



Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales

# **The Effect of Training and Development on Organizational Commitment as Key Elements to Retain Talent in Business Organizations**

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*“You don’t build a business. You build people, and people build the business.”*

– Zig Ziglar



## RESUMEN

Este trabajo de fin de grado trata el tema de la gestión del talento en las empresas a través del papel protagonista que la formación y el desarrollo juegan en el compromiso organizativo de los empleados, claro precursor de la retención. En el panorama empresarial actual, las compañías son conscientes del valor incalculable que el capital humano les proporciona y por ello, compiten por adquirir y mantener a sus mejores empleados. Con este fin se hará un análisis de las contribuciones académicas en los campos de retención de talento, formación y desarrollo y compromiso organizativo. Seguidamente, servidos de los resultados de una encuesta, se elaborará un modelo para tratar de ver de que forma influyen las diferentes variables en el compromiso organizativo. Finalmente, teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, se tomarán unas conclusiones.

**Palabras clave:** Formación y Desarrollo de Recursos Humanos, Compromiso Organizativo, Retención del Talento, Rotación de Personal.

## ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the topic of employee retention in business organizations, by regarding organizational commitment as its key precursor, and focusing on the effect that employee training and development has on organizational commitment. In the current business environment, firms are well aware of the unmeasurable value that human capital provides them with, and for this reason, companies compete in order to acquire and maintain their top performers. With this in mind, the main academic contributions in this field will be examined and analyzed, and subsequently, with the help of the results of a survey, a model will be elaborated with the aim of identifying how different variables affect organizational commitment. Finally, keeping everything said above in mind, some conclusions will be made.

**Key words:** Training and Development (T&D), Organizational Commitment (OC), Employee Retention, Turnover.

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## **1. Introduction and Objective**

### **1.1. Introduction**

The working world is in a constant evolution, and this change is accelerating at an unprecedented pace. Technology has changed the way organizations operate and interact within themselves and with society as a whole, constantly transforming business models in all industries. The disruption of technology has also affected the relationship between organizations and human capital. This disruption led by artificial intelligence, robotics, the internet of things and sharing economy platforms, will affect blue-collar workers in a bigger scale, but it will also be noticed by white-collar workers (EY Megatrends, 2016). Some of the trends affecting the current labor market are an aging workforce, the fact that multiple generations with different values and expectations working together (baby-boomers, generation Xers, millennials), a growing sense of corporate citizenship and social responsibility, an increasing urge to create more sustainable businesses, the demand of finding an equilibrium between personal life and work, as well as the idea that technology should complement humans, not replace them, the rise of soft skills, a hyper-connected workplace, and an awareness about personal info and data (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends 2018).

In the 21st century, specific jobs and skills no longer define an individual's career path in the long term. It is the individual's experiences and his or her ability to adapt to the circumstances and learn new things what makes the difference today. Besides, because the ongoing transformation of work requires that employees and organizations constantly adapt to the demands of the time, the retention of talent has now become trickier than ever before. For this reason, training and development of employees is now more important than ever, understanding T&D not just as learning a particular skill or ability, but rather as learning how to constantly learn and adapt. Companies are aware that investing in their employees or the so-called "human capital" brings substantial benefits to the firm (Becker, 2009). Moreover, employee development is no longer to be understood as a linear regression with defined steps like it was years before, but it may rather be thought as an exponential regression or as countless different representations going in all possible directions. In addition, as employee needs, motivations, and



incentives are becoming more and more customized to each individual, the one-size-fits-all approach in the relationship between organizations and their employees has failed (Finkelstein, 2019). Also, business organizations must go the extra mile so that employees perceive the T&D programs as a reward (Emerson, 1976). For this reason, keeping employees committed to an organization, having in mind that organizational commitment is a key determinant for the retention of talent, has proven to be a substantially difficult endeavor (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends 2018).

## **1.2. Objective**

The aim of this final thesis is to analyze how training and development (T&D) practices affect the organizational commitment (OC) of employees as an explanation to their retention and consequently, as a tool to avoid employee turnover (in this dissertation employee retention and its opposite, turnover will be referred to indistinctly). Along the study of this topic, two different approaches have been analyzed. The first presumes that there is a direct relationship between T&D and turnover, and the second presumes that T&D and turnover are indirectly related through organizational commitment (OC). However, this second approach will be the basis in which the research will be carried out. Assuming that OC has an inverse relationship with employee turnover, the purpose of this study will be to explain the existing relationship between T&D and OC.

For this purpose, the existing academic literature regarding the topics of employee retention and turnover, training and development, and organizational commitment will be reviewed in that order. First, the concept of employee retention and its antithesis, employee turnover will be examined. After that, the concepts of Training and Development (T&D) will be analyzed, as well as those T&D practices that are considered to have a positive effect on organizational commitment -which are also defined as High Commitment Practices-. Subsequently, the main academic contributions featuring organizational commitment will be revisited.

The next step will be to inspect the existing academic literature regarding the direct and indirect relationship between T&D and turnover. Once the contributions of academic authors have been examined, the results of a survey will be presented. With

the results of this survey and having the indirect approach in consideration (T&D-OC-turnover), the effect that T&D has on OC will be explained, assuming that OC is a trigger of retention. In conclusion, based on the existing academic literature and the results of the survey, I will draw some conclusions on how the concepts of T&D, OC and turnover relate to themselves.

This dissertation does not aim to be a dogmatic or an exhaustive list of recommendations, nor does it pretend to find the absolute truth about the effect of T&D on OC. Its purpose is merely to better understand the drivers and to better correlate some of concepts that have been repeatedly studied along the academic literature on the fields of training and development, organizational commitment, and employee retention.

## 2. Conceptual Framework

### 2.1. Employee retention and turnover

Organizations all around the world strive to attract talent to their teams. However, integrating talent in the organization is just the starting point. In such a competitive working landscape as that of today, companies must make exceptional efforts in order to remain attractive to top performers and therefore, retain talent. Employee retention or retention of talent is the set of practices carried out by organizations in order to incentivize that its valuable employees remain working for the organization. Contrarily, turnover is when an employee leaves an organization. It can be **involuntary**; this is when the employee is encouraged or forced to leave by the employer. The other type of turnover is **voluntary**, which is initiated by the employee itself, frequently when the organization would rather keep him or her employed. Companies look forward to incentivizing the stay of employees who perform well while those employees whose performance is not as good are normally encouraged or forced to leave the organization (Noe, 2007). Retention of high-performance employees has become an extremely complicated task for organizations today. In 2017, 51% of U.S. employees claimed that they were actively looking for a new job or were open to job offers. 40% of employees stated the possibility of looking for a new job out of their companies in the upcoming 12 months (HR Insights, 2017). Even if employee termination can be induced by the organization for several reasons (involuntary turnover) such as underperformance, conflict with peers, a breach of the employment contract, and many others, the focus of this dissertation will be on voluntary turnover and what measures can be implemented by companies in order to retain talent.

Voluntary turnover is normally due to two main causes: because the employee is on the age of retiring or because the employee has found a more convenient job in a different organization. It may also be the case that due to suspicions; the employee decides to quit his job before he is fired. Worst case scenario for voluntary turnover is that the working conditions of a certain job or the employee's relationship with his or her

peers is unbearable. Yet, because it is in their best interest, organizations try to avoid voluntary turnover, especially of those employees who perform the best mainly because of the high expense of hiring someone to replace them and the time and effort needed to train the new entrant in the company (replacement and training costs). Nonetheless, the retention of top performers is not as effortless task. Today's work environment is extremely competitive and complex. The US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported in 2017 that those employees who were born between 1957 and 1964 have occupied an average of 11.9 jobs from ages 18 to 50, and this number will most likely increase in subsequent generations (BLS, 2017). Employees feel that their own personal careers are more important than loyalty to a specific employer and in addition to that, organizations are continually "poaching talent" from their competitors, this is offering jobs to top-performers working for competitor companies (Noe, 2007). This makes retaining talent in today's world organizations a very complicated endeavor. It was estimated that 86% of organizations are having trouble finding the right employees and 58% of employers state that they have issues with employee retention (Hale, 1998). Training employees is a very costly investment, and hence, companies seek to get the highest possible returns from it. It is estimated that the average organization gives up \$1 million when 10 managerial and professional employees quit their jobs (Fitz-end, 1997).

In addition to the economic cost bore when an employee leaves the organization, there is also a brain drain to consider. This loss of knowledge and know-how is many times harder to recover, especially in highly-specialized jobs. However, even if knowledge is perceived to be one of the most important assets for a firm, firms do not have the supportive systems to maintain and leverage the benefits of knowledge (Toracco, 2000). More and more organizations have become aware of this lack of support and are consequently developing systems to tackle this problem. Furthermore, companies need to rethink their organizational structures in order to stimulate that the knowledge is transmitted among employees, and hence, ensure this knowledge stays in the company or otherwise, keep losing the valuable knowledge that employees have developed during their service (Ramlall, 2004).

W. F. Cascio (2010) discerned two types of turnover, these being both voluntary and involuntary indifferently. These types are functional and dysfunctional. Functional turnover happens when the employee leaving the organization is an underperformer, while dysfunctional turnover happens when high performing employees leave the firm. A different categorization of turnover, in this case of voluntary turnover but also making use of the terms functional and dysfunctional, was done by Dalton, Todor, and Krackhardt (1982). They distinguished two types of voluntary turnover, the first type being functional turnover which happens when the organization's opinion of the leaving employee is negative. The other type is dysfunctional turnover which is when the organization's opinion of the leaving employee is positive.

Organizational commitment is inversely related to turnover. Employees who are committed to the goals of their organization and share them, are prone to remain in the organization as by attaining these goals they are also realizing their own personal values (Porter et al. 1974). Nonetheless, the connection between OC and retention will be discussed further on. Just to mention another effective method to increase employee engagement and commitment with the organization are Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs). ESOPs consists in a contribution benefit in which employees own the stock of the company they work for, this is, they are both its owners and its employees. ESOPs help to solve the Agency Problem by aligning the interests of two very important stakeholders: employees and shareholders, which in this case, are the same people. Some companies like King Arthur Flour based in Vermont, U.S.A or Mondragon Corporation in the Spanish Basque Country, are two very good examples of successful 100% employee-owned companies with very low turnover rates. However interesting ESOPs may be for the topics of organizational commitment and employee retention, this is another field of study which is not directly related to the main focus given to this dissertation.

Regarding turnover, the concept of turnover intention should first be presented. Turnover intention is defined as an intentional interest in quitting an organization and it tends to be assessed on a specific interval of time. Besides, it is thought to be the last in a series of withdrawal behaviors in which the individual may also be considering other

employment alternatives (Tett and Meyer, 1993). Additionally, the motivation of employees is also a key element for the retention of employees in organizations. Work motivation is defined as an assortment of forces that emanate from within the employee's will, as well as from the outside, that empowers him to commence job related tasks and to establish its form, direction, duration and intensity (Meyer et al., 2004). Many theories have tried to explain the factors that influence the motivation of employees. Maslow (1943), McClelland (1961), Herzberg (1959), and Hackman & Oldham (1980) are among the most renowned and the most revised in business schools. Professor Sunil Ramlall, Ph.D. from the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, Minnesota, made a summary of the common factors of all the motivation theories named above that have an influence in employee retention. He first identified that employees have a series of needs that depend on their individual preferences and background, their career aspiration, their ambitions and their work-private life equilibrium. Secondly, he stated that employees seek for an inclusive, respectful and friendly work environment. Being given challenging responsibilities, supervising other employees, receiving a fair and equitable treatment, the degree of effort devoted, and an environment that enables workers to develop as a professional and as a person were also classified as critical elements influencing motivation and retention (Ramlall, 2004). In the same paper, Ramlall claimed that the lack of a standardized procedure of Training and Development showed a deficit of commitment to employee's development in the long-run and thus, culminating in a deficiency of commitment from employees. Today's workforce expects more from a job than just money, especially when an individual's basic needs are covered. Nonetheless, remuneration does have an important effect. The working market is becoming more and more transparent each day, and information about salaries and rewards are available to the public thanks to webpages such as Glassdoor and LinkedIn. Employees nowadays request customized compensations and rewards that are consistent with their lifestyles and working expectations. As it has already been stated, it is undoubtable that the one-size-fits-all approach to the relationship companies have with their employees is quite old-fashioned (Finkelstein, 2019), and this idea can be extrapolated to employee remuneration too. Besides, those individuals who do not comprehend their compensation are 60% more inclined to quit their job (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends 2018).

Eisenberger et al. identified the perceived organizational support (POS) and the perceived supervisor support (PSS) as two elements that have an impact on the retention of employees. PSS is seen by employees as a prelude of POS, because of the effect that top management's opinions and comments have on supervisors and vice versa. What is more, PSS and POS are positively related (Eisenberger et al. 2002). Sheridan defends that taking into consideration the gender and the marital status of the employee, in addition to the external circumstances of the labor market, as well as the organizational culture values and the employee's job performance, all these together are thought to have an effect on retention (Sheridan, 1992). Informal recognition is also key to retain talent in organizations. While most companies do make some type of formal recognition to highly-esteemed employees such as performance bonuses at the end of the year or some sort of symbolic recognition such as a years-of-service award, frequent recognition of an employee's work, which is as important or even more important than formal recognition, is many times omitted. Research shows that employees who do not receive recognition are twice more predisposed to be looking for another job and those who do not feel appreciated have 34% higher chances of quitting (2018 Employee Retention Report).

Attendance and absenteeism are also predictors of retention and turnover in that order. Absenteeism, or not going to work without a valid reason, is a state of job withdrawal in which the employees avoid involvement in their jobs physically, mentally or emotionally (Noe, 2007). Absenteeism does not include occasional absence as a result of legitimate justifications such as health concerns or family motives. After reviewing the existing academic contributions to the matter, Blau and Boal (1987) made a distinction between two types of absenteeism: excused and unexcused. In the same paper, Blau and Boal identified an alternative distinction of absence types. These types are: medical (which includes sickness, family motives, injuries, tiredness, etc.), career-enhancing (such as interviews for a job, both within and out from the organization), normative (regular excused absences such as "personal days", taking advantage of the norms of the organization about absence and the allowed days of absence), and lastly, calculative (the employee makes use of excused and unexcused absences in order to avoid doing certain tasks of his or her job). In "Employee-organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover", the term *linkage* is used to refer to the

relationship among commitment, absenteeism and turnover. In this book, the authors (Mowday, Porter, & Steers) identify two types of linkages, the ones englobed under *membership status* which refers to the acts of joining, leaving or staying in an organization (this would be transitory in the case of absenteeism and perpetual regarding turnover), and the other involving the *quality of membership* which comprises other employees' attitudes such as loyalty and commitment. Ultimately, high rates of attendance or having worked for a long period of time in an organization does not necessarily imply that the time spent in the job was productive and that the employee's performance was beneficial for the organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

Finding a balance between personal life and work is also a key determinant of employee retention, and for this reason, employees who are able to balance them are 10% more prone to remain in their organizations (2018 Employee Retention Report). However, this is becoming harder and harder in these demanding times when many have to sacrifice their personal well-being in order to advance on their professional careers. Classic examples of these obstacles or impediments to career advancement are parenthood, chronic diseases, disabilities, and having to take care of dependent relatives. Companies are aware of this issue and for this reason, they are becoming more and more supportive and more permissive towards telework and flexible time arrangements.

Diversity is also indispensable in order to understand the retention of talent in business organizations. Even if having a diverse workforce is key to be successful in a globalized market, Karen Brown (2018) said that employees who belong to a minority (religious, gender, socio-economic background, race, sexual orientation, etc.) tend to create an "identity cover" and conceal their real identities because they believe being their real selves will harm their careers and their commitment will be doubted. In order to tackle this issue and retain employees who belong to these minorities, Brown proposes not only to think about diversity, but to make an additional effort towards real inclusion. Another aspect to consider would be the retention of women in the labor market because of the lack of support and the lack of flexibility from some organizations towards maternity, especially in high-demanding and time-consuming jobs. Many women complain that they are asked about their maternity status and future plans in job interviews



because some companies do not want to bear the cost of hiring an employee who will soon take a maternity leave. Despite this truth, asking this question is highly immoral and unethical. What is more, job-interview questions regarding gender, marital status, nationality or race, beliefs and age are illegal in Spain and they violate the article 14 of the Spanish Constitution. In the case of maternity-related job interview questions, these violate the Spanish law as well (Ley Orgánica 3/2007, de 22 de marzo, para la igualdad efectiva de hombres y mujeres y el Artículo 14 de la Constitución Española).

A very interesting perspective to turnover is given by Dacia J. Faison Roe (2019) on a Harvard Business Review article. She argues that when a top performer is willing to leave an organization, managers should think that maybe letting him or her go is the best for the rest of the team and the organization too. This is contrary to the general way academics, organizations, and HR professionals tend to see it. We are inclined to think that retaining talent is necessarily the best a company can do, and consequently, the turnover of valuable members of the team should be avoided at all costs. Nonetheless, there are always some exceptions. If the employee who wants to leave has needs or motivations that the manager just cannot meet, it is best for all to just let that employee leave. On the contrary, if this unsatisfied employee remains in the organization, he or she will most likely stop being committed to the firm and his or her performance will most likely drop, or what is worse, this employee could spread his or her dissatisfaction to the rest of the team, and the consequences would be most damaging for the organization. For this reason, organizations should be agile enough to identify the cases in which they just can no longer satisfy the individual needs and requirements of an specific employee, and instead of postponing the unavoidable expense of hiring and training a new employee, use this as an opportunity to incorporate new talent to the organization (Faison Roe, 2019).

To conclude, figuring out what makes people leave their jobs is not as easy as it may seem. Disagreements in the conclusions of the different studies of employee turnover make it hard to understand this process (Tett and Meyer, 1993). This is because of the personal dispositions of each individual and the difficulty of finding universalized answers to turnover and the magic recipe for the retention of talent.

## 2.2. Training and Development

Training employees is of the utmost importance in all sorts of organizations, not only privately held companies, but also country governments, NGOs and others. Its benefits and the value provided are broadly acknowledged. It is estimated that in the United States alone, organizations spend around \$135 billion in training each year (Patel, 2010). According to a State of the Industry report by the Association for Training and Development (ASTD) in 1999, a very big number of American companies spent more than \$2 million on training each year. Not only do organizations implement training and development programs for the well-being of their employees, but also because organizations that implement training programs for their employees are aware that training is an essential investment necessary in order to remain competitive by constantly educating their workforce. What is more, training is considered as a key requirement to maintain a competitive advantage. In this fast-paced changing world of today, organizations require employees with updated abilities and skills, that are able to quickly adapt to change. Some works of investigation indicate that the effects of training are particularly noticeable on productivity and organizational performance (Scott and Meyer, 1991). In addition, 90% of Millennials claimed on a survey carried out in 2016 by Gallup Poll that they appreciate measures which enable career growth and development, but only 40% of employees really thought they had learnt something new on their jobs in the last 30 years (Finkelstein, 2019). Therefore, it is clear that T&D is highly regarded by human capital but still, there is a science of training that proves that there are good ways and bad ways to design, deliver and implement training programs (Salas, 2012). There is also a concern of whether training contributes to reach the desired organizational results.

To begin with, a distinction should be made between the concept of training and the concept of development. Training is defined as “*the systematic approach to affecting individuals’ knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order to improve individual, team, and organizational effectiveness*” (Kraiger, 2009). A different definition is “*an organization’s planned efforts to help employees acquire job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors, with the goal of applying these on the job*” (Noe, 2007). In order

to fully understand the concept of training, we must keep in mind that training is a multidisciplinary field. It is related to a wide variety of disciplines going from psychology to engineering and from management to cognitive science.

On the other hand, development is defined as “*systematic efforts affecting individuals’ knowledge or skills for purposes of personal growth or future jobs and/or roles*”. (Kraiger, 2009). An additional definition of employee development is “*the combination of formal education, job experiences, relationships, and assessment of personality and abilities to help employees prepare for the future of their careers.*” (Noe, 2007). Development is a self-assessment act which is the desired consequence of training. It focuses on how an employee grows in maturity, self-awareness and in conclusion, as a person. Due to the difficulty to assess whether an activity is carried out to target training, development, or both, in this dissertation both terms will be used indifferently.

During the last three decades, an increase on the interest in training has prompted a very important expansion on the research conducted about this field. No one doubts the benefits that training programs provide employees in particular and organizations in general. The mutual benefits of training and development allow organizations to adapt, compete, excel innovate, produce, be safe, improve service and reach goals. Also, collaborating on the development of employees has proven to be very beneficial for organizations, which are reconsidering their employee development programs in order to make them more holistic and contribute to a sense of good corporate citizenship, essential for an effective talent retention strategy (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends 2018). These organizations can no longer provide their employees with lifelong jobs. Employee development does not only help organizations by reinforcing labor flexibility, improving performance, and building competitive advantage, but it is also helpful for employees who may have to look for job opportunities in the external labor market. This is where the danger for employers is: development may trigger turnover and replacement costs (Nelissen et al; 2017).

Yet, many might wonder why organizations should care about training their workforce. Boudreau and Ramstand (2005) claimed that organizations must excel in three domains in order to maintain a competitive advantage. These domains are finance, products or markets, and human capital. However, it is in the latter -which englobes providing the tools for the workforce to develop professionally and be more capable to perform in their jobs- that enables organizations to more easily achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. Delaney and Huselid (1996) discovered that if carried out well, training and staffing practices were positively related to the perceived organizational performance. In a study of 1,000 companies, Huselid (1995) found that high-performance work practices, including training, were a predictor of employee retention and performance as well as long-run measures of corporate financial performance. Training also affects another key aspect of corporate success, which is leadership performance (Collins & Holton, 2004). Additionally, the *Human Capital Theory* upholds the importance that a competitive workforce has for the economic performance of organizations (Becker, 2009)

Because of the uncertain times we live in, organizations strive to adapt to the various challenges and opportunities that are constantly arising. Organizations and their human capital are deeply affected by these changes. Some of the trends involving human capital are the aging population, a more diverse workforce, the new motivations and expectations of the younger generations, the influence of technology in our working lives, the need to train an adaptive and flexible workforce while at the same time making sure that employees have the necessary skills to compete in today's environment. From a macroeconomic point of view, current issues with unemployment and slow economic growth also affect the conditions of the workforce. Because the pace of change is becoming faster and faster, not only must organizations adapt to this change, but they must also adapt the T&D programs carried out by them, so that they are not stagnated in time, but evolving and adaptive to the needs of the moment (Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends 2018).

Consequently, governments at all levels (local, regional and national) are seeking to develop a well-prepared workforce in their area in order to attract employers and hence, reduce unemployment and have a positive impact on local societies, making them able to compete with other locations (Salas, 2012). In a study executed in the Netherlands by Leeuwen and van Praag (2002) it was demonstrated that if employers receive a €115 tax credit for training each employee, the total cost for the country would be of €11 million, however, the country would earn €114 million in revenue increases as a result of training employees.

Despite the positive effect that training and development have on human capital, it should be kept in mind that resources are limited and therefore, they must be wisely allocated. This is why knowledge on what is the most effective training is of the utmost importance. One key element of training is learning transfer which is defined as “*on-the-job use of knowledge, skills, and behaviors learned in training.*” (Noe, 2007). Transfer is crucial, without it, training is a senseless waste of resources and time. Moreover, training should not be thought of as a one-time event but as a continuous process that takes in consideration the inputs of training, the training process itself and also what follows it. Training should be considered as a “system”, and not a one-time event (Salas, 2012). Thus, in order for training to be effective, three circumstances must take place. These conditions are social support from the organization itself and peers, technical support such as electronic performance support systems (EPSS) and self-management (Noe, 2007). Researchers have proved how the activities carried out before, during, and after training influence its effectiveness. Yet, if trainees cannot apply what they were trained for in their jobs, they are likely to forget what they learnt and may also consider it irrelevant.

Another important element of training is employee’s motivation to learn. Motivation to learn is defined as “*a condition when trainees believe that training is relevant and are willing to exert effort in the training environment*” (Noe, 2007). Motivation to learn influences whether employees decide to attend training, the effort they make to learn during training and whether or not they apply the concepts and skills acquired once the training is completed (Quiñones, 1997). J. M. Keller (1987) developed

the ARCS Motivation Model which identified the key determinants to reinforce the motivation to learn of employees. These are attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. In addition, if trainees do not consider previous training courses useful and did not have a satisfactory experience with the training either, they may react negatively to future training sessions and consequently, lose their motivation to learn.

Training does not only target individuals, but if well-designed, it can also help to improve team performance. A meta-analysis demonstrated that, on average, 20% of the variance in team performance is explained by training (Salas et al., 2008). Additionally, training also has a positive impact on manager and leader effectiveness. Leadership development differs from manager development in that it targets more complex competencies which are harder to relate to individual jobs. They both include a series of both formal and informal learning activities such as traditional training, mentoring, coaching, action learning and feedback (M.J. Burke & Day, 1986; Cullen & Turnbull, 2005)

### **2.2.1. Training employees**

Training does not make sense if it is not employee-centered. T&D programs should always look after the real needs of employees, and involve them in every possible way, so that the outcome is beneficial both for the trainee as well as for the organization. In order to conduct a satisfactory training program for employees, an instructional design of this training needs to be done. Instructional design is defined as “*a process of systematically developing training to meet specific needs.*” (Noe, 2007). This is usually done through a computer application or learning management system (LMS) that is employed to administrate, develop, and deliver the training program. Instructional design has several stages. The first stage is the assessment of the needs for training, taking the organization, employees and the tasks into consideration. Following, the organization has to ensure the readiness of the employees for training which includes employees’ attitude, skills, motivation, etc. After this, the organization must plan the training program including the objectives pursued, the instructors who will guide trainees and what methods will be followed. Then the program is implemented and finally, the results of

the training are evaluated, to ensure the training was useful and will be transferred (Noe, 2007).

Donald J. Kirkpatrick and James D. Kirkpatrick (2009) also elaborated a guideline to carry out a proper training program. They identified the following factors that should be taken into consideration when planning and applying a training program:

1. Determining needs
2. Setting Objectives
3. Determining what materials to cover
4. Selecting the participants
5. Selecting the best agenda
6. Choosing the most suitable premises
7. Electing the best instructors
8. Selecting and preparing the audiovisual aid
9. Coordinating the program
10. Evaluating the program

Donald J., and James D. Kirkpatrick (2009) also emphasize the importance of evaluating the training. This is because evaluating training programs and determining its effectiveness, legitimates the expense bore by the organizations when they invest in training their employees. In addition, evaluation is also helpful to determine whether the training has been of any help in order to accomplish the organization's goals and objectives. If finally, it is determined that training did not have the desired positive impact, management can then decide whether to continue providing that training or not, and in case they chose to continue, management can decide how the training program can be improved.

### **2.2.2. Training methods**

The training of employees in an organization can be in-house (delivered by the organization itself) or contracted-out (the organization hires a specialized provider for this purpose). The decision on whether the training is one or the other depends on the

ability or lack of ability that the firm has to conduct it. This ability is measured in terms of resources such as time, trainers educated for the task, money, experience, facilities, and many others.

After establishing the goals and objectives of the training program, the training method that fits best with the requirements and characteristics of the firm and the employees who will be the trainees should be elected. According to Noe (2007), there are three basic types of training methods. The first type is **presentation methods** such as lectures, workbooks and podcasts. It is a sort of passive learning, which trainees tend to forget if it is not put into practice frequently. The second kind of training is formed by the **hands-on methods**, a more active training which requires trainees to practice the new skills through simulations, on-the-job training, role plays and other methods such as case studies. Hands-on methods on the other hand allow trainees to internalize the training more deeply and retain the new skills for a longer period of time. Apprenticeships and internships are also included in this category. The third training method are **group-building methods**, which include discussions, experimental training and team training activities. These are very popular in organizations nowadays, as team building is thought to improve productivity, collaboration, and performance among many other benefits. Currently, a very significant percentage of the training is done through computer or other sorts of electronic devices such as tablets or smartphones, with the internet as support. These include e-learning (the training is received via internet or the company's intranet) and electronic performance support systems (EPSSs). EPSSs are computer applications that delivers employees with access to skills training, information and advice. Most of the training (69.3% of the hours) is delivered through blended learning techniques (blended techniques combine two or more types of methods). About 35.5% of the training hours were provided in a classroom setting while only 25.6% of hours were delivered merely via computer-based and online. Additionally, 1.7% of the training hours were delivered via mobile devices (2018 Training Industry Report). Other means of training which are seen as amusing by trainees are outdoor training and training through videos and movies. Outdoor training extracts the trainees from their usual classroom and gives them a break from computers. Adventure activities such as rock climbing and sailing are an example of these type of outdoor training activities (HR.com, 2001).



Coaching and mentoring are two employee development methods very recurrent in today's organizational efforts to increase the well-being of their employees and hence; the organization's success. Both activities have a positive effect on skills, performance, and development. Various academic journals claim that coaching and mentoring are fundamental in order to prompt employee career development. These two practices must be thought of as continuous in time instead of as a practice that happens only once (Kutilek, 2001). Coaching is the employee development method in which a coach works with the employee so that he can help him cultivate skills and provide him with support and feedback. Coaches induce the employee or manager to identify areas that need revision and assist them to establish goals and create an action plan. The process of coaching can take at least six months of weekly or monthly coaching sessions (Noe, 2007).

Mentoring is the employee development method in which a mentor, who is a senior manager with experience, assists an employee with less experience or maturity, also known as *protégé* (Noe, 2007). The etymology of the term mentor has its origins in the Ancient Greece, more concretely in Homer's *Odyssey*. In this epic poem, Mentor is a character who is an old man sent by the goddess Athena to guide the young Telemachus in his struggles.

Even if both terms have very similar connotations, they do differ in many aspects too. In coaching, the coach poses questions and points of reflection to guide the employees, but he or she does not give an answer nor does he or she give any recommended guidelines to follow. Coaching is more focused on developing specific competencies. Mentoring is a more personal practice in which the mentor gives counseling to the *protégé* based on his personal experience and his point of view. The mentor might provide the *protégé* with recommendations and guidelines. Mentoring focused more on the development of the employee as a professional. In addition, coaching is a limited event on time, lasting for a determined number of sessions, which are structured and planned. Mentoring on the other hand is more "on the fly", more informal and less planned (BBVA, 2017).

To sum up, T&D provides business organizations with substantial advantages and therefore, should be highly regarded by companies. Training makes employees feel more integrated and more valuable. It also provides them with the necessary skills to help firms remain competitive and it also allows workers to grow as professionals. Evidence proves that organizations should wisely allocate their resources when investing on training its employees as training per se will not bring positive outcomes. Most importantly, it is necessary that T&D really targets the needs of workers.

### **2.3. Organizational Commitment**

The concept of organizational commitment has been examined repeatedly along the existing literature and in academic circles. It is viewed as a key aspect to understand the performance of organizations and of individuals. Organizational commitment has been identified as an important variable in understanding the work behavior of employees in organizations (Mowday, 1979). Committed persons should be more likely to want to remain with an organization and work towards its goals (...) Meyer and Allen (1997) pointed out that committed employees are more valuable than those employees who are not committed. In early studies of employee “loyalty”, loyalty was seen as a form of socially acceptable behavior on the part of employees (...) The study of organizational commitment helps us to some degree to explain how people find purpose in life (Mowday, 1979). Organizational commitment, which involves a desire of the employee to remain its membership in the organization, is key in determining employee turnover (Porter et al. 1974)

A definition of organizational commitment is *“the degree to which an employee identifies with the organization and is willing to put forth effort on its behalf”* (Noe, 2007). Organization commitment shares some characteristics of organizational loyalty, commitment to working groups, job, career, supervisor, and union (Bartlett, 2001). Moreover, the concept is highly related to engagement and it is also very hard to distinguish them. An additional definition of organizational commitment is *the degree to which an employee believes in the goals of the organizations and wants to see the organization succeed* (Mowday, 1979). Nonetheless, employee engagement goes one

step further. Employee engagement is defined as “*degree to which employees are fully involved in their work and the strength of their job and company commitment.*” (Noe, 2007). The difference between these two terms is that commitment refers to the employees’ attitude towards the firm they work for, while engagement is a broader term that englobes commitment with the organization and its goals as well as how involved employees are with their jobs. In order to successfully adapt to change, companies must have committed employees that cope with the demands of this fast changes. These employees are the source of competitive advantage (Dessler, 1993).

According to Lyman W. Porter, commitment is characterized by at least three factors: 1) a strong belief and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values; 2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and 3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization (Porter, 1970). The concept goes beyond job satisfaction in several ways. Job satisfaction as a concept is strictly limited to an individual’s job and it may constantly vary depending on daily events and situations on the work place. On the other hand, commitment is more stable and global, as it involves the individual’s response to an organization as a whole, not just his or her particular job. For example, an individual might be very proud and happy of working for a firm, but simultaneously may feel discontented with his or her job, and for this reason, wants to change jobs within the organization. In this case, this individual has very low job satisfaction but his or her commitment to the firm is high. Moreover, although it is rare, the opposite may also occur (high job satisfaction but low organizational commitment).

In order to measure the level of organizational commitment, Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) elaborated a questionnaire, in which they claimed that the commitment of employees with the company is not stagnant, but it is a process that evolves over time. The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) that was issued to 2,563 employees working in various jobs in nine different organizations from different sectors ranging from the public sector to university employees or bank employees among others. The measures included in the OCQ comprise sources of organizational attachment, job involvement, job satisfaction, career satisfaction, motivational force to perform, intrinsic motivation, central life interests, turnover, absenteeism, intent to leave and estimated

tenure, job performance and behavioral commitment rating. This questionnaire consisted of 15 claims scored on a scale from 1 to 5 ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). Once answered, the scores are summed and divided by 15 resulting on the OCQ index. The OCQ was also found to be a good predictor of employee turnover. This questionnaire has become one of the most popular instruments to measure the level of organizational commitment in a wide variety of industries. Later version OCQs only include 9 claims and eliminate the ones that were negatively formulated.

A different attempt to understand what prompts organizational commitment was performed by Varona (1996) with the support of the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) (Downs & Hazen, 1997), which relates satisfaction to eight communication variables. Varona determined that communication satisfaction is positively related to commitment.

Commitment can be considered from two perspectives: an attitudinal perspective and a behavioral perspective. Attitudinal commitment is focused on “The process by which people come to think about their relationship with the organization (...) a mind set in which individuals consider the extent to which their own values and goals are congruent with those of the organization”. On the contrary, behavioral commitment is described as “the process by which individuals become locked into a certain organization and how they deal with this problem.” (Meyer, 1991). In the behavioral perspective, an individual is committed to the organization because of the costs of leaving. Elseways, the attitudinal perspective is more positive and ties the individual to the organization because he or she believes that remaining in the organization will enable him or her to accomplish his or her personal goals, which are aligned with those of the organization (Blau et al., 1987).

In a different paper by Meyer and Allen (1997), commitment is conceptualized in a three-component framework. However, these must be thought as components of commitment, not as types. These three approaches are affective, continuance and normative commitment, which try to explain why employees remain in an organization.

Firstly, **affective commitment** is referred to the employee's emotional link and involvement with the organization. Employees with a high level of affective commitment to their company continue working in it because they *want* to do so.

Affective commitment has four types of antecedents. The first one is formed by personal characteristics (it includes demographic characteristics such as age, sex and education as well as personal dispositions such as need for achievement, need for power and need for affiliation from the McClelland Human Motivation Theory). Individuals whose job requirements are aligned with their personal disposition tend to have a more positive attitude towards work than those who are less compatible. Moreover, it is proven that affective commitment is related to the decentralization of the decision-making process within the organization's structure structural characteristics. In addition, job-related characteristics and work experience also have an effect on affective commitment, following the hygiene and motivator factors theory presented by Herzberg (1966).

Secondly, **continuance commitment** is referred to the employee's awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees with a high level of continuance commitment to their company continue working in it because they *need* to do so. Continuance commitment involves losses which would appear if the employee stopped working for a specific organization. These losses can be both work and nonwork related. Examples are the threat of losing benefits, seniority-based privileges, the feeling of having wasted time and other potential costs of quitting an organization.

Lastly, **normative commitment** is referred to the employee's feeling of obligation to remain working for an organization. Employees with a high level of normative commitment continue working in it because they feel that they *ought* to do so. Examples of normative commitment are commonly found in cases in which the employee is associated to the organization by family or cultural ties (e.g. "*My family has produced lawyers for five generations; therefore, I can work as a lawyer or work as a lawyer*"). Nonetheless, it may also arise in cases such as the company granting the employee with "rewards in advance" such as paying for an MBA or incurring in costs related to providing training to the employee.

Employees with affective commitment are more likely to stand for their organization than those with continuance commitment and normative commitment, in that order. These three components of commitment are not mutually exclusive, meaning that an employee can experience the three forms of commitments or some of them simultaneously. Also, it has been stated that commitment and turnover are negatively correlated. This translates in that the likelihood of abandoning an organization decreases when the strength of any of the three components increases, nonetheless, the existing relation between commitment and employee retention will be discussed later on.

In conclusion, employees are more committed to organizations with values which reflect their own personal values, interests and concerns. Therefore, they work in order to achieve the success of these organizations by which they feel their own personal values are being recognized (Meyer, 1991). As shown by research, affective commitment has a close relation with job performance, sense of citizenship on the organization, and attendance. It is followed by normative commitment. Continuance commitment on the other hand, seems to have no relation or to be negatively related to the attitudes listed before. In addition, an employee may have a tenacious affective commitment towards the organization but simultaneously have a more hesitant affective commitment towards a specific goal set by the organization that the employee does not really share. The opposite may also happen: the employee may have a weak affective commitment towards the organization as a whole but a stronger affective commitment towards a particular goal by which he is specially devoted (e.g., a salary increase) (Meyer et al., 2004). Hence, it is on the best interest of organizations that their employees develop an affective commitment towards them.

In a different paper, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) made some conclusion regarding the effects of commitment. They used the term “focal behavior” to describe how employees are harnessed to a series of behaviors, independently on which of the three types of commitment they are experiencing. These “focal behaviors” are easy to identify. Nonetheless, there are other behaviors that are harder to identify than the type of “focal behaviors” expected from a committed employee, still they are of a great advantage for the purposes of commitment. They are not required by organizations;

though they are highly desired. Examples of these “non-focal behaviors” are how employees speak about the company out of their jobs, or whether they help to integrate new recruits. Additionally, these “non-focal behaviors” are more likely to occur in employees with a high degree of affective commitment, followed by those who have a more normative commitment towards the organization. Per contra, continuance commitment has no relation or is even negatively related to these “non-focal behaviors”.

As it was previously stated, many authors have tried to create a universally accepted set of needs and values to satisfy employees and therefore, increase employees’ commitment with the organization. Ideally, this would translate into a set of experiences in the work place that would develop the affective commitment of all employees. One of these attempts is the infamous Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory of Motivation (1966) in which he distinguished among hygiene factors (or maintenance factors) that are those taken for granted and considered indispensable and are also related to the circumstances in which the job will be conducted (these include peers, company bureaucracy, salary, ergonomics, etc.) and the motivational factors which provide with extra motivation for employees (they include the needs for achievement, recognition, advancement, work-itself, responsibility and the possibility of growth). Another very widespread motivation theory is the Maslow’s Hierarchy of Need’s Pyramid (1943). This pyramid includes in order of importance from the base to the tip, the following needs: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs and lastly, self-actualization needs. These theories are very extended and recurrent in university lectures, however, none of them has been universally accepted and used. Each person’s preferences in life are very specific and there is not a specific single recipe that applies to all the workers in an organization. Yet, most employees highly regard a set of actions delivered by the organization that protects their security and engagement with the firm. As S. Finkelstein (2019) stated, the “one-size-fits-all” approach to the development of employees is no longer feasible in the contemporary business world.

It is also important to clarify the difference among the concepts of motivation and commitment, which are easy to confuse because of the apparent similarity. Motivation is a wider concept than commitment, the latter being a force that induces the former.

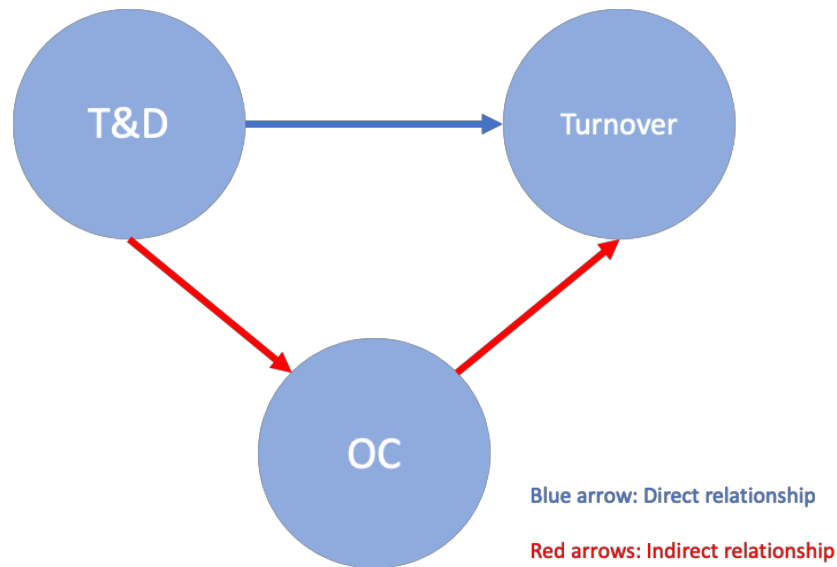
Commitment can trigger motivation and persistence towards achieving goals. The confusion comes from the fact that in our ordinary lives' language, we use the term commitment when referring to decisive challenges with repercussion in the long-term while motivation on the other hand is used for more ordinary things with a shorter repercussion (Meyer et al., 2004). Nevertheless, the two concepts of motivation and commitment are highly related. Employees with a high degree of affective commitment undergo more intrinsic motivation than the rest. Additionally, it is also necessary to make some remarks about the link between the concepts of job involvement and organizational commitment. These two concepts are very related; however, job involvement is more focused on the particular job of a certain employee while organizational commitment involves how employees feel for the organization they work for. Job involvement has been defined along the existing literature in different ways ranging from the importance the individual thinks his or her job provides to his or her self-image, to whether an individual actively participates in his or her job, or how an individual's self-esteem is affected by his or her perception of performance in his or her job (Blau et al., 1987). An individual may be very pleased with his or her particular job but may not feel attached to the organization and vice versa. It is also important to note that the organizational commitment of an employee is not stagnant and stable, but it evolves by increasing or decreasing along time. To conclude Mowday, Porter, & Steers (1982) determined that organizational commitment has four main outcomes: turnover intention, turnover, performance, and absenteeism.

#### **2.4. Relationship between training and organizational commitment as an explanation to employee retention and turnover (Direct and Indirect Approaches)**

Despite the substantial amount of literature written about the fields of training and development and organizational commitment, the relationship among both subjects and its influence in the retention of talent is still not very clear in the academic world. There is some debate on whether T&D has a **direct** effect on turnover, or if on the other hand, this effect is **indirect** with OC acting as a "bridge" (Ahmad et al; 2013). The latter



proposition claims that T&D is related to organizational commitment and therefore, it affects employee retention.



Graph 1: Direct and indirect relationship between T&D-OC-Turnover

#### **2.4.1. Indirect Approach (T&D-OC-Turnover)**

This proposal is generally more frequent and more backed up in the world of academics. As it has been previously stated, it defends the role that OC plays as an intermediary between T&D and retention. This approach will be the basis of the research performed afterwards. The connection between T&D and OC, and OC and turnover will be reviewed subsequently.

##### **a) Training and Commitment (T&D-OC)**

In 1992, Lang suggested that the goal pursued by training ought to be to increase organizational commitment. Kenneth R. Bartlett from the University of Minnesota Twin Cities studied the impact of training on organizational commitment in the health care sector. In his research, Bartlett found that access to training, social support for training,

motivation to learn and perceiving the benefits of training are positively related to organizational commitment, especially to affective commitment. Another study undertaken to U.S. Navy recruits showed that participation in training programs incremented organizational commitment (Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, and Cannon-Bowers, 1991). In the same paper, Tannenbaum et al. (1991) declared that employees may feel their company cares about them and is willing to invest on them when effective training is delivered; consequently, increasing their organizational commitment towards their employer.

In a research done by Wesley S. Roehl and Skip Swerdlow (1999) of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, the relationship between training and commitment of workers in the hotel sector of U.S. was examined, specifically from the States of Nevada, Washington and California. This study found an indirect relationship between training and commitment through the direct relationship that work environment has with both training and organizational commitment; hence proving the need of executing high-quality operational training programs. In a different study done by Cagri Bulut and Osman Çulha (2010), training is claimed to have an effect on organizational commitment through four different hypotheses: motivation for training, access to training, benefits from training and support for training.

Many employees think of training as an indispensable feature of their jobs. This is where the psychological contract shows up. The psychological contract is defined as “*a relationship embedded in the context of social exchange theory*” (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961). Employees consider that they are entitled to a certain number of benefits from their organization due to real or perceived promises, and training is no exception. Subsequently, once the results of the survey and the model are presented, the effect that T&D has on OC will be analyzed.

#### **b) Commitment and Turnover (OC-Turnover)**

Throughout abundant empirical research, organizational commitment has been contemplated as a reasonable forecast of turnover, and hence, to the retention of talent in organizations. As it was declared by Aaron Cohen (1993), much of emphasis given to the

concept of organizational commitment is precisely to understand its connection with turnover. By its very nature, individuals with a high level of commitment are eager to stay in their organization (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). As it was previously stated, Meyer and Allen (1997) claimed that organizational commitment and turnover are negatively correlated. This translates in that the likelihood of leaving a company decreases when the strength of any of the three components identified increases (affective, normative, and continuance commitment).

Nonetheless, there are substantial variations among different studies based on quantitative analysis, and a considerable amount of academic literature has addressed these inconsistencies like the analysis performed by Robert P. Tett and John P. Meyer in 1993. These inconsistencies may be a consequence of how organizational commitment and turnover have been defined, or as a consequence of miscalculations and inaccuracies in the statistics. Also, if we think of absenteeism as a trigger of turnover, generally no distinction is made between the several sorts of absenteeism (Blau and Boal, 1987). Another explanation to these inconsistencies might be that the relationship between organizational commitment as its outcomes (in this case, turnover) may not be direct, and there are some intermediary elements affecting and consequently, the T&D-OC-Turnover scheme would not be so simple as there would be more variables affecting (Cohen, 1991).

Blau and Boal (1987) stated that the combination of different levels of job involvement and organizational commitment will have as a consequence different sorts of turnover and absence behaviors. The following table predicts absenteeism and turnover as a consequence of the level (high or low) of job involvement and organizational commitment.

Table 1  
Using High Versus Low Levels of Job Involvement and Organizational Commitment to Predict Turnover and Absenteeism (Hypothetical)

Cell (Describing Individual)	Effort Focus	Salient Satisfaction Facets	Label	Impact on Voluntary Turnover (Organization's Perspective)	Category Describing Meaning of Absence Behavior	Model Describing Relationship Between Turnover & Absenteeism
1. High Job Involvement & High Organizational Commitment	individual task-related = higher; group maintenance-related = higher	work itself future with company pay co-worker supervisor	Institutionalized Stars	Dysfunctional	Medical	Independent Forms
2. High Job Involvement & Low Organizational Commitment	individual task-related = higher; group maintenance-related = lower	work itself working conditions pay	Lone Wolves	Mixed, Depends on Task Interdependence	Career-Enhancing	Progression-of-withdrawal
3. Low Job Involvement & High Organizational Commitment	individual task-related = lower; group maintenance-related = higher	co-worker	Corporate Citizens	Mixed, Depends on Task Interdependence	Normative	Attitudinal Alternate Forms
4. Low Job Involvement & Low Organizational Commitment	individual task-related = lower; group maintenance-related = lower	reward	Apathetic Employees	Functional	Calculative	Spillover/Behavioral Alternate Forms

Table 1 from Blau, G. J., & Boal, K. B. (1987). Conceptualizing how job involvement and organizational commitment affect turnover and absenteeism. *Academy of management review*, 12(2), 288-300.

Employees on cell 1 are the most committed and most valued by organizations. They are also the less likely to present medical absence behaviors and to leave the company. These employees are called *Institutionalized Stars*. The impact for the organization of them leaving would be dysfunctional. On the opposite side, employees on cell 4 have low organizational commitment and low job involvement and are the most likely to present calculative absence behaviors and to quit the company. Individuals on cell 4 are called *Apathetic Employees*. In this case, the impact for the organization if they leave would be functional. In the cells in between (2 and 3), there are employees whose leaving impact on the organization is a mix of functional and dysfunctional. In cell 2 there are individuals with high job involvement and low organizational commitment, which present career-enhancing absence motives and are described as *Lone Wolves*. Lastly, on cell 3 we have *Corporate Citizens*, which have low job involvement but high organizational commitment. They present normative absence behaviors.

When an individual works in an organization, a “psychological contract” between the individual and the organization is made. This “psychological contract” defines how the employee’s relationship with the organization is in regarding both membership status and the quality of this membership (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Working on an organization provides individuals with positive aspects such as economic support as well some type of psychological rewards like job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Nonetheless, when individuals devote themselves to their organizations, some negative effects may also arise. A classic example of these negatives effects is when because of all the time devoted to their jobs and their organizations, employees have very little time for their personal lives and start abducting themselves from their social lives and acquaintances. This is why so many employees find it hard to find a healthy work-life balance nowadays. Therefore, and as conclusion, the fact that an employee has a vigorous organizational linkage may have a positive, a neutral, or even a negative result (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

It has also been discussed whether organizational commitment or job satisfaction had a more significant impact on turnover intention. However, even if the results concluded that job satisfaction and organizational commitment reinforce employee retention, their influence largely depends on intentions as well as on the election of measures, and therefore, there is no black or white answer to that question (Tett and Meyer, 1993). Other studies claim that commitment has an indirect effect on turnover. These studies indicate that commitment promotes first a positive mood towards the job and then people leave or stay in an organization influenced by this attitude or feeling (Bem, 1967).

Tett and Meyer (1993) revisited the OCQ questionnaire first conceived by Mowday, Steers and Porter and afterwards by many others. They elaborated an equivalence of the both existing scales (the original of 15 claims and its derivative with 9 claims) contrasting them in terms of leave and turnover. As a result, they concluded that the primitive OCQ was a more effective tool for the study of turnover intention. Cohen (1991) concluded that the inverse relationship existing between organizational commitment and employee turnover (this means that the more committed an employee is

with the organization, the less likely he or she will be to quit his or her job at an organization), both actual and intended, is more powerful among the younger employees whose careers have are at an early stage of development, rather than among those employees in more mature stages of their careers. This is due to the fact that younger employees have a wider set of career alternatives and opportunities, and also, are less tied to responsibilities than their more mature counterparts. Hence, they do not hesitate as much to quit when they are not content with their jobs. Younger professionals are more focused on establishing themselves in the labor world while mature professionals care more about settling down. Consequently, turnover rates are lower in the later career stages, without taking into consideration the degree of commitment (Cohen, 1991). For the purpose of this dissertation, the existing relationship between OC and turnover will be presumed.

#### **2.4.2. Direct Approach (T&D-Turnover)**

Although this approach does not support our hypothesis, a brief explanation will be presented. Even if they are a smaller number, there are also some defendants of the direct relationship between T&D and employee retention (Hassan et al. 2013; Ahmad, 2013). This relationship entails that the HR departments of organizations have work in order to deliver the correct T&D programs to their employees so that they retain the best among them. Ahmad (2013) developed a questionnaire of 16 questions that was delivered to 100 respondents. His research, which used retention as dependent variable and training as independent variable, concluded that there is a positive correlation between both variables, meaning that training enhances employee retention. Villegas (2006) also ratified the direct existing relationship between training and retention. He stated that when receiving training, employees feel that their companies care about their personal welfare, and because of that, they want them to develop a successful career in their organization, which has as a result an increase in retention rates.

With relation to the direct approach, it is worth mentioning again the existing tricky position known as **employability paradox** that affects many organizations. As it has already been stated, many T&D activities that reinforce employees' employability also

increase the chance of employees leaving the organization and may also increase replacement costs as a consequence of the turnover. Training employees makes them more prepared, and therefore, more employable (Nelissen et al; 2017).

Waung stated that training programs were positively related to employee retention in entry-level positions (Waung, 1995). Also, employee development is a recognized tool to prompt retention as well as a powerful talent attractor. This is because helping employees advance as professionals also helps organizations create a reputed brand in the working market, which makes an organization more appealing to talented individuals (HR Insights, 2017).

### 3. Hypothesis formulation

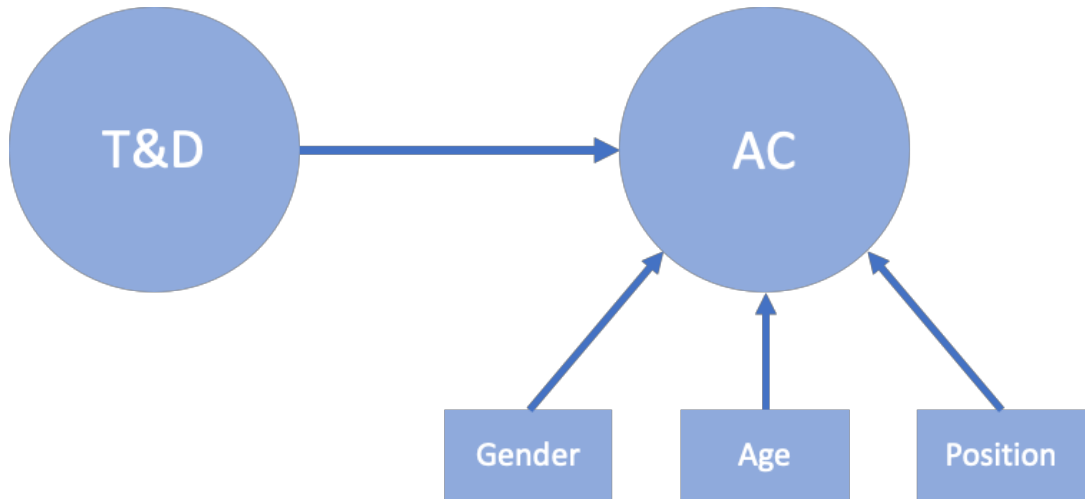
Framed by the indirect approach (T&D-OC-Turnover/Retention) and presuming that OC is a clear predecessor of employee retention/turnover, the effect that T&D has on OC will be evaluated in this dissertation's model. In order to do so, two types of OC presented by Meyer and Allen (1997) will be distinguished. These are affective commitment (AC) and continuance commitment (CC). Normative commitment has been omitted. Gender, age and position have been established as control variables. Also, all the T&D- related questions (9-14) have been clustered in the variable T&D.

In the model, the effect that gender, age, and position as well as T&D, have on both AC and CC will be determined.

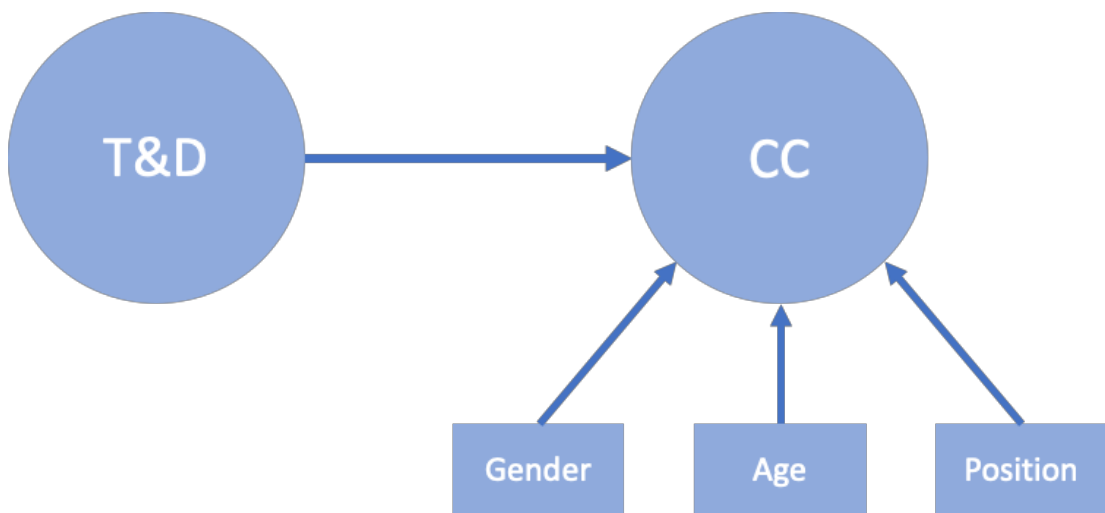
H0t&d: T&D has a positive effect on AC and CC
H0gender: Gender has an effect on AC and CC
H0age: Age has an effect on AC and CC
H0position: Position has an effect on AC and CC

Table 2: Hypothesis of variables affecting AC and CC.





Graph 2: Hypothesis of variables affecting AC.



Graph 3: Hypothesis of variables affecting CC.

#### 4. Methodology

The elaboration of this paper has followed an inductive method. After the main academic contributions have been reviewed, a survey was conducted with a sample of 283 respondents (n= 283). The measures employed were training, turnover, and commitment. With the data obtained in the survey (See Attachment 1), a model following the SEM model (structural equation modeling) has been done. In the survey, respondents were made to answer the following:

1. Identification number
2. Gender
3. Age
4. Number of years in the working market
5. Company you currently work for
6. Position held in your company (1. Staff, administrative position, 2. Middle management position, 3. Senior management)
7. Number of years working for your current company
8. Email
9. Have you been involved in training and development activities in the company you currently work for during the last year?
10. Have you received any guidance or assistance at your job during the last year?
11. Have you been promoted in your company within the last year?
12. Have you been promoted in your company within the last five years?
13. Have you experienced an informal change of position in your job during the last year?
14. Have you experienced an informal change of position in your job during the last five years?
15. Are you able to prioritize the order of preference of your job's tasks?
16. Are you able to influence the pace of your work?
17. Are you able to interrupt your work if necessary?
18. Are you able to decide how to perform your job?
19. Do you learn new things at work?

20. Do you think your job enables you to improve your professional skills and abilities?
21. Does your job require you to use a lot of your skills and abilities?
22. I have a sense of belonging towards my company
23. I feel emotionally attached to my organization
24. My organization means a lot to me
25. I feel part of the “family” of my organization
26. I like to talk about my organization to outsiders
27. I would like to spend the rest of my professional life in my organization
28. I see my organization’s problems as mine
29. I believe I do not have many professional alternatives if I quit my job
30. A consequence of quitting my organization would be a scarcity of other viable professional alternatives
31. At the moment, remaining in my organization is more of a need than something I wish

\*(The survey was conducted in Spanish).

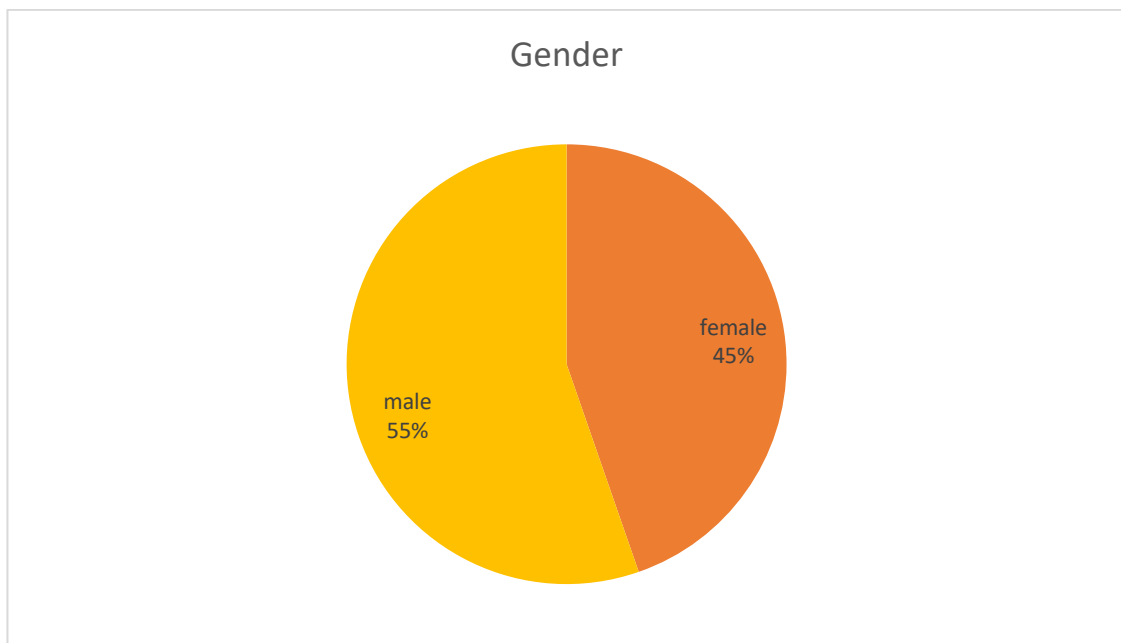
- ⇒ Control variables are sex, age, and position.
- ⇒ Questions 1 to 9 are about demographics, contact information, seniority, etc.
- ⇒ Questions 9 to 14 are related to training and development.
- ⇒ Questions 15 to 21 target independence and learning at the workplace.
- ⇒ Questions 22 to 31 measure organizational commitment, more specifically:
  - 22-28 measure affective commitment.
  - 29-31 measure continuance commitment.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Survey

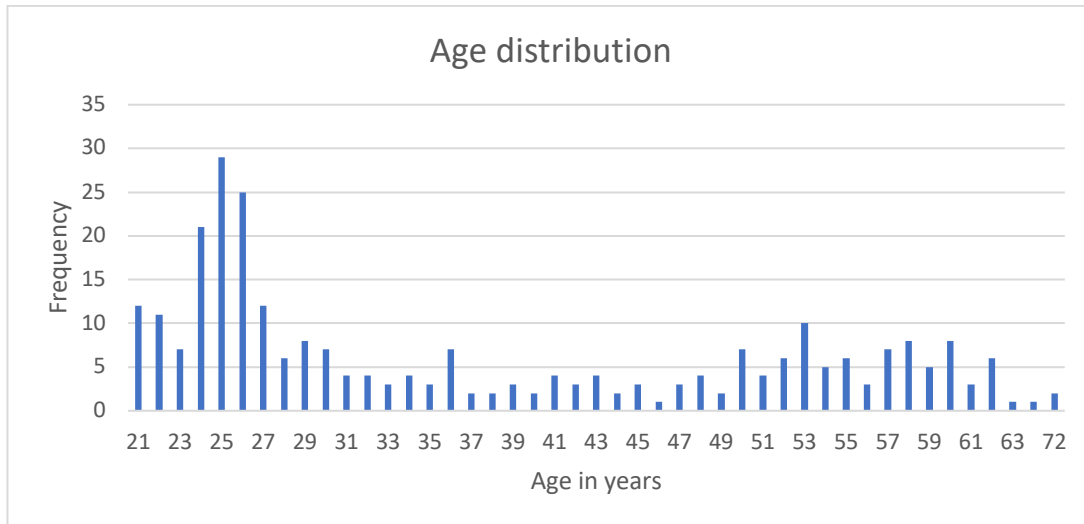
The sample is made up of 283 respondents (n=283), whom all of them have been in the labor market for at least six months. The survey was issued by a group of students from Universidad Pontificia Comillas (ICADE) to their acquaintances in the working market. The most important statistics will be presented below:

- **Demographics**



Graph 4: Gender distribution of the survey.

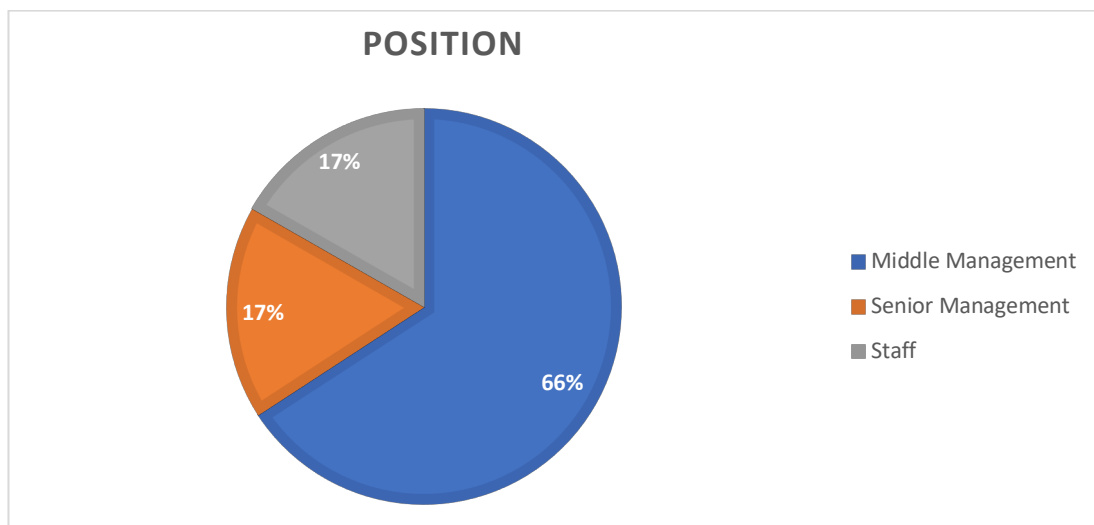
The percentage of male respondents (55%) was bigger than that of female respondents (45%).



Graph 5: Age distribution of the survey.

Regarding the age distribution of the respondents, it is noticeable how even if there were respondents ranging from 21 to 72, most of the respondents were considerably young. (Mean: 37.33 Median: 31 Mode: 25 SD: 14.063)

The most frequent age is 25 and the median is 31, meaning that half of the respondents to the survey ages are between 21 and 31, while the other half was distributed in a much larger range of ages. This makes sense given that the survey was distributed by last-year students to their acquaintances.



Graph 6: Position of the respondents to the survey.

Concerning position, most of the respondents occupied a middle management position (66%), while the percentage of senior managers and staff was equal (17% each).

1. Staff		2. Middle Management		3. Senior Management	
Mean	33,7142857	Mean	35,3837838	Mean	47,2040816
Median	26	Median	29	Median	50
Mode	22	Mode	25	Mode	58
SD	13,3147373	SD	13,3887833	SD	12,6573095

Tables 3, 4 and 5: Correlation of age and position of the respondents.

If position and age are compared, it is clear that there is a positive correlation between age and position. This means that more senior positions tend to be occupied by older employees, while younger employees tend to occupy lower ranking positions.

1. Staff			2. Middle Management		
1. Female	35	74%	1. Female	82	44%
0. Male	12	26%	0. Male	103	56%
Total	47	100%	Total	185	100%

3. Senior Management		
1. Female	9	18%
0. Male	41	82%
Total	50	100%

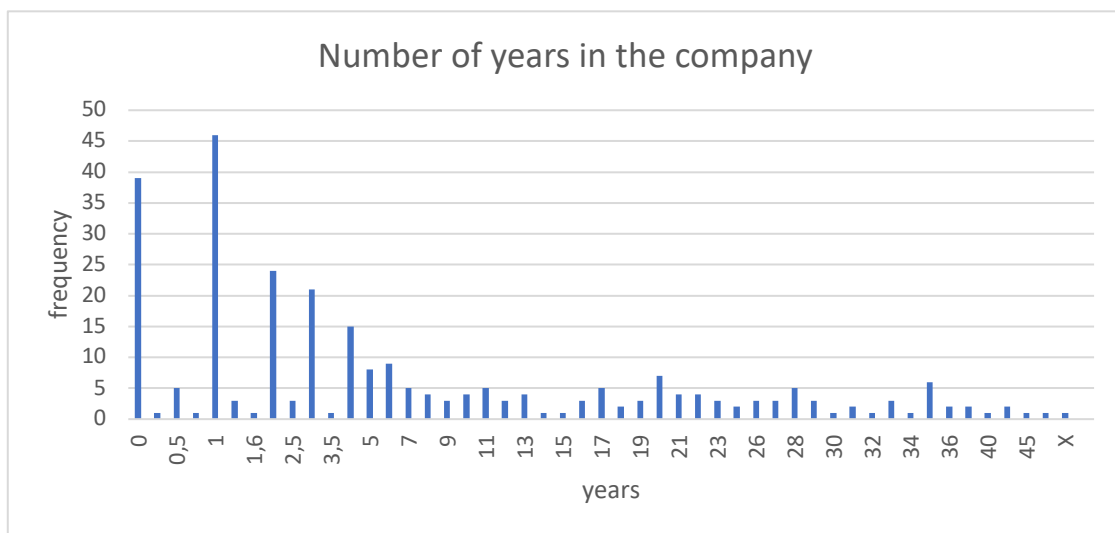
Tables 6, 7 and 8: Correlation of gender and position of the respondents.

However, if position is analyzed from a gender perspective, and even if the percentage of male respondents was higher than that of female respondents (55% male vs. 45% female), it is appreciable how there is a very significant gender gap in senior positions (females comprise 74% of the lower ranking respondents while they online account for 18% of the top management).



Graph 7: Number of years in the working market of the respondents.

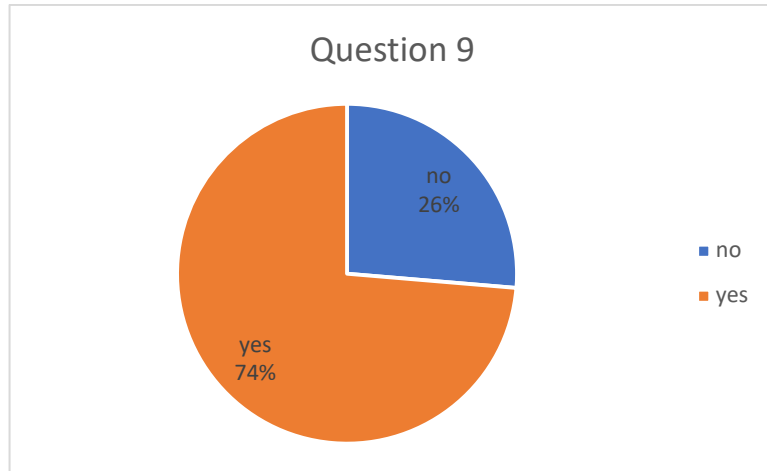
Regarding the number of years in the working market and given the relatively young group of respondents to the survey, it makes sense that most of the them have not been working for very long, 3 years being the most frequent number of years working and the median 7.5 years (Mean: 13.12 Median: 7.5 Mode: 3 SD: 12.479).



Graph 8: Number of years working for a company.

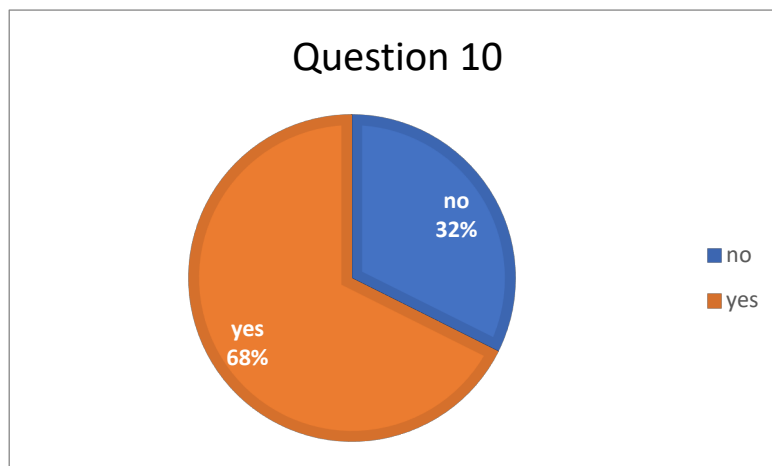
The results of the survey show us that today, people remain working in the same company a short period of time. Nonetheless, it has to be kept in mind that most respondents have not been in the working market for more than 10 years. Therefore, the results here are no conclusive (Mean: 9.07 Median: 3 Mode: 1 SD: 11.44).

- **T&D**



Graph 9: Involvement in T&D activities during the last year.

74% of the respondents have been involved in T&D activities in the company they currently work for during the last year (Question 9) and 68% of them has received some type guidance or assistance at their jobs during the last year (Question 10). This ratifies the interest companies currently have in training their employees.



Graph 10: Guidance/ assistance at workplace during the last year.



Table 9: Mean, Median, Mode and Standard Deviation of the results of the survey

	2. Sex	3. Age	4. Number of years in the working market	5. Company you currently work for	6. Position held in your company	7. Number of years working for your current company	8. Email	9. Have you been involved in training and development activities in the company you currently work for during the last year?	10. Have you received any guidance or assistance at your job during the last year?		
Mean	0.4468	37.33	13.12410072		2.025179856	9.07119334		0.73989313	0.734615385		
Median	0	31	7.5		2	3		1	1		
Mode	0	25	3		2	1		1	1		
Standard deviation	0.498	14.06	12.47856914		0.578881472	11.44414428		0.40528231	0.44238936		
11. Have you been provided in your company within the last year?	0.2730851		0.38228382	0.17307823	0.22868171	3.1054675	3.0583858	2.8125	3.0195325	3.3085975	3.20196078
0	0		0	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3
0	0		0	0	0	3	3	2	3	4	4
0.4656055			0.486875424	0.273045939	0.42800386	0.28169092	0.3465567	0.98019059	0.84271308	0.735088006	0.78500884
22. Have your job made you use a lot of your skills and abilities?	3.39375	4.918	4.62	4.464	4.316	4.66	4.124	3.98	3.372	3.3	3.188
3	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	3	3	3
4	7	4	4	4	5	4	7	2	1	1	1
0.5718493	1.2825643	1.2588005	1.2835379	1.2585646	1.27469911	2.2612147	1.9043949	2.002412	2.0866407	1.94331295	
23. I believe I don't have many professional alternatives if I quit my job											
38. Adequacy to decide how to perform your job?											
19. Do you learn new things at work?											
20. Do you think your job enables you to improve your professional skills and abilities?											
31. At the moment, remaining in my organization is more of need than something I wish											

## 5.2. Model

### Coefficients (a)

Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		Sig.
	B	Standard Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	1,277	0,457		2,793	0,006
T&D	1,104	0,396	0,166	2,79	0,006
Gender	0,225	0,194	0,071	1,161	0,247
Age	0,026	0,007	0,235	3,791	0
Position	0,793	0,176	0,289	4,507	0

a. Dependent variable: Affective Commitment

### Summary of the Model

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard Error of the Estimation
1	0,428 (a)	0,183	0,17	1,42877

a. Predictors: (Constant), Position, T&D, Gender, Age

Table 10 and 11: Model results for AC.

### Coefficients (a)

Model	Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		Sig.
	B	Standard Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	2,877	0,462		6,224	0
T&D	-1,019	0,4	-0,153	-2,547	0,012
Gender	-0,184	0,196	-0,058	-0,938	0,349
Age	0,041	0,007	0,364	5,82	0
Position	-0,29	0,178	-0,105	-1,628	0,105

a. Dependent variable: Continuance Commitment

### Summary of the Model

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Standard Error of the Estimation
1	0,410 (a)	0,168	0,154	1,44427

a. Predictors: (Constant), Position, T&D, Gender, Age

Tables 12 and 13: Model results for CC.

## 6. Conclusion and further research

The model proves that the variables “organizational commitment” (OC), a proxy of turnover, is explained and it has been explained in accordance with “training and development” (T&D). The variable OC has been divided into affective commitment (AC) and continuance commitment (CC). Using as control variables the variables gender, age, and position, the following conclusions are drawn, using as significance level  $\alpha=0.05$ , so that  $p < \alpha$ :

- **Affective Commitment (AC)**

- The direct effect of T&D on AC is significant and positive.
- Gender has no significant effect on AC.
- Age has a significant and positive effect on AC.
- Position has a significant and positive effect on AC.

- **Continuance Commitment (CC):** coefficients for the dependent variable CC have negative sign because they are inverted. This is due to the fact that in the survey, questions 29 to 31 make negative affirmations.

- The direct effect of T&D on CC is significant and positive. There is no variation with regard to AC.
- Gender has no significant effect on CC, there is no variation with regard to AC.
- Age has a significant and positive effect on CC, there is no variation with regard to AC.
- Position has no significant effect on CC, even though it does have a significant and positive effect on AC.

- **Conclusion**

With the results of the model, it can be determined that: Firstly, that OC (a proxy of retention/turnover) is directly affected by T&D, both significantly and positively. This means that the more T&D employees receive, the more committed these employees will be to their organizations and therefore, the more likely that they will remain in their companies. Control variable “Gender” has no significant effect on OC and hence, men and women are equally prone to be committed to their organizations. Regarding control variable “Age”, results show that age has a significant and positive effect on OC, meaning that the older an employee is, the more committed that he or she will be to his or her organization. Lastly, with respect to control variable “Position”, results prove that it has a significant positive effect on AC but no significant effect on CC. This translates in that the higher the employee’s rank is within the organization, the more committed he or she will be to the organization not because he or she feels obliged or because it is more convenient (CC), but because the employee experiences a stronger attachment to the organization, sees the organization’s goals as his or hers and therefore, wishes to remain as part of the organization (a higher level of AC).

These results confirm the importance that T&D has on the retention of employees in business organizations. Nonetheless, if these organizations want to remain competitive in the current business landscape, human resources professionals must keep in mind that the one-size-fits-all approach to human resource management in general does no longer work (Finkelstein, 2019). It is not only providing employees with training but giving them the training that they need. Furthermore, employees demand being treated not merely as a “resource”, but as human beings. Companies that adapt to employees’ needs and allow them to perform their jobs on the way that fits them best are a must for business success.

To conclude, further research on how to make businesses more adaptable to individual circumstances, how to bring HR closer to employees and whether treating employees as a “resource” is the best approach for businesses to take, what T&D programs really have a positive impact on employees, and how to tackle the employability paradox would be desirable.

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## 8. Attachments

### 8.1. Survey questions (original in Spanish)

#### Training and development

##### Datos generales

Encuestas para los TFM/ TFG curso 18-19

1. **DNI \***

2. **Sexo \***

3. **Edad \***

4. **Número de años que lleva trabajando (por cuenta ajena) \***

5. **Empresa en la que trabaja \***

6. **Posición que ocupa en la empresa \***

7. **Número de años que lleva trabajando en su actual empresa \***

8. **e-mail \***

**Responda sí o no a las siguientes preguntas**

9. **¿Ha participado en actividades de formación y desarrollo en su empresa en el último año?**

sí

no

10. **¿Ha tenido asesoramiento o guía para el desarrollo de su trabajo en el último año?**

sí

no

11. **¿Ha sido promocionado en su empresa en el último año?**

sí

no

12. **¿Ha sido promocionado en su empresa en los últimos 5 años?**

sí

no

13. ¿Ha cambiado de posición profesional en su empresa sin promoción formal en el último año?

sí

no

14. ¿Ha cambiado la posición profesional en su empresa sin promoción formal en los últimos 5 años?

sí

no

### Frecuencia

15. ¿Tiene posibilidad de decidir el orden de prioridad de sus actividades laborales?

1 Nunca

2

3

4 Siempre

16. ¿Tiene posibilidad de influir en el ritmo de su trabajo?

1 Nunca

2

3

4 Siempre

17. ¿Tiene la posibilidad de interrumpir su trabajo si lo considera necesario?

1 Nunca

2

3

4 Siempre

18. ¿Tiene la posibilidad de decidir como realizar su trabajo?

1 Nunca

2

3

4 Siempre

19. ¿Aprende cosas nuevas en su trabajo?

1 Nunca

2

3

4 Siempre

20. ¿Tienen la impresión de que con su trabajo puede mejorar sus habilidades y capacidades profesionales?

1 Nunca

2

3

4 Siempre

21. ¿Su trabajo requiere mucho de sus habilidades y capacidades?

1 Nunca

2

3

4 Siempre

**Actitudes organizativas**

**22. Conteste sobre el grado de acuerdo con las siguientes afirmaciones**

	Totalmente en desacuerdo	2	3	4	5	6	Totalmente de acuerdo
Tengo un sentimiento de pertenencia hacia mi empresa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Me siento emocionalmente apegado a mi organización	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mi empresa significa mucho para mí	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Me siento parte de la "familia" de mi organización	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Me gusta hablar de mi empresa con personas ajenas a ella	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Me gustaría pasar el resto de mi vida profesional en mi empresa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Siento que los problemas de mi empresa son mis problemas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creo que tengo pocas opciones que considerar si dejo mi empresa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Una de las consecuencias de dejar mi empresa sería la escasez de alternativas laborales viables para mí	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
En este momento, quedarme en mi empresa es más una necesidad que un deseo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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