). Otherwise, dismissal is not profitable from the organization's point of view. Recruitment processes often do not reveal the employee's practical suitability for a specific job (Shaw et al., 1998). An employee who is theoretically suitable for the task may also underperform in the task after recruitment.

Involuntary turnover, i.e., when an organization fires an employee, can also correct such bad recruitment decisions (Shaw et al., 1998).

Excessive dismissal can also negatively affect how other employees of the organization experience job satisfaction, commitment, and their relationship with the organization (Travaglione & Cross, 2006). With termination processes, other employees can also get the impression that they are not valued in the organization and that the organization does not bother to invest enough in maintaining the relationship between the employee and the organization (Travaglione & Cross, 2006). Consequently, even after a certain limit value, the involuntary turnover of employees also starts to have a decreasing marginal return, and it can also negatively affect the organization's performance and profit expectations (An, 2019).

However, furthermore to its cost benefits, involuntary turnover can act as a positive example for other employees (Meier & Hicklin, 2007). Although excessive dismissal can also have negative effects on other employees in the organization, involuntary turnover can also encourage other employees. The benefits to the organization can therefore be indirect in addition to the direct cost benefits, when the dismissal can serve as a motivating signal for other employees of the organization, and encourages them to perform better (McElroy et al., 2001).

Involuntary turnover is strongly associated with individuals experiencing negative emotions related to it. It can cause financial and work uncertainty, i.e., cause a different outlook on life (Schneer, 1993). It can also cause negative effects on the employee's self-esteem and well-being (Schneer, 1993). Involuntary turnover is often seen as a failure from both an individual and an organizational perspective (Shaw et al., 1998). The association of failure with involuntary turnover has led to the fact that the subject has not been discussed so much in the literature and some of it has remained unexplored (Burrows et al., 2022).

Voluntary turnover

Voluntary turnover is related to the employee's decision to leave the organization and terminate the employment relationship with the employer (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017). Employees may decide to leave the organization to retire, leave their working life, or they may decide to accept an offer from another organization. Often, an employee's voluntary departure is significantly influenced by how much compensation they receive from the job, i.e., reward, the correspondence of the job description to their future dreams, and the available job options and comparing them to the current position (Harman et al., 2007). Leaving can also be influenced by management incompetence, poor judgment, lack of foresight, and poor communication (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000).

Every voluntary departure of an employee is a loss for the organization (An, 2019). The organization loses human and social capital, for example, skills, abilities, and knowledge about the organization, which have been acquired over time and which the departing employee possesses (Lee & Whitford, 2013). The costs related to this arise in connection with the replacement worker and their training (An, 2019). Hiring a new employee involves several administrative steps, and even after recruitment, the organization must invest financial and human resources to train the new employee as part of the organization (An, 2019). This can weaken the organization's operational capacity and performance. In addition, the building of social networks in the organization slows down, which weakens the organization's social capital (Dess & Shaw, 2001). These costs increase even more if the employee is very talented because finding a qualified person on the labor market is particularly challenging.

For the most part, the decision of a highly educated person to leave the organization is usually voluntary, because often organizations want to keep these employees within the organization due to their abilities (Kyndt et al., 2009). Educated persons are also more likely to have more career opportunities, which makes mobility easier (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). They also actively look for better career opportunities to advance their careers. However, many employees who express a desire to change jobs do not actually do so

(Allen et al., 2005). Even if they are unsatisfied with their current organization and their job and alternative opportunities are attractive, employees still do not necessarily quit despite their intentions. This is because the risks of termination are high, both financially, transactionally, and psychologically (Allen et al., 2005). Therefore, it is often easier to express a desire to change jobs than to actually do it.

Although there is still a long way to go between making the decision to leave and actually leaving the organization, and most employees do not carry out their intentions, planning to leave is often a sign of departure. It has been studied that the planning of the departure and the intention to leave is the biggest predictor of the fact that the employee will actually leave the organization (Elanain, 2014).

This study focuses on voluntary employee turnovers, as the study examines how the different agents of the organization influence how the employee sees their relationship with the organization and how this influences the employee making decisions about staying and leaving their workplace.

2.2.2 Drivers of employee turnover

Employee turnover is predicted by many variables that vary depending on the situation. In general, predictive factors can be found in four categories. These four categories include the characteristics of the employee, the characteristics of the current position, the nature of the current organization, and external conditions (Griffeth et al., 2000).

The current position's and the current organization's nature can be classified as push factors in whether an employee leaves the organization voluntarily (McBey & Karakowsky, 2001). This is therefore influenced by the factors that occur in the working conditions, which can affect the decision. The characteristics of the current position can be, for example, skill development, job satisfaction, independence at work, and work-related stress (Griffeth et al., 2000). The nature of the current organization can again be described through, for example, security, leader characteristics, or salary and benefits (Griffeth et al., 2000). The employee's characteristics can again be considered as belonging to individual factors (McBey & Karakowsky, 2001). Individual factors can be fundamental questions when investigating employees' intentions to leave the organization. If the employee's characteristics fit better with the organization, they are more likely to stay, and if they do not fit in, the employees are more likely to leave (McBey & Karakowsky, 2001). These characteristics can be, for example, age, gender, education, or family situation (Griffeth et al., 2000). External conditions can also influence whether an employee decides to leave the organization voluntarily. External conditions can also be called pull factors (McBey & Karakowsky, 2001). These seem to pull the employee away from outside the organization. These factors can be, for example, the unemployment rate and the situation of available work opportunities, and expenses (Griffeth et al., 2000).

However, often these characteristics alone do not influence whether the employee really considers leaving the organization and decides to leave in the end. Many characteristics that affect turnover affect it only indirectly, and the decision to leave is ultimately the sum of many factors. The initial decision is essentially influenced by the underlying relationship between the employee and the organization, to which these characteristics also make individualistic changes due to their implementation environment.

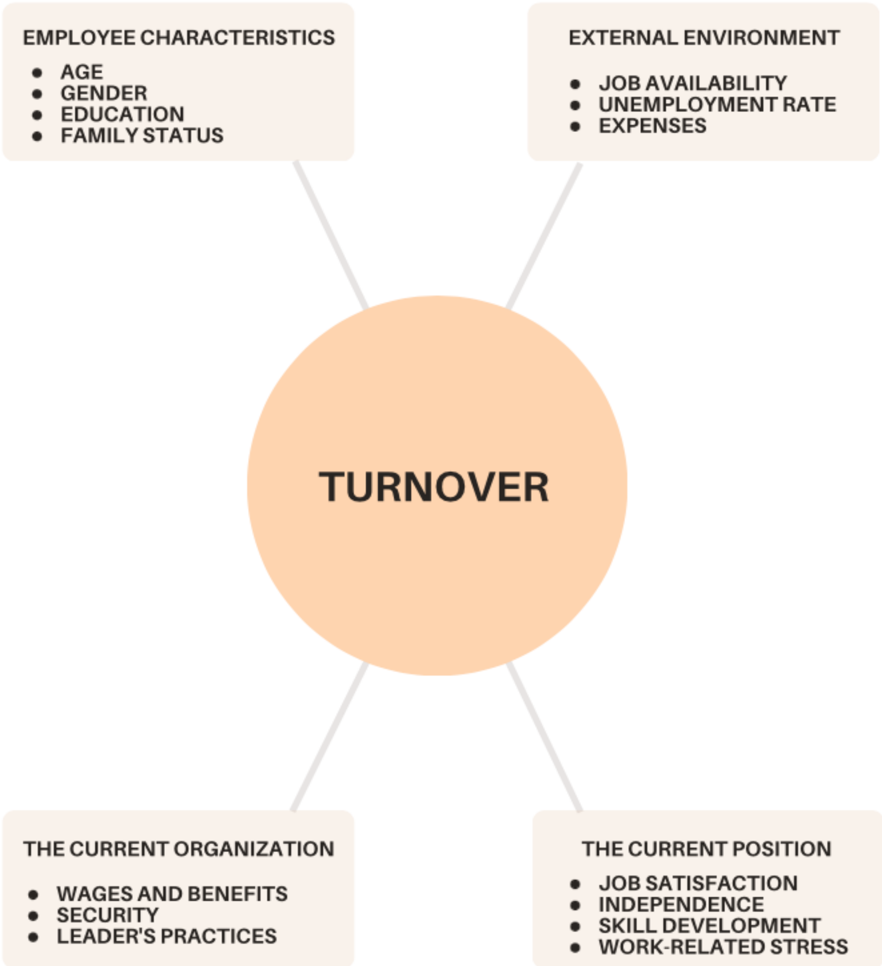

Figure 4. Employee turnover drivers.

Employee characteristics

Organizations need to hire people whose employee characteristics are as compatible as possible with the position. Finding the most suitable candidate is important to avoid wrong recruitment decisions. It has been studied that the employee's age, gender, education, and family relationships influence how likely the employee is to leave the organization voluntarily (Griffeth et al., 2000).

Age. Younger employees, who are relatively new to working life, have inevitably not yet found a position or organization that suits them perfectly, so they may be more likely to look for new jobs that would better meet their wishes (DelCampo, 2006). New employees are also statistically more likely to have lower wages, which increases their desire to look for other jobs (Cho & Lewis, 2012).

In general, the older an employee gets, the less likely they are to leave the organization (Cho & Lewis, 2012). An older employee usually finds the mobility caused by turnover more difficult and does not feel that they get as much from it as a younger employee. Thus, the benefits concerning the disadvantages are not as high as for a young employee. They may also have been satisfied with their current benefits and don't even want to pursue anything else (Cho & Lewis, 2012).

Older employees may also have developed longer-term and deeper relationships with their colleagues, which is why they do not want to leave the organization (Peltokorpi et al., 2015). They feel that the social sacrifices would also be too great in terms of leaving. Older workers may have invested more funds towards their pension, which would possibly have to be partially used in connection with turnover (Ippolito, 1987). In addition, the workplace can also offer such benefits as informal leadership responsibilities that have come through career and age (Peltokorpi et al., 2015).

Gender. It has been studied that voluntary turnover is higher with women than with men because women value social relationships more than men (Peltokorpi et al., 2015). For women, the social relationships at the workplace are more important, based on which they are more likely to change jobs until they find an organization where the social relationships meet their wishes, and the coworkers are more pleasant.

According to old socially accepted norms, gender roles also matter. In confrontational situations, women are supposed to make more choices in favor of home, than men (Peltokorpi et al., 2015). Women keep more value on raising children and taking care of the home. In addition, men base their identity more on their workplace, which is why they are more likely to stay in the same workplace (Worthley, 2009).

Women don’t create such a deep bond with their position, and turnover rates are more likely to be higher among women. According to other research, the difference between the sexes does not have such great differences and thus does not have such great importance concerning how likely an employee is to consider leaving the organization and how likely they are to leave the organization voluntarily (Kyndt et al., 2009).

Education. Employees with a higher level of education are more likely to leave the organization and their current workplace (Kyndt et al., 2009). Employees with higher education usually also have higher expectations for their career and development opportunities, which is why they are more likely than low-educated employees to also seek these development opportunities actively (Che et al., 2022; Trevor, 2001).

Organizations also want the most advanced and skilled workers, in which case they usually also replace less well-educated and meritorious employees with more suitable employees (Fields et al., 2009). This in turn also increases the mobility of employees among both high-educated and low-educated employees. However, the turnover of highly educated employees is often voluntary, while the turnover of low-educated employees is involuntary (Fields et al., 2009).

Family status. Turnover also involves risks, so the potential risks must be smaller than the possible benefits for voluntary turnover to be profitable. Employees with a spouse are more likely to change jobs voluntarily (Lebert & Voorpostel, 2016). Even more precisely, the spouses must have a stable job, so that it provides security for the possible risks of turnover (Lebert & Voorpostel, 2016). The risks without the financial security of another person could be too great for an employee living alone. On the other hand, the spouse can also influence the change of workplace in such a way that if the spouse's workplace is in another place or moves to another place, in which case the employee may more actively look for a job elsewhere as well (Fields et al., 2009). In countries where pension accumulation or comprehensive health care is strictly linked to the workplace, employees do not necessarily want to give up these benefits by changing jobs, even though changing might otherwise be timely (Fields et al., 2009).

If the employee has children or dreams of having children shortly, employees might look for jobs in organizations that are closer to home or that have opportunities for a daycare center or school nearby (Lebert & Voorpostel, 2016). Working hours must also be flexible regarding school or kindergarten hours so that the organization is suitable for parents (Lebert & Voorpostel, 2016). On the other hand, with small children, parents have less time and resources to look for possible new jobs, so turnover rates are lower (Lebert & Voorpostel, 2016). In addition, due to the risks caused by job hunting and changing jobs, parents with children, especially young children, do not change jobs as often as those without them (West & Worthington, 2014).

External environment

When scarcity prevails, external factors also affect how likely an employee is to look for a job in another organization. Turnover causes risks, so before deciding to leave, the employee must assess how a possible job change would affect life through benefits and risks. External factors guide the decision to leave or stay, as they can affect getting a job as a macro phenomenon as well as at the family level.

Job availability. Other job opportunities attract employees to change jobs, especially when employees think that the new job enables them things and opportunities that are not available in their current job (Dardar et al., 2012). If there are opportunities for a better workplace, at least in theory, employees begin to evaluate their current work more critically, which can lead to turnover intentions or a decision (Nair et al., 2016). Better job opportunities in terms of career development to explain employee issues are often mentioned in the literature even before being overlooked as an explanatory factor, and they have not been studied much (Yan et al., 2015). Nowadays, the topic has been studied and there is a lot of empirical evidence between turnover and alternative job opportunities (Albalawi et al., 2019; Nawaz & Pangil, 2016).

Potential alternatives from other jobs alone do not explain employees' intention to change jobs (Albalawi et al., 2019). Other opportunities should be associated with the alternative job, such as better benefits, development opportunities, or lower expenses (Albalawi et al., 2019). In various studies, commitment to the current organization has also been associated with how attractive alternative job opportunities are seen in the eyes of employees (Acikgoz et al., 2016). Other studies, on the other hand, have not found any similarities or empirical evidence for these (Feng & Angeline, 2010)

Unemployment rate. Job opportunities are significantly affected by the labor market situation (Albalawi et al., 2019). If the unemployment rate in the area of job expertise in which the employee should be employed is high, it is more likely that the employees will not look for opportunities as actively elsewhere (Fields et al., 2009). High rates of unemployment increase the likelihood that the employee will not be employed or find work elsewhere so easily.

Employees hold on to their jobs harder, even if the conditions in the organization are not ideal for them if there is a lot of unemployment in the sector or the market seems unstable (Bhat et al., 2021). In other words, in a bad labor market situation, the otherwise significant factor of HR in employee turnover intention loses its significance (Bhat et al., 2021).

If unemployment in the sector is low, employees may more actively look for jobs outside the organization as well. Employees believe that the demand is greater and that jobs are more easily available. More attractive job opportunities are often available precisely when the employment forecasts are positive and there is little unemployment in the sector (Bhat et al., 2021). Organizations also hire employees from outside the organization for positions when the labor market is balanced (Fields et al., 2009).

Expenses. Especially now, the cost of living is on the rise (Spencer, 2023). The upward pressure in the prices of almost all commodities also should cause the wages of employees to rise in the same proportion. Often, however, this does not happen, as it does not now, so purchasing power weakens (Spencer, 2023). When the cost of living and the salary is out of balance, the employee starts looking for alternative jobs elsewhere, where compensation would be better than the rising cost of living.

The current organization

The organization must attract competent and skilled employees to stay in its service by various means. The means can be tangible, such as salary or benefits (Ahmad et al., 2013). The means can also be intangible, i.e., provide security, opportunities to grow, or meaningful tasks (Ahmad et al., 2013). Organizational features that can influence an individual's opinion of the workplace are salary and benefits, security, and leaders' practices.

Wages and benefits. One of the biggest reasons why employees look for new job opportunities is salary, benefits, and other compensation in general (Owence et al., 2014). Better-paying job opportunities elsewhere pull employees away from their current organization (Nair et al., 2016). Competitive pay is a big factor in why some organizations have a lower turnover rate than others (Fields et al., 2009). Consideration of salary and benefits plays a big role in how competent and good employees can be brought to the organization or stay there (Ahmad et al., 2013). They are meant to bring security to the employee.

In addition to salary, benefits may include pension benefits, occupational health, paid days off, or vacation time (Renaud et al., 2021). In addition, organizations may offer some additional benefits, such as gym memberships, exercise, culture, or other benefits. These benefits are also valued, but they do not have the same impact on turnover as more traditional benefits (salary, vacations, etc.) (Renaud et al., 2017).

Organizations and managers often want to explain high turnover rates by the fact that workers leave the organization precisely in pursuit of better financial compensation

(Ahmad et al., 2013). With this, managers try to protect their ego and self-esteem from criticism and bumps when employees decide to leave the organization (Nair et al., 2016).

Security. Uncertainty and insecurity at work come when the organization is unable to keep working conditions sustainable (Ratnasari & Lestari, 2020). The organization does not have the necessary control over how the work will appear in the future. Employees experience insecurity in their work when their status as an employee and the compensation they receive from work may fluctuate and are not certain (Ratnasari & Lestari, 2020). This causes employees to think about other solutions for their work.

Uncertainty at work does not necessarily directly correlate with the employee's intentions to leave the organization. The uncertainty that stems from something often causes the employee to no longer trust the organization and is not as committed to it as before (Lee & Jeong, 2017; Mauno et al., 2014). When commitment decreases, the employee's intentions to leave the organization rise accordingly.

It is in people to want to prevent the loss of resources. Employment or job security can be seen as one resource. When this resource is threatened, other resources such as job satisfaction, well-being, or coping are also put to the test. Consequently, a person wants to prevent the loss of other resources, so they direct the remaining resources away from where the loss of resources is more likely (current organization) and direct them toward where resources could be recovered (new organization). This aims to compensate for the uncertainty brought by the current work. (Mauno et al., 2014).

Leaders' practices. The actions of supervisors are considered to be linked to how the organization is considered to function (Zhang et al., 2008). When the supervisor is competent and takes care of the well-being of their subordinates with their leadership skills, employees are less likely to consider leaving the organization (Fields et al., 2009).

If the supervisor acts as a mentor, i.e., supports the professional growth of their subordinates and actively offers learning opportunities, it positively affects the employees' intentions to stay (Zeb, 2023; Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2017). The interaction and its quality are also of great importance to how the employee experiences the effects of their supervisor's management. If the supervisor actively promotes the interaction between the employee and the supervisor and strives for both in the relationship to make the other grow and develop, the employee is more likely to be comfortable in the organization and not consider leaving (Park & Pierce, 2020).

Although the employees hope that the managers uniformly treat all employees, they still hope that the needs are considered as individuals, so that the employees can develop better (Sobaih et al., 2022). Managers who take these characteristics into account and motivate and bring ideas to the work community make the employees want to become like their role models, which often also reduces the intention to leave the current organization (Chen & Wu, 2017).

The current position

Work tasks and their characteristics also have a significant impact on how meaningful the employee perceives their tasks and their place in the organization. This can again influence how high the turnover rates are. The work tasks should bring more added value to the employee than they take away so that work remains interesting to do.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction can be described by the employee's attitude towards the job. However, satisfaction alone does not completely determine what kind of turnover intentions the employee has. Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction has been connected to many different components, and relatively little research has been done on its direct effects on intentions to leave (Swider et al., 2011). However, two arguments that have been studied concerning job satisfaction and turnover can be drawn.

If an employee is dissatisfied with their job, they are more likely to actively look for new jobs and organizations (Kaur & Kaur, 2023). With low work motivation towards their current position, they are also more likely to look for new opportunities all the time, also in the sense that they want to test the market. In addition, the higher the dissatisfaction with one's job, the more likely the employee will accept any new job, even if it does not fully meet the employee's wishes (Swider et al., 2011). If, on the other hand, the employee has higher job satisfaction, they are more likely to need better offers from the possible new workplace (Swider et al., 2011).

Independence. Employees who have more control over where, when, and how they do their work and how they delegate it have less intention to leave the organization (Jensen et al., 2013). It has been studied that employees who have little control over their work tasks are more likely to develop anxiety and work beyond their role, in which case they feel that the reward they receive from work is not sufficient relative to their freedom (Jensen et al., 2013). Employees feel that they have too much stress compared to how much power they have to influence the matter, so they look for work elsewhere as a coping mechanism (Jensen et al., 2013).

Social factors also affect how independently an employee is allowed to act on their task. Culturally, there can be radical differences in this dimension. In some organizations, there is a more precise hierarchy in management, and the organization may not be very agile in moving according to the wishes of individual employees. In addition, the employee's capabilities, which, for example, are brought by personal characteristics, impact how the job is customized. Depending on the organization, these can also affect what the employee is used to or what they expect, which in turn can affect whether they want to find a job that better matches their wishes. (Dysvik & Kuvaas, 2013).

Skill development. It is extremely important for employees that they are offered opportunities to develop their skills and learn even in challenging tasks (Lapointe &

Vandenberghe, 2017). If you look at the development of the employee's skills through turnover, it can have two-fold results.

It has been studied that if an employee develops their skills through, for example, orientation, training, or on-the-job learning opportunities, they become more attractive as a job seeker in the labor market (Koster & Fouarge, 2011). This can lead to the fact that, while looking for work, they receive more attractive offers from other organizations. Consequently, turnover may increase. It has also been studied that if the organization offers skill development and learning to the employee in their work, the attractiveness of the current job increases with development opportunities and the employee does not necessarily want to leave their current job easily (Sieben, 2007). Consequently, turnover decreases.

Work-related stress. Employees who experience more work-related stress are more likely to start looking for alternative job opportunities elsewhere (Bhat et al., 2021). If employees are dissatisfied with their work and, in addition, feel that the resulting work stress is much higher than normal, they more easily seek to leave the organization (Ramlawati et al., 2021). Work stress easily rises if the characteristics and demands of the job, work-life imbalance, and workload are higher than the person's abilities and resources (Giauque et al., 2019). Individuals handle and experience stress differently.

Especially in changing organizations, employees can experience work stress, because changes often cause anxiety and stress. However, organizations can reduce employee stress and thus turnover intentions if they communicate the change clearly to employees. Open communication, directly and indirectly, reduces employees' stress from their work. If the tasks are in balance with the employee's strengths, and the employees are kept up-to-date, turnover rates can decrease in the organization. (Muhammad et al., 2018).

2.2.3 Effects of EOR on employee turnover intentions

All the components mentioned in the theoretical background affect how the employee perceives their relationship with the organization. It is the sum of many characteristics that contribute to how the employee wants to stay or leave the organization. Due to its wide range of features, EOR is sometimes difficult to see as an influencing factor on turnover intention, but it is mirrored by various components behind the departure decision (Allen et al., 2005). Almost all employees who are considering leaving do not actually leave the organization, but at the same time turnover intention is the biggest sign that the employee actually leaves (Elanain, 2014; Allen et al., 2005).

The relationship that managers (agents of the organization) have with their subordinates can positively or negatively affect the employee's intentions to leave. A negative relationship between EOR and turnover intentions means that the better the relationship is, the fewer intentions the employee has on leaving (Elanain, 2014). In poor-quality relationships, communication, trust, and other possible benefits of the relationship are missing or minimal. This leads to employees experiencing negative feelings towards their managers, which can be directly reflected in the organization (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Such relationships are not desirable, so the employee tries to solve them by seeking better relationships, in another organization (Elanain, 2014). In this case, turnover rates increase. Regardless of the nature of the relationship between an organization and its employees, it is widely acknowledged that it can be a significant factor in employee turnover (Morrow et al, 2005).

When employees experience a strong and high-quality relationship with their organization, they experience more positive attitudes toward their organization, such as the intention to stay. When the relationship is strong, employees feel it is their moral obligation to stay with the relationship and the organization, because the commitment to the organization is strong (Liu et al., 2020). Due to a moral obligation, they want to act in the way that is best by the organization's goals and interests (Liu et al., 2020). They will not leave the organization or consider leaving it, as it would go against these moral models.

The moral obligation that arises from a high-quality relationship goes even further than just a relationship based on reciprocity and seeking reciprocity (Liu et al., 2020). To a large extent, the literature on EOR and its connection to how employees develop turnover intentions are based on the idea that it is reciprocity and the future benefits on both sides and the resulting commitment that drive the employee to not want to leave the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1989).

Also, too good, and high-quality relationships between leaders and employees can cause the same increase in turnover rates as low and poor-quality relationships (Liu et al., 2020). Too good a relationship increases the employee's value and attractiveness in the labor market. This is because the employee believes and even assumes that they can repeat the same valuable relationship with their managers in another organization where other benefits such as salary are better than in the current organization (Morrow et al., 2005). This causes delusion, because of which the employee may look for a new organization, even though in theory the relationship with the organization is good.

Based on previous research, the turnover of employees based on EOR causes a U-shaped curve, where turnover is highest when the relationship between the employee and the organization's agents is of excellent or poor quality and lowest when the relationship is moderate/good (Morrow et al., 2005). Other studies, which base the relationship more on the definition of an exchange relationship, i.e., where both benefit from each other through different exchanges, are based on a linear curve. According to the linear curve, when the relationship is of low quality, the turnover is the highest, and when the relationship is of high quality, the turnover is the lowest (Schyns et al., 2007).

In the relationship between the employee and the organization, the employee mirrors some agent of the organization as the organization i.e. personifies the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). The organization's agents can be, for example, the employee's closest supervisor or also the senior management. If the employee and the organizational agent develop a high-quality relationship between them, the employee often wants to identify with their leader (Sluss et al., 2012). When identifying with their leader, the employee also identifies with the organization, if the leader acts in line with the organization's goals in the employee's opinion (Niu et al., 2022). With this process, the employee takes the organization's goals and values as their own, and those become part of their daily activities. This promotes commitment to the organization, which in turn reduces the employee's desire to leave the organization (Niu et al., 2022).

2.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical background discussed research previous regarding the employee-organization relationship and employee turnover intentions. In figure 5 the theoretical framework summarizes all the concepts presented in this chapter. The meaning of the theoretical framework is also to guide the following chapters to conclude the research and gain a deeper understanding of the reasons behind employee turnover intentions in employee-organization relationships with different agents.

The framework consists of topics related to this research, the influence of the relationship between the employee and the organization on the employee's intention to leave the organization. More precisely, whether there is a difference between different agents in the organization, what kind of effects the relationship has on turnover intentions, and what the relationship consists of. The theoretical framework aims to bring together the concepts and topics identified in the literature and the relationships between them. That is why the framework has highlighted the dimensions that influence turnover intentions, as well as the topics that influence EOR. The organization's agents are supervisors and senior management so that the differences in the relationship and its impact can be examined. The theoretical framework is left loose so that the empirical part of the research builds results on top of the framework freely.

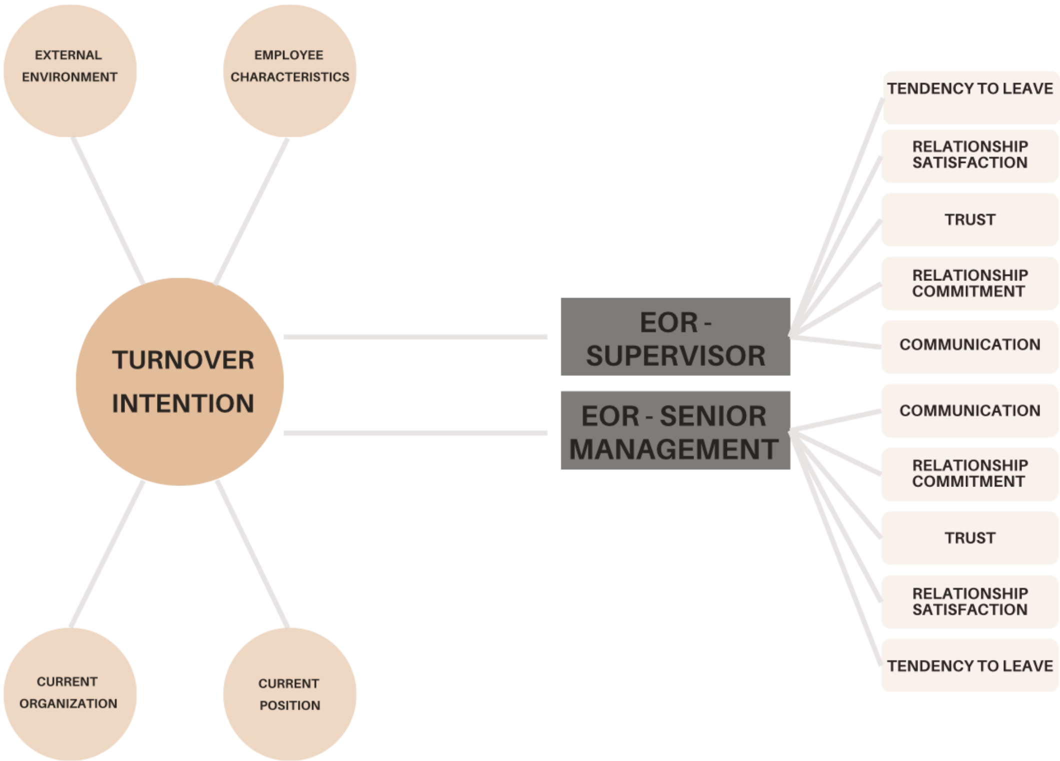

Figure 5. Theoretical framework.

3 Methodology

This chapter explains how the research was carried out, and why certain choices were made. This chapter goes through the process from choosing a research method to analyzing the data. First, the research approach is discussed, then the sample, data collection, and data analysis are covered. Finally, the quality of the data is discussed.

3.1 Research approach

Based on the research questions and topic, choices must be made about which research methods will be used to solve the problem. As research methods, it is possible to choose quantitative, qualitative, or a combination of these methods, a mixed method. A qualitative research method is often chosen when not much research has been done on the subject yet and the aim is to better understand the phenomenon (Felix & Smith, 2019, pp. 92-95).

The purpose of the study was to get answers to how employees' relationships with the organization affect employee turnover intentions if the employee mirrors the organization as their supervisor or senior management. When studying the behavior of different groups with each other, and how the phenomena are based on this behavior, qualitative methods should often be chosen for the research method (Silverman, 2017, pp. 8-9). The material collected using qualitative methods is therefore as versatile as possible, i.e., it is not limited only to a certain question, but rather to the whole situation including the question. Thus, the point of view can be changed nimbly, and new perspectives can be created on the phenomenon (Alasuutari, 2011).

The phenomenological trend is interested in the reality in which a person lives. This experience base is utilized in the phenomenological research strategy. The individual's experience is emphasized. Reality and knowledge, which are created as a result of social interaction, are always subject to interpretation and depend on who and how they are interpreted. (Puusa et al., 2020).

In social construction, it is typical to assume that different phenomena arise as a result of social interaction (Alasuutari, 2011). In this research, we act following social constructionism, so the research does not seek to find absolute facts about how the relationship between different agents affects the employee turnover intentions in the organization but aims to raise the topic more as a phenomenon arising through the employees' experience.

When conducting qualitative research, the research is largely based on perceptions and experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 125). However, there is a difference between the world of experience of the researcher and the researched. The researcher often asks questions in the light of their world of experience, and since the world of experience is always personal, to understand it more comprehensively, one should also ask at least some why-questions in addition to the what-questions (Vilkka, 2021). With this attitude, it is easier for qualitative research to produce the expectations set for it, i.e., the most comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Qualitative research is characterized by its subjective nature. Quantitative research is usually based on facts that are thought to be the same regardless of the researcher and the situation (Vilkka, 2021). Qualitative research focuses on examining individual cases, and what is essential in the research is the perspective of the people participating in it and the researcher's interaction with the findings (Puusa et al., 2020). Consequently, the difference between the researcher, the material, and the research object is typically small. If all studies were only isolated objects, the results would be devoid of the meaning of real life (Puusa et al., 2020).

Qualitative research is characterized by data collection methods such as theme or group interviews, observation, and analysis of various documents or materials. The research group is selected for the study purposefully, not randomly. Analyzing the data is often inductive, that is, it is not used to test pre-established hypotheses, but rather to reveal new and unexpected things. The material is comprehensive, and the cases are unique, and as such cannot be generalized, nor can the researcher decide which of them is relevant. (Vilkka, 2021).

3.2 The sample

A sample is a group of people, with the help of which data can be collected for the study. Getting the right people involved in the research is important so that the research produces value and progresses as desired. The purpose of the sampling process is to define the target group, choose the right technique to collect the data, and define the sample size. The sample can be obtained either using random sampling or purposive sampling and using either the Snowball technique or stratified sampling. (Felix & Smith, 2019, pp. 99-103).

It is essential for this study that the sample is selected according to certain criteria. The purpose of the study is to find out how the relationship between different agents in organizations affects employee turnover intentions. Due to the topic of the research, the research question is not relevant to the majority of the population, which is why purposive sampling has been utilized in the research. It is essential for the sample that they work in the organization and have the opportunity to reflect on their intentions to stay or leave the organization in their relationship with their immediate supervisor and senior management. Accordingly, the subjects must be in a position where they do not themselves act as senior management or directly under it. In addition, with the help of purposive sampling, it is possible to achieve the fact that due to a carefully selected sample, the researcher can come up with a smaller sample that produces enough and the right kind of information for the research.

The purpose of qualitative research is not to generalize facts widely, but to study a smaller part of the population through different methods so that one can learn to understand the meaning of the phenomenon in a broader way. However, the phenomenon can be generalized to organizations in many different fields, and the research does not focus only on a single case, so stratified sampling has been used in the research. An effort has been made to contact people from as many different backgrounds and fields as possible so that understanding could be increased. Thus, the answers of research subjects from different backgrounds and organizations can be compared to similar situations and questions.

The exact size of the sample was not defined in advance, but the purpose was to interview 8-12 people relevant to the study from various organizations, so that everyone has at least two superiors on the management ladder, depending on the size of the organization and the position of the participating person. Participants were selected for the study, who were between the ages of 35 and 60, with an average age of 50. In the end, 10 interviews were held via Teams or Zoom. Five of the interviewees identified as male and five as female. The interviews lasted from 30 to 50 minutes. The interviews were conducted between May 2nd and May 7th, 2023.

Interviewee	**Gender**	**Service Area**	**Education**	**Duration**
1	Male	Education	Master’s	34:29
2	Female	Education	Master’s	39:58
3	Female	Finance	Graduate	35:04
4	Male	Engineering	Master’s	30:40
5	Female	Finance	Graduate	36:03
6	Male	Finance	Master’s	34:35
7	Male	IT	Master’s	48:41
8	Male	Insurance	Bachelor’s	30:51
9	Female	IT	Bachelor’s	33:39
10	Female	Health	Bachelor’s	31:17

Table 1. General information of the interviewees.

3.3 Data collection

Data was collected mainly through interviews. Secondary data was sought from already existing materials and literature. The interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews. In a semi-structured interview, the themes, and subject areas that are wanted to get information about through the interviews are gathered together. However, additional questions can also be asked, and the questions do not have to proceed in the same order in each interview (Vilkka, 2021). The body of the questions, as a guide for the interviews, remains the same for all interviews conducted (Appendix 1.). Thus, the interview is more natural, and the goal remains that the interviewee can give their description of things. However, when using interviews as a data collection method, it is important that the questions are created in such a way that the interviewee does not need to have more detailed knowledge of the phenomenon before the interview and the questions are still easy to understand (Puusa et al., 2020).

In semi-structured interviews, it is important that the interviewer directs the way of the conversation with their questions and thus the interview stays on the topic for which answers are hoped. However, the interviewer does not steer the conversation too much but gives room for possible side paths that support the goals of the interview and bring new perspectives to it.

In general, semi-structured interviews are used when the goal of the research is to explain a phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2007, p. 314). The purpose of this study is to explain which factors of relationship affect an employee's intention to leave an organization and whether they differ from one another when it comes to a close supervisor or senior management, to whom the employee mirrors their relationship with the organization. In research, it is also important to try to understand people's attitudes, experiences, and meanings, in which case it is important that the interviewees have space to talk about their own experiences.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the data collection method for this study also because the topic can be experienced at first as broad and difficult to understand, so it ensured the opportunity for the interviewer to lead the discussion, but also for the interviewee to ask questions if something was unclear. In addition, the semi-structured interview also gives flexibility to the research, when more detailed questions can be asked, or the questions can be returned to get the most accurate understanding possible from the answers. Semi-structured interviews enable a body of questions that supports the framework of the thesis.

Open-ended questions were used in the interviews, which ensured that as rich and comprehensive information as possible was collected from the interviews. As interviews were the primary data collection method and the research was focused on explaining, this was an important feature of the interviews. In the interviews, an effort was made to preserve the nature of the conversation, and the interviews were developed around the structure depending on when the interviews were held.

The interviews were all arranged as individual interviews remotely via Zoom or Teams, which made it possible to easily record the interviews. The recording also ensured that the interview could be returned to and thus the validity of the study increased. The interviews were all organized over one week. The interviews were all conducted in Finnish, which was the mother tongue of the interviewees. Thus, in the interviews, the interviewees were also able to express their experiences in different nuances, which they might not have been able to express in the same way in a foreign language.

The interviewees were approached by e-mail, in which case the interview request was the same for all interviewees (Appendix 2.). In the interview request, the subject of the study, the data collection method, the time to be reserved for the interview, and the reliability of the interviews were presented. The data collected from the interviews were treated anonymously due to sensitivity. The interviews were recorded, and it was agreed with the interviewees that the recordings will only be used for conducting the research and will not be processed by persons other than the researcher. The interviewees were also able to influence the time of the interview themselves.

3.4 Data analysis

The purpose of qualitative research analysis is to create a meaningful whole from the data, which makes it possible to produce an interpretation and draw conclusions about the phenomenon under study (Puusa et al., 2020). It is essential to analyze the collected material, and for analysis, it must be changed into a format where it is easier to study. The interviews are therefore transcribed. In transcribed interviews, the interviews are written down as a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee. In transcription, it is essential to decide how accurately the interview will be transcribed. Are there included, for example, filler words, hesitation, or sign language (Hepburn, 2017, pp. 66-98)? In the creation of this study, a transcription method was used, which also considered possible sign languages or changes in a speech during the interview. These were transcribed based on the notes taken during the interview.

The research problem and the perspective chosen by the researcher often guide the data analysis. Content analysis has been used to analyze the data of this study. Content analysis is a traditional method of data analysis in qualitative research and is suitable for analyzing heard, seen, and written data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 179). These data formats can be easily obtained from interviews. Content analysis is divided into conventional and directed content analysis. The conventional content analysis aims to look at the collected data and find some typical features or meanings that repeat (Vilkka, 2021). After this, everything irrelevant is removed from the material and it is examined with the help of a theoretical framework. In directed content analysis, the theory strongly guides the analysis of the data, and the data is interpreted only in the light of the theoretical framework (Vilkka, 2021).

In addition to these, summative content analysis has also become a method of content analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). In summative content analysis, similar to conventional content analysis, it is started to look at the material data-driven, but in the final stage a theoretical framework is also brought in, in which case previous knowledge partially guides the analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018). Summative content analysis was chosen for the analysis of the study because the data was to be examined in the light of a theoretical framework, but the point of view of the subject did not completely support the choice of directed content analysis either, since the theory is broad, and the subject is still relatively unexplored.

The analysis of the data began by familiarizing the carefully transcribed interview material, which was transcribed into a Word document, producing a total of 151 pages. The transcribed data was read through several times to create a comprehensive picture of the material and data. After that, the material was searched for various themes, expressions, or content that supported the solution to the research problem. These relevant points were highlighted and added to a separate Word document in certain categories formed from the theory that were relevant to the research problem. In this way, repeated phenomena were accumulated that the theory had not yet identified as related to the topic of the study. Separate Word documents were for the turnover intentions in comparison with the immediate supervisor and senior management so that the two could be analyzed side by side. Thus, it was easier to highlight the results in the results section.

3.5 The assessment of the quality of the data

The research is also evaluated through its ethics, validity, and reliability. Validity means how much the research measures what it is intended to measure. A valid study should not have systematic errors. Mistakes also occur if the subjects understand the research questions differently from how the researcher has thought about them. For this reason, the interview questions should already be planned in such a way that they are as easy to understand as possible in the same way. Reliability means that the research results are accurate. In other words, when evaluating, it is looked at how the research results can be repeated regardless of the researcher. These together form overall reliability, where random errors are minimized. (Vilkka, 2021).

In this study, the aim was to progress consistently from the topic selection to the writing of the theory and the research itself. Although this thesis may contain topics and concepts that are not familiar to many, an effort has been made to explain and write them in such a way as to make them as easy to understand as possible. This appropriate description increases the reliability of the thesis (Puusa et al., 2020).

A similar question frame was used in the interviews, which ensured a balanced analysis of the material. All interviews were also videotaped and transcribed in the same way. In the design of the question frame, the aim was to make the questions simple, but in such a way that their answers would describe as much as possible the topic that was wanted to be studied. Interviews also have challenges as a data collection method. The interviewees may lie, or they may have some motives not to tell the truth or to embellish things. This reliability problem was tried to be minimized by ensuring privacy protection, i.e., the results are processed anonymously, and the data is viewed only by the author of the study.

To increase validity, the research uses versatile sources. Sources have been evaluated throughout the process and an effort has been made to find the most versatile and up-to-date sources of the phenomena. In the research, good scientific research methods have been followed under ethical principles, and the sources and the bibliography have been included as part of the research work (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 237). In addition, the choices made in the research have been tried to be justified with the help of theory and professional skills, as well as previous studies, so that the right choices would have been made as the research progressed and the reliability of the research would have increased (Puusa et al., 2020).

4 Findings

This chapter presents the results of the data for the study. In the interviews, a few themes emerged from the relationship between the employee and the organization, which have an impact on the quality of the relationship and, through that, an identifiable connection with the employee's turnover intentions. Under each sub-heading, the employee's relationship with the immediate supervisor as well as the senior management is examined, as well as their effects on the turnover intention. After this, the chapter discusses the effects of unique environments. Finally, the results are summarized, and the revised framework is presented.

4.1 Trust, support, and respect

During the interviews, trust emerged as one of the major recurring themes. Although it was described using different words, the concept of trust carried slightly different meanings depending on the context in which it was discussed. However, every interviewee emphasized the importance of trust in their relationship with their supervisor and senior management, and it was never overlooked.

The participants were specifically asked to identify a factor in their relationship with their supervisor that they would not compromise on, and that could potentially make them reconsider their employment status. Trust was often cited as a critical factor, as interviewees emphasized the importance of building a trusting relationship with their supervisor. They noted that trust was demonstrated through the supervisor's confidence in their abilities, without the need for constant monitoring or oversight.

"... if there was terrible micromanaging, that would also have a big impact on the decision to move somewhere else" (Interviewee 9.)

"An unnerving characteristic of a leader is some kind of stalking and, in a way, the same kind of mentality, that you don't trust your subordinates, that we take care of things." (Interviewee 3.)

At the same time, trust was also seen in such a way that it was hoped that the supervisor would be a reliable person with whom conversations could be held confidentially, and thus also areas of development and sensitive issues could be talked about. The interviewees found it difficult to stay in the organization if the trust was completely exhausted or suffered a bad knock for some reason. This was the most raised issue when talking about the interviewees' intention to leave the organization. Supervisors were expected to show trust also through concrete actions so that a better relationship could develop.

"If any factor would make it easier for me to look for work elsewhere, it would be a breach of trust. If I have told a supervisor some things in confidence and I hear that they have then told that matter to a third party, it could have a big impact." (Interviewee 5.)

"... if the trust were lost, the supervisor acted in such a way that you could no longer trust, then you could consider whether to leave." (Interviewee 8.)

"I feel that trust plays a big role in how you enjoy working in the organization and how committed you are. Trust in the supervisor is behind everything there." (Interviewee 9.)

Although supervisors were expected to have confidence in their employees' ability to make decisions regarding their work tasks and to grant them autonomy and responsibility, the interviews also highlighted the importance of the supervisors' active involvement in supporting decision-making. The interviewees felt that if they are left completely alone with decision-making, it easily reflects on how satisfied they are working in the organization and how they experience work stress, and through this how willingly they want to stay in the organization. The supervisor was often viewed as playing a more significant role in building trust than senior management, particularly in the context of shaping employees' intentions to leave the organization. This relationship between trust and employees' intentions to leave was also evident in their interactions with senior management.

"A supervisor needs to be reliable and responsible, and in such a way that you also get tips and information about things and support in difficult situations." (Interviewee 2.)

Concerning senior management, trust was experienced in slightly different ways. Trust came up a lot when discussing the interviewees' relationship with senior management. Employees hoped for greater trust from senior management, which they believed could be achieved through respectful interactions. They believed that this trust and respect would make their work feel more significant and increase their motivation to stay with the organization. It was appreciated that the senior management would consider the kind of knowledge and skills the people have about their work tasks and would not belittle it. Being demoted can often lead to a desire to seek opportunities elsewhere, where employees feel that their skills and knowledge are respected and valued, and where they can trust that the organization will support their growth and development in their current role.

"You can disagree on things, but if that kind of respect is not maintained, it is something that easily pushes you away from the organization." (Interviewee 1.)

4.2 Communication

A key theme in the interviews was the importance of communication in how much employees think about whether they want to leave or stay in the organization. In modern times, especially with the covid pandemic, a larger part of communication has moved to electronic channels instead of live chats (Loyless, 2023). Instead of in which channel, it was felt to be important that in the discussion connection there was perceived openness and presence from all parties in the relationship. Being heard was important to maintain the meaning of the relationship.

When communicating with the supervisor, it was brought up in the interviews how all the employees would like to be met as individuals. It is important that there is no favoritism, but that everyone should be heard. An open culture of discussion is promoted by creating the above-mentioned trust so that even difficult issues can be discussed without fear of sanctions. Regardless of the channels, the important thing is that the supervisor is present and even if they are in a hurry, they would listen to the worries and the discussion atmosphere would be as reciprocal as possible. Sometimes even a simple question would bring the feeling that the conversation is open, and the employee is being taken into account. During discussions with their supervisor, employees found it frustrating when promised progress did not materialize, and they felt unable to express their true desires and concerns.

"... annoying that we discussed and discussed and discussed and then nothing happened and finally when you decide to leave the organization, you get a message that yes, it could have been done this way." (Interviewee 7.)

"They didn't ask at all how I was doing, and I then gave them feedback about it, and they were grateful for the feedback. The important thing is to be able to constructively give feedback on both sides." (Interviewee 9.)

“...now they have much work and so many subordinates that sometimes it feels whether they have time, and it takes to answer e-mails.” (Interviewee 10.)

"A conversational culture is that there are rarely surprises when there is good and constant communication. Then you know pretty well where you're going all the time, and it also creates confidence." (Interviewee 4.)

In several interviews, employees mentioned that communication with their supervisors often extended beyond work-related topics, and they viewed this as an important aspect of building a comfortable and supportive work environment. In the interviews, it became evident that it is important to be able to deal with topics both inside and outside of work with humor, and it was often hoped that the supervisor would also find a sense of humor in the discussions. In this way, the discussion culture would be made more relaxed and the discussion would be open. This would also create a situation where it would be easier to talk about even the most serious issues at a low threshold and approach the supervisor.

"Communication is very open. Sometimes when we talk about work matters, we might also start talking about leisure matters too, so that line is quite blurred. In addition, humor is often used in discussions." (Interviewee 2.)

"... that even in a tight situation there is some humor, and you can kind of relate to the seriousness of things and there is such an easy and open conversation." (Interviewee 5.)

If to avoid or at least minimize employees' intentions to leave, communication with senior management is also important. When the interviewees were asked about communication with senior management, the answer was usually that both the relationship and the communication are often quite distant. However, this was not only seen as a bad thing. Through the interviews, it became apparent that employees often hoped for senior management to meet with them as a group, rather than on an individual basis. However, this did not mean that communication was not valued. Employees felt that it was important for senior management to communicate decisions about strategy to the groups that would be affected, to make them feel valued and significant in their work. The importance of senior management as good communicators were emphasized, i.e., good communication and its skills are particularly important for creating a good relationship.

"Communication is quite formal. Of course, there might be an e-mail message or something, so they don't personally send any message to me, but more of an announcement to everyone in a little more distant way. That's really how it should be." (Interviewee 6.)

"...on the other hand, it would be nice to have more contact with them from time to time as well, but of course, everyone is probably quite busy... If I needed something from them, I could still contact them." (Interviewee 9.)

4.3 Mutual goals

Findings show that the role of common goals, objectives, and values in the relationship between the employee and both supervisor and senior management cannot be ignored. Coyle-Shapiro and Shore (2007) considered in their research that to understand the relationship between the employee and the organization and to show the consequences of it, it is important to be able to understand to which organizational agent the employee mirrors their relationship when talking about the organization. When considering the organization in terms of values and strategy, the interviews uncovered a trend where individuals perceive a stronger connection between senior management and these aspects. As we move down the management ladder, the organization appears to become increasingly personalized.

From the employee's point of view, senior management rarely plays a very strong role. However, in all the interviews it became clear that in terms of commitment and staying in the organization, it is important that the relationship with the senior management is as good as possible regardless of the power distance. In all the interviews, the answer was that the relationship with senior management is also important, although it does not have as strong an impact or as close to everyday life as the relationship with the closest supervisor.

"The relationship with the senior management is important in terms of commitment to the organization, yes. In an organization where the senior management is far away and nothing has ever been heard or seen from them, I would say that from time to time when you see or hear from them too, it makes you more committed." (Interviewee 5.)

Strategy implementation plays a strong role from the employee's point of view. Strategy implementation is done by supervisors as well as senior management. During the interviews, it was evident that senior management frequently manifests its influence through strategy and values. Interestingly, in some instances, participants mentioned the difficulty in completely differentiating between the personal values of senior management and the values of the organization itself. This indicates a potential overlap or intertwining of these two sets of values. In the interviews, one important takeaway was that the organization's values played an important role. At the same time, interviewees were ready to adapt their values as the strategy changed, except if their role changed a lot or the new values conflicted a lot with their own or the organization's former values. This was regarded as a major push factor, highlighting the importance of the relationship with senior management in influencing individuals' decisions to seek alternative opportunities.

"Yes, I would probably be more inclined to start looking for work elsewhere if we were acting contrary to my own or the company's current values." (Interviewee 8.)

"...especially when a strategy is being formulated, being able to personally identify with it holds significant importance concerning senior management." (Interviewee 1.)

"... the senior management decides something that affects my work and that now the strategy will be completely changed. ...then I would say that some other position needs to be looked for." (Interviewee 6.)

According to the interviewees, it is important for employees to feel that their supervisor is on the same side as them. It may sometimes be difficult for a supervisor to make impartial decisions, as they should often represent the interests of both the organization and the employee with their actions (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007). According to the results, the relationship between the supervisor and the employee suffers if the supervisor does not actively seem to pursue the same issues and strive for the best for the employees. According to the interviewees, it is important to feel that the supervisor is supportive and wants to promote the employee's interests, for example in salary and benefits matters.

"...if the supervisor is meant to help me in achieving my goals and becoming the best employee I can be, and if I am to remain satisfied working here, then I don't have trust in them fulfilling that role." (Interviewee 7.)

"I trust the working methods of my supervisor... but there have been moments regarding salary where I have felt that they haven't been assertive enough in promoting my interests in that matter." (Interviewee 1.)

“They are also strongly on the side of us, employees, in those matters where we hope for change to take place.” (Interviewee 10.)

4.4 Relationship satisfaction and commitment

In the relationship with the employee and the supervisor or senior management, commitment and satisfaction are influenced by the themes mentioned above, such as trust, support, respect, communication, and a shared value base. These are important cornerstones in any relationship, but they show up differently. Thus, relationship satisfaction and commitment play a role, as they act as mediators between these themes and the relationship itself, influencing how an employee contemplates their decision to leave the organization. They impact how the relationship is perceived and the nature it takes. In each EOR, their significance varies, and they are also formed differently.

In addition to the things mentioned above, the relationship between the employee and the supervisor is influenced by the personality of the supervisor from the employee's point of view and how well their personality and the supervisor's personality are compatible. It would be considered difficult the continuation the relationship if the personality of the supervisor changed or if traits began to appear that were completely at odds with the employee's traits.

“...if there is a lack of personal chemistry with the supervisor and the leadership style is of a certain type, which differs from your way of thinking." (Interviewee 3.)

"... there is so much personality involved in this work." (Interviewee 2.)

The supervisor is often seen in terms of openness, trust, support, and closeness. They are often more personified, while senior management is seen as distant figures who represent more of the organization and its values. The findings indicate that it was more difficult to articulate thoughts and opinions about the relationship with senior management, and often individuals were satisfied with much less in that regard. The relationship with the supervisor was of greater importance and even the smallest nuances could cause more resentment and thoughts about whether to leave the organization. On the other hand, individuals were more satisfied with their relationship with senior management when there was effective communication and a willingness to listen to information coming from lower levels in the decision-making process. It was not necessarily desired for senior management to engage with individuals on an individual basis; rather, it was more important to feel a sense of belonging as part of a group. Belonging to the group and being part of the group concerning senior management was important, even though in Finland, where the interviews were conducted, an individualistic culture prevails, where management is usually the management of individuals (Hofstede, 1984).

Commitment to the workplace is largely formed with the qualities that are valued in relationships. The employee must feel relevant and somewhat close to the relationship in light of their values to feel committed to the organization. If the employee is not committed, the intentions to leave are clearer. According to the findings, to promote commitment in a relationship, there must be an open atmosphere within the organization and the flow of information must be immediate and trust must be created through that. In addition, it is important that the employee feels that they are responsible for their part in decision-making and that they make meaningful decisions.

"... due to that dishonesty, I don't feel responsible or committed, because I don't feel like I'm working almost even in the same company as them." (Interviewee 7.)

"...it comes down to whether one feels heard and can influence things, which ultimately determines whether there is dissatisfaction." (Interviewee 4.)

4.5 Impact of individual environment

In addition to EOR, employee characteristics, the external environment, the current position, and the current organization also greatly influence the employee's intentions to leave. In the interviews, questions were also asked about these themes to get an overall picture. These cannot be completely ignored when interpreting the answers, because when examining the relationship, each different individual environment also influences the matter and how the situation is perceived as a whole. The individual environment and the issues that came up when examining the impact of EOR on the intention to leave all affect the individual tendency to leave.

People of the same age, in the age range of 35–60 years, were deliberately chosen for the interviews. The selected persons were chosen as those who have already accumulated a working career. The interviewees were asked to examine the relationship with the supervisor and senior management as an individualistic aspect, but when asked, often age also came up regarding intentions to leave. It was often felt that finding a new and perhaps even better job might be difficult at this stage, and the risk of finding one is not small enough compared to the incentive.

"I think that you can probably get a good job in this field, but of course when you think about it individually, you start to be old enough that if you didn't have your current job, you would have difficulties getting a job of a similar level." (Interviewee 8.)

Many interviewees had families and children. When asked why they had or had not considered leaving the organization, the answer was often partly related to the fact that they did not want uncertainty or to get into a situation where the whole family would have to move for a new job. Often, this was cited as a significant underlying reason that had such a strong impact that individuals were even willing to compromise on certain benefits or job satisfaction.

"...I didn't apply for any position because the children's personal life, going to school, and their circle of friends was more important to me than if I would have applied for a position elsewhere." (Interviewee 1.)

The salary was another significant theme that emerged in every interview, and it was highlighted as an area for improvement in eight interviews. In the remaining interviews, participants felt that the salary was in line with industry standards. Money often arouses great emotions, and based on the findings, it was often felt that salary development is lagging. For the most part, it was felt that salary development, in general, is lagging in the industry, but the role of supervisors was also brought up in salary discussions. It was felt that the supervisor's task would be to promote the employee's interest also through salary discussions and to also make an effort to ensure that the salary corresponds to the development of the employee's skills and knowledge over the years.

"... the salary maybe not be so much these days, sometimes it felt like you got a really good salary in the industry, but at the moment the salary development has not progressed despite how many years of work there are." (Interviewee 3.)

In addition, the findings showed that alongside the relationship, when changing jobs, the relationship with the entire work community also plays an important role. Supervisors are often perceived as being closer because they simultaneously have the role of guiding and encouraging employees while also safeguarding their interests to some extent. However, often also the support of the work community from those working in the same work tasks was felt to be extremely important when tasks could be solved with those in the same position or new regulations that came from the senior management could be threshed together.

"Collegial support is important and we share a lot of information and methods in our field, so there is a lot of discussion." (Interviewee 2.)

"However, the work community is such that we go in the same direction and pull the same rope, that it carries a little even on weaker days." (Interviewee 6.)

4.6 Summary of findings and revised framework

The purpose of this study was to find answers to whether EOR affects the employee's intentions to leave the organization and to investigate in more detail how the relationship with the supervisor and senior management differs and through which themes they are valued.

The findings showed that the interviewees valued many of the things that had already been brought up in previous research in their relationship with their supervisor and senior management. In addition to this, however, new themes emerged that had not yet been observed. The themes that emerged in the interviews manifested themselves in different ways and were valued in different ways when it came to the relationship with the supervisor or the relationship with senior management.

Perhaps even the biggest theme in all the interviews was trust and its creation both concerning the supervisor and the senior management. According to the findings, however, the importance of trust was often more strongly associated with the relationship with the supervisor. Often, the interviewees recognized that if there was a lack of trust concerning a supervisor, it would be a factor that would hurt keeping the job. Trust was most easily expressed by supervisors through granting freedom in decision-making and having confidence in employees' up-to-date knowledge of their tasks. This trust in employees' competence and autonomy enabled them to make independent decisions. At the same time, it was hoped that support would be available from supervisors when needed so that employees would not feel alone in challenging situations. Furthermore, trust was also manifested in the ability to openly discuss personal matters, even the most challenging ones, with the supervisor without fear of them sharing them with others. Thus, trust supported and facilitated communication, as well as the autonomy and support provided in tasks.

According to the findings, support was also shown in such a way that a feeling of belonging and playing on the same team was expected more strongly from the supervisor than from senior management. Especially with salary discussions and difficult situations at work, it was brought up how important it is that the supervisor feels like they are promoting the employee's interests and issues. This was also felt to be a major factor in what kind of relationship is formed with the supervisor and how it is made to stay in the organization.

When reflecting on their relationship with senior management, the interviewees often also identified trust as a major factor in the success of the relationship and staying in the organization. Trust, however, was seen in a slightly different role than what it was when mirroring the supervisor. Trust was most often described through respect. Respect often referred to the recognition that employees are often the best professionals in their respective roles and often have a deeper understanding of their work than senior management. It was hoped that even in challenging situations, respect would prevail, allowing for the resolution of disagreements. The idea was to foster a mindset where everyone works together for the common goal, playing on the same team, without the "us vs. them" mentality.

Communication was also a theme that came up in all the interviews, also in other answers, rather than when talking about it separately. In this study, it emerged that communication with senior management is often relatively distant, and according to those interviewed, there is hardly any communication with individual employees. However, this was not perceived in a negative light in terms of forming a relationship. Communication was felt to be important, especially if it concerned one's work tasks. However, based on the findings, it was important to belong, as it were, to a group, i.e., communication was not even expected to extend to the individual level. This did not mean that communication with senior management was not also held in high esteem. Senior management was expected to be good communicators and to be open in their communication. Openness creates an atmosphere of respect and trust even in a relatively distant communication relationship.

According to the findings, there were relatively different opinions about communication with supervisors. In this regard, it was considered important that the supervisor is often available, and that the discussion culture is confidential and individual. However, it was hoped from the supervisor that no one would be favored and that everyone would be met as equal, but still individualized. Individual relationships in communication and in general were held in high regard in terms of how commitment to the organization and dealing with turnover intentions was perceived. According to the research, an important role was also played by the fact that the conversation culture with the supervisor was open and that even difficult issues and areas of development would be easy to discuss. Based on the data, it is important that the supervisor can sometimes be met face-to-face, but even if the communication takes place via electronic channels for the most part, availability was more important than this. Open communication also had a great impact on how trusted the relationship with the supervisor was perceived to be.

Senior management was often seen more as an entity, and according to the results, senior management was more easily equated to being similar to the organization. On the other hand, the immediate supervisor was often personalized as an individual entity, while being perceived as more distant from the organization as a whole. According to the findings, the personality of the supervisor had a great impact on how the employee feels they get along with the supervisor, which either reduces or supports the person's intentions to leave the organization. The matching of personalities was felt to be important in the development of the communication culture, which also contributed to how the confidential relationship developed.

As mentioned above, the senior management was seen more as a personal entity similar to the organization. Often when talking about what was the most important characteristic concerning senior management and what would most likely make an employee consider leaving the organization, values, and strategy were brought up. It was hoped that the senior management would bring transparency to the implementation of the strategy and values so that it would be easy to follow them and stand behind them. Often, in the interviews, it was challenging to identify a specific factor that could influence the relationship with senior management to the extent of causing someone to leave the organization or consider it. This also supports the fact that the supervisor's relationship undoubtedly plays a greater role in how easily an employee considers leaving the organization. However, it was frequently highlighted that if senior management were to completely contradict the established strategy or values, or if job responsibilities were significantly altered as a result, individuals would be more inclined to seek opportunities elsewhere about their relationship with senior management. According to the findings, the implementation of the strategy and the values also contributed to how respect was perceived in the relationship.

All these themes influenced the level of satisfaction and the extent of commitment in the relationships. In addition, it was often even difficult to separate the relationship with a supervisor from its individualistic concept. Thus, the findings also showed that the external environment, current position, current organization, or employee characteristics should not be forgotten even in this frame. For the most part, these individual factors were influenced by age, family relationships, and salary. Data was collected from interviewees who were relatively the same age, but who had already advanced their careers, so age was expected to be an influencing factor. Furthermore, family considerations played a role, as individuals expressed a desire to avoid uprooting or subjecting their entire family to uncertainty when seeking a new job. In addition, the salary has an effect either whether it was worth staying in the organization or not. Other benefits were also valued and how the supervisor supports employees in salary discussions. All these also affected employee turnover intentions.

In summary, figure 6 gathers together the new findings obtained from the data and combines them with the previous research. Relationship satisfaction and relationship commitment are not perceived as identical background factors in the context of this research. Instead, specific aspects emerged as more influential according to the research findings, which then impact the level of satisfaction and commitment in the relationship. These, in turn, continue to influence how the relationship is perceived. The research confirmed that trust and communication are major influencing factors about the supervisor and thus how the employee perceives the turnover intention. In addition, the findings showed that the personality, autonomy, and support of the supervisor relationship are also strong factors, so they were added to the theoretical framework. The study also confirmed that communication played a major role also concerning senior management and thus turnover intentions. In addition, trust through respect was perceived to play a large role. In addition to this, values and strategy implementation were linked to senior management and added to the theoretical framework.

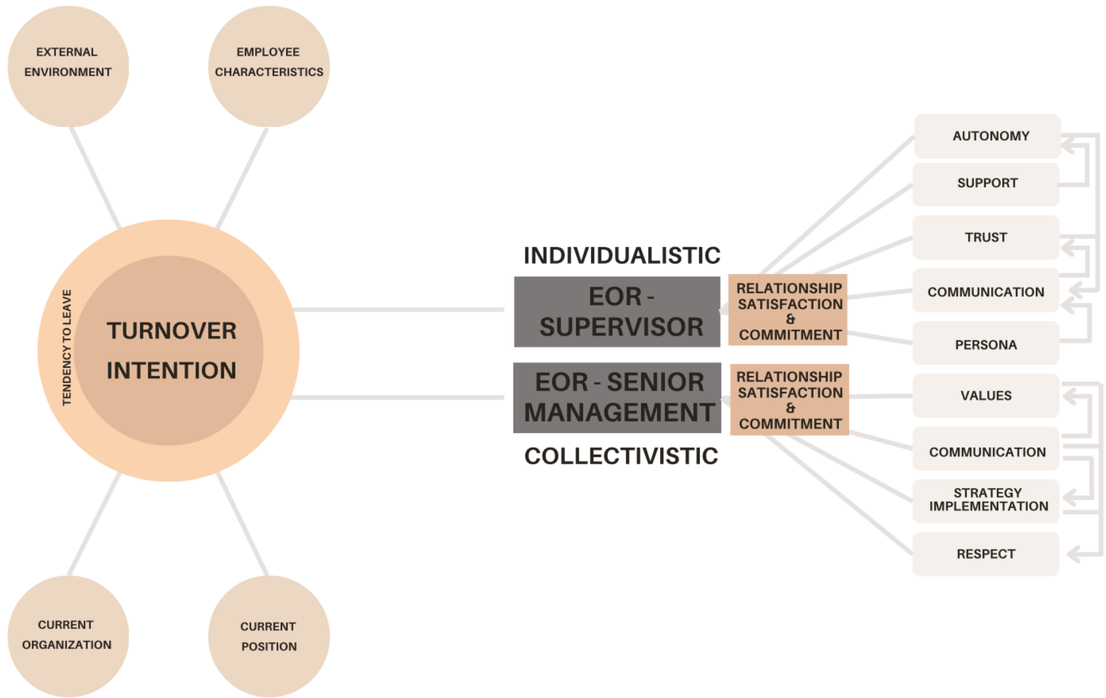

Figure 6. Revised theoretical framework.

5 Discussion

This study focused on how the relationship between the employee and the organization affects the employee's turnover intentions. In a more detailed examination, it was important in terms of the final result, whether the employee mirrors their relationship with the organization through a supervisor or senior management, and whether the factors influencing the relationship and the intentions to leave are therefore different. The study used semi-structured interviews, suitable for the qualitative research method. This made it possible to obtain information based on experience extensively.

This chapter aims to answer the research questions with the help of the collected data and the already existing theory. This chapter presents its theoretical and managerial contributions, as well as the study's limitations and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Theoretical contribution

The theoretical contributions of this thesis rely on previous research results. The relationship between the employee and the organization has a meaning in employee turnover intentions (Elanain, 2014). This was also confirmed by this study. However, only supervisors were mirrored as agents of the organization in previous studies, and it was revised by mirroring the relationship between the employee and the organization to other agents as well, such as senior management (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2017; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). The aim was to increase the theoretical contribution of this research by studying senior management as well and more specifically the differences in employee relationships between the supervisor and senior management.

The study confirmed that the importance of the supervisor's EOR is more significant in terms of the employee's intentions to leave (Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). However, the research revealed that the relationship with senior management should not be underestimated, and it also has an impact on the employee's intentions to leave. This thesis also answered the research question; *"Does the relationship between the employee and the supervisor or senior management affect the employee turnover Intentions differently?"*, because the research revealed different dimensions that only appeared in another relationship, or their manifestation differed with the employee's relationship experienced with senior management and the supervisor between.

This thesis partially challenges research by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), who presented that in low-quality relationships, where communication is minimal and only related to work-related matters, employees feel that they belong to an outgroup and the formed relationship is bad. However, this study showed that the relationship formed with senior management can also be good if the employees generally feel that they belong to the outgroup and the communication is the same for all members of the group. This creates a good relationship in terms of communication, with which employees are satisfied and are more likely to want to stay in the organization. On the other hand, communication with the supervisor should be closer, more individualistic, and more open. Results found that it doesn't have a great impact whether the communication is online or face-to-face if the supervisor is available. This result is different from what Kim (2021) indicated when emphasizing the importance of face-to-face communication. This study also contributes to the fact that it is important to distinguish between the different agents of the organization.

Trust is one of the major influencing factors behind EOR (Ferrin et al., 2007). In this study, according to the results, it was found that trust in a relationship with a supervisor is the biggest reason for the way the relationship takes shape. It was also perceived as the biggest factor behind intentions to leave. If the supervisor shows reliability through an open discussion culture, and actions and by keeping the discussions confidential, it is more likely that the employee will not consider leaving the organization. A relationship without an emotional connection does little to build trust (Shore et al., 2009). The relationship with senior management was felt to be more distant, and trust was often seen more through respect. Senior management must respect the fact that employees are professionals in their roles but communicate changes and decisions openly to generate respect and trust.

Finally, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing results that imply that the different agents of the organization are seen in different ways and therefore different things are expected from the formed relationship, which affects employee turnover intentions. Employees often do not easily mirror senior management as an agent of the organization (Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). Employees see the supervisor more as an agent of the organization in the sense that they personalize the supervisor more. Senior management, on the other hand, is seen more as an organization and not personified as a representative. According to the findings, this manifests itself in such a way that the perceived relationship with senior management and turnover intentions are more influenced by the organization's values and strategy and changes in them. The relationship with the supervisor and the intention to leave is, therefore, more influenced by, for example, the supervisor's personality, trust, and the support received from the supervisor.

5.2 Managerial implications

To minimize voluntary employee turnover intentions, it is crucial to prioritize the themes identified in this study within the organization. The themes that different managers should take into account in their activities vary depending on the position in which the managers work.

As the biggest implication, it is important to strive to increase trust concerning employees. When acting in a supervisor position, the manager should support their subordinates in decision-making, but also give responsibility and trust that the subordinate can make the right decisions. The supervisor needs to adopt a role where the purpose is not to watch every move of the subordinates, but to offer support in a changing environment and to ask, for example, how the subordinates are doing and if there is anything they could need help with. In a senior management position, trust emerges through more respect. When making decisions, senior managers need to remember to also respect the views of employees, because they are often professionals in their roles.

Communication plays an important role when employees consider their commitment and desire to stay in the organization. It is important for managers acting in the role of supervisors to face their subordinates as individuals, but without favoring anyone. In communication, instead of in what channels communication happens, it is more important that the supervisor is as available as possible and easily approachable. In addition, supervisors must create an open discussion culture so that it is easier to bring up development targets from both sides. This is also greatly influenced by the persona of a supervisor, and dealing with things through humor is also appreciated. Those working in senior management positions must develop their communication skills as much as possible. Instead of an individualistic approach, senior management is expected to deal with the personnel as a group, and there is no need for personal communication in terms of the development of the relationship. However, the changes and the strategy must be communicated openly, to know how to prepare for the changes. This reduces employee turnover intentions.

To minimize turnover intentions, it is important for employees to feel that they belong to the community and that everyone is on the same side. Those working in a supervisor position should actively strive to promote the status of their subordinates in their activities. In the role of senior management, it would be important to implement the strategy and implement the values in everyday work. If the values are visible in everyday life and the reasons and solutions for values and the strategy are understood, it is easier to stand behind them as an employee.

5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study was carried out from the employee's point of view and reflecting their relationship with both supervisors and senior management. Therefore, one possible research direction for the future could be to study the employee-organization relationship and its effect on turnover intentions from another perspective, such as the perspective of senior management. For them, it is not clear to which organization's agent they mirror their relationship, so the research results could be interesting. In addition, the interviewees in this study did not experience much work-related stress. In previous studies, however, stress has been perceived as a major influencing factor in employee turnover intentions (Frone, 2018). Future studies could focus on how a good or bad relationship with the organization affects the amount of perceived stress in high-stress environments.

In this study, the effects of the employee-organization relationship on employee turnover intentions were examined. The EOR relationship could also be mirrored in another component, such as the effects of the relationship on crisis management because several of the same components also affect the organization when a crisis occurs.

This study was carried out as a qualitative study, in which 10 people from five different organizations in Finland were interviewed. By increasing the number of interviewees and the number of organizations, valuable research results could be collected on how generalizable the research results are, and how much different cultures or event environments influence the matter. The sampling of the study was, therefore, one limiting factor, which by expanding it could lead to more generalizable results.

Qualitative research always has limitations related to the researcher's objectivity. The author of the study was not employed during the implementation of the study with any of the organizations used in the study. However, in interview situations, it is possible that the researcher-researched setting affects the results, and even though the results have been examined objectively and in the light of theory, the interpretation of the results may have also been influenced by the researcher's view of results.

Limitations in the study were also caused by the limitation of time and resources. By minimizing their effect, it would be essential for the research to find more people to study who have seriously considered leaving the organization or have voluntarily left the organization and mirror their thoughts and experiences on how the relationship between them and the organization the relationship has influenced the turnover decisions.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Semi-structured interview guide

Interviewee:

Basic information:

1. Tell me a little about yourself…
    a. Age
    b. Gender
    c. Educational background
    d. Family

Company and position:

2. What is your role in the organization and how long have you worked there?
3. Are you satisfied with your job?
4. Do you experience work-related stress? How much?
5. How independent is your job, and do you feel you are still developing?
6. How do you see the overall employment situation in your area of expertise?
7. Do you feel like your job is secured at the moment?
8. Do you feel like the salary and benefits match your education and skills?
9. Have you ever considered changing the workplace? Why?

Relationship with supervisor:

10. How do you experience your relationship with your supervisor?
11. Are you satisfied with the way your supervisor works and your relationship together?
12. Do you trust your supervisor, their ways of working, and their decisions?
13. Do you feel you are committed to your relationship with your supervisor and that you promote it with your actions? Do you feel like your supervisor does the same?

14. What kind of communication do you have with your supervisor? How do you communicate?
15. Do you feel like your relationship with your supervisor commits you more or less to the organization?
    a. What would need to change for you to stay/leave the organization?
16. In your relationship with your supervisor, what influences your decision to stay/leave the organization the most?

Relationship with senior management:

17. How do you experience your relationship with senior management?
18. Are you satisfied with the way senior management works and your relationship together?
19. Do you trust senior management, their ways of working, and their decisions?
20. Do you feel you are committed to your relationship with senior management and that you promote it with your actions? Do you feel like senior management does the same?
21. What kind of communication do you have with senior management? How do you communicate?
22. Do you feel like your relationship with senior management commits you more or less to the organization?
    a. What would need to change for you to stay/leave the organization?
23. In your relationship with senior management, what influences your decision to stay/leave the organization the most?

Appendix 2. Interview invitation

Hello,

My name is Aada Mäkelä, and I am a 23-year-old business student from the University of Vaasa. In my studies, I am focusing on strategic business development. I am currently doing my master's thesis on how employees feel their relationship with the organization affects their intention to stay or leave the organization. I compare the employees' relationship with their supervisors and with senior management. For this reason, I would like to interview employees who have at least two senior supervisors in the organization. I would like to find people between the ages of approx. 35 and 60 from different organizations and fields for an interview.

In the interview, we would discuss the interviewee's background, current organization, and position. In addition, we would talk about the interviewee's relationship with the supervisor and senior management. The interview would last approximately 30–45 minutes and would be conducted via Zoom or Teams. The topic does not have to be already familiar to the interviewee, and theoretical knowledge of the topic is not required. I would like to record the interview so that it would be easier to go back to the details in the analysis.

After the interviews, I analyze the data obtained from the interviews and utilize previous research and theory. The data obtained from the interviews is processed anonymously in the study and the data is not analyzed or reviewed by persons other than the author of the study.

Would you be interested in participating in the interview?
I would like to carry out the interviews on schedule as soon as possible.

Kind regards,
Aada Mäkelä