



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

# What Makes Us Act?

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## Factors Affecting Voluntary Job Mobility

Isabel Bergsten, 860629  
2014-06-04

Master Thesis in Strategic Human Resource Management and Labour Relations  
30 higher education credits  
Spring semester 2014  
Supervisor: Tomas Berglund  
Examiner: Elena Bogdanova

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Appendix 1

## **Abstract**

Voluntary job mobility is an important question for organisations. Companies are investing a great amount of money, time and effort in recruiting and the training of employees. This study will illustrate factors affecting voluntary job mobility. Motivational factors, situational factors related to the work and family situation and individual factors related to an employee's background are discussed as aspects influencing voluntary job mobility. A questionnaire, using closed-ended questions was sent to employees that had taken action in changing job. Factors affecting voluntary job mobility are illustrated by a comparison between employees who actually changed jobs and employees that did not change jobs. Based on the self-determination theory as well a theoretical model based on previous research it was found that motivational factors are affected by both internal and external influences, even though internal influences are affecting motivation to a higher degree. The result shows that working tasks related to an inner interest and pleasure is the main factor that first and foremost motivates employees to voluntarily change jobs. The situational factors that are found to affect voluntary job mobility mostly are work as a whole, psychological working conditions and social support. In this study, differences within individual factors such as age, gender and education were found not to affect voluntary job mobility. The result and the provided indications of factors affecting voluntary job mobility will hopefully be of importance for employers and HR policymakers that strategically work with preventing voluntary turnover.

## **Keywords**

Voluntary job mobility, motivational factors, situational factors, individual factors, self-determination theory.

## **1. Introduction**

Voluntary job mobility is defined as a process by which an employee voluntarily leaves a job and an organisation. Job mobility and employee turnover is a big challenge for organisations due to the fact that companies are investing a great amount of money, time and effort in the development of their employees (Kraimer et al 2010). Costs due to employees quitting their jobs can therefore be tremendous for an organisation. These expenses might for example be hiring costs for replacement of employees, training costs and costs for administration (Elci et al 2012). Employee turnover also affects organisational productivity in a negative manner (Firth et al 2004). The most comprehensive problem occurs when a workplace loses their core competencies and workforce that possess essential skills. Organisations that fail to retain talented employees will therefore be left with a less qualified workforce and this will, in the end, affect their possibility to be competitive (Hausknecht et al 2009). Consequently, turnover of employees is an essential threat for organisations and there is a need for knowledge about why employees voluntarily choose to leave the organisation. There are a variety of reasons for why employees quit their jobs and it is an important concern for employers in order for them to be able to control turnover behaviours (Elci et al 2012). However, voluntary job mobility also has some advantages. Looking from a labour market perspective, interregional mobility is important for the efficiency of the economy because movements are important for restoring and maintaining equilibrium in resource markets. From an individual perspective, mobility is an investment in human capital through which some workers are able to increase their earnings, as well as job satisfaction and personal wellbeing. Due to these advantages, it is hard for organisations to completely control turnover among the employees (Nakosteen et al 2008).

Voluntary job turnover has been subject for an extensive body of research and been studied from many different perspectives. Many researchers have looked at objective rewards such as income and status when studying factors of mobility. Other studies state that subjective aspects such as dissatisfactions regarding income can have an important impact on job mobility (Gesthuizen 2008, Böckerman and Ilmakunnas 2009, Elci et al 2012). Because of the importance for organisations to be able to control the turnover among the employees, this study will pay attention to factors affecting voluntary job mobility. The study will have an individual perspective, highlighting important factors that are affecting employee's choice to stay or leave their current employment. The study will focus on motivational factors, situational factors related to our work and family situation, as well as individual factors such as age, gender and education.

March and Simon (1958) discussed for more than fifty years ago two decisions that employees face when they interact with organisations. The first decision is concerning employees' willingness to work hard and produce according to organisational needs. Whereas the second decision is related to employees' choice to participate, which is more essential for this particular study. March and Simon (1958) state that the decision of leave or remain in a company illustrates motivational problems that occur when human beings are involved in organisational tasks. Management of these problems related to individual choices is essential for organisations and for the human resource management when working on issues related to voluntary turnover.

When examining previous research, there are no updated studies existing that investigate factors on voluntary mobility from different industries in the Swedish labour market. Furthermore, other studies are usually investigating employees' intentions to be mobile and quit their jobs, while these studies have not examined employees that have taken action. Furåker (2005) explains that even though an individual in a survey or an interview states that they are prepared to change jobs, we cannot be sure that they will actually take action. A central part within this study will be to investigate employees that have already taken action in the process of changing jobs by searching for a new position.

### **1.1 Objectives and research questions**

Based on the self-determination theory as well as a theoretical model based on previous research, the aim of this study is to illustrate factors affecting voluntary job mobility. The study will demonstrate factors and situations that affect employees' attitudes to change jobs. All participants within this study have had an intention to change jobs and have taken action in doing so, however only some have actually changed jobs during the study period. A comparison will therefore be made between those who changed jobs and those who remained with the same employer.

Following research questions have been formulated:

- What motivates employees to voluntarily change jobs?
- In what way is voluntary job mobility affected by dissatisfaction with factors related to an employee's work and family situation?
- Are differences in age, gender and level of education affecting voluntary job mobility?

This study will be based on information from employees that applied for a new position during the autumn 2013. All of the participants were employed during this time and therefore voluntarily looked for another position. The result will reflect the factors that affected employees to leave their employment. The originality with this study is its examination of differences between those who changed jobs compared to those who did not change jobs. Another originality and value is its assessment of employees that have taken actions in their intentions to change jobs and are active in a recruitment process. These workers will represent various professions and industries. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the research field by examining factors motivating decisions of voluntary job mobility, what situations that affects these decisions, as well as eventual differences between age, gender and level of education.

## **2. Previous research**

This section aims to introduce the concept of job mobility, as well as situational and individual factors, which based on previous research has been found to affect voluntary job mobility. Situational factors are related to an employee's work and family situation that affects their decisions of voluntary turnover, whereas individual factors are related to an employee's background and consists within this study of age, gender and level of education. The previous research will be used to understand the result and the analysis that later on also will examine factors that motivates employees to voluntarily change jobs and how dissatisfaction with situational factors affect voluntary job mobility.

### **2.1 Job Mobility**

The concept of job mobility might seem rather simple, however it is quite complicated and may have more than one meaning. According to Berglund et al (2010) job mobility can be separated into different types of transitions. The concept may involve movement between employers or between different types of contracts, for example temporary contracts and part-time employment. Another workplace mobility can occur between different occupations and industries, between different positions or when individuals are moving between employment, unemployment and inactivity. Geographical mobility can also be included in the concept, explaining changes in location and between countries (Berglund et al 2010). In 1954, Herbert Parnes had already discussed labour mobility, conceiving the concept in three different ways. The first understanding of this concept is described as an individual's *ability* to move from one job to another. The second description regards an individuals' *willingness* to make such moves while the last one is the *actual movement* (Parnes 1954). Furåker (2005) discusses

Parnes explanation of labour mobility, stating that the first two dimensions of the concept relates to aspects of potential changes. However, these two dimensions do not describe the actual movement. The author describes that the last dimension can be regarded as the most crucial indicator since it is the actually movement that has an impact on both the employee and the employer. However, this dimension can only tell us if there is an actual mobility or not and will not tell us anything about certain conditions, which are important to illustrate the mobility and to be able to control it.

According to Lam et al (2011), job mobility is described as patterns of intra- and interorganisational transitions over an individual's working life. The authors make a distinction between internal and external job mobility, meaning that internal job mobility is when you change position within the organisation while external mobility is when you change organisation. Gesthuizen (2008) restricts the concept further by talking about voluntary mobility. Ng et al (2007) state that the society have gone from a traditional career path that is characterised by a long and faithful service to one specific employer to a more dynamic career path. Nowadays, employees are more likely to voluntarily seek opportunities outside the organisation. Consequently, external job mobility has become more prevalent. Lam et al (2011) describes this willingness to voluntary change jobs as a career strategy.

This study will focus on employees that are employed for the moment but have applied for another position outside the organisation. The individuals have voluntarily chosen to contact a recruitment company, participating in this study, in order to change jobs and these actions are therefore interpreted as voluntary. Based on the above reasoning, this study will focus on voluntary external job mobility.

## **2.2 Situational factors affecting job mobility**

Factors related to the employees' work, as well as the family situation, appear to motivate job changes and affect voluntary job mobility. This section aims to clarify how these situational factors are affecting voluntary job mobility among employees.

### ***2.2.1 Employment situation and working conditions***

Several studies have found working conditions as a very important attribute for the existence of voluntary job mobility. Many researchers have described adverse working conditions as a strong factor for increased quitting behaviour among employees (Maertz and Kmitta 2012, De Cuyper et al 2010, Böckermann and Ilmakunnas 2009 and Batt and Volcour 2003). De Cuyper et al (2010) found that, especially highly employable workers are more inclined to

quit jobs due to the lack of control over working conditions. Garner and Hunter (2012) also discuss this area and report that working conditions preventing role conflicts further will contribute to a more positive psychological climate at the workplace. This in turn will lead to greater satisfaction and decrease staff turnover. Another factor affecting voluntary job mobility is employees' perceptions of the possibility to manage work and family demands (Batt and Valcour 2003). The authors argue that supportive supervisors and access to flexible scheduling practices will lower the turnover intention among these employees. Maertz and Kmitta (2012) interviewed 186 employees representing several occupations and organisations who had quit their jobs voluntarily. The authors state that employees who reported working conditions related to poor management and difficulties in manage family demands due to the work situation showed a greater tendency to quit their jobs, even if they had no other job offer in hand. Working conditions related to inflexible work schedules and weak work responsibilities on the other hand were more often associated with employees that had made a plan of changing jobs and already had another job offer in hand. Poor management also influenced these employees to some extent (Maertz and Kmitta 2010). Several researchers explain that co-worker support and cooperation among employees are other important factors that will generate positive psychological climate and contribute to a decreased staff turnover (Garner and Hunter 2012, Cuyper et al 2010 and Berglund 2007). Valentine et al (2011) suggest that managers should create a work culture that increases group creativity in order to avoid voluntary job mobility.

Types of employment contracts further play an important role in employee's decisions of voluntary change jobs (Böckermann and Ilmakunnas 2009, Berglund 2007 and Furåker 2005). Berglund's (2007) study shows that temporary employees are more open for leaving an organisation than permanent employees. The author states that differences in voluntary job mobility among temporary and permanent workers can be explained by the fact that temporary workers have a higher level of insecurity. Similarly, Böckermann and Ilmakunnas (2009) argue that this job insecurity is a factor influencing voluntary job mobility. Several studies further indicate that voluntary job mobility among employees is strongly associated with work related stress (Elci et al 2012, Maertz and Kmittas 2012, Mulki et al 2008, Firth et al 2004). Maertz and Kmittas (2012) found that employees voluntarily quit their jobs because of work related stress even though they do not have another job available. Böckerman and Ilmakunnas (2009) explain different types of work related stressors, stating that feelings of uncertainty, mentally heavy work tasks and discrimination affect employee turnover. Other stressors are role overloads and role conflicts (Vandenberghe et al 2010). A lower stress level will, according to Mulki et al (2008) result in lower emotional exhaustion, higher job

satisfaction and, finally, lower turnover intentions among employees.

Elci et al (2012) conclude that organisations will always continue to produce stress for employees, emphasizing that it is important for managers to find ways to reduce negative consequences of work related stress. Firth et al (2004) also state that job stressors and intentions to quit can be prevented by management support and point out that managers need to control factors influencing job stressors.

### ***2.2.2 Financial gains***

Several studies indicate that motivational aspects related to financial gains such as wages and other benefits are affecting voluntary job mobility. Employees will change jobs if the benefits do not exceed the costs. The financial incentive is therefore an important factor when individuals make decisions of changing jobs (Lundh 2005). Dale-Olsens' (2004) result shows that employers that offer higher wages experience a reduction in workers turnover rates. Entry wages are also found to affect voluntary job mobility. Bachmann et al (2010) found that employees entering the labour market with less than an average starting wage are more likely to externally change jobs. The authors therefore argue that entry wage differences is an important factor of job mobility, since employees that are affected by poor economic starting conditions are more likely to externally mobile on a voluntary basis. Böckerman and Ilmakunnas (2009) also emphasis wages as an important factor for job changes and claim that employees with adverse working conditions increase their tendency of changing jobs if the wage does not sufficiently compensate for these adverse conditions. Delfgaauw (2007) further claims that workers who quit their jobs for pay, often move to another industry. The author argues that an employee's reason for quitting their job thereby affects their decision to stay in or leave in a certain industry. Maertz and Kmitta (2012) have found a correlation between pay and available job alternatives. The authors claim that employees that have another job available are more often reporting pay as a top reason for voluntary turnover.

### ***2.2.3 Training and development***

Opportunities related to training and career development are also important aspects regarding employee's decisions of changing jobs. Batt and Valcour (2003) report that the presence of benefits related to career development are associated with a decreased probability of voluntary job turnover. It is the employee's perceptions of career opportunities that are essential for the outcome. Career stages, provided programs and opportunities that support employees development is therefore important in order to avoid voluntary external job mobility among the employees (Lam et al 2011). Kraimer et al (2010) argue that it is

important to integrate career theories within strategic human resource management in order to understand variables that are central for voluntary turnover. Reineholm (2013) further claims that the access of career opportunities also affects employees' level of autonomy and psychosocial working conditions, which in turn affects voluntary job mobility. Houks et al (2001) also points out unmet career expectations as a contributing factor for declining health, concluding that the relationship between turnover intentions and unmet career expectations are quite stable regardless occupation.

Direnzo and Greenhaus (2011) provide an explanation for why employees concentrate on career opportunities, claiming that employees engage in ongoing job search activities in order to remain employable in a boundary less world of a volatile economy. These activities in turn increase the likelihood of voluntary turnover and are related to opportunities to develop additional career competences. Furthermore, Direnzo and Greenhaus (2011) explain that the feeling of not being employable triggers employees to make career strategic choices to enhance their skills.

#### ***2.2.4 Job satisfaction***

Researchers have found evidence for a correlation between declined job satisfaction and increased turnover intentions (Valentine et al 2011). Job satisfaction is not only affecting turnover intentions, it also has a strong influence on actual movements (Gesthuizen 2008). Böckermann and Ilmakunnas (2009) illustrate that a self-reported level of job satisfaction is a good predictor for job mobility describing that dissatisfied workers are more likely to quit their current job. Vandenberghe et al (2010) explain decreased job satisfaction among employees as a consequence of an increased role overload and decreased wellbeing. This in turn will result in greater turnover intentions. Gesthuizen (2008) also provides explanations for reasons behind employee dissatisfaction. The author states that the more dissatisfied a worker is with factors such as wage, the match between working tasks and capabilities, hours worked and the job in general, the more likely he or she is to voluntarily change organisation. Nyberg (2010) also found that lower pay growth is related to dissatisfactions, explaining that it is an essential factor making employees more willing to changes job, even though they are satisfied in their jobs over all. The author explains that high performers especially are more likely to voluntary leave their employment if the pay growth is slow. Reineholm (2013) discusses another factor contributing to job dissatisfaction, arguing that low variety in working tasks increases job dissatisfaction and in turn voluntary job mobility.

Elci et al (2012) explain that leader's behaviour has an important effect on employees'

feelings of job satisfaction. Leadership therefore plays an essential role in preventing turnover intentions and voluntary job mobility among employees. Firth et al (2004) claim that managers need to pay attention to both external and internal sources of job satisfaction in order to prevent turnover and to save financial cost and efforts due to recruitment, introduction and training of replacement staff.

### ***2.2.5 Family situation***

Batt and Valcour (2003) refers to aspects related to family situations as influencing factors on voluntary job mobility. They believe that work demands might interfere with family life and create a work-family conflict. Furåker (2005) also discusses this area and claims that having children at home increases the risk that a work-family conflict arises. These employees therefore show higher voluntary job mobility than employees without children. To avoid voluntary turnover among the employees due to work-family conflicts, managers should provide a possibility for the employees to control and manage work and family demands (Batt and Valcour 2003). The authors suggest that employers should formulate work-family policies and human resource practices, arguing that both the organisation and the employee would benefit from such policies and practices. These policies and practices should include dependent care benefits, flexible scheduling and supportive supervisors. The aim is to provide a possibility for the employees to increase the amount of control over managing work and family demands and decrease voluntary turnover due to work-family conflicts (Batt and Valcour 2003).

Other factors related to social obligations that are associated with family situations are marital status. Employees that are alone in the household show higher voluntary job mobility than employees in a relationship. One explanation might be that people that are alone in the household are more willing to move geographically, which contributes to increased job mobility (Furåker 2005). Gesthuizen (2008) also discusses this, claiming that employees with partners have more regional commitments, and therefore are more restricted when it comes to changing jobs.

### ***2.2.6 Tenure***

Previous research indicates that tenure is affecting job mobility. Lundh (2005) argues that job mobility is limited by both the employees' and employers' interest of a certain continuity of the employment relation. He states that employees are concerned with a certain security related to a secure income, while the employer is concerned with having access to certain skills and knowledge that existing employees are holding. Furåker (2005) illustrates another

factor that limits job mobility and refers to the employment protection legislation in Swedish. He describes the purpose of this legislation as a way to provide employees security. The legislation makes it difficult to terminate a contract, especially if the individual has been employed for a longer period of time. The fundamental idea of the legislation is that a dismissal must be fair and reasonable and the principle is that employees with the shortest period of employment must be the first to leave in case of a termination. For security reasons, it is therefore advantageous to stay at one employer since you are more secure in times of downsizing. Berglund (2007) has made a study discussing flexibility and his result shows that there is a high percentage of employees valuing high job security and that this is an important factor related to turnover cognitions.

Another factor affecting voluntary job mobility is work history. The longer period of time an employee has stayed with the same employer will affect job mobility (Böckerman and Ilmakunnas 2009). If an employee has become used to a certain environment and has settled down in the organisation during a long period, they become more restricted when it comes to changing jobs (Furåkers 2005). Theandersson (2000) also discusses this area and explains that there is a correlation between the tenure and the investment and effort the employee have put in the workplace. A change of employer would therefore be associated with a high loss for these employees, which is why they are less likely to voluntarily change jobs.

## **2.3 Individual factors**

Voluntary job mobility might also be affected by factors related to an employee's background. This next section will clarify how factors such as age, gender and education have been found to affect voluntary job mobility.

### **2.3.2 Age**

Several researchers have found that the age of an employee plays a significant role regarding decisions of voluntary job change. Younger people are more willing to move and change jobs than older employees and therefore shows higher turnover rates than elders (eg. Böckerman and Ilmakunnas 2009, Furåker 2005 and Theandersson 2000).

Furåker (2005) explains that older people are less likely to change jobs than younger employees. He provides an explanation describing that older people are less willing to move geographically. Furthermore, the longer a person has stayed in a community, the more restricted he or she is to a new environment. Theandersson (2000) provides a further explanation and states that there is a correlation between age and the period of employment.

An older employee has usually stayed with the same employer during a longer period and invested more time in their current work than a younger employee. A change of employment would therefore be associated with a higher loss for older employees. Another explanation provided is related to psychological conditions whereas Theandersson (2000) argues that many older employees simply feel too old to change jobs. A further explanation is that younger employees has better competitive advantage in the labour market compared to older workers, which is why they are more willing to change jobs. Younger employees have also been found to put greater demands on their work situation than older employees, and are therefore more inclined to change jobs. Furåker (2005) further states that employees that are close to retirement are less motivated to invest time in retraining, which is another reason for why older employees avoid changing jobs in a higher degree than younger employees.

### ***2.3.1 Gender***

Gesthuizen (2008) states that women show less turnover intentions than men and explains that the labour opportunities are greater for men. He claims that the estimated gains of changing jobs for men therefore outweigh the costs to a higher degree than for women. Delfgaauw (2007) further claims that women are less focused on financial prospects and future job duties than men. Nakosteens et al (2008) also discuss this area, explaining that women experiencing higher earnings during the initial period of an employment are significantly less likely to migrate than men in the same situation. Furåker (2005) provides another explanation for why women are less likely to voluntarily change jobs than men. The author claims that women are more likely to take responsibility for children and family, which make them less mobile compared to men. Women are, for the same reason, also less willing to move geographically, which further inhibits voluntary job mobility among women.

### ***2.3.3 Level of Education***

An employee's level of education reflects decisions of changing jobs voluntarily and employees with lower education show less turnover intentions than employees with higher education (Gasthuizen 2008). The author claims that employees with lower education have less labour opportunities than employees with higher education, which is why a change for these employees are associated with a higher risk. Böckerman and Ilmakunnas (2009) further describe that this is related to a higher unemployment rate among low-educated employees. Theandersson (2000) provides another explanation for differences between educational levels regarding job mobility and explains that less educated employees have lower competitive advantages than compared to higher educated employees. These workers therefore have fewer opportunities to get another job, why they are less likely to leave their current employment.

Higher educated employees are shown to put higher demands on their work situation compared to lower educated employees, which is another explanation for why voluntary job mobility is more widespread among higher educated employees. The level of education also has an important impact on what an employee values in a work situation. Higher educated employees value interesting work tasks and it is more important for them that their work fulfil an intrinsic value than for lower educated employees. Employees with lower education are instead prioritising economic exchange in a higher degree than higher educated employees (Theandersson 2000).

### **3. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses**

This section aims to present a theoretical model and hypotheses that have been formulated based on previous research.

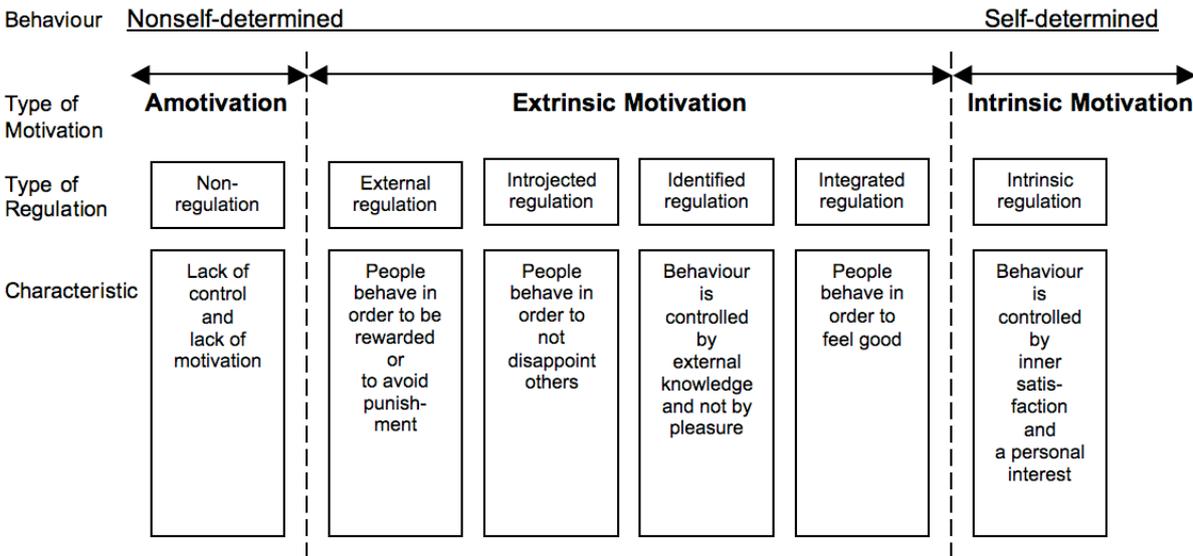
#### **3.1 Theoretical models explaining factors affecting voluntary job mobility**

The present study aims to illustrate factors that, based on previous research, have been found to influence voluntary job mobility. Within this study, these factors have been divided into three groups, consisting of motivational, situational and individual factors. This section aims to introduce a theoretical framework that will facilitate the understanding of these factors. Two theories will be introduced in order to explain what factors that motivate employees to change jobs and in what way dissatisfaction with certain situational factors as well as employee background are affecting job mobility.

In order to understand what factors that motivate employees to change jobs, the *self-determination theory* will be used. The theory is developed by Deci and Ryan (2000) and explains that motivation is related to an individual's psychological need for competence, autonomy and relatedness. The basic idea with the theory is that individuals get motivation by experiencing control over their situation. The theory is divided into three different types of motivation: *amotivation*, *extrinsic motivation* and *intrinsic motivation*. The authors describe amotivation as a stage where individuals lack motivation and lack intentions to act. Extrinsic motivation is described as a position where the motivation is controlled by external influences. Deci and Ryan (2000) divides this type of motivation into four groups *external regulation*, *introjection*, *identification* and *integration*. The external regulation indicates that people's behaviour is controlled by external contingencies and that we behave in order to achieve a desired consequence, such as getting rewards or to avoid punishments. Unlike external regulation, the introjection motivation explains that people's behaviour is controlled

by consequences related to the individual’s own actions, such as feeling of guilt, shame or pride. This type of extrinsic motivation is related to the individual, however it is not self-determined. The third type is the identification extrinsic motivation. This type explains that behaviour is controlled by external knowledge. The individual accepts certain behaviour because they know it has advantages, although it is not connected to their inner desire. The last type of extrinsic motivation is integration. This type indicates that individuals have identified factors that make them feel good and act in accordance to these factors. The integration motivation is least controlled by external influences and therefore contributes to a greater motivation to act. All these four types of extrinsic motivation can lead to autonomous or self-determined behaviour if they are well internalised (Deci and Ryan 2000).

The intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is described as providing fully internalised motivation and is the basis for self-determined behaviour. This intrinsic motivation occurs when a situation is valuable for the individual and when the person found it useful and interesting. Deci and Ryan (2000) illustrates the relationship between motivation and behaviour by using a scale where amotivation is placed on the left side and the intrinsic motivation on the right side. The extrinsic motivation is placed in the middle. The authors explain that the left end is characterised by a non-self-determined behaviour, while the right end is characterised by self-determination. The model in figure 1 illustrates the self-determination continuum, which I reproduced from Deci and Ryans model (2000:237):



**Figure 1: Motivational model.**

According to this theoretical model, motivational factors are expected to affect voluntary job mobility. Depending on whether these factors are influenced by external or internal aspects,

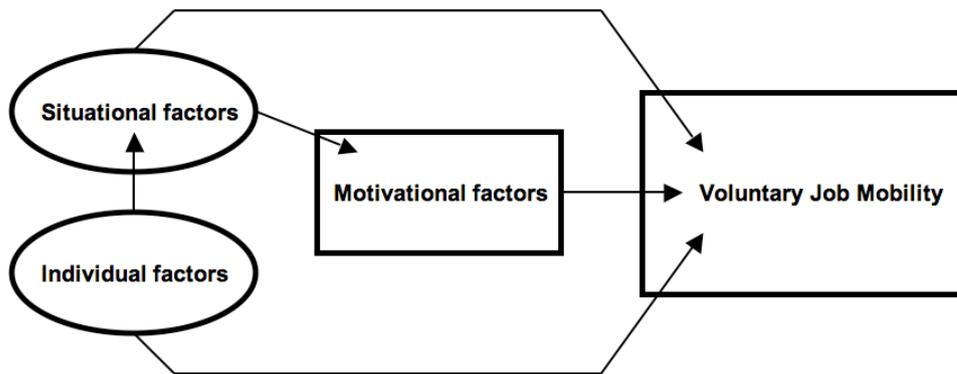
they will result in more or less motivation. According to the theory, internal factors might, for example be working tasks that are connected to an individual's personal interest. This factor will have a stronger motivational impact than an external factor such as, for example, a higher wage. Wage can, according to the model, be understood as an external regulation and the reward of a higher wage motivates the individual to change jobs. However, this factor will not have the same strong motivational impact as the internal factor of working tasks. I will illustrate this reasoning with an example. An employee is offered two jobs, one with a higher salary and one with work tasks providing individual satisfaction. The individual will, according to the theory, be more motivated to choose the offer providing work tasks related to individual satisfaction since this factor is influenced by internal motivation.

According to previous studies, different factors are affecting voluntary job mobility at different levels. In order to gain a better understanding of the relationship between different factors and voluntary job mobility, another theoretical model has been created based on previous research. Situational factors are found to affect voluntary job mobility and relates to an individual's employment and family situation. Previous research states that dissatisfaction with such situational factors affects an employee's decision of whether to leave or remain within an organization (eg. Theandersson 2000, Batt and Valcours 2003, Lundh 2005, Furåkers 2005 and Berglund 2007). Job satisfaction is thereby strongly associated with voluntary job mobility and researchers indicate that the more satisfied an employee is at work, the less likely he or she is to voluntarily change jobs (eg. Garner and Hunter 2013, Reineholm 2013, Valentine et al 2011, Vandenberghe et al 2010, Böckerman and Ilmakunnas 2009, Gesthuizen 2008 and Firth et al 2004). Situational factors are affected by internal and external influences, which according to the self-determination in turn affect individual's motivation (Deci and Ryan 2000).

Other aspects that have been found to affect voluntary job mobility are individual factors. These factors are related to an employee's background and have been found to affect employee's attitudes of what is important in a work situation. Previous research has also found that there is a relationship between individual aspects and situational aspects. This is related to the fact that an individual's situation affects how he or she values or adjust to circumstances associated with their employment and family situation (eg. Böckerman and Ilmakunnas 2009, Gesthuizen 2008, Delfgaauw 2007, Furåker 2005 and Batt and Valcour 2003).

Based on previous research, the model in figure 2 has been constructed to illustrate the

relationship between different factors and voluntary job mobility:



**Figure 2: Theoretical model**

According to the model there are several relationships between factors that influence each other. These relationships are individual factors affecting situational factors and situational factors affecting motivational factors. However, this study will only focus on the three different factors in relation to voluntary job mobility. What will be of interest within this study is therefore the relationship between motivational factors and voluntary job mobility, situational factors and voluntary job mobility, as well as the relationship between individual factors and voluntary job mobility.

### **3.2 Proposed explanations for voluntary job mobility**

Based on the theoretical framework mentioned above, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

1. *Factors related to internal motivation will affect voluntary job mobility to a higher degree than factors related to external motivation*
2. *Situational factors are expected to affect voluntary job mobility in the following way:*
  - 2a. *Dissatisfaction with benefits such as wages and training and development increased the probability of voluntary job mobility*
  - 2b. *Dissatisfaction with work conditions such as working tasks, social support, employee protection, psychological working conditions and work as whole increase voluntary job mobility*
  - 2c. *Dissatisfaction with the possibility to manage work and family demands increase the probability for mobility*

3. *Individual factors, such as age, gender and education are expected to affect voluntary job mobility in the following way:*
- 3a. *Men are more mobile than women*
  - 3b. *Increasing age decrease the probability for mobility*
  - 3c. *Higher educational level increase the probability for mobility*

## **4. Methodology**

Following chapter will describe the research design and illustrate how the study was carried out. The research questions within this study ask for behaviours and an explanation for a certain relationships between variables. The author is interested in illustrating in what way different factors are affecting voluntary job mobility. Quantitative empirical data has been analysed using statistical procedures. The study has a deductive approach and aims to test theories by examining a relationship among certain variables. According to Creswell (2009) a quantitative approach should be used when the researcher wants to identify factors and understand certain predictors that influence an outcome. The author further explains that this approach is preferable to test theories or for explanation. The quantitative approach is therefore a preferable research design for this study and a survey have been used. Using a survey provides numeric descriptions of the participant's attitudes by asking a sample of a certain population. According to Hakim (2000) the sample survey allows associations between factors to be mapped and measured, which are appropriate for this study. The intention was to be able to generalise from the sample to the whole population.

### **4.1 Sample**

During this study the author was collaborating with a recruitment company in Sweden. This company recruits employees for different organisations within different industries and positions. The company offered the researcher access to their database of around 90 000 individuals from different occupations looking for new jobs. A systematic sample method was used and participants were identified by a selection of individuals that during the period of 20<sup>th</sup> of September 2013 to the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2013 applied for a new job. 3 200 people had applied for a position during this period and a randomly selection, using systematic sampling was made by sending the questionnaire to every third person on the list, skipping the first and the last 100 people. 32 of these people had invalid contact information, which is why the questionnaire was distributed to a total of 968 people. The sample for this study consists of 184 individuals. All of the respondents within this study had applied for a new position roughly six months before the research was carried out. These people, therefore, had an

intention and willingness to change jobs. I am interested in general patterns and employees in general, not specific individuals, wherefore the chosen sample method is preferable (Hakim 2000). The survey was sent to individuals of different ages and different genders. Furthermore, these individuals come from a variety of industries and workplace cultures. The educational level varied from completing sometime at the high school level to completing a university degree. Of these individuals, 38.0 percent are women and 62.0 percent are men. The age range is from 21 years to 64 years and the average age is 41 years. 54.3 percent of the participants are living in a committed relationship and 40.8 percent have at least one child at home.

52.7 percent of the respondents, representing 97 individuals had an employment when the study was carried out as well as six months before. Since this research is focused on voluntary job mobility, only these individuals will be a part of the upcoming result and analysis. In order to find out whether the participants had an employment or not, a control question focusing on the individual's current situation was asked within the questionnaire. To separate the respondents and be able to make a comparison between employees that changed jobs within this six month period, a question was asked about whether they changed jobs within these months or not (see appendix 1). 50 individuals, representing 51.2 percent had changed employers and 47 individuals, representing 48.5 percent had not change employers.

As mentioned above, the sample for this study consists of 184 individuals, which represents a response rate of 19.0 percent. Such a low respondent rate indicates that many members of the sample did not respond to the survey. If these people would have responded, it might have had an effect on the final result. Such an issue is according to Creswell (2009) called a response bias. The author explains that a way to control bias is to examine returns for example week by week. If responses begin to change, problems with bias have most likely occurred. Within this study, the respondents had two weeks to fill out the survey. 51.1 percent of the responses came the first week. After sending a reminder, the rest of the responses came the week after. The responses were controlled after the first and the second week and the results did not differ much. One problematic issue within this study is that the researcher could not discern what members in the sample that had answered the survey or not. That could otherwise be another way to control eventual bias. A further issue within this research is related to the low respondent rate. To control if the result represents the whole population and if it is possible to generalise the finding, more responses would be needed or the survey would need to be redone.

## **4.2 Indicator**

In this study an online survey tool were used. The survey contains a number of questions about the workers background and working situation. Further, their subjective view of perceived working conditions and job satisfaction, as well as key factors for changing employers has been examined. The survey was designed so that only questions relevant to the individual's specific situation were answered. The measurement therefore differed between the participants depending on their labour market status. However, the questions have had the same focus across all respondents. The complete survey is shown in appendix 1. Hakim (2000) claims that by being consistent with the questions across all respondents, it is possible to analyse different groups on a comparable basis. Within this study the respondents are divided in two groups, one consisting of the employees that changed jobs and a second consisting of employees that did not change jobs.

According to Creswell (2009), a way to test a theory is by using independent and dependent variables. Independent variables are the factors that probably are affecting a certain outcome, while the dependent variables are the outcome of the independent variables. Within this study one dependent variable has been used. This variable is voluntary job mobility. To measure this variable, the respondents have been separated into the two different groups mentioned above, one group of respondents that changed jobs and one group that did not change jobs. A comparison between these two groups has been done in order to measure voluntary job mobility. Three groups of independent variables are used, which are motivational factors, situational factors and individual factors, consisting of age, gender and education. The motivational factors capture aspects that are related to valuation of important factors for wanting to change jobs. This group was measured by asking the respondents to evaluate different factors related to their willingness to change jobs. The respondents that changed jobs were asked to evaluate the most important factor for changing jobs. The respondents that did not change jobs were asked to evaluate the most important factor for wanting to change jobs. The respondents selected these factors from a list with aspects founded to be important motivators for voluntary job mobility within previous research. These factors were financial gain, working tasks, numbers of hours worked per week, work environment, physical workload and mental workload. Further factors are manager support, colleague support, collaboration between colleagues, career opportunities, opportunities for education, opportunity to utilize their full skills, employment protection, possibilities to manage work and family demands and the work as whole.

The second group of independent variables are situational factors. Situational aspects are related to an employee's work and family situation. These variables were measured by asking the employees that changed jobs to evaluate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with certain factors in their former employment and how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the same factors in their current employment. This was measured on a scale from one to five, where one was very satisfied and five was very dissatisfied. The employees that did not change jobs were asked to do the same thing but only in relation to their current situation. The situational factors that the respondents had to evaluate was financial gain, working tasks, numbers of hours worked per week, work environment, psychological and physical working conditions, manager support, colleague support, collaboration between colleagues, career opportunities, opportunities for education, opportunity to utilize full skills, employment protection, possibilities to manage work and family demands and the work as whole.

The used individual factors are related to employee's background. These factors were investigated by letting the participants answering questions about their gender, age and level of education.

#### **4.3 Validity and Reliability**

Validity refers to the issue of whether a measuring instrument measures the concept it was supposed to measure (Bryman 2004). There are different types of validity and the very minimum is called *face validity*, which refers to that the measure actually reflects the content of the concept in question. To assess this type of validity, the questionnaire used in this study was discussed with a supervisor with experience within the field. Another way to ensure validity is to gauge the *concurrent validity* of the measure, which can be done by the use of a criterion on which people are known to differ (Bryman 2004). Within this study there is a slight difference in response between employees who changed jobs and those who did not change jobs. Unfortunately, there is not enough difference in order to be able to make a reliable assessment. Another way to strengthen the validity is related to *construct validity*, which refers to that the measure represents a concept that is well embedded in theory (Bryman 2004). This has been done within this study by reviewing previous research, from which the concept has been derived and hypotheses been formulated.

Reliability refers to issues of consistency of measures. To consider whether a measure is reliable, one way is to retest the measure in order to examine if it is stable over time (Bryman 2004). Unfortunately, this has not been possible within this study. However, the questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions and the researcher has not been able to affect the result

by subjective judgment, which should indicate a greater reliability (Bryman 2004). In order to detect mistakes and ambiguities and in order to reduce problems with validity and reliability, a pilot study was performed on three acquaintances that recently changed jobs.

#### **4.4 Method for analysis**

The empirical data was analysed by univariate analysis using frequency table. Univariate analysis refers to analysis of one variable at a time and a frequency table provides the percentage of participants included in each variable (Bryman 2004). A bivariate analysis was further used to analyse the empirical data. Unlike the univariate analysis, the bivariate analysis refers to an examination of two variables at a time in order to investigate whether these two are related (Bryman 2004). Gamma was used as measure for examining these relationships. The frequency tables and the measurement of associations were produced by the use of the analytical software SPSS version 21.0. To be able to present the variables of age and level of education, these variables were categorised. Age was grouped into up to 29 years, 30-49 years and 50 years or older. The category of level of education was grouped into maximum high school and higher education. A further distinction has been made and factors of having children at home and marital status will not be analysed within this study.

#### **4.5 Ethical considerations**

The Swedish Research Council (2002) has formulated four ethical principles consisting of requirements of information, consent, confidentiality and utilisation.

Within this study ethical issues have been considered based on these principles. All participants were informed about the study, the objectives and purpose and how it will be executed, which fulfils the requirement of information. Participation was voluntary and the participants were informed that they at any time could discontinue their participation, which met the requirement of consent. To fulfil the requirement of confidentiality all the information that has been shared by the participants have been treated confidential and totally anonymous. The researcher was also unable to discern who had answered the questionnaire or not. The collected information will not be used for any other purpose than for this study, which fulfils the requirement of utilisation.

### **5. Results and Analysis**

Within this study, factors affecting voluntary job mobility have been examined. This section aims to present the result by showing statistics from the completed questionnaire. The results

are reported in tables supplemented with a descriptive text. This section further aims to provide an analysis of the data collected. The empirical data is analysed in relation to Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory and the created theoretical model presented in previous chapter. The research questions and the formulated hypotheses are further used to analyse the data.

### 5.1 Motivational factors related to voluntary job mobility

In order to be able to illustrate factors affecting voluntary job mobility, one part of this study is to investigate what motivates an employee to change jobs. According to Deci and Ryan's (2000) theory about self-determination, motivation is related to self-determined behaviour, which occurs when individuals experience that a certain aspect is valuable for them. According to the empirical study, the participants were asked to evaluate the most important factor for wanting to change jobs. In order to find impacts on voluntary job mobility, the result is analysed by an evaluation of conditions in the previous employment among employees that changed jobs compared to those who did not change. The findings are illustrated in the table below:

**Table 1. Motivational factors. Percent.**

	Changed jobs (n=50)	Did not change jobs (n=47)	Balance
Working tasks	24.0	6.4	17.6
Current manager	14.0	6.4	7.6
Hours worked per week	10.0	6.4	3.6
Psychological working conditions	2.0	0.0	2.0
Employment protection	10.0	8.5	1.5
Manage work and family demands	4.0	4.3	-0.3
Opportunities for education	0.0	2.1	-2.1
Work environment	6.0	8.5	-2.5
Work as whole	12.0	17.0	-5.0
Opportunities to utilise full skills	2.0	8.5	-6.5
Career opportunities	12.0	19.1	-7.1
Wage	4.0	12.8	-8.8

According to the self-determination theory, factors can be placed on a scale depending on their importance for an individual. Factors can be explained as intrinsic motivators, extrinsic motivators or amotivators, depending on their position on the scale. Intrinsic motivators are the ones valued the most, amotivators are not valuable at all and the extrinsic motivators are the ones valued in-between (Deci and Ryan 2000). According to the result, the comparison

between employees that changed jobs and those who did not change jobs showed that *working tasks* are the most important factor for wanting to change jobs. When looking at the self-determination theory, it is reasonable to interpret this factor as *intrinsic motivation* since it is related to our interest and that we want to feel pleasant in what we do. According to the theory this aspect provides fully internalised motivation and is the basis for self-determined behaviour (Deci and Ryan 2000). This reasoning is reflecting the result since working tasks was found to be the most important factor for voluntary job mobility. Based on the result, one can see that working tasks are followed by *current manager*, *hours worked per week*, *psychological working conditions* and *employment protection*. These factors are related to how we feel and according to the self-determination theory it is reasonable to interpret these factors as *integration extrinsic motivation*. Integration motivation is the aspect within the different types of extrinsic motivation that is least controlled by external influences and therefore contributes to incentives to act. However, the motivation to perform is not as strong as within intrinsic factors (Deci and Ryan 2000). This is also reflected in the result since these factors are valued as less important for wanting to change jobs than working tasks.

The following factor in the table is *possibilities to manage work and family demands*. This aspect is probably connected to the extrinsic *introjection motivation*, since this type of motivation is related to individual's fears to disappoint others. According to the theory this factor is not as motivating for wanting to change jobs as the extrinsic integration factors. This is reflected in the result, since this factor is less valued than the integration factors mentioned above. The result further shows that employees that changed jobs are more dissatisfied with this factor than employees that did not change jobs. The theory argues that this aspect is less motivating than extrinsic *identification motivation*. The following factor in the table *opportunities for education* is reasonable to interpret as an identification motivation. The identification motivation is related to that individuals get motivated because they know that an act has certain advantages, although it is not connected to their inner desire (Deci and Ryan 2000). Opportunities for education could therefore be understood as such a factor since employees know that if they develop their knowledge and skills they will get certain advantages. Based on this finding, the self-determination theory could be questioned. This because opportunities for education, according to the theory, motivates voluntary job mobility to a higher degree than possibilities to manage work and family demands, which was interpreted as introjection motivation. However, such contradictions might be related to other aspects, such as for example cultural differences. Individuals within this study might prioritise the family more than people in other cultures. A more comprehensive comparison, which is not covered in this study, is therefore necessary to be able to draw further conclusions. Also

the following factors in the table *work environment*, *work as whole* and *opportunities to utilise full skills* might, according to the theory be located on the wrong side of the scale. It is reasonable to interpret these factors as integration extrinsic motivation since they are related to how we feel. These factors should then be placed before possibilities to manage work and family demands as well as opportunities for education, since they, according to the theory are more motivating than both identification motivation and introjection motivation. Additional research would again be needed to draw further conclusions about this contradiction.

The last two factors in the table are *career opportunities* and *wage*. According to the self-determination theory, it is reasonable to interpret these factors as *external regulation* since they are related to rewards, such as receiving a higher salary or another position. According to the theory, external regulation is controlled by provided external possibilities and people are motivated to act in order to achieve a desired consequence. In accordance to the theory, these factors are the least motivating for voluntary job mobility, apart from the amotivational factors where individuals completely lack motivation. This reasoning thereby reflects the result presented in the table above since career opportunities and wage are least valued as important factors for wanting to change job.

The result is illustrated in the models below. Figure 3 is reflecting the actual outcome while figure 4 is reflecting the expected result according to the theory.

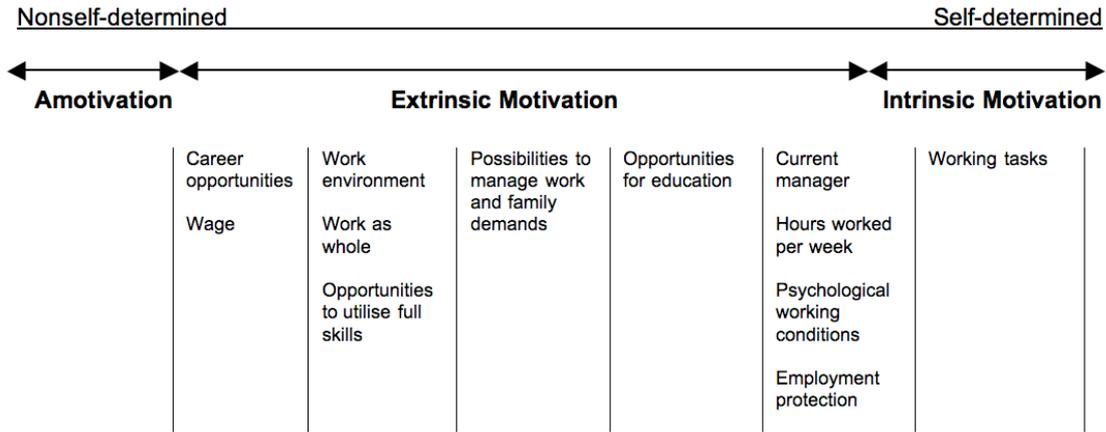
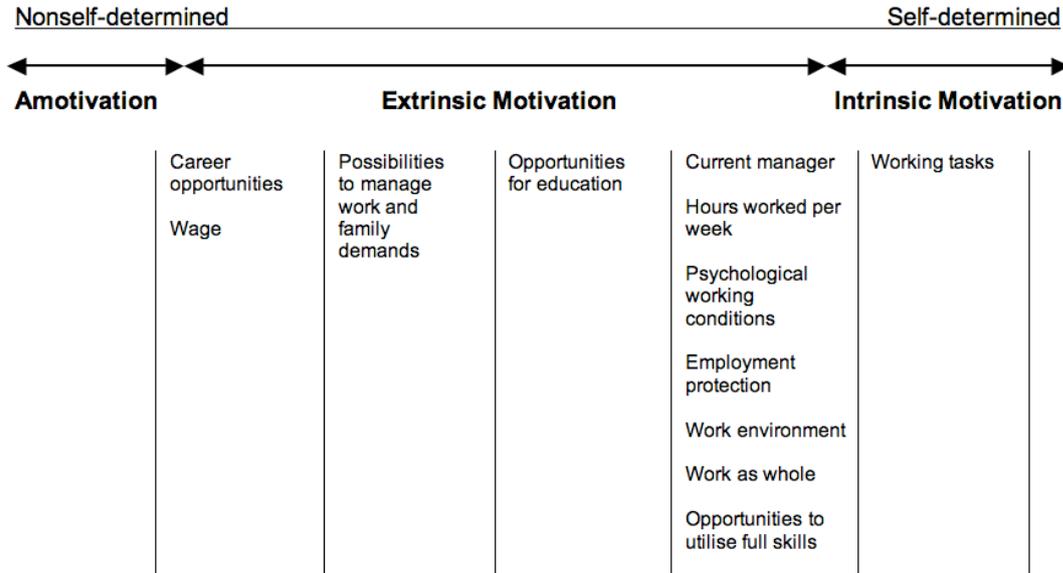


Figure 3. Result.



**Figure 4. Expected result.**

The results indicate that some motivational factors that affect voluntary job mobility are more influenced by internal aspects, while some are more influenced by external aspects. Apart from the factors of possibilities to manage work and family demands and opportunities for education, the result indicates that factors that are more controlled by external influences contribute to less motivation to act. Factors that are more controlled by internal influences on the other hand contribute to a greater motivation to change jobs. Both internal and external factors are influencing voluntary job mobility even if the internal is influencing these decisions to a higher degree. The formulated hypothesis 1, expecting that factors related to internal motivation will affect voluntary job mobility to a higher degree than factors related to external motivation, is thereby mostly supported. This statement can only be confirmed statistically because of a small sample size.

## **5.2 Situational factors related to voluntary job mobility**

Another part with this study was to examine in what way dissatisfaction with certain situational factors affects voluntary job mobility. The respondents were asked to evaluate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with certain situational factors within their current and former work situation. They were asked to do so by set a value on a scale from one to five, where one was very satisfied and five was very dissatisfied. Only values of four and five will be presented within this analysis. How dissatisfaction with certain situational factors affects voluntary job mobility is analysed by an evaluation of satisfaction in the previous employment among employees that changed jobs compared to those who did not change jobs.

To be able to identify differences the factors are presented in parallel. Only situational factors covering 40 % or more of the respondents, or have shown to be the key motivator for voluntary job mobility will be interpreted in this analysis. The table below presents the result:

**Table 5. Situational factors. Percent.**

	Changed jobs (n=50)		Did not change jobs (n=47)	Balance between "Changed jobs" (former) and "Did not change jobs"	Correlation value (Gamma $\gamma$ )
	Former situation	Current situation			
	Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied		
Work as whole	44.0	10.0	19.1	24.9	0.537
Psychological working conditions	44.0	12.0	21.3	22.7	0.488
Management support	50.0	12.0	34.0	16.0	0.319
Manage work and family demands	28.0	8.0	12.7	15.3	0.453
Colleague support	31.0	10.0	17.0	14.0	0.353
Physical working conditions	22.0	8.0	8.5	13.5	0.504
Work environment	38.0	12.0	25.5	12.5	0.283
Employment protection	48.0	28.0	36.2	11.8	0.239
Wage	40.0	16.0	29.8	10.2	0.222
Hours worked per week	22.0	10.0	12.8	9.2	0.317
Career opportunities	60.0	8.0	51.0	9.0	0.179
Opportunities for education	60.0	16.0	51.0	9.0	0.179
Working tasks	24.0	4.0	17.0	7.0	0.212
Opportunities to utilise full skills	62.0	20.0	55.3	6.7	0.137
Collaboration with colleagues	20.0	6.0	19.2	0.8	0.027

The result shows that factors related to training and development such as career opportunities, opportunities for education and opportunities to utilise full skills contribute to strong dissatisfaction among employees who changed jobs. However, the result also indicates that employees that did not change jobs are strongly dissatisfied with these aspects. The result indicates that 55.3 percent of the employees that did not change jobs are dissatisfied with the opportunities to utilise their full skills compared to 62.0 percent of the employees that changed jobs. 51.0 percent of the employees that did not change jobs are dissatisfied with career opportunities and the opportunities for education in their former jobs compared to 60.0 percent of the employees that changed jobs. The result for those who changed jobs is, as earlier mentioned, based on the circumstances in previous employment. According to wage, this aspect contributes to some degree to dissatisfaction and the result indicates that 40.0 percent of the employees that changed jobs are dissatisfied with their wage compared to 29.8 percent of the employees that did not change jobs. The difference between the two employee groups is to some degree larger concerning the wage factor compared to factors concerning training and development. Both aspects related to training and development and wage therefore seems to contribute to employee's feelings of dissatisfaction. However, the result

does not show a great difference between employees that changed jobs compared to those who did no change. According to the measure of association, this result shows a weak correlation since the  $\gamma$ -values for these aspects do not exceed 0.222. According to Blaikie (2004) values in between 0.1 to 0.3 indicates a weak correlation. The sample is too small to be able to ensure the result, but from a statistical point of view, it is possible to argue that a correlation does not exist. The formulated hypothesis 2a, expecting that dissatisfaction with benefits such as wages and training and development will increased the probability for voluntary job mobility should therefore, statistically, be rejected. According to the theoretical model situational factors related to training and development and wage can therefore, statistically, not explain voluntary job mobility.

A motivational factor that was important for voluntary job mobility was working tasks. When employees evaluated working tasks as a situational factor, not many employees were dissatisfied with this aspect compared to other aspects. Among the employees that changed jobs, 24.0 percent were dissatisfied with their working tasks in former employment and of those who did not change jobs, the percentages of dissatisfied employees are 17.0. There is not a significant difference between those who changed jobs compared to those who did not change jobs. According to this result and the fact that working tasks was valued as an important motivational factor, it seems like employees do not have to be particularly dissatisfied with working tasks in order to change jobs. Thus, it is possible to believe that reasons, other than the current working tasks, is important for voluntary job mobility, since it was a strong motivating factor. However, the sample is too small to be able to secure this statement, but statistically it is possible to connect these findings to the theoretical model. According to the model, aspects related to working tasks as an important situational factor is statistically crucial for voluntary job mobility, as long as it does not involve the current working tasks.

Regarding the situational factor of work as whole, there is quite a high degree of dissatisfaction among employees that changed jobs. It was also this factor that showed the greatest difference between employees that change jobs compared to those who did not change jobs. According to this factor, 44.0 percent of those who changed jobs were dissatisfied in their former employment, compared to 19.1 of those who did not change jobs. Thus, there are more employees that changed jobs that were dissatisfied with work as whole. The result thereby supports the part of the formulated hypotheses 2b, expecting that dissatisfaction according to work as whole was expected to increase voluntary job mobility. As a result, this aspect of the hypotheses is supported. According to the  $\gamma$ -value and Blaikie

(2004) the result shows a moderate correlation, close to strong, wherefore it is possible to state that there is a correlation between work as whole and voluntary job mobility. Values in between 0.3 to 0.6 indicate a moderate correlation (Blaikie 2004). However, due to a low sample these statements can only be explained statistically. The situational factors of psychological working conditions also seem to contribute to voluntary job mobility. According to this factor, 44.0 percent of those who changed jobs were dissatisfied in their former employment and only 21.3 percent of the employees that did not change jobs are dissatisfied with the same factor. The result thereby statistically supports the part of the formulated hypotheses expecting that dissatisfaction according to psychological working condition will increase voluntary job mobility. The result further showed that there is a moderate correlation according to the  $\gamma$ -value. Another interesting finding regarding work as whole and psychological working conditions is that even though dissatisfaction with these factors are high among employees that changed jobs, there were not many that evaluated these factors as motivators for wanting to change jobs. It is therefore possible to believe that even though dissatisfaction is high, it is not crucial for actually taking the action to change jobs. However, again the sample is too small to be able to secure this statement.

According to tenure and the situational factor of employment protection, there is a fairly high degree of employees in both groups that are dissatisfied. 48.0 percent of those who changed jobs were dissatisfied with the employment protection in their former employment compared to 36.2 percent of those who did not change jobs. This might, statistically, indicate that employment protection, to some degree is affecting voluntary job mobility, although it does not seem to be crucial. The evaluation of the motivational factors reflects this statement. However, this result does not indicate a correlation according to the  $\gamma$ -value. It is therefore not possible to argue that such correlation exists and also this aspect of the formulated hypotheses 2b may be rejected. According to the theoretical model, it is not possible to argue that employment protection affects voluntary job mobility. However, as stated, this statement can only be confirmed statistically since the sample is too low.

Aspects of social support such as management support and colleague support are among the situational factors in top by showing quite high difference between employees that changed jobs compared to those who did not change jobs. Regarding the factor of management support, 50.0 percent of the employees that changed jobs were dissatisfied in their former employment and 34.0 percent of those who did not change jobs are dissatisfied with this factor. According to colleague support, 31.0 percent of the employees that changed jobs were dissatisfied in their former work situation compared to 17.0 percent among the employees that

did not change jobs. Because of the relatively high difference between the two employee groups regarding both factors it is possible to believe that these factors are affecting voluntary job mobility to a high degree. According to these findings, the aspect of the hypotheses expecting that dissatisfaction with social support will increase voluntary job mobility is therefore consistent with this result. According to the theoretical model, aspects related to social support are important situational factors that are crucial for voluntary job mobility. However, it is only possible to state this statistically, due to a small sample. Management support was also valued as the second most important motivating factor for voluntary job mobility. Both factors showed a moderate correlation according to the  $\gamma$ -value and Blaikie (2004).

The result is illustrated in the models below:

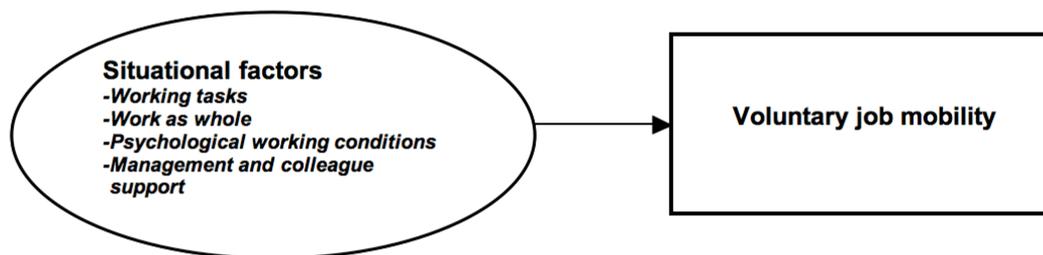


Figure 5. Result.

### 5.3 Individual factors related to voluntary job mobility

This section aims to clarify how individual factors, such as age, gender and education affects voluntary job mobility. The result is reported in the table below:

Table 6. Individual factors. Percent.

		Changed jobs (n=50)	Did not change jobs (n=47)	Balance	Correlation value (Gamma $\gamma$ )
<b>Gender</b>	Male	55.4	44.6	10.8	-0.009
	Female	46.3	53.7	-7.4	
<b>Age</b>	Up to 29	52.2	47.8	4.4	-0.349
	30-49	51.1	48.9	2.2	
	50 or older	50.0	50.0	0.0	
<b>Education</b>	Maximum high school	47.2	52.8	-5.6	-0.157
	Higher education	54.1	45.9	8.2	

According to hypotheses 3a within this study, men are more mobile than women. The result supports this assumption to a limited degree. 55.4 percent of the men compared to 46.3 percent of the women did change jobs. Despite this difference, the  $\gamma$ -value indicates that there is no correlation. The formulated hypothesis therefore needs to be rejected, but this statement is only possible to confirm statistically because of a small sample size. According to the result, neither the individual factor of age indicates a correlation between different age groups and voluntary job mobility. Of employees that changed jobs, the highest value is among the age group of up to 29 years, where 52.2 percent changed jobs. The lowest percentage is among employees of 50 years or older. Among these employees 50.0 percent changed jobs. According to employees that did not change jobs, 47.8 percent are employees up to 29 years and 50.0 percent are employees that are 50 years or older. The balance is low and the formulated hypothesis 3b, expecting that increasing age will decrease the probability for mobility is therefore not possible to consider. The correlation is moderate according to the  $\gamma$ -value and Blaikie (2004). Another formulated hypothesis within this study is 3c that expects that higher educational level increase the probability for job mobility. According to the result, employees with higher education that changed jobs are 54.1 compared to 47.2 percent of employees with lower education. Considering the  $\gamma$ -value one can see that there is no correlation between educational level and voluntary job mobility. The formulated hypothesis 3c therefore needs to be rejected. According to the findings and the developed theoretical model, it is possible to argue that individual factors are not affecting voluntary job mobility. However, due to a small sample size, the presented statements can only be confirmed statistically.

## **6. Conclusion**

One aim with this study was to illustrate what motivates employees to voluntarily change jobs. According to the result and the self-determination theory, it is possible to conclude that motivation is affected by both internal and external influences. Internal influences were found to affect motivation to a higher degree than external influences.

The result showed that the only intrinsic factor, working tasks that are related to internal aspects, such as personal interest and pleasure was the factor that first and foremost motivates the employees to voluntarily change jobs. According to the self-determination theory, this factor provides the most self-determinate behaviour and can therefore be explained as the primary factor for motivating voluntary job mobility. Other factors related to how we feel can,

according to the self-determination theory, be understood as integration extrinsic motivation. These aspects are within the extrinsic group least controlled by external influences and therefore contribute to incentives to voluntary change jobs. These aspects are within this study understood as current manager, hours worked per week, psychological working conditions and employment protection. Aspects such as work environment, work as whole and opportunities to utilise full skills are also understood as integration motivators. However, an exception from the theory was found regarding the factors of possibilities to manage work and family demands and opportunities for education. These factors are, according to the theory, understood as introjection and identification motivation, which are influenced by external aspects to a higher degree than the integration motivation. Despite that, these factors were, according to the result, valued as more important for wanting to change jobs than work environment, work as whole and opportunities to utilise full skills. In consideration to low answering frequency as well as a small number of participants, it is unfortunately not possible to draw any further conclusions regarding this result. Career opportunities, followed by wage are the least valued factors and are understood as external regulation, which according to the theory are the most external controlled factors. Career opportunities and wage is consequently concluded as the least motivating factors for voluntary job mobility.

Another aim with the study was to illustrate in what way differences in dissatisfaction between employees that changed jobs compared to employees that did not change jobs regarding situational factors are affecting voluntary job mobility. According to the results and according to the developed theoretical model explaining factors affecting voluntary job mobility, it is possible to conclude that work as whole, psychological working conditions and social support are the factors that related to dissatisfaction affects voluntary job mobility mostly. These results showed a moderate correlation. The result also indicates that aspects related to working tasks are affecting voluntary job mobility as long as it does not involve the current working tasks. This because working tasks were found to be a strong motivator, even though there was no distinctive difference in dissatisfaction among employees that changed jobs compared to those who did not change jobs. However, these results are not shown to be significant and it is not possible to statistically confirm this conclusion. Factors related to training and development and wage and employment protection were found to not affect voluntary job mobility, which contradicts what the author expected theoretically.

The developed theoretical model can further explain the last aim with this study, questioning if differences in age, gender and level of education are affecting voluntary job mobility. According to the results, individual factors were found not to affect voluntary job mobility. It

is therefore possible to conclude that differences within individual factors, such as gender, age and education will not affect employees' willingness to voluntarily change jobs, which further contradicts what the author predicted theoretically.

Another interesting conclusion within this study is that dissatisfaction with certain situational factors among the employees is not equivalent with factors motivating voluntary job mobility. It is not unreasonable to believe that dissatisfaction is connected to voluntary job mobility. However, this study shows that factors affecting voluntary job mobility is not necessarily linked to dissatisfaction. To act in accordance to expressed dissatisfaction, as employer, may therefore not prevent voluntary job mobility among the employees.

Unfortunately, the sample size was too small in order to be able to confirm these results other than statistically. More research is needed to be able to generalise the findings to the whole population. However, the results might be of importance for employers and HR policymakers that strategically work with preventing job turnover.

### **6.1 Research limitations and further directions**

A crucial limitation within this study is a combination of a low answering frequency, as well as a small number of participants. According to these deficient aspects, it is not possible to generalise any findings. However, the research has contributed by providing some indications of different types of factors influencing voluntary job mobility. As far as I know, there are no updated studies existing that investigate factors affecting voluntary job mobility from different industries within the Swedish labour market. Further research would therefore be of great importance and the researcher hopes that this study has contributed to an increased interest to the field.

The study has highlighted factors affecting voluntary job mobility, however has not reported how these factors are influencing decisions of voluntary job mobility. A proposal for further studies to emphasize such aspects, in order to deepen the knowledge of motives behind voluntary job mobility would be highly recommended.

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## Appendix 1

### Section 1: General information

**1. Your gender**

- Male
- Female

**2. Your age:** \_\_\_\_\_ years

**3. Your highest level of completed education**

- Elementary school (or similar)
- Secondary school (or similar)
- University
- Vocational University

**4. Marital status**

- Married
- Cohabitant
- Single

**5. Children staying at home**

- Yes
- No

**6. Are you employed?**

- Yes (directed to question 7)
- No (directed to question 65)

**7. Have you during the last 6 months changed employer?**

- Yes (directed to question 8)
- No (directed to question 45)

### Section 2.1: Attitudes to voluntary job mobility

**8. How many times have you, during the last ten years, voluntarily changed employer?**

- 0 times
- 1-2 times
- 3-4 times
- 5 times or more

**9. For how long did you stay with your previous employer**

- 1 year or less
- 2-5 years
- 6-9 years
- 10 years or more

**10. What was your situation in the labour market before you changed job?**

- Employed
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Student
- Other

**11. What type of employment did you have at your previous workplace?**

- Employed until further notice
- Employed by the hour
- Temporary employment
- Hired consultant

**12. What type of employment do you have at your current workplace?**

- Employed until further notice
- Employed by the hour
- Temporary employment
- Hired consultant

**13. What is your current position?**

- White collar worker
- White collar worker and manager
- Blue collar worker
- Blue collar worker and manager
- Self-employed
- Other

**If you look back 6 months, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following conditions:**

**14. The previous wage**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**15. The previous working tasks**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**16. Hours worked per week in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**17. The work environment in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**18. The physical working conditions in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**19. The psychological working conditions in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**20. The management support in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**21. The colleague support in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**22. Collaboration with colleagues in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**23. The career opportunities in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**24. The opportunities for education in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**25. The opportunities to utilize full skills in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**26. The employment protection in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**27. Possibilities to manage work and family demands in previous employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**28. Previous work as whole**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following conditions in your current job?**

**29. The current wage**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**30. The current working tasks**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**31. Hours worked per week in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**32. The work environment in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**33. The physical working conditions in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**34. The psychological working conditions in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**35. The management support in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**36. The colleague support in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**37. Collaboration with colleagues in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**38. The career opportunities in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**39. The opportunities for education in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**40. The opportunities to utilize full skills in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**41. The employment protection in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**42. Possibilities to manage work and family demands in current employment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**43. Current work as whole**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**44. What was the most important factor for why you wanted to change job?**

- The wage
- The working tasks
- Hours worked per week
- The work environment
- The physical working conditions
- The psychological working conditions
- The management support
- The colleague support
- Collaboration with colleagues
- The career opportunities
- The opportunities for education
- The opportunities to utilize full skills
- The employment protection
- Possibilities to manage work and family demands
- Work as whole

**Thank you for your participation!**

**Section 2.2: Attitudes to voluntary job mobility**

**45. For how long have you stayed with your current employer**

- 1 year or less
- 2-5 years
- 6-9 years
- 10 years or more

**46. How many times have you, during the last ten years, voluntarily changed employers?**

- 0 times
- 1-2 times
- 3-4 times
- 5 times or more

**47. What type of employment do you have?**

- Employed until further notice
- Employed by the hour
- Temporary employment
- Hired consultant

**48. What is your position?**

- White collar worker
- White collar worker and manager
- Blue collar worker
- Blue collar worker and manager
- Self-employed
- Other

**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following conditions in your current job?**

**49. The wage**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**50. The working tasks**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**51. Hours worked per week**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**52. The work environment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**53. The physical working conditions**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**54. The psychological working conditions**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**55. The management support**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**56. The colleague support**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**57. Collaboration with colleagues**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**58. The career opportunities**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**59. The opportunities for education**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**60. The opportunities to utilize full skills**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**61. The employment protection**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**62. Possibilities to manage work and family demands**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**63. The work as whole**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied				

**64. What was the most important factor for why you applied for another job?**

- The wage
- The working tasks
- Hours worked per week
- The work environment
- The physical working conditions
- The psychological working conditions
- The management support
- The colleague support
- Collaboration with colleagues
- The career opportunities
- The opportunities for education
- The opportunities to utilize full skills
- The employment protection
- Possibilities to manage work and family demands
- Work as whole

**Thank you for your participation!**

## Section 2.3: Attitudes to job

How do you evaluate the following factors in a new job?

**65. The wage**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**66. The working tasks**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**67. Hours worked per week**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**68. The work environment**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**69. The physical working conditions**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**70. The psychological working conditions**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**71. The management support**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**72. The colleague support**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**73. Collaboration with colleagues**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**74. The career opportunities**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**75. The opportunities for education**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**76. The opportunities to utilize full skills**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**77. The employment protection**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**78. Possibilities to manage work and family demands**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**79. The work as whole**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not important at all				

**Thank you for your participation!**