

# DETERMINANTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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## Abstract

The paper deals with a topic of organizational commitment. It is viewed as one of the basic concepts describing the relationship between an employee and an organization. According to Meyer and Allen (1997), all dimensions of commitment concern a relationship between an individual and an organization and an individual's desire to remain in it or to abandon it, however, the strength of each dimension is conditioned by different factors. Model of organizational commitment consists in distinguishing following three commitment components: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. From this point of view, paper also deals determinants of organizational commitment in the light of research.

The main objective of presented research was to search for determinants of organizational commitment. As was mentioned above, in the research, Meyer and Allen three-component model of organizational commitment was used. The data for this study were collected from 330 Polish employees holding different forms of employment: classic employment (N = 198) and temporary work (N = 132). Participants were recruited from two organizations: state company (N = 205) and a private company (N = 125). The research has shown that work locus of control, breach of psychological contract and psychological climate had a significant influence on organizational commitment.

**Key words:** organizational commitment, breach of psychological contract, psychological climate.

**Classification JEL:** M12 – Personnel Management.

## 1. Introduction

Organizational commitment is one of the basic concepts describing the relationship between an employee and an organization. Along with such concepts as work commitment and job satisfaction it has been one of the leading research subjects for over 30 years. The researchers' great interest in the construction of organizational commitment is a result of its role in individuals' functioning in the place of work. For example, there are numerous arguments that strongly committed employees work more and have better results than those with lower level of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997). They are also more willing to assist other co-workers, to undertake additional actions in the workplace and to take active part in solving problem situations (Shore & Wayne, 1993). However, as some studies indicate, there occur negative correlations between organizational commitment and attendance level, abandonment tendencies and staff fluctuation (Allen & Mayer, 1996; Bańka, 2000). As the success of a company may depend on how its employees get committed to it, understanding which factors determine commitment development and what keeps it on the same level seems to be particularly important.

## 2. Organizational commitment in Meyer and Allen's three-component model

The model proposed by Meyer and Allen is the most frequently analyzed model (cf. Wołowska, 2013) and its authors are said to have had the greatest contribution to the development to multi-dimensional approach to organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1984, 1991, 1997; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). It integrates two principal approaches to commitment. The first one, connected with Porter and collaborators' works (Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian, 1974) described organizational commitment as an attitude and the strength of an individual's involvement and identification with a particular

organization. The second one, based on Becker's proposition (1960) treated commitment as the tendency to remain within the organization due to perceived costs of abandoning it.

The initial theoretical proposition of Meyer and Allen (1984) consisted in distinguishing two commitment components: affective and continuance. Further, the model was extended by a third component – normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

The affective component means emotional commitment of an employee to the organization and identification with it. The persons with strong affective commitment continue their employment in the organization because they want to do so. The choice of the notion – affective commitment – was conditioned by a belief that all factors involved in the development of this component are accompanied by strong positive feeling, and this is probably the most essential aspect of this form of commitment. Meyer and Herscovitz (2001) however, unlike to other researchers, do not treat it only as an affective condition of an individual but they believe that it is an important cognitive element of this form of commitment (e.g. the belief that what you do is somehow important).

Continuance component is the awareness of costs connected with abandoning the organization. Employees whose basic attachment with the organization is based on the continuance component remain within it as they need to do so. Normative commitment component, however, is the sense of moral duty to stay in the organization. Persons with high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to do so.

Thus, commitment is the force which binds an individual with to a course of action. This force is experienced as a state of mind which can take different forms: desire, perceived cost or the duty to continue the course of action. These states of mind are reflected by distinguished components underlying the concept of commitment. The strength of each of these states can be measured and it may jointly reflect an individual's 'commitment profile' (Meyer & Herscovitz, 2001, p. 308).

### **Factors conditioning development of three organizational commitment components**

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), all dimensions of commitment concern a relationship between an individual and an organization and an individual's desire to remain in it or to abandon it, however, the strength of each dimension is conditioned by different factors.

In the model discussed, the main process which leads to the development of affective commitment is an individual's personal satisfaction which has its source in satisfying personal needs, meeting expectations as well as achieving individual goals through the mediation of the organization. This experiencing of particular satisfaction may be also connected with the sense of support received, the sense of organizational justice as well with the feeling of workplace meaningfulness and own contribution to the organization functioning. Therefore, work environment which supports its employees, treats them well and positively appraises their results, contributes to their stronger feeling of self-esteem.

*Continuance commitment* may develop as a result of an action or event which increases the costs connected with abandoning the organization (under the condition that in employees' view these costs will have to be incurred by themselves). In the three-component model of organizational commitment, Meyer and Allen (1991) describe these actions and events as investments and alternatives. Investments can be treated as "personal sacrifice" connected with abandoning the organization. Employees may invest in the organization in various ways, including e.g. costs connected with moving their families to a place of current employment or devoting time to acquire specific organizational skills. Alternatives, on the other hand, can be described as "limited possibilities" of finding another job. Strong continuance commitment will develop in these employees who believe that they have few such possibilities. Factors

affecting employee perception of alternative possibilities of employment include: information on labor market and general economic climate, the employee's evaluation of own skills (current and desired on labor market or outdated), the effects of prior attempts of job search as well as the degree to which family factors limit their ability to change their place of residence. The investments and alternatives listed above affect the development of continuance organizational commitment only when the employee is aware both of their presence and their consequences.

*Normative organizational commitment* develops on previous socialization experience (pressure from the family and culture) as well as on the influence the individual is subject to as a newly-employed person in the organization during the socialization process. Socialization experience, both from an individual's early childhood period and the one acquired in the place of work, include a lot of various information connected with the relevance of particular attitudes and behavior. Complex conditioning and modeling processes teach individuals and provide them with knowledge on what is valuable, what their family, culture or organization expect from them. In the case of normative commitment the belief that it is proper to be loyal towards one organization becomes internalized. This component of commitment may also develop on the basis of a special kind of investment undertaken by the organization specifically for the use by its employees; the investments that the employees perceive as difficult to return (*Meyer & Allen, 1991*). These may include, for example, payment of tuition fees or hiring security services for the employee's family members. In such a situation, norms acquired by the employee connected with reciprocation of commitment may generate the state of a lack of balance between the obligations of both parties. Due to established sense of duty towards the organization, employees reduce their sense of the lack of mutual obligations balance. Normative commitment may also develop on the basis of 'a psychological contract' between an employee and an organization which is defined by Rousseau as an unwritten set of expectations operating all the time between all members of the organization (Rousseau, 1990). Other factors connected with normative commitment may be cultural differences in the range their dominating values. Cultures which emphasize the importance of collective values and more extended relations between an employee and an employer will contribute to a stronger development of normative commitment than cultures in which dominating individualistic values give more possibilities of employment.

### **Determinants of organizational commitment in the light of research**

From the point of view of an organization the answer to the question what benefits are connected with having "committed" workforce is essential. Therefore, the researchers' main aim is to prove that strong commitment brings desired (from the point of view of the organization) effects such as: low staff absenteeism and fluctuation, high productivity as well as determination of dispositional and situational attributions contributing to strong commitment development (*cf. research review, Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnysky, 2002*). Amongst the variables treated as determinants of organizational commitment the following ones were distinguished: demographic variables, individual differences, professional experience as well as alternatives and investments.

Correlations with demographic variables appeared to be generally low. Age and tenure (in the organization; and on the work post) correlated positively but weakly with all three commitment components whereas research conducted in countries outside Southern America, revealed that age correlated more strongly with continuance component than with normative component. As far as tenure is concerned, its correlation with normative commitment component was weaker in the countries outside Northern America.

In the range of individual differences, commitment correlated with locus of control and task self-efficacy. External locus of control correlated negatively with the affective component whereas task self-efficacy had a weak positive correlation.

Research results revealed stronger correlations between organizational commitment and professional experience variables than individual differences variables. The studies conducted outside Northern America demonstrated stronger correlations between affective commitment and the work role perceived as ambivalent and conflict whereas in Northern America the conflict role was more strongly connected with normative commitment component.

Alternatives and investments correlated more strongly with continuance component than with affective or normative ones. Positive correlation between continuance commitment component and universality of own skills and education on the labor market was also noted.

### **Psychological contract breach**

A psychological contract is a set of people's beliefs concerning an agreement defining exchange conditions and implicit benefits both for an employer and an employee (*Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1995*). It develops on the basis of employees' belief of reciprocal obligations between themselves and an employer and it becomes foundation of the employment relation (*Rousseau, 1995; Shore & Tetrick, 1994*). While interacting with the employer's representatives and observing organizational procedures employees develop a belief of what the organization expects from them as well as how it will return their efforts exerted on behalf of it (*Rousseau & Parks, 1993*). Contemporary organizations, however, are not always able to fulfill their commitments towards their employees as the conditions they have to act in, leading to changes in the employment relation, increase the probability of breaching this psychological contract. Psychological contract breach, which is defined as an employee's awareness that the organization did not keep one or several promises comprising the contract (*Morrison & Robinson, 1997*) occurs very often nowadays. In the time of organizational changes and lack of predictability (*Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Turnley & Feldman, 1998*) psychological contract breach is rather a standard than an exception (*Robinson & Rousseau, 1994*).

It is generally assumed when analyzing a psychological contract that collective sense of the contract breach by the organization affects fundamentally attitudes and behavior of employees. It was noted, for example, that the contract breach decreases general job satisfaction (*Robinson & Rousseau, 1994*), reduces efficiency as well as work role performance both during work and after leaving the workplace (*Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, & Bolino, 2002*). Psychological contract breach is also connected with reduced work involvement, weaker organizational commitment and stronger tendency to quit it (*Schalk, Freese & van den Bosch, 1995; after: Freese & Schalk, 2008*). Moreover, psychological contracts are for employees the basis for perceiving predictability and workplace control which get decreased due to the organization's failure to fulfill the contract obligations. This lack of predictability and control over the environment may lead to the employee's experiencing stress (*Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Sutton, 1990*).

### **Psychological climate**

Psychological climate means the way the organizational environment is perceived and interpreted by its employees (*James & James, 1989*). According to James and James, the perception of the organizational environment takes on personal, motivational and emotional meaning for employees through their own process of 'valuation'. In this process, cognitive representation of working environment features is interpreted in the light of individual values and also in terms of its significance for an individual's wellbeing.

The differences in perception and valuation which constitute psychological climate result from individual differences between employees, situational differences (e.g. working environment features) and also from the interaction between an individual and the situation (*James, James & Ashe, 1990; after: Brown & Leigh, 1996*). Relationships and other individual factors perceived may generate differences in perceiving the same environment by different individuals. For example, the study on superior-subordinate exchange shows differences in organizational environment perception even among the employees who report to the same manager. The same manager may treat the subordinates differently due to their mutual relation factors and also due to differences perceived by employees in the level of their abilities and willingness to make sacrifice in order to achieve organizational goals (*Dienesch & Liden, 1986*). Additional differences in psychological climate valuation may result from different management styles within the organization as well as cultural differences in various organizations.

The definition of psychological climate adopted for the needs of this paper is based on Kahn's ethnographic research (1990) who described climate indicators which determine employees' tendency to engage totally in their work or to keep psychological distance to it. According to Kahn (1990), psychological safety and psychological meaningfulness are important elements which increase the employee's engagement.

Kahn (1990) defines psychological safety as the employees' feeling that they can express themselves without fear of negative consequences for their self-image, status or career. Dimensions of the climate which form elements of psychological safety are: (a) management which is perceived as flexible and supportive and which gives the employees the feeling that they control their own work and methods by which their work is accomplished (supportive management), (b) organizational roles and norms which are perceived as clear (clarity), (c) employees' sense of freedom in expressing their true feelings and core aspects of self-concepts in their work roles (self-expression).

On the other hand, work psychological meaningfulness is the feeling of employees that, in return of their investment, they receive psychical, cognitive and emotional energy (*Kahn, 1990*). People experience their work as meaningful when they perceive it as a challenge which is worthwhile and which brings satisfaction. Dimensions of psychological climate which constitute work psychological meaningfulness include: (a) the feeling of making a significant contribution towards achieving organizational goals (perceived meaningfulness of contribution), (b) the feeling of adequate recognition, (c) the feeling that the work is challenging and it leads to personal development (*compare Brown & Leigh, 1996*).

### **3. Methodology of the research**

The aim of the study presented was to determine which factors of organizational environment, dispositional features and individual work contextual factors are positively related to organizational commitment.

#### **Research issues**

The study predicted that dispositional variables, i.e. work locus of control and self-appraisal will substantially explain organizational commitment. Basing on the definition of locus of control and the definition of organizational commitment components in Meyer and Allen's three-component model (1991, 1997) it was assumed that locus of control will explain the three components of organizational commitment in different ways (*cf. Coleman, Irving & Cooper, 1999*).

According to the theory of locus of control it could be expected that inner-directed people would perceive themselves as the ones who have control over actions in organizational

environment as, generally speaking, inner-directedness is founded on people's belief of having control over environment (*Lau & Woodman, 1995*). It seemed more probable that employees with internal work locus of control, unlike those who are outer-directed, will be attached to the organization because they want to do so (affective component). The studies revealed, e.g. negative correlation between external locus of control and affective commitment component (*cf. Meyer et al., 2002*). And, contrarily, employees with external work locus of control, as those who are convinced of having no control over the environment, will tend to a greater extent to bind with the organization due to external circumstances, e.g. their feeling of the lack of alternative possibilities of employment (continuance component). As far normative commitment component is concerned it develops on the basis of employees' belief that (which is a consequence of social and organizational norms influence) that they should remain within the organization and support it. Unlike the awareness of costs connected with abandoning the organization, which is characteristic for continuance component, however, the obligations of the normative component become internalized.

Therefore, normative commitment component is an active state of mind which sustains the individual's inner belief of having control over the environment. Summing up, it could be assumed that the relation between work locus of control and organizational commitment will depend on the commitment component, similarly as the relation of the second dispositional variable analyzed in the study – self-appraisal. Affective commitment component is based, among the others, on building by the organization the sense of self-esteem in its employees through positive appraisal of their work and recognition of their contribution. Thus, it was probable that the employees' high self-esteem would contribute to strengthening the bonds of "I want" type, like the belief that one should be loyal to one organization (commitment normative component). Continuance component, on the other hand, developing on employees' belief that they must stay in a particular place of work as there are no other employment possibilities for them, will probably be connected with low level of self-esteem.

According to the assumptions of Meyer and Allen's theoretical model (*1991, 1997*) and the results of research conducted on organizational commitment (*cf. research review, Meyer et al., 2002*) it was also expected that psychological climate will have significant influence on the employee's binding with the employer. The assumptions of Meyer and Allen's three-component model indicate that the main process leading to affective commitment development is an individual's personal satisfaction which has its source in fulfilling personal needs, meeting expectations and achieving individual goals through the mediation of the organization. This experience of feeling special satisfaction may be also connected with the sense of support provided, the sense of organizational justice, perceived professional role as well as workplace meaningfulness and own contribution to the organization functioning.

This also corresponds to Kahn's assumptions (*1990*) according to which *psychological safety* is affected by the fact whether the management imposes strict discipline and expects it in behavior or, on the contrary, it allows flexibility of organizational behavior respecting individual approach to performing tasks. Managers differ from one another in the ways they convey organizational requirements, supervise and reinforce subordination behavior. Supportive management allows subordinates to make attempts and experience failures without fear of consequences in the form of punishment. Moreover, this management style gives subordinates the possibility of exercising control over their own work and methods of accomplishing tasks. Employees may experiment with new methods of accomplishing goals and use their creativity for solving work-related problems.

The opposite management style, i.e. rigid and non-flexible methods of work control signal that the management has little trust in employees or no belief in their intentions or abilities to perform work duties without close supervision. Control, freedom of choice and the

sense of security created by supportive management raise motivation and increase organizational commitment. Similarly, clear expectations and consistent norms in the place of work create psychologically safe environment. The opposite situation takes place when professional role-related expectations and work situations are not clear, internally inconsistent and unpredictable – then psychological safety is violated. Moreover, employees distance themselves from their work roles in situations when they predict sanctions for expressing their individuality in the work role performed and, in consequence, their reactions reflect weakening organizational commitment.

From one side, it can be stated that the lack of psychological safety makes the employees perform their work roles schematically and perfunctorily. On the other hand, when employees feel safe in their work roles they tend more often to reflect their personality, creativity, feelings and self-concepts in it. Such organizational work conditions increase probability that the work role will be internalized by an employee and that an individual will start to treat it as expression of core aspects of the self-concepts. Such personalized role performances indicate high level of organizational environment safety and work role performance safety perceived by an employee and it can also mean acceptance of expectations connected with this work role (*Brown & Leigh, 1996*). Employees will involve more in their professional work and get involved in the organization when they feel safe in expressing the core aspects of the self-concepts.

The second dimension of psychological climate – work meaningfulness, is the feeling of employees that in return for their investment in the organization they will receive psychical, cognitive and emotional energy (*Kahn, 1990*). Work meaningfulness develops on the basis of employees' belief that their work contribution significantly affects organizational processes and outcomes and contributes to achieving organizational goals (*cf. Brown & Leigh, 1996*). Moreover, it is important for psychological meaningfulness of work, that employees have the belief that the company sets high requirements and, at the same time, recognizes and appreciates employees' effort in their operation on behalf of the organization (*Kahn, 1990*).

Work environment, therefore, which supports employees, treats them well and positively appraises the effects of their work, contributes to commitment level increase. It is confirmed, among the others, by the studies of Eisenberger, Fasolo and Davis-LaMastro (*1990*) that discovered positive relations between organizational support and affective commitment and professional achievements. Other research results demonstrated strong correlation between affective commitment component and perceived organizational support in Northern America whereas in the countries outside Northern America, the correlation between perceived organizational support and normative commitment component was stronger (*cf. Meyer et al., 2002*). Studies conducted outside Northern America revealed also strong correlations between affective component and work role perceived as ambivalent and conflict, whereas, in Northern America, conflict role was more strongly connected with continuance component.

The studies checked also the prediction that psychological contract change, perceived as its breach by an employee, will lower the level of organizational commitment (*cf. Lester et al., 2002*). This prediction is based on the assumptions of *social exchange theory* according to which people start interactions with others as they are motivated by expected benefits to be received from the other party (*Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960*). Social exchange contains a series of interactions between two sides, such as: profits from the employer and the employee's contribution (*Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005*). Each party acts according to the rule that the other party will return the actions, which, in time, will create mutual obligation. If one party does not reciprocate the other one, the balance between each party's contribution is disturbed (*Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005*). In such a situation, employees will try to restore the balance

lost by reducing their trust in the company and organizational commitment (*Taylor & Tekleab, 2004*).

It is confirmed by the results of studies conducted, for example, by Shore and Barksdale (*1998*). They discovered that the lack of balance between commitment of an employer and an employee results in lower affective commitment. Also, Robinson and Morrison (*1995*) stated that employees, who are aware that their psychological contract was breached, are unwilling to engage voluntarily in activities on behalf of the organization. Moreover, according to Morrison and Robinson's statement (*1997*), breaching psychological contract is perceived by employees as something unfair and their belief that staying in this employment relation is mutually beneficial is no longer that strong. It can be said that breaching contract conditions has a role of some kind of life event or 'shock' which makes employees think about their place in the organization, which undoubtedly affects commitment to it (*Lee & Mitchell, 1994*).

The studies also adopted the assumption of stronger correlation between psychological climate and organizational commitment in private companies than in state companies. This assumption was based on Ouchi's statement (*1980*) that the system of control and rewards in market type organizations is defined, to a greater extent, by achievements and situational factors. It results from the statement that the level of organization commitment among employees of a private company may be connected more with situational influence as in market type organizations it is probably easier for employees to notice relations between behavior, achievements, and rewards (*Lawler, 1973, 1986, 1992; after: Brown, 1996*). In essence, private organizations expect more productivity and efficiency from their employees. Simultaneously, these expectations are supported by the organization's willingness to reward its employees for high level of their achievements. Employees may expect that the organization will facilitate their achievements by favorable work conditions and proper behavior of superiors. On the other hand, in bureaucracy type organizations, rewards are usually connected with longevity in a particular company and with contributions on its benefit. In this type of a system, which is characteristic for state organizations, relations between an employee's achievements and related rewards are less significant. Working conditions and behavior of superiors are perceived less instrumentally. In a state organization the relation between working conditions which could potentially facilitate accomplishing goals by employees and ensure them awards is more difficult to notice.

Summing up, the study aimed at searching for the answer to the following research issue:

*To what degree is the organizational commitment (affective, continuance, normative) determined by dispositional variables, i.e. self-esteem, psychological contract breach and psychological climate, i.e. psychological safety and work meaningfulness with the control of individual work contextual factors influence, i.e. the type of employment contract (permanent – temporary), tenure in a company, age or sex?*

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

The test covered 330 persons – 205 employed in a state company and 125 working in a private company. The group studied consisted of 193 women and 137 men, which corresponds respectively to 58.5% and 41.5% of the whole group studied. The subjects tested were from 19 to 69 years old and their average age was 32.5. Almost 70% of the subjects studied had university education, and the remaining 30% had secondary education. The average tenure in the whole group fluctuated from 0.5 to 48 years ( $M = 9.33$ ;  $SD = 10.65$ ) the



mean value and standard deviation of tenure in the current place of work were respectively:  $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 4.43$ .

### **Procedure**

The tests were conducted in Toruń, Bydgoszcz, Włocławek, Warszawa and Gdańsk. They were conducted among employees of state organizations (government agencies offices) and employees of private companies offering design and telecommunication services. In both types of companies the chief manager's consent for conducting tests was each time obtained. The study concerned important personal and professional matters, which gave reasons for the necessity of remaining them anonymous.

### **Measures**

*Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS)* was elaborated on the basis of Meyer and Allen's original method (Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment Scales), (1997) (cf. Bańka, Bazińska i Wołowska, 2002). The scale consists of 18 items, 6 for each of 3 sub-scales. Sub-scales constitute equivalents of theoretically distinguished three commitment components. Affective commitment scale comprises statements confirming the employee's positive emotional attitude to the organization (e.g. "This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me."); continuance component – statements expressing the employee's belief of the necessity of remaining in the organization due to the lack of employment alternatives and previous investments resulting from the decision of belongingness to the company (e.g. "I have a feeling that remaining in the company is a necessity for me."); whereas the normative component – included statements reflecting the sense of moral duty to stay within the organization and the belief that one should be loyal to it (e.g. "I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.") The subjects tested express their attitude towards each statement by means of a seven-point scale anchored in the following way: 1 – I totally disagree, 7 – I totally agree. All sub-scales obtained high level of reliabilities: the value of coefficient alpha for affective commitment scale was  $\alpha = 0.86$ ; for continuance commitment  $\alpha = 0.76$ ; for normative commitment  $\alpha = 0.88$ .

*Psychological Contract Breach Scale* consists of three general statements indicating the degree to which the organization kept its promise. The subjects studied, using a seven-point scale, indicated to what degree they agree with each statement. The exemplary items of the scale are: "Promises made to employees in our organization are often promises without substantiation.", "Generally, I can say that my organization keeps promises which were made when I was recruited." All the scale statements were evaluated by the participants with the use of a seven-point scale (from 1 – I totally disagree to 7 – I totally agree). Robinson and Morrison (2000) used a similarly constructed scale in their studies. The scale reliabilities were tested – Cronbach's alpha coefficient appeared to be high, reaching the value of 0.79.

*Psychological Climate Questionnaire* was elaborated on the basis of Brown and Leight's original measure (Psychological Climate Measure), (Brown & Leight, 1996). According to the authors' idea (Brown & Leight, 1996), the questionnaire dimensions consist of two theoretically distinguished aspects of psychological climate – psychological safety and work meaningfulness. The first three dimensions, i.e. supportive management (e.g. "My boss is flexible about how I accomplish my job objectives."), role clarity (e.g. "Management makes it perfectly clear how my job is to be done.") and self-expression (e.g. "The feelings I express at work are my true feelings.") form the aspect of psychological safety ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ); the other three, i.e. contribution ("I feel very useful in my job."), recognition (e.g. "The organization recognizes the significance of the contribution I make.") and challenge (e.g. "My job is very challenging.") constitute the aspect of work meaningfulness ( $\alpha = 0.90$ ). Each of 18 items in

the questionnaire is evaluated by the subjects tested in a seven-point scale (from 1 – *I totally disagree*, to 7 – *I totally agree*).

*Work Locus of Control Questionnaire* is a measure strictly related to working area and was elaborated on the basis of an original measure of *Work Locus of Control Scale* (Spector, 1988). It contains items which constitute internal work locus of control (e.g. “*Employees who perform their job well get promoted.*”) and external work locus of control (e.g. “*Making money is mostly the matter of luck.*”). Reliabilities of the 10-point scale appeared to be relatively high: Cronbach’s alpha = 0.79.

*Self-Appraisal Questionnaire* is a one-dimension method allowing for evaluation of general level of self-appraisal, i.e. a relatively constant disposition understood as conscious attitude (positive or negative) towards oneself. It consists of 10 diagnostic statements. The persons tested, using a four-point scale, have to indicate to which degree they agree with each of them. Reliabilities of the tool used in the study (*adapted by Dzwonkowska, Lachowicz-Tabaczek, & Łaguna, 2008*) appeared satisfactory: Cronbach’s alpha coefficient = 0.82.

*Type of employment contract.* The subjects tested indicated their type of employment contract by marking 1 – when the employment contract was made for definite period of time (temporary) and 2 – when the employment contract was made for indefinite period of time (permanent).

## Results

For the purpose of verifying the prediction that dispositional variables, contract breach and psychological climate, i.e. psychological safety and work meaningfulness (with the control of individual work contextual factors) significantly predict organizational commitment, hierarchic analyses of regression were conducted. The aim of the analyses was also to check if, in regards to the company ownership status, commitment components are set in different degree by the predictors studied.

The analyses were conducted consecutively for the three organizational commitment components: affective, continuance and normative, considering a company ownership status. In each analysis, in block 1, individual work contextual factors were included in the equation as predictors, i.e. the type of employment agreement (permanent – temporary), tenure in the company as well as age and sex, in block 2 – dispositional variables were included as predictors, i.e. self-appraisal and work locus of control, in block 3 – psychological contract breach whereas in block 4 – psychological climate dimensions were added as predictors, i.e. psychological safety and work meaningfulness (see Tables 1, 2, 3).

Regression analysis for affective organizational commitment revealed that from the group of predictors treated as individual work contextual factors – age appeared to be a significant predictor in a private company whereas, in a state company, it does not constitute an affective component. In the group of personality variables, internal work locus of control was a significant predictor only in a state company whereas self-appraisal did not show influence on affective commitment in any group of employees tested. Moreover, psychological contract breach turned out to be a significant predictor of affective component in both groups tested, however, both in a state company and in a private one, this predictor lost its statistical significance after inclusion of psychological climate dimensions in a regression equation. The scores analysis also revealed that, in a private company, affective commitment component is set both by psychological safety and work meaningfulness. In a state company, on the other hand, work meaningfulness was significant for affective commitment and safety dimension appeared insignificant.

*Table 1. Results of hierarchical analysis of regression – individual work contextual factors, dispositional variables, contract breach and psychological climate as predictors of affective organizational commitment in a state and private company (own study)*

	Predictors	State Company				Private Company			
		$\beta$	t	$R^2_{corrected}$	F	$\beta$	t	$R^2_{corrected}$	F
Block 1	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	n.i.				0.36***	3.79		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
					<b>0.03</b>	2.45*			<b>0.11</b>
Block 2	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	n.i.				0.36***	3.75		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	-0.34***	-5.03			n.i.			
					<b>0.16</b>	7.26***			<b>0.12</b>
				$\Delta R^2=0.14$	16.14***			$\Delta R^2=0.02$	n.i.
Block 3	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	n.i.				0.39***	4.13		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	-0.21**	-3.53			n.i.			
	Contrach breach	-0.48***	-7.90			-0.41***	-5.21		
					<b>0.36</b>	17.10***			<b>0.28</b>
				$\Delta R^2=0.20$	62.34***			$\Delta R^2=0.16$	27.18***
Block 4	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	n.i.				0.29**	3.53		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	-0.21***	-3.63			n.i.			
	Contrach breach	n.i.				n.i.			
	Psychological safety	n.i.				0.31**	3.25		
	Work meaningfulness	0.42***	4.57			0.25*	2.58		
					<b>0.43</b>	17.93***			<b>0.35</b>
				$\Delta R^2=0.08$	13.24***			$\Delta R^2=0.08$	7.21***

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.1$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Table 2. Results of hierarchical analysis of regression – individual work contextual factors, dispositional variables, contract breach and psychological climate as predictors of continuance organizational commitment in a state and private company (own study)

	Predictors	State company				Private company			
		$\beta$	t	$R^2_{corrected}$	F	$\beta$	t	$R^2_{corrected}$	F
Block 1	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.24**	3.51			0.39***	4.17		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
				<b>0.11</b>	7.08***			<b>0.12</b>	5.30**
Block 2	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.29**	2.79			0.40***	4.23		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	n.i.				n.i.			
				<b>0.11</b>	5.28***			<b>0.13</b>	3.97**
			$\Delta R^2=0.01$	n.i.			$\Delta R^2=0.02$	n.i.	
Block 3	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.24*	2.37			0.40***	4.94		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	0.19**	2.80			0.23**	2.94		
	Contrach breach	-0.31***	-4,53			-0.50***	-6.71		
				<b>0.20</b>	7.91***			<b>0.37</b>	11.11***
			$\Delta R^2=0.08$	20.50***			$\Delta R^2=0.23$	45.02***	
Block 4	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.23*	2.28			0.36***	4.60		
	Sex	n.i.				-0.18*	-2.31		
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	0.19**	2.87			0.22**	2.89		
	Contrach breach	n.i.				n.i.			
	Psychological safety	n.i.				0.41**	3.55		
	Work meaningfulness	0.22*	2.02			n.i.			
				<b>0.21</b>	6.87***			<b>0.43</b>	11.34***
			$\Delta R^2=0.02$	2.73*			$\Delta R^2=0.07$	7.67**	

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

*Table 3. Results of hierarchical analysis of regression – individual work contextual factors, dispositional variables, contract breach and psychological climate as predictors of normative organizational commitment in a state and private company (own study)*

	Predictors	State company				Private company			
		$\beta$	t	$R^2_{corrected}$	F	$\beta$	t	$R^2_{corrected}$	F
Block 1	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.30**	2.73			0.44***	4.66		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
				<b>0.03</b>	2.42*			<b>0.13</b>	5.70***
Block 2	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.28**	2.67			0.44***	4.70		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	-0.25***	-3.64			n.i.			
				<b>0.10</b>	4.57***			<b>0.15</b>	4.57***
			$\Delta R^2=0.08$	8.52***			$\Delta R^2=0.03$	n.i.	
Block 3	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.39***	4.13			0.44***	5.13		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	n.i.				n.i.			
	Contract breach	-0.36***	-5.28			-0.38***	-4.88		
				<b>0.21</b>	8.44***			<b>0.29</b>	8.08***
			$\Delta R^2=0.11$	27.84***			$\Delta R^2=0.14$	23.80***	
Block 4	Type of contract	n.i.				n.i.			
	Tenure in the company	n.i.				n.i.			
	Age	0.20*	2.12			0.41***	4.76		
	Sex	n.i.				n.i.			
	Self-appraisal	n.i.				n.i.			
	Locus of control	-0.15*	-2.42			n.i.			
	Contract breach	n.i.				n.i.			
	Psychological safety	n.i.				0.35**	2.73		
	Work meaningfulness	0.46***	4.47			n.i.			
				<b>0.30</b>	10.32***			<b>0.33</b>	7.71***
			$\Delta R^2=0.09$	13.16***			$\Delta R^2=0.05$	4.64*	

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

In continuance commitment component, from the group of predictors treated as individual work contextual factors – employees' age and sex appeared significant. Age is a significant continuance commitment predictor both in a state company and in a private one,

however, its influence in a private company is stronger. Sex, on the other hand, is a significant predictor only in a private company. In the group of personality variables, in both types of companies, internal work locus of control constitutes significantly continuance commitment component. Moreover, both dimensions of psychological climate appeared significant predictors of organizational continuance commitment, with such a difference, however, that continuance commitment in a state company is influenced by work meaningfulness whereas in a private company – psychological safety.

Regression hierarchical analysis results for normative organizational commitment showed that age indicates normative commitment among employees employed both in a state company and a private one, however, its influence in a private company is stronger. Dispositional variables do not affect normative commitment in a private company whereas internal work locus of control showed its influence in a state company. From psychological climate variables, work meaningfulness is significant for commitment normative component in a state company (as much as continuance and affective components), whereas psychological safety in a private company. The variable – psychological contract breach – included in the equation, according to the regression analysis scheme described, in block 3, showed its influence on continuance and normative components of organizational commitment in both groups tested, i.e. in a state company and in a private company. However, similarly to the analysis referring to the affective component, this influence disappeared after the insertion of psychological climate dimensions to the regression equation.

#### 4. Discussion

When searching for organizational commitment predictors it can be observed that predicted assumptions are partly affirmed. Employee's age, among individual work contextual factors, appeared to be a significant predictor for all three organizational commitment components. Its influence on organizational commitment is stronger in a private company. The influence of age on commitment appeared the most significant for the normative component and the least significant for the affective commitment component. Generally, this result suggests that the strength of the employees' ties with an organization increases with age. In a private company, this rule corresponds to all three commitment components whereas in a state company the employees' age is of no significance in establishing bonds based on the affective component. The study revealed, additionally, that sex is a significant predictor of continuance commitment component – in a private company, men see their future with the organization out of necessity somehow. Tenure in the company did not demonstrate its influence on commitment components in a private company nor in a state one, similarly as employment contract type described above – permanent and temporary.

In the group of dispositional variables, internal work locus of control appeared to be a significant predictor for organizational commitment. This result, obtained in the group of state company employees suggests that employees who believe that they are active makers of events and that their professional promotion, pay rise and career general development depend on their own actions engage in their work more than employees with external work locus of control (*cf. Spector, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990*). Additionally, the feeling of an individual of having important influence on the environment is also connected positively with affective and normative components of organizational commitment in a state company. On the other hand, external locus of work control turned out to be significant predictor for continuance commitment component in both types of companies. This means that ties between employees and an organization established on the sense of necessity of staying in it due to the fact of seeing no other possibilities of finding employment in other places is related to their feeling

of the lack of control over the environment. Self-appraisal – the second one of analyzed dispositional variables – did not show its influence in any of the examined groups of employees. Therefore, the prediction that self-appraisal level may explain organizational commitment was not confirmed.

The prediction of the influence of psychological contract breach on organizational commitment was confirmed, however (*Thoresen, Kaplan, Barsky, Warren, & de Chermont, 2003; Bal, De Lange, Jansen, & Van Der Velde, 2008*). The study revealed that the higher level of psychological contract breach the lower level of organizational commitment in the range of all the three components. These results, corresponding to the subjects employed in both types of companies suggest that, according to the theory of social exchange, the balance between the employee's contribution and the organization was disturbed (*cf. Blau, 1964; Kempny & Szmatka, 1992; Sztompka, 2004*). The employees who sense that they invested valuable services on behalf of the employing company which did not return the commitment try to restore the balance lost by lowering the level of their organizational commitment (*Tekleab, Takeuchi, & Taylor, 2005*).

## 5. Conclusion

The results, in line with the predictions, showed also that psychological climate affects significantly the level of each of the three components of organizational commitment. Psychological safety, however, as a psychological climate dimension, is a significant predictor for commitment components only in a private company. Simultaneously, correlation level of particular commitment components with psychological safety differs substantially. It affects continuance organizational commitment component to the highest degree whereas to the lowest degree it affects the affective component. The results obtained, however, can be interpreted as the evidence of the fact that, in commercial companies, higher level of psychological safety facilitates organizational commitment.

It affects all the three commitment components in such a way that higher level of psychological safety means higher level of organizational commitment – continuance, affective and normative. It can be assumed, therefore, that in private companies, management perceived by employees as flexible and supportive, giving a sense of control over own work and methods as well as clarity of roles and organizational norms and the sense of freedom in expressing own feelings and core aspects of self-concepts in the work role facilitates building ties between employees and their employing organizations. In a state company, on the other hand, organizational commitment is explained mainly by work meaningfulness. Although this psychological climate dimension contribution is the most significant for normative component, work meaningfulness appeared also to be a significant predictor for the other components. Therefore, employees who feel that receive psychical, cognitive and emotional energy in return of their investments feel committed to the organization in which they are employed.

Summing up, a practical conclusion in reference to the company – employee relation is the suggestion that the organization should want to influence psychological climate in the place of work as the employees' positive evaluation of it makes they feel stronger bonds with the company. It may, on one hand, result in higher work discipline, e.g. reduced absenteeism, on the other hand, people committed to the organization (especially in affective way) seldom seek a new place of employment, which allows, among the others, to reduce costs connected with training new employees (*Meyer & Allen, 1997; Gellatly, 1995*). However, it shall be emphasized here that it is important for organizational commitment that in a commercial company the influence of management is marked by raising psychological safety level among the employees, whereas, in a state company, by the rise in work meaningfulness.

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