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Organizational commitment and the well-being of temporary agency workers: A longitudinal study

Nathalie Galais and Klaus Moser

ABSTRACT

Previous research found that organizational commitment is positively related to employee well-being. However, in the current age of contingent work, transitions, and 'protean careers', the advisability of commitment is questionable. Therefore, we analyzed the role of organizational commitment in one paradigmatic area of contingent work arrangements: temporary agency work. In contrast to standard workers, temporary agency workers have to deal with two organizations: the temporary agency and client organization. Results revealed an ambivalent role of organizational commitment for temporary workers. Cross-sectional commitment towards the client organization had positive effects on workers' well-being, whereas commitment towards the agency had no effects. However, longitudinal analyses revealed that commitment to the client was detrimental to workers' well-being when they experienced reassignment to another client. In sum, we found beneficial and dysfunctional effects of organizational commitment on well-being, which suggest the reconsideration of the role of organizational commitment for individuals in unstable work arrangements.

KEYWORDS

contingent work ■ organizational commitment ■ temporary agency work ■ transitions

One of the unintended consequences of modern capitalism is that it has strengthened the value of place, aroused a longing for community.

(Sennett, 1998: 138)

The employment of temporary agency workers who are supplied by a staffing agency is a strategy to increase flexibility and reduce costs by helping organizations to adapt their labor forces to the current market demands (Davis-Blake & Uzzi, 1993; Houseman, 2001; Pfeffer & Baron, 1988) by quickly adding or removing employees in response to changing business conditions (Connelly & Gallagher, 2006; Moorman & Harland, 2002). Temporary agency workers are employed by a staffing agency that sends them to different client organizations where they perform their daily work. Thus, temporary agency work is often called a 'triangular' employment relationship (Barling & Gallagher, 1996; Connelly & Gallagher, 2004a; Druker & Stanworth, 2004; Purcell et al., 2004) between the workers, the staffing agency, and the client organization. Whereas temporary agency work is beneficial for organizations by increasing their competitiveness (e.g. Moorman & Harland, 2002), respective concerns were raised regarding the consequences of temporary agency work for the temps themselves (Beard & Edwards, 1995). The specific working conditions of temporary agency workers and the more general issue of organizational membership are both at hand.

First, temporary agency jobs differ from permanent jobs, even when temps and permanent employees have comparable working tasks. For example, the majority of temporary workers receive lower pay, less training, and experience high job-insecurity (Finegold et al., 2005; Hall, 2006; Kalleberg et al., 2000). Although in most Western countries there exists a noticeable development towards an increase of more skilled workers in the sector of temporary agency work (TAW), including IT specialists or medical staff (Connelly & Gallagher, 2006), in other countries (e.g. Germany) and for the majority of jobs, TAW is still dominated by low-skilled workers (Antoni & Jahn, 2006). Compared to core workers, temporary workers also have less control over the content of their work (Connelly & Gallagher, 2004a) and they are mainly assigned to low-complexity jobs (Davis-Blake & Uzzi, 1993; Kalleberg & Rognes, 2000). Furthermore, they have little control concerning the duration of an assignment (Aronsson et al., 2002; Beard & Edwards, 1995), which is, per se, limited (Feldman, 2006; Pfeffer & Baron, 1988; Sullivan, 1999). Assignment transitions, multiple relationships, and weak bonds between client organizations and workers are the core components of these working arrangements (McLean Parks et al., 1998; Sullivan, 1999). After every new assignment in a new client organization,

temps are confronted with a new work place, often with completely new duties and roles, new co-workers and local supervisors, as well as new organizational cultures (Druker & Stanworth, 2004).

Second, there exists a considerable amount of ambiguity concerning the meaning of organizational membership for temporary agency workers (McLean Parks et al., 1998). From the perspective of their formal employment contract, temporary agency workers are members of the staffing agency (e.g. they are hired, evaluated, paid and can be laid off from that organization). However, from the perspective of their daily working experiences, they often feel like they belong to and 'work for' the client organization. For example, their day-to-day work activities are located there, they receive instructions from supervisors of the client organization, and they regularly work together with employees of the client organization (Connelly & Gallagher, 2004b; Feldman, 2006). In fact, research has found that temporary agency workers often see themselves as employees of the client organization (Smith, 1998).

In sum, TAW seems to be a relatively unattractive work arrangement compared with permanent work (Beard & Edwards, 1995; Chambel & Castanheira, 2006; Kalleberg et al., 2000; Purcell et al., 2004). In fact, the vast majority of temps work involuntarily as temporary agency workers, the main cause of which is a lack of employment alternatives (Aronsson et al., 2002; Chambel & Castanheira, 2006; CIETT, 2000; Storrie, 2002; Von Hippel et al., 1997), although a minority voluntarily choose this kind of work arrangement because of the variety and challenges of different assignments and for a feeling of independence (CIETT, 2000) (for further discussion of the distinction between voluntary and involuntary temporary agency workers, see Ellingson et al., 1998; Feldman et al., 1995). For example, in Germany the motive to find a permanent job is predominant for most temporary workers (Kvasnicka, 2005). A recent representative survey of the TAW-image in Germany, which was commissioned by the Association of German Temporary Employment Agencies (TNS Emnid, 2007), found that most people see TAW either as a stepping-stone towards permanent work or as an alternative to unemployment. One reason why flexibility is not often mentioned could be that flexibility, that is, with regard to part-time work arrangements as they are known (e.g. from the UK and the Netherlands) are rare in Germany, where the usual contract is on a full-time basis (Antoni & Jahn, 2006).

Within industrial, work, and organizational psychology, both issues – the impact of specific working conditions on well-being and the ambiguity of organizational membership of the TAW arrangement – have evoked research interests. From the perspective of industrial and work psychologists,

TAW is often regarded as a work arrangement with a considerable amount of stressors, which raises the question of whether TAW may have a negative impact on workers' health (Gimeno et al., 2004). Organizational psychologists have raised the question as to which attitudes workers will develop towards the involved organizations in the face of limited organizational membership, dissociation between formal employer (the agency) and workplace (at the client organization), and a work arrangement in which workers may feel disposable (Beard & Edwards, 1995; Bishop et al., 2001; Gallagher & McLean Parks, 2001; Garsten, 1999; McLean Parks et al., 1998). More specifically, workers' organizational commitment towards the client organization as well as commitment to the respective staffing agency has been the focus of research (Connelly & Gallagher, 2006; Feldman et al., 1995; Krausz et al., 1995; Liden et al., 2003). In sum, from both an organizational and an industrial psychology perspective, temporary agency work seems to be a debatable work arrangement.

The goal of the present study is to examine the role of organizational commitment in the context of the highly transitory work environment of TAW. We would like to take a closer look at the interplay between organizational commitment and reassignment with regard to individuals' well-being. The concept of commitment, which includes aspects of stability, loyalty, and the feeling of being a part of the organization, stands in contrast to the temporary character of the assignments and the separation of the employer (agency) and the workplace (at the client) in TAW. These specific aspects of TAW may limit the application of earlier findings concerning organizational commitment that result from standard work settings and are based upon long-lasting relationships. In contrast to the suggested positive effects of commitment in standard work arrangements, we propose that commitment plays an ambivalent role in the transient work setting of TAW.

Given the fact that transitions in general are related to impaired well-being in individuals (e.g. Mack et al., 1998), we expect the same for reassignment. This is why we propose an interaction effect of reassignment and commitment on well-being. More specifically, the effects of reassignment depend on commitment to the agency and commitment to the client organization. In fact, in transitory work environments a dilemma arises: on the one hand, organizational commitment (to a client organization) nurtures the need for belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Rousseau, 1998) and can, therefore, be expected to be positive for well-being, but on the other hand, high commitment aggravates the negative consequences of organizational transitions due to reassignments. In the face of reassignment, high commitment can be seen as a risk factor that increases the vulnerability for the negative effects of transition. Therefore, we will analyze whether it is particularly

disadvantageous for workers' well-being to experience reassignment when they are highly committed to a client organization. In contrast, commitment to the agency may act as a buffer, given that the relationship between the agency and temporary worker survives the reassignment process.

In the following section, we will review the previous research that has been conducted on well-being in temporary agency work and introduce re-assignment as a specific job characteristic that is related to well-being.

Working conditions and well-being in temporary agency work

The few existing studies on well-being in temporary agency workers have reported conflicting results; some studies found evidence that temporary agency workers experience a considerably high amount of strain. For example, a qualitative study revealed symptoms of alienation (Rogers, 1995) and emphasized that the outsider position of temporary agency workers leads to marginalization and discrimination. Furthermore, Rogers and Henson (1997) report a considerable amount of sexual harassment of female temporary agency workers. In fact, from their observations they concluded the following: 'The low status, depersonalization, and objectification of temporary workers fosters an environment in which poor treatment including sexual harassment is likely' (p. 233). In addition, temporary agency workers experience a high degree of job insecurity, little control, and little predictability concerning their workplace and duties (Beard & Edwards, 1995; Kalleberg & Rognes, 2000; Purcell et al., 2004) and may also be targets of stigmatization (Boyce et al., 2007). A recent study found that temporary nurses had higher job stress than their permanent counterparts (Yeh et al., 2007).

However, others have argued that it might be beneficial for temps to be held less responsible for certain job duties than permanent workers (Druker & Stanworth, 2004). Some evidence suggests that temps are more content with their jobs than permanent employees (Sodenkamp & Schmidt, 2001), at least this is the case for those who are voluntary temps (Krausz et al., 1995). Finally, similar results were reported for other groups of contingent workers. For example, a study with substitutes found fewer health problems as well as less sickness absence for this group of workers compared with permanent workers (Virtanen et al., 2001), and workers with temporary contracts reported less stress compared with permanent workers (Parker et al., 2002).

Unfortunately, previous research on stress and health of temporary workers was mostly cross-sectional in nature, comparing temps with standard workers. This approach has four major shortcomings. First, selection effects cannot be clearly differentiated from causal effects of TAW; that

is, we cannot rule out that temps differ from permanent employees. For example, temps can be easily laid off if they complain or become sick. Similarly, Virtanen et al. (2001) argue that contingent workers are more reluctant to report health problems because they fear that their contracts may not be renewed as a consequence. Second, another intriguing possibility is that temporary jobs are created by means of reorganizing work leading to a greater workload for permanent co-workers (Pearce, 1993). Third, the two groups might use different comparison standards when evaluating their working conditions. For example, Sodenkamp and Schmidt (2001) found that temps compared their situation to jobs in previous client organizations, which happened to be worse. In addition, temps could also compare their situation with the alternative of being unemployed, for which there exists considerable evidence that most prefer being employed to being unemployed (Paul & Moser, 2006). Fourth, at least one job characteristic, reassignment, is specific for temporary work arrangements, but the effects of reassignment are difficult to disentangle in cross-sectional studies. In the next section, we will take a closer look at this core job characteristic.

Reassignment and well-being

Findings in the context of standard work suggest that transitions in general are stressful and detrimental to workers' health. Examples are organizational transition processes in general (Mack et al., 1998), relocation of workers (Moyle & Parkes, 1999), job change (Isaksson, 1990), newcomers' entrance into an organization (Feldman & Brett, 1983), and organizational restructuring (Brockner et al., 2004; Dunford, 1999). In contrast to these changes and transitions, reassignments are not exceptional events for temps but rather a core part of the work arrangement itself. Although reassignments can generally be expected to occur, they are relatively unpredictable. That is, the initial decision and duration of the assignment are not under the control of the individual worker, but are rather determined by the staffing agency and client organization.

The different forms of transitions and changes are similar in that they cause disequilibrium and force individuals to reorient to a new situation, which might be aversive (Louis, 1980; Pearlin et al., 1981). In the case of temporary agency workers, they have to leave the familiar workplace of their previous assignment and adapt to the situation of the new assignment (Druker & Stanworth, 2004; Garsten, 1999). Although there exist workers who voluntarily chose TAW because they prefer flexibility, freedom, and

variety, and might welcome reassignment as a new experience (Chambel & Castanheira, 2006; CIETT, 2007), most prefer permanent employment and expect to receive an offer to become a permanent employee in the client organization. In fact, the motive to find a permanent job through TAW is predominant for temporary agency workers (Bauer & Truxillo, 2000; CIETT, 2007; Druker & Stanworth, 2004), and many regard temping as an opportunity to attain a permanent job at a client organization (Beard & Edwards, 1995; Druker & Stanworth, 2004; Virtanen et al., 2003). Therefore, for the vast majority of temps, reassignment means that they remain in a state of incongruence between the current employment status and their preferred employment status.

In sum, with regard to the outlined findings concerning the negative effects of transitions, we propose:

Hypothesis 1: Reassignment leads to decreased well-being.

Organizational commitment and well-being

Although work arrangements become more flexible and loyalty based on 'lifelong' employment seems to decline, it has been argued that identification processes continue to exist for TAWs (Gallagher & McLean Parks, 2001; Pittinsky & Shih, 2004; Rousseau, 1998). Rousseau (1998) emphasized the crucial role of organizational commitment for an individual's social identity and feeling of belonging (Rousseau, 1998) and a strong human motive of belonging in general (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In fact, during the last few decades, research on organizational commitment found many desirable outcomes of high organizational commitment for the organization as well as for the individual (Pittinsky & Shih, 2004). Besides positive effects on job performance and job survival (e.g. Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) it has been shown that commitment is negatively related to occupational strain (Begley & Czajka, 1993; Leong et al., 1996; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002; Teo & Waters, 2002) and positively related to well-being (e.g. Wiener et al., 1987) and life satisfaction (Kacmar et al., 1999). This may be the reason why 'individuals seek to be committed' (Pittinsky & Shih, 2004: 792).

Though until now research on the effects of organizational commitment on well-being in the context of TAW was lacking, results from research reviewed in the beginning of this section suggest that commitment should also be related to well-being in temps. It is noteworthy that these work arrangements are characterized by a multiple agency relationship, involving the temporary staffing agency as well as the client organizations (McLean

Parks et al., 1998; Polivka & Nardone, 1989). In fact, temps can be committed to both the agency and the client organization (Liden et al., 2003). Therefore, the following two assumptions can be stated:

Hypothesis 2a: High organizational commitment towards the client organization is positively related to well-being.

Hypothesis 2b: High commitment to the temporary staffing agency is positively related to well-being.

Interaction of commitment and reassignment on well-being

Which effects should be expected when highly committed temporary agency workers experience reassignment? Although there have been arguments that the organizational commitment of temporary agency workers to their temporary work agency is rather low (e.g. Smith, 1998), because the majority of temporary agency workers prefer other work arrangements (CIETT, 2000), we can still expect some variance in the relationship between the workers and their agencies, that is, that some are more committed to the agency (e.g. identify with its goals) than others. We expect that this commitment is a resource for the temporary agency workers comparable to that of employees in other work settings. In fact, findings for workers in standard work arrangements suggest that commitment is a resource for coping with organizational stress (Kobasa, 1982; Teo & Waters, 2002). For example, King and Sethi (1997) found a moderating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between stressors and burnout; that is, in highly committed employees, the effect of stressors on burnout was less strong. Similarly, Britt and Bliese (2003) found that self-engagement, which is akin to commitment, is a buffer between work stressors and strain. Therefore, we expect that commitment to the agency buffers the negative effects of reassignment and that temps who are highly committed to the agency will suffer less from a reassignment than workers who are less committed.

Hypothesis 3: Commitment to the staffing agency moderates the relationship between the experience of reassignment and well-being. High commitment to the agency buffers the negative effects of reassignment on well-being.

Let us now turn to the question of what it means for temporary agency workers to develop high commitment to the client organization. It is not an

uncommon phenomenon that temps develop bonds towards client organizations. For example, Smith (1998) reported that ‘... the day-to-day work experiences of many temporary workers were indistinguishable from those of permanent workers’ (p. 419), and because most of them hope to become permanent workers, they ‘... developed strong ties with their managers and strong commitments to the company’ (p. 419). Another study found that primarily those workers who were involuntary temps and who preferred permanent work developed a strong socio-emotional relationship towards the client organization, whereas voluntary temporary workers built a more economic relationship (Chambel & Castanheira, 2006). For those workers with socio-emotional relationships, which itself is strongly related to loyalty and organizational commitment (Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993), re-assignment might be perceived as a breach of the psychological contract between the temp and client organization, which in turn leads to strain (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003).

There exists even more direct evidence that in developing commitment to a target and then perceiving that the relationship is threatened or even breaking down is experienced as a drawback and impairs well-being. For example, Probst (2000) found that an increase of perceived job insecurity (i.e. expecting a threat to organizational membership) is more adverse for highly committed employees and leads to higher levels of distress. Furthermore, high commitment to an organization leads to stronger negative outcomes when employees feel that they have been treated unfairly (i.e. experience a worsening relationship; Brockner et al., 1992). Similarly, research on work-related over-commitment found that health complaints resulting from a lack of balance between efforts put into one’s job and rewards received are stronger when commitment is high (Aust et al., 1999; Joksimovic et al., 1999). Finally, employment commitment aggravates the negative effects of unemployment on mental health (Paul & Moser, 2006). All of this evidence suggests that being committed moderates the negative effects of change and transitions. More specifically, an interaction effect of organizational commitment and transition experience on well-being can be expected. High commitment to the client organization increases the individual’s vulnerability to the negative effects of their reassignment to another organization.

Hypothesis 4: Commitment towards the client organization moderates the relationship between the experience of reassignment and well-being. High commitment towards the client decreases well-being when reassignment occurs.

Method

Research design

The need for longitudinal analyses in the field of contingent work, especially with regard to individual experiences and coping with contingent work-arrangements, has been emphasized previously (Beard & Edwards, 1995). As others have cogently explained, the investigation of stressor-strain relationships requires longitudinal designs (Zapf et al., 1996). This is especially the case when the investigation of the effects of transition processes on workers' well-being is at issue. We will apply a three-wave longitudinal design, which allows for the capturing of individual reactions to TAW across assignments.

Sample and procedure

For the current study we recruited clerical temporary agency workers. We wanted to have homogeneity with regard to the assigned jobs, that is, to avoid assignment particularities due to highly complex jobs (e.g. in engineering) or due to specific firm recruitment strategies, for example, where complete groups of workers are recruited for limited projects (e.g. in the construction industry). All of the temporary workers were assigned to jobs in the office sector, including clerical assistants, secretaries, and receptionists. Workers were employed by different agencies and were assigned to a wide range of client organizations. We requested temporary staffing agencies to distribute our questionnaires to temps who were assigned to clerical jobs. To avoid overrepresentation of a particular agency, the maximal number of questionnaires was restricted to 20 per agency. Data were collected successively from 2000 to 2002. Workers were employed in 29 agencies mainly from the southern region of Germany. The number of workers employed by the same agency ranged from one to 19 ($M = 8.67$, $SD = 5.25$).

The recipients were instructed to complete their surveys and return them directly to the authors in pre-stamped return envelopes. The surveys were anonymous and included instructions to create an idiosyncratic identification code to match respondents' surveys over time. In order to directly contact participants at Time 2 and to ensure confidentiality, a pre-stamped postcard was enclosed that requested participants to fill in their address and send it back to the authors separately from the questionnaire.

Data were collected during the first eight weeks of employment in the staffing agency (T1), five months later (T2), and 14 months later (T3, time range varied from 12 to 15 months). In order to increase the response rate and to reduce dropout, participants received €25 at Time 1 and €10 at

Time 2 and Time 3. A total of 151 (109 female, 42 male) temporary workers participated at Time 1, 110 at Time 2 (81 female, 29 male) and 101 at Time 3 (76 female, 25 male). Because some did not participate at Time 2 but again at Time 3, and vice versa, the sample size of workers who had participated at all three measurement points and who had answered the relevant variables of this study was 80 (60 female, 20 male). Non-respondents at Time 2 and Time 3 did not differ from Time 1 with regard to demographics. The proportion of female and male workers in our sample corresponds to the general distribution of gender in the clerical sector (Federal Employment Office, 2005; Rudolph & Schröder, 1997). The average age of the respondents (T1) was 30.76 (SD = 9.67, minimum = 17, maximum = 61).

In terms of education, three participants did not have any level of school graduation, 45 had finished junior high school (nine years of schooling), 48 had finished secondary school (10 years of schooling), 25 were qualified for university access (13 years of schooling), and 30 had a university diploma (comparable to a master's degree).

Measures

Organizational commitment to the client organization (T1) was assessed with a shortened version of Mowday et al.'s (1979) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire with 11 items. The sample items were: 'I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization' and 'I feel very little loyalty to the client organization' (recoded). Four items of the original scale were excluded because they focused on the voluntary choice of the organization, which is not appropriate in the context of TAW where assignments are determined by the staffing agency (e.g. 'I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over the other organizations that I was considering at the time I joined'). We adapted the item 'This is the best of all possible organization for which to work' into 'I would appreciate getting a permanent job in this client organization'. The responses were given on five-point scales (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .76$; $n = 146$).

Commitment to the employment agency (T1) was measured with three items, which focused on the feeling of belonging to the agency. These items were adapted from the Affective Commitment Scale as developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), which have already been used in previous research for the measurement of commitment towards the agency (e.g. Liden et al., 2003; Van Breugel et al., 2005). The three items were the following: 'I feel a strong feeling of belonging to the temporary staffing agency', 'I do not feel emotionally attached to the temporary agency' (recoded), and 'I think I could

similarly be attached to any other agency'. The items were rated on five-point rating scales (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .65$; $n = 104$).¹

Reassignment (T2 and T3) was measured by asking participants at Time 2 and Time 3 whether they had experienced a reassignment. This means that they were no longer in the client organization that they worked for at Time 1. We used a dichotomous measure that indicates whether participants had experienced reassignment (= 2) or not (= 1) during their time as temporary worker. At Time 2, 48 had experienced a reassignment, whereas 57 had not (five missing values). At Time 3, 62 had experienced reassignment and 28 had not (11 missing values). Remember again that in this study reassignment refers to the client organization to which organizational commitment was measured at Time 1.

Well-being (T1, T2, T3): as an indicator of well-being we wanted to use a measure that included both mental and physical health. Therefore, we assessed psychosomatic complaints with a well established 14-item scale developed by Mohr (1986). Subjects rate items concerning somatic (e.g. 'I feel dizzy', 'My neck hurts') and emotional complaints ('I often feel tired and powerless during the day', 'It is difficult for me to relax after work') on a five-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The alpha coefficient estimates of reliability were .87 at Time 1, .88 at Time 2, and .82 at Time 3. The retest-reliability from Time 1 to Time 2 was .68 and from Time 1 to Time 3 it was .44.

Compared to the other samples, the participants in the current study reported moderate levels of psychosomatic complaints (see Mohr, 1986). The means of psychosomatic complaints were 1.93 (SD = .63) for Time 1, 1.99 (SD = .68) for Time 2, and 2.34 (SD = .78) for Time 3. Univariate analysis for repeated measures revealed a significant difference between the means over time ($F(2, 76) = 14.23, p < .001$). The confidence intervals of the mean for Time 3 did not overlap with the intervals for the means at Time 1 and 2; that is, psychosomatic complaints were significantly higher at Time 3. To ensure that this finding was not caused by a systematic selection effect due to the participation of individuals with increased complaints from the onset, we compared the initial levels of psychosomatic complaints at Time 1 for those who dropped out and those who participated at Time 3. No differences were found for the two groups ($t = -.35, NS$).

Control variables

We assessed workers' current employment status at Time 2 and at Time 3; that is, participants were asked what employment status they had at that time and whether they were still pursuing TAW or whether they had become

permanent employees. Participants were also asked whether they experienced unemployment, were retired or received vocational training (mostly provided by the Federal Employment Office). With regard to the longitudinal sample ($n = 80$), 26 participants had become permanent workers at Time 2 and 45 were still pursuing TAW. At Time 3, 55 were permanently employed and 14 were temporary workers. At Time 2 and Time 3 respectively, nine and 11 participants fell into the following four categories: unemployed, retired, self-employed, and taking part in vocational training. We used a dummy coded variable that indicated the workers' employment status (permanent = 2; non-permanent = 1).

Perceived voluntariness of being a temp was measured by two items with a five-point Likert scale format (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Items included the following: 'TAW is only a makeshift solution for me' ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.40$), and 'I prefer the variety and flexibility that is provided through TAW' ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 1.20$). The correlation between the two items was $r = -.42$.

Furthermore, *education* (1 = no graduation to 5 = master's degree), *part- versus full-time employment* (1 = part-time, 2 = full-time), gender (1 = male, 2 = female), and age (in years) were included as control variables. In addition, we computed the number of participants that worked for the same agency in order to control for the effect of agencies being represented by different numbers of participants ('frequency agency'), and we measured the time workers were pursuing or had pursued TAW at Time 2 ($M = 5.53$ weeks, $SD = 3.46$) and at Time 3 ($M = 12.41$ weeks, $SD = 8.86$).

Results

The means and standard deviations of all the study variables as well as their correlations are shown in Table 1. The commitment to the agency and client organization was measured at Time 1, reassignment was measured at Time 2 and at Time 3, and psychosomatic complaints were measured in all three waves of the study. The correlations in Table 1 should be interpreted with caution because they do not take control variables into account and they are mostly cross-sectional. Therefore, linear hierarchic regression analyses, including control variables, were computed.

In Tables 2 and 3, the results of the regression analyses for psychosomatic complaints for Time 2 and Time 3, respectively, are shown. We used a residual based approach to predict the change in psychosomatic complaints over time by entering the psychosomatic complaints measured at Time 1 as an independent variable in the first step of the regression analyses. Positive

Table 1 Means, standard deviations and correlations among all the study variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Age ^a	30.76	9.67																	
2. Gender ^b	1.72	.45	.07																
3. Education ^c	3.22	1.14	-.05	-.00															
4. Time in TAW (T2)	5.53	3.46	-.25*	.10	.12														
5. Time in TAW (T3)	12.41	8.86	.05	-.16	-.02	.30*													
6. Frequency agency	8.88	5.22	.10	-.08	-.02	-.08	.01												
7. Full/part-time employment ^d	1.89	.32	-.02	.01	-.11	.14	.02	.00											
8. TAW is a makeshift solution	2.99	1.41	.19*	.07	.15+	-.13	-.12	.05	.00										
9. Preference for job change	2.76	1.17	.06	-.05	.06	-.03	.31**	.04	.04	-.42***									
10. Commitment to client organization ^e	3.16	.62	-.06	-.07	-.01	.03	-.04	-.14	-.08	-.13	.02								
11. Commitment to agency ^e	2.69	.59	.13	-.05	.02	.05	-.21*	-.09	.10	.01	.04	-.06							
12. Experience of reassignment (T2) ^f	1.46	.50	-.03	.10	-.11	.23*	.16	.15	.04	-.19*	.07	-.31***	-.05						
13. Experience of reassignment (T3) ^f	1.70	.46	.03	.07	-.06	.23*	.45***	.10	-.04	-.29***	.18*	-.20*	-.17	.70***					
14. Transition to permanent job (T2) ^f	1.39	.49	.11	-.00	.00	-.03	-.23*	-.02	.02	.07	-.12	.14	.05	-.08	-.07				
15. Transition to permanent job (T3) ^f	1.74	.44	.08	.06	.11	-.08	-.25*	-.08	-.04	.22***	-.24***	-.03	.04	-.12	-.30***	.20*			
16. Psychosomatic complaints (T1) ^g	1.93	.61	-.02	.09	-.11	.07	-.11	-.01	.04	.03	-.17*	-.22**	.13	.20*	.10	.09	-.03		
17. Psychosomatic complaints (T2) ^g	1.99	.67	.06	.13	-.20*	.08	-.24*	-.12	.08	.14	-.24*	-.20*	.16	.14	.05	.12	-.03	.68***	
18. Psychosomatic complaints (T3) ^g	2.30	.75	-.04	-.04	-.15	.01	-.15	-.01	.12	-.17	.12	.12	.12	.18	.03	.07	-.05	.44***	.43***

Note. + $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, T1 : 143 < n < 151, T2: 83 < n < 103, T3: 66 < n < 84.

^a (in years), ^b (1 = male, 2 = female), ^c (1 = no qualified school degree to 5 = master's degree), ^d (1 = part-time, 2 = full-time), ^e (1 = not at all to 5 = very much), ^f (1 = no, 2 = yes).

effects on psychosomatic complaints at Time 2 and 3 mean an increase of the psychosomatic complaints. We further included the current employment status, time in TAW, frequency of agency, part- versus full-time employment, age, gender, education, as well as the two items measuring the voluntariness of pursuing TAW as control variables. Only full- versus part-time employment had a positive effect on the increase of psychosomatic complaints at Time 3, indicating a higher level of psychosomatic complaints for workers with full-time employment. Remember that the current employment status variable differentiates between those workers who found permanent employment and those who did not.

In the second step, we entered reassignment, measured at Time 2 and Time 3, respectively, as independent variables. For the regression of psychosomatic complaints at Time 3, we entered reassignment at Time 2 for a first analysis, and we included reassignment measured at Time 3 for a second analysis. Finally, commitment either towards the client (Table 2) or towards the agency (Table 3) was included in the third step of the regression analyses, and the interaction of reassignment and commitment was included in the fourth. In Tables 2 and 3, the standardized beta values for the final equation (with all the predictors entered) and stepwise analyses of the explained variance of the entered variables are shown.

Reassignment and well-being

Zero-order correlations did not reveal a significant relationship between the experience of reassignment (T2 or T3) and an increase of psychosomatic complaints at Time 2 or Time 3. These findings are not consistent with *Hypothesis 1*, which postulated an effect of reassignment on well-being. The results of the regression analyses confirm this result (see Table 2 and 3). Reassignment had no effect on well-being (i.e. the increase of psychosomatic complaints over time).

Commitment to the client organization and well-being

Consistent with *Hypothesis 2a*, commitment to the client organization was negatively associated with psychosomatic complaints, both cross-sectionally ($r = -.22$) and longitudinally (Time 2; $r = -.20$) although not for Time 3. Therefore, the correlative results support *Hypothesis 2a* for Time 1 and Time 2. Table 2 shows that commitment to the client organization is negatively related to the increase of psychosomatic complaints after the inclusion of control variables and reassignment as predictors. Commitment to the client explains 5 percent ($p < .05$) of the variance for the increase of

Table 2 Reassignment, commitment to the client organization and well-being (psychosomatic complaints)

	Psychosomatic complaints T2 ^x					Psychosomatic complaints T3 ^y					Psychosomatic complaints T3 ^z				
	β	R^2	R^2 adj.	ΔR^2	F_{change}	β	R^2	R^2 adj.	ΔR^2	F_{change}	β	R^2	R^2 adj.	ΔR^2	F_{change}
Step 1: Control variables															
Psychosomatic complaints T1	.64***	.52	.45	.52	7.79***	.45***	.28	.17	.28	2.47*	.51	.28	.16	.28	2.44*
Current employment status ^a	.04					.01					.01				
Time in TAW	-.00					-.08					-.10				
Frequency agency	-.11					-.04					-.06				
Full-/part-time employment ^b	-.00					.24*					.22*				
Age ^c	-.06					.05					-.01				
Gender ^d	.03					-.08					-.11				
Education ^e	-.16 ⁺					.06					.01				
TAW is a makeshift solution ^f	.09					-.10					-.11				
Preference for job change ^g	-.08					.19					.18				
Step 2:															
Reassignment T2 ^g	-.48	.52	.45	.00	.33	-.108*	.29	.17	.01	.94	—	—	—	—	—
Reassignment T3 ^g	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-.81	.28	.15	.00	.17
Step 3:															
Commitment to client organization ^f	-.30	.52	.44	.00	.05	-.53	.34	.21	.05	4.13*	-.38	.32	.19	.05	4.21*
Step 4:															
Commitment to client × reassignment T2	.56	.53	.44	.01	1.64	1.32*	.40	.27	.06	5.82*	—	—	—	—	—
Commitment to client × reassignment T3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	.99	.35	.21	.03	2.45

Note. Beta values are from the final equation (with all predictors entered). ⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, $n^x = 84$, $n^y = 74$, $n^z = 75$, ^a (1 = non-permanent, 2 = permanent), ^b (full-time = 2, part-time = 1), ^c (in years), ^d (1 = male, 2 = female), ^e (1 = no qualified school degree to 5 = master's degree), ^f (1 = not at all to 5 = very much), ^g (1 = no, 2 = yes).

psychosomatic complaints from Time 1 to Time 3, in turn indicating a main effect of commitment on well-being, which again supports *Hypothesis 2a*. However, for Time 2, no effects were found based on regression analyses. In sum, by and large, commitment to the client organization seems to play a supportive role for well-being.

Commitment to the agency and well-being

We expected well-being to be positively affected by commitment to the agency (*Hypothesis 2b*), but in fact it was not related to psychosomatic complaints (bivariate correlations). Regression analyses confirm that commitment to the agency had no significant effect on the change of psychosomatic complaints (Time 2 $\Delta R^2 = .01$, Time 3 $\Delta R^2 = .00$). In sum, neither regression analyses including control variables nor univariate analyses found effects of commitment to the agency on well-being. Therefore, *Hypothesis 2b* has to be rejected.

Interaction of reassignment and commitment on well-being

We assumed that commitment to the client organization should increase the negative effects of reassignment on well-being. In addition, we also suggested a buffer effect for commitment to the agency. Therefore, the interaction effects of commitment and reassignment on well-being are expected (*Hypotheses 3a* and *3b*).

In fact, the interaction of reassignment and commitment to the client organization on the change of psychosomatic complaints from Time 1 to Time 3 was significant when reassignment experienced at Time 2 was entered as an independent variable. More specifically, approximately 6 percent ($p < .05$) additional variance of psychosomatic complaints are explained by the interaction of reassignment at Time 2 and commitment to the client organization at Time 1 (see second column in Table 2). The respective interaction effect neither reached statistical significance for Time 2 nor for Time 3 when the reassignment, which was measured at the same time as psychosomatic complaints, was entered into the regression analyses (see first and third column in Table 2), although the pattern of these effects was similar. This may be explained by lag effects of reassignment and commitment on psychosomatic complaints. Probably the duration between Time 1 and Time 2 as well as between Time 2 and Time 3 was not long enough to reveal changes in psychosomatic complaints when reassignment occurred in the interim. In contrast, reassignment that occurred between Time 1 and Time 2 had an effect on psychosomatic complaints at Time 3.

To illustrate the nature of the interaction we used O'Connor's (1998) program for exploring interactions in moderated multiple regression analyses. Figure 1 was constructed by plotting commitment 1 SD below and 1 SD above the mean for those who experienced transition and those who did not.

In sum, results provide support for the idea of a moderator role of commitment to the client organization for the relationship of reassignment on well-being. In fact, reassignment has negative effects on well-being for those workers who were highly committed to the client organization.

Table 3 also shows an interaction effect of commitment to the agency and reassignment on the increase of psychosomatic complaints with regard to Time 3. Although the results were comparable for Time 2 and Time 3, the

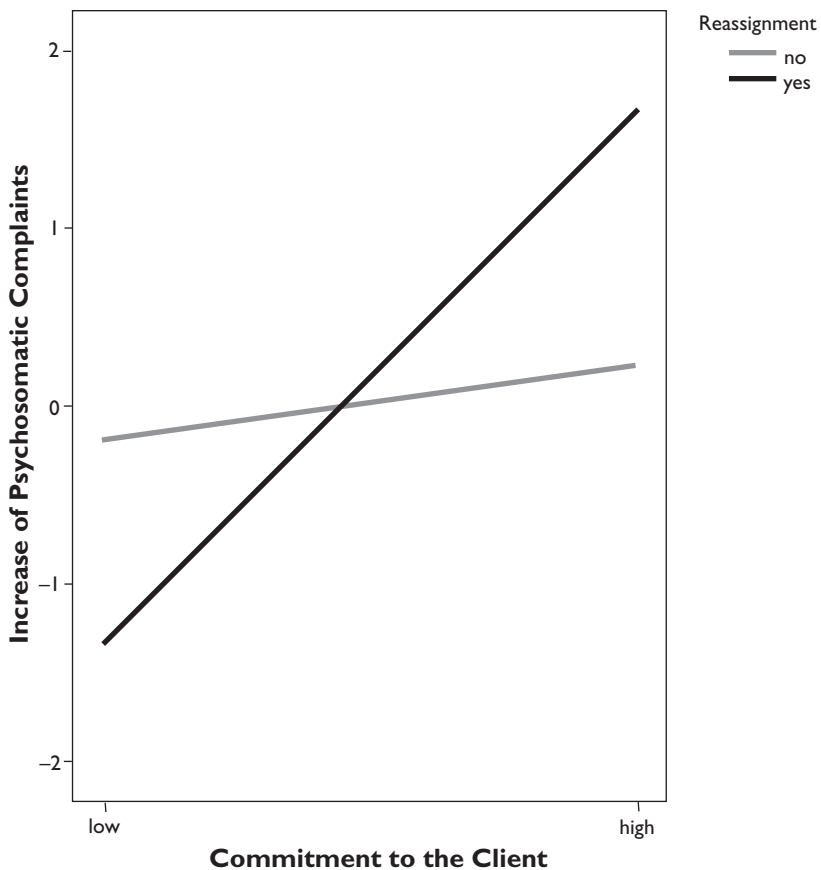


Figure 1 Interaction of reassignment (T2) and commitment to the client on the increase of psychosomatic complaints

Table 3 Reassignment, commitment to the agency and well-being (psychosomatic complaints)

	Psychosomatic complaints T2 ^x				Psychosomatic complaints T3 ^y				Psychosomatic complaints T3 ^z			
	β	R ²	R ² adj.	ΔR^2	β	R ²	R ² adj.	ΔR^2	β	R ²	R ² adj.	ΔR^2
Step 1: Control variables												
Psychosomatic complaints T1	.65***	.49	.39	.49	4.92***	.56	.38	.24	.38	2.83	.61	.40
Current employment status ^a	-.01				-.00				.05			.27
Time in TAW	.06				-.07				-.04			.40
Frequency agency	.03				.08				.02			
Full-/part-time employment ^b	-.00				.20				.15			
Age ^c	-.04				-.07				-.12			
Gender ^d	.05				-.04				-.11			
Education ^e	-.14				.07				.01			
TAW is a makeshift solution ^f	.13				-.03				.03			
Preference for job change ^g	.04				.24				.28			
Step 2:												
Reassignment T2 ^h	-.58	.49	.38	.00	.22	1.16	.38	.23	.00	.16	—	—
Reassignment T3 ^h	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.10	.41
Step 3:												
Commitment to client agency ⁱ	-.22	.50	.38	.01	1.08	.73	.38	.22	.00	.30	.74	.42
Step 4:												
Commitment to client × reassignment T2	.61	.52	.38	.01	1.11	-.138	.45	.28	.07	5.18*	—	—
Commitment to client × reassignment T3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	-.132	.47
											.31	.05

Note. Beta values are from the final equation (with all predictors entered). ⁺ $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, $n^x = 84$, $n^y = 74$, $n^z = 75$. ^a (1 = non-permanent, 2 = permanent), ^b (full-time = 2, part-time = 1), ^c (in years), ^d (1 = male, 2 = female), ^e (1 = no qualified school degree to 5 = master's degree), ^f (1 = not at all to 5 = very much), ^g (1 = no, 2 = yes).

interaction effect was only significant for Time 3 when reassignment at Time 2 ($\Delta R^2 = 7\%$) or reassignment measured at Time 3 ($\Delta R^2 = 5\%$) were included as predictors. Figure 2 shows this interaction effect. The patterns of the regression lines indicate that workers who were highly committed to the agency showed an increase in well-being when they were reassigned but a decrease of well-being when they were not reassigned. Although the postulated interaction effect was found (*Hypothesis 3b*), its pattern goes somewhat beyond the idea of a buffer role of commitment, which means that there is a reduction of negative effects but not an amplification of positive effects when reassignment occurs.

Finally, we found a positive correlation between psychosomatic complaints at Time 1 and reassignment at Time 2 ($r = .20$). It is not clear

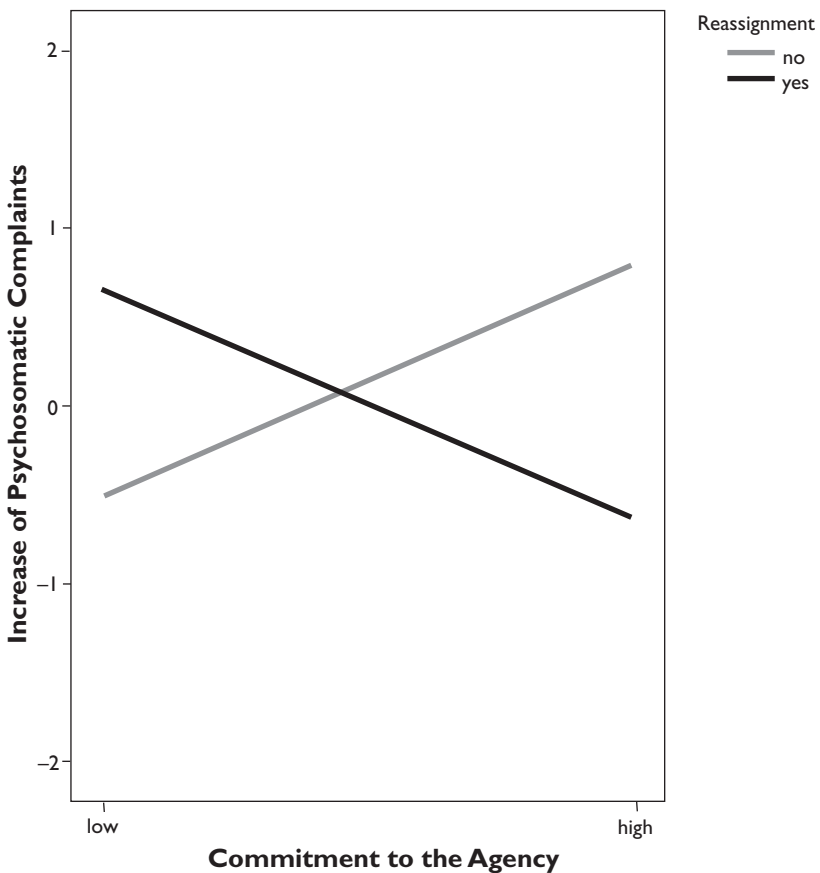


Figure 2 Interaction of reassignment (T2) and commitment to the agency on the increase of psychosomatic complaints

whether this can be explained by self-selection effects (e.g. individuals with high levels of complaints seek reassignments) or selection-processes from the client organization (workers with impaired health are more often replaced) or the agency (workers are sent to shorter assignments).

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the role of organizational commitment and reassignment for individuals' health in TAW. We found that the often reported positive effects of employee commitment on individual outcomes have to be qualified for those who work in transitory work environments. Although we found support for the positive effects of organizational commitment to the client on workers' well-being cross-sectionally, longitudinal analyses revealed that high organizational commitment to the client organization turned out to increase workers' vulnerability for the negative effects of reassignment. Our findings suggest that the stress potential of reassignment on well-being depends on the employee's focus of commitment. Those who were committed to the client organization were better off during this assignment but suffered from a reassignment. For those who were committed to the agency, reassignment even had a slight positive impact on health.

Contrary to previous research on contingent work that has mostly been cross-sectional, our study is an answer to the call for longitudinal research in this area (e.g. Aronsson, 2001; Beard & Edwards, 1995). In accordance with research in other areas of organizational transitions (e.g. Mack et al., 1998), we expected that the experience of reassignment decreases well-being. However, we found no effect for reassignment. It is noteworthy that this was true both with and without statistically controlling for various individual and work related variables. Therefore, at least in our study, reassignment in general seems to not be a stressor.² Consideration of commitment to the temporary staffing agency and the client organization will contribute to a more thorough understanding of this result.

Based on past research (e.g. Teo & Waters, 2002), we expected positive effects of organizational commitment on well-being. In fact, the cross-sectional results concerning the relationship between commitment to the client organization and well-being support this hypothesis. However, commitment to the agency was not related to well-being. Commitment to the client organization and commitment to the agency pertain to goal congruence. One might speculate that the specific work arrangements in the client organization as well as the temporary workers' involvement in daily

work activities in the client organization might have a higher and more direct potential to satisfy a need of belonging, being attached, feeling 'at home', or more generally, stability. Although organizational commitment to the employment agency also has value congruence at its core, the respective values focus on learning, development, variety, and more generally, change. Future research should investigate more closely the exact meaning of organizational commitment when both stability and change compete.

It is also noteworthy that our measures of commitment towards the client and commitment towards the agency were not identical. At the core of organizational commitment is a need for attachment. Therefore, both measures focus on a feeling of belonging to the respective organization. However, at least in our sample, commitment to the agency does not include the aspects of long-lasting membership. Therefore, commitment to the client organization can tap respective items of the commitment scale of Mowday et al. (1979), whereas items tapping the 'desire to stay' are not appropriate for commitment to the agency.

Besides direct effects of commitment on well-being, we assumed that the 'desire to attach' plays a key role in the experience of transitions (Sullivan, 1999). We expected contrasting effects for the moderating role of commitment to the client organization and commitment to the staffing agency on well-being. While commitment to the client organization should increase the effect of reassignment on strain, the opposite was expected for commitment to the agency. In fact, reassignment to another client organization decreased well-being in those workers who were highly committed to the previous client organization. Whereas high commitment to the client organization transforms a reassignment into a stressor, commitment to the temporary work agency buffers the effects of reassignment on well-being. Moreover, those who were highly committed to the agency even reported superior well-being when reassignments occurred than when they did not. One explanation might be that commitment to the staffing agency implies that workers value the goals of the agency, whose mission it is to arrange assignments, changes, and challenges. The matching of individual and organizational goals is one central aspect of commitment (Gaertner & Nollen, 1989; Hall, 2002). In other words, those who are highly committed to the agency seem to gain from reassignment. This may support the notion of unbounded workers and their preference for contingent work arrangements: Those who are committed to the staffing agency seem to seek freedom and flexibility, and reassignment is welcome from their point of view (see Marler et al., 2002).

Commitment to the client organization may be a way of satisfying a need for belonging and identifying, but at the same time seems to increase

workers' vulnerability to the negative effects of reassignment. However, it is questionable as to whether being reluctant to develop commitment is an adequate adaptation strategy for employees in unstable work environments. Although it may be true that those who are less committed cannot be hurt by reassignment, their need for belonging remains unsatisfied, which may contribute to a decreased well-being. In sum, organizational commitment is a double-edged sword in the context of transitory work arrangements. The positive effects of organizational commitment on well-being are foiled when transition occurs and workers have to separate from the respective organization.

Limitations

In general, we found that the interaction effects between commitment and reassignment were only significant for the third measurement point (T3). More specifically, a time lag occurred between reassignment (at Time 2) and a decrease of well-being. This finding underlines the advantage of conducting longitudinal studies with more than two measurement points in order to investigate the 'lag' of stressor strain relationships (Taris & Kompier, 2003). However, there is some arbitrariness in the choice of time distance between the three measurement points. Therefore, the minimum time lag that is necessary to elucidate the effects of reassignment is a matter of further research. In addition, due to the limited sample size, the power of statistical analyses was restricted, which may have contributed to an underestimation of the cross-sectional effects of reassignment.

As our data rely on questionnaires and self-reports, a mono-method bias (e.g. Podsakoff et al., 2003) could be a problem. However, a couple of counter-arguments to this exist. First, in view of the repeated measurement of well-being and the rather factual measurement of reassignment, systematic biases are less probable. In longitudinal analyses, the problem of systematic biases is reduced given that the focus of the investigations is on the change of employment-status and well-being. Second, organizational commitment was measured at Time 1 before the second wave, which examined reassignment and a change in well-being. Finally, the detection of spurious interaction effects is less probable even though the cross-sectional correlations between commitment and well-being may be overestimated due to common method variance.

The change of the psychosomatic complaints was measured by comparing the levels of complaints over time and not by asking participants about the development of the respectively experienced psychosomatic complaints. This approach cannot completely rule out that the change of

psychosomatic complaints (or the absence of change) is a result of the individuals' redefinition of the level or the nature of complaints, or even a change of their sensitivity with regard to the experience of complaints over time (Terborg et al., 1980). However, the measure of psychosomatic complaints that was used here is strongly related to the experience of very specific and concrete complaints. In fact, we decided to use psychosomatic complaints as a measure of well-being exactly because we consider them to be at the intersection of mental and physical health. Therefore, reconceptualization should not be a severe problem, although it cannot be completely ruled out that sensitivity towards complaints may have changed over time.

We included workers from different agencies as well as different client organizations in our sample. As one alternative to the statistical control of a possible agency effect, multi-level analyses could be considered. However, because we restricted the number of participants per agency, the probability of finding any interpretable effect due to the type of agency is close to zero.

Finally, the results of our study have to be seen in the context of the German labor market. Temporary agency workers predominantly prefer security and lifelong employment, and boundaryless careers are unattractive. TAW is primarily seen as a stepping stone into a permanent job (Garhammer, 2001; Kvasnicka, 2005). In other words, many workers have a rather traditional vocational orientation, which makes them comparable with those that have been denominated, in other research, as having a preference for stable organizational membership (Marler et al., 2002).

Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to examine the effects of transitions as well as the interplay between organizational commitment and transitions on the well-being of temporary agency workers. In particular, the role of the individual's commitment has not yet been introduced as an independent variable for individuals' well-being in the context of non-standard work arrangements. This is surprising given the fact that it has often been emphasized that growing flexibility, and especially the growth of contingent work, has dramatically changed the relationship between individuals and organizations (Gallagher & Sverke, 2005). While it has been questioned as to what degree workers will commit to an organization in non-standard work arrangements that are characterized by weak bonds and little stability, the consequences that this might have for individuals who do commit under such circumstances has been neglected so far.

All in all, the identity-forming role of commitment should attract more attention in the context of non-standard work and discontinuous careers in order to determine risk factors, potential stress, well-being under increased flexibility, and the negative side of fragmented work-arrangements (Rousseau, 1998; Sennett, 1998). Furthermore, future research might also take into account the different facets of commitment, for example, professional or vocational commitment (see, for example, Cohen, 2003). This would allow for investigations into the compensatory roles of such forms of commitment. For example, it has been argued that for so called 'boundaryless workers', identification with one's own profession is more central than identification with an organization (Hall, 1996; Sullivan, 1999). Moreover, it might be interesting to assess the long-term effects of reassignment on these various forms of commitment. For example, research might analyze whether repeated reassignments lead to a decline in the preparedness to develop commitment towards a client organization.

From a managerial point of view, the role of the staffing agency as an employer should be discussed. According to our results, organizational commitment towards the agency not only has a buffer role but can also increase well-being when reassignment occurs. Therefore, it might be interesting to ask the question of what agencies could do to encourage their workers to develop organizational commitment in the face of the often rather transactional relationship between the agency and workers, which is related to low organizational commitment (Kallberg & Reve, 1992; Kalleberg & Rognes, 2000; Von Hippel et al., 1997). First, the findings on the positive effects of organizational support from the agency on organizational commitment show a feasible way of increasing workers' commitment (Liden et al., 2003; McClurg, 1999; Van Breugel et al., 2005). Commitment towards the agency and client organization depend on the perceived organizational support (POS) from the respective organization. In fact, Connelly et al. (2007) even found evidence for spill-over effects, indicating that POS from the agency has positive effects on affective commitment towards the client as well as POS from the client, which is related to increased continuance commitment towards the agency. Second, agencies may also foster their relationship with their workers through specific human resource practices, for example, by offering training opportunities that would positively relate to commitment (Finegold et al., 2005). Third, some kind of 'personalization' of the employer-employee relationship might be a useful strategy. In fact, during our study we came across agencies that highly valued personalized contacts with their workers and organized regular get together meetings with their employees. Those activities may result in a

'relational form of management', which is appreciated by the workers (Druker & Stanworth, 2004: 67).

Finally, our results are also relevant for client organizations. Admittedly, the finding that commitment to the client was positively related to well-being but at the same time increased workers' vulnerability to the negative effects of reassignment makes it challenging to draw definite conclusions. Nevertheless, our reply to Gallagher and Sverke (2005), who asked whether '... worker commitment to a client organization in the THS [temporary help services] industry is even a meaningful construct' (p. 192), is straightforward. The findings of the current study, similar to those from Pittinsky and Shih (2004), who reported high commitment in mobile workers amidst their mobility, suggest that organizational commitment is also relevant for temporary agency workers. Moreover, with regard to the general positive effects of employees' commitment to organizational outcomes (Fedor et al., 2006), it is also desirable for client organizations to have committed external workers. However, it may be rather cynical to recommend client organizations to increase temporary workers' commitment and to accept that this may impair workers' well-being when reassignment occurs. In fact, client organizations often fall back on agency temps just because the relationship means 'no commitment or obligations' on their part (Druker & Stanworth, 2004: 59). With regard to temporary workers' preparedness to develop commitment to client organizations, they are called upon to provide for the fair treatment of their external workers (Feldman et al., 1994). This might include such things as transparency concerning assignment decisions as well as the provision of opportunities for skill development. In sum, client organizations bear responsibility for their temporary workers and they should be aware of the ethical implications of their employment strategy.

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Notes

- 1 Unfortunately, the measurement of commitment to the agency has been introduced into the survey at a later time. Therefore, the sample size varies.
- 2 One has to keep in mind that the power of the analysis was restricted due to the comparably small number of participants, which leads to an increased probability of committing a beta-error.

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