Co-operative Difference and Organizational Commitment: The Role of High-performance Work Practices

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between human resource management practices (HRMPs) and organizational commitment remains unexplored in the specific context of financial service co-operatives (FSC). The specific principles that guide co-operatives are believed to cause a different perception of the HRMP by the employees, even when the practices are similar to those of the capitalist sector. This perceived co-operative difference would be of strategic importance for FSC as it could play a role in the relationship between HRMPs and the organizational commitment. Two objectives are drawn from this, the first being to identify the HRMPs, called high-performance work practices (HPWP), which act as determinants of the
employees’ perception of a co-operative difference, and the second, to verify the existence of a relationship between the perceived co-operative difference and organizational commitment. Based on survey data, this research uses factorial modelling and shows that the co-operative difference perception is significantly influenced by practices of training, empowerment, and transformational leadership. It also demonstrates that the perception of a co-operative difference plays a mediating role between HPWPs and the organizational commitment of the employees.

Keywords: Co-operative difference, affective commitment, normative commitment, calculative commitment, strategic human resource management

INTRODUCTION

In Canada and other industrialized countries, increased competition among employers to attract the best candidates, and extensive efforts to retain the nowadays very mobile graduates, have created a new labour market context. In consequence, co-operatives like other organizations have to adopt strategies for human resource management (HRM) that reflect the new demographic realities and that ensure good employee performance, workforce retention and recruitment of new talent.

This paper focuses on one aspect of this problem, namely organizational commitment in a network of financial service co-operatives (FSC). The context of co-operative organizations brings some peculiarities to the organizational commitment issue, peculiarities that still need to be explored. From the point of view of ownership, governance, and purpose, it is known that co-operatives differ from capitalist firms, mainly because of their
democratic way of management (Leclerc, 2010; Brown & Novkovic, 2015). The complex nature of the co-operatives also suggests some specificities in the choice of HRM practices (HRMPs), in their deployment, as well as the employee perception of these practices.

In spite of this co-operative context, the fact remains that FSCs are in competition with capitalist enterprises like banks (De Cooman et al., 2011). This reality creates pressure on co-operative organizations, as can be seen in their efforts to reduce operating costs. Whether being done through reengineering of production process, the merging of co-operatives or the closing of service points, FSCs sometimes adopt management strategies similar to those recommended by the capitalist banking sector (Fortin & Leclerc, 2009, 2011). Obviously, these strategic evolutions have had an impact on HRM, sometimes resulting in strategic activities for HRM that mimic those of the capitalist world: staff reduction, staff mobility, incentive pay systems, skill development programs, and so on. For example, during the reengineering process undertaken between 1997 and 2000 at the Fédération des caisses populaires acadiennes (FCPA) in Canada, the number of employees declined from 936 to 729, a decline of 18.4% (Leclerc & Fortin, 2003). In accordance, many institutions from the for-profit, the public, and the non-profit sectors have put in place a large set of HRMPs called *high performance work practices* (HPWPs). Their goal is ‘to make organizations more competitive, innovative and flexible, able to cope with rapid technological change, and able to offer high-quality work to a labor force that has grown in educational sophistication’ (Kalleberg, Marsden, Reynolds & Knoke, 2006: 271-272).

Regardless of the many studies on human resources in the co-operative sector and in the social economy (Davister, 2007), few studies have analysed HRMPs in this sector, either with a qualitative approach (Davis, 1999, 2006; Feroz, 2014; Mallikarjuna, 2014) or a quantitative approach (Arcand et al., 2004, Medcof &
Even fewer empirical studies have been conducted on HPWPs within the specific context of co-operatives enterprises.

Within the field of HRMPs, moreover, research has not yet focused on employment relationships in co-operatives (ER). Indeed, past research on co-operatives preferred to study the non-relational aspects that prevail in the organization (Byrne, McCarthy, Ward & McMurtry, 2012), the existing service relationship between co-operatives and their consumer members (Byrne, Heinonen & Jussila, 2015), or the owner status of employees in a worker cooperative (Hoffmann, 2016). ER between management and employees in co-operatives have not yet been directly addressed. As a matter of fact, findings from other studies that discuss ER in co-operatives (Haiven & Haiven, 2009; Davis, 2006; 2004), base their analyses on secondary data, or on interviews conducted with leaders or members of co-operatives, without explicit reference to the employees. To the best of our knowledge, only three studies published in scientific journals have collected data from workers involved in ER in co-operatives or in non-profit organizations. Firstly, Troberg & Köppä (2011) have identified the main factors that affect workers’ motivation and their sense of innovation when placed in a democratic management system such as co-operatives. Secondly, Bernardi & Köppä (2011) have compared the perceptions of co-operative workers to those of workers in capitalist firms concerning the climate in their organization. Finally, Bastida, Marimon & Carreras (2018) have analyzed the impact of some HRMPs on workers’ satisfaction in non-profit organizations. In sum, none of these studies has used the organizational commitment variable in its analysis, and this is why we believe that our work can fill a gap in the existing literature.

Within ER, some resemblance has been noted between FSCs and capitalist firms in the choice of HRM activities. Wetzel & Gallagher
(1987) gave a good assessment of this reality in their paper on labour relations in co-operatives. They conclude on union-management relationships, asserting that: “Thus, conflict is likely to be a feature of every work organization, including cooperatives” (p. 525). But, co-operatives remain guided by principles of democracy, equity, and training, to name a few (Davis, 2006). In accordance with the observed specificities of the co-operative management style proposed by Purcell (1987), that is the combination of consultation and participation in decision-making and employee development, one can only suspect that a difference exists in the co-operative ER, in the functioning of co-operative HRMPs, in HPWPs. We believe that employees perceive this difference, even when adopted co-operative practices are similar to capitalist firms, in order to face market competition.

Due to the lack of knowledge on co-operative ER and based on the idea that the FCPA employees perceive the co-operative difference of their financial service co-operative management compared to capitalist financial service institutions, this research aims to achieve two goals. First, it seeks to identify the determinants of the employees’ perception of a co-operative difference through usual HPWPs within their ER. Then, the research wants to verify the existence of a relationship between the perception of the co-operative difference and organizational commitment within their ER. This paper bears a lot of its originality and of its advancement to knowledge from better understanding the nature of ER in a co-operative context, and observing the impact of HPWPs on organizational commitment, through the specific lens of employees’ perception of a co-operative difference.

Since HPWPs of ER are essential to the building of a competitive capacity against capitalist firms, in a capitalist market, it becomes more than relevant to consider the scope of HRM in this type of
democratic business, and to identify if the co-operative difference plays a role in the personnel management. This is especially true for the FCPA, at focus in this research. The availability of skilled human resources is a particular challenge for this organization operating in Caraquet, a small Canadian community of northeastern New Brunswick with a population of 4248 people in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2017a) and the presence of two demographic trends – population decline in small rural communities and aging population. From 2006 to 2016, an average population decline of 7.5% was observed in 6 of the 7 census divisions in which the caisses populaires operate (Statistics Canada, 2017b) and, in 2016, 21.4% of the population of these 7 census divisions was aged 65 years and older compared to 16.9% for Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017c). It has to be noted that in New Brunswick, a province of Eastern Canada, caisses populaires and credit unions play an important role in the financial service industry. In December 2019, they controlled 11.2% of this lucrative market (Bank of Canada, 2018, Canadian Credit Union Association, 2020).

The purpose of this study is to identify the HRMPs which act as determinants of the employees’ perception of a co-operative difference, and to verify the existence of a relationship between the perceived co-operative difference and organizational commitment. The following contains five sections. The fist describes the theoretical framework on co-operative difference, HPWPs and organizational commitment, at the basis of our research model on co-operative ER. This section ends with the conceptual model and hypotheses of the study. More specifically, the resulting research model follows a strategic perspective of HRM and the AMO (abilities, motivation and opportunity to participate) approach from the work of Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg & Kalleberg (2000). The model links bundled HPWPs, employees’ perception of a co-
operative difference, and their organizational commitment. The second section reports on the collection of in situ data, namely the study population, the data collection tools and the variables within the various constructs of the model. The third section describes the results and their analysis while the fourth section discusses the influence of the perceived co-operative difference on strategies for co-operative HRM. The study concludes on the contributions and limitations of the research while suggesting some orientations for work to come.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Co-operative difference

Three fundamental aspects differentiate co-operatives from other business organizations like capitalist or state firms. The statement from the International Co-operative Alliance on Co-operative Identity (ICA, 1995) defines: 1 - a set of values (self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity); 2 - a set of ethical values (honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others); and 3 - a set of principles (voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education-training-information, co-operation among co-operatives, concern for community), that shall guide co-operatives decisions.

From a theoretical point of view, the challenge in studying co-operatives comes from the fact that property, decision-making, and benefits are lodged directly in the hands of the member-user. As underlined by Gijselinckx & Develtere (2008: 1), “[b]ecause they are owned and democratically-controlled by their members (individuals or groups and even capital enterprises), the decisions taken by co-operatives inherently try to balance the need for profitability with the needs of their members and the wider
interests of the community”. Many issues come from that unique setup: how to align managers and members’ goals, how to get rid of free riders, how to maintain the interest for members to invest in the co-operative (Novkovic, 2008), how to promote employees’ commitment in non-workers’ co-operatives, and the like.

In Canada, like in other countries, co-operative businesses operate in a specific set of legislation. Their framework includes, totally or in part, the different aspects of the co-operative principles adopted by the ICA. For example, the New Brunswick credit unions act respects the first principle about voluntary and open membership by imposing no limitations on “the number of membership shares it may issue” (New Brunswick, 2019, par. 40.2) but includes no obligation about the principle regarding member education. In this province, caisses populaires and credit unions are incorporated under a specific law that is different from other co-operatives for it includes special regulations about risk management and savers’ protection. For example, paragraph 177 of the act stipulates that any caisse populaire has to be part of a federation to ensure risk-pooling practices (New Brunswick, 2019).

As stated by McKillop & Wilson (2011), the co-operative nature of the caisses populaires strongly affects the organizational behaviour. To illustrate this reality, we may simply point out the many objective functions, a formal representation of the main goals of a firm, have been suggested to explain their decisions (Fortin et al., 2000). This setup often creates particular managing rules for the employees. As a result, employees may perceive their work environment of a co-operative differently and one could expect that their answer to HPWPs towards organizational commitment be affected by such a perception. It then becomes important to identify the determinants of the employees’ perception of a co-operative difference through the HPWPs and to verify the existence of a relationship between the perception of the co-operative difference
and the employees’ commitment to the organization. This brings all the interest of testing models of HPWP in a co-operative context to verify if distinctive results are observed compared to other business environments. This is of particular interest given that most research on this topic have been conducted in the for-profit sector and some in the public sector (Kalleberg et al., 2006). If so, these results may have important implications from a managerial point of view because of the competitive advantage this may bring to co-operatives in the labour market. On an intuitive basis, Côté (2007) suggested the potential of a co-operative difference as competitive advantage variable in defining the strategic plan for the co-operative firm.

The capacity of HPWP to influence the perception of the co-operative difference is implicitly recognized in the fifth co-operative principle about education, training and information. The challenge is to develop what Davis (2006) calls a learning culture. Through education and training, co-operatives try to build a positive perception of their specific model. As summarized by Davis (1999: 63), “[t]here cannot be an effective cooperative strategic management programme without human resource management (HRM) because cooperative strategic management is human centred, value led and culture dependent”. In this respect, one could expect to see a difference of the employees’ motivation in the co-operative sector, like other studies noted that employees’ motivation in public and non-profit sectors is rooted in ‘the intrinsic dimensions of work, especially the desire to benefit others and society’ (Hamann & Foster, 2014: 335; Leete, 2000).

In such conditions, an assessment of the employees’ organizational commitment and of its relationships with HPWP in the specific co-operative context is relevant in terms of both new knowledge and organizational management.
HR Concepts

HPWPAs

As mentioned earlier, one objective of this study is to identify determinants of the employees’ perception of a cooperative difference through usual HPWPAs. Implementing these practices seeks to enhance the organizational performance, based on employees that possess strong knowledge, skills, abilities and motivation (Karatepe, 2015). The conceptualization of the HPWPAs issues from the AMO approach presented in the work of Appelbaum et al. (2000) where they put forward the influence of bundled HPWPAs on certain behavioural outcomes. The next paragraphs explain how HPWPAs bundles are built according to the three AMO dimensions.

The first dimension (A) refers to abilities and skills possessed by the employees. Within the KSA (knowledge, skills and abilities) approach (Combs et al., 2006), this dimension is a set of practices that reinforce the firm’s capital of skills. They may, for instance, correspond to staffing practices that use structured and valid instruments for recruiting and selecting personnel, aiming to attract the largest number of competent candidates and then select the best ones among them (Subramony, 2009). These practices also concern the development of abilities in order to provide the workforce with the required skills to properly run the production process. In the quest for employees’ commitment, these practices mounted in systems for employee skills development have shown to be important tools for staff mobilization (Fabi, Lacoursière, Morin & Raymond, 2010). In fact, they increase the area of employees’ autonomy and they develop a sense of being supported and treated fairly by the employer. This leads to an increased willingness to engage actively with the organization (Malhotra et
The second dimension (M) concerns practices on the development of employees’ motivation. They encourage discretionary effort and discourage unproductive behaviour from employees (Wright & Kehoe, 2007). They may also relate to job security, sharing of information, opportunities for advancement, balance between work and personal life, compensation and process performance management (Appelbaum et al., 2000). One may also find practices related to leadership (Fabi et al., 2010), including a participative style of leadership. Indeed, related HPWP s seek for a greater involvement of the employees in the decisions regarding the organizational performance. Such practices may then lead to a greater employee motivation if they see themselves as an integral part of the company’s destiny.

The third dimension (O) stands for the opportunity to participate in decision-making. In general, this dimension calls for the idea of employee empowerment. This concept is a relational process in which the supervisor shares power with the subordinates (Geralis & Terziiovski, 2003; Hamed, 2010). Pertaining to the theoretical perspective of social exchange (Conger & Kanungo, 1988), it implies the use of practices that involve the possibility for subordinates to suggest changes to their supervisor, but above all, that give them the opportunity to make decisions in their work (Forrester, 2000). Examples of practices related to employee consultation (Simard et al., 2005), autonomy at work, employee participation in decision-making (Malhotra et al., 2007), and the implementation of work teams and more fluid channels of communication in the organization (Appelbaum et al., 2000) are widely documented in the literature.
Organizational commitment

Among the behavioural outcomes expected through the AMO approach of HPWPs is the organizational commitment of the employees. Indeed, past research suggested that bundled HPWPs can influence positively organizational commitment of employees (Fabi et al, 2011; Hu, Hou, Mak, Xu, Yang, Hu, Qiu & Wen, 2019; Karatepe, 2015; Luna-Arocas & Camps, 2008).

Nowadays considered a multidimensional concept (Vandenberghe et al., 2009), commitment is “a force that binds an individual to a course of action of relevance to one or more targets” (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001: 308). Personal attitudes result from one’s commitment, that develop a psychological state whereby the person’s behaviour may be influenced in a favourable way towards several elements: the organization where the person operates (Meyer & Allen, 1997; Meyer et al., 2002), the working group and the supervisor (Ben Mansour et al., 2009), the person’s work and career (Mueller, Wallace & Price, 1992) or the customer’s service in the service sectors (Elmadag et al., 2008; Peccei & Rosenthal, 1997). However, this paper focuses specifically on the commitment to the organization and its three components.

In line with the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and that of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), affective organizational commitment is an unconditional commitment of the individual towards the business of the organization. The individual agrees to respond favourably to the requirements of the organization and does not hesitate to make every necessary effort since he or she gets great satisfaction from that emotional attachment where the organization provides him ‘something of value’ (Mostafa, Bottomley, Gould-Williams, Abouarghoub & Lythreatis, 2019). In other words, ‘employees remain with the organization because they want to’ (Bansal, Irving & Taylor, 2004: 236).
For its part, normative organizational commitment happens when an individual is committed to the business of the organization because he/she feels a moral obligation to do so. The individual responds positively to the requests of the managers because he or she may otherwise feel a heavy moral dissatisfaction. Based on a set of normative pressures that are internalized by the individual (Vandenberghe et al., 2009; Wiener, 1982), this form of engagement puts emphasis on the individual belief that conscience problems would occur if he/she did not commit to the organization success. In other words, ‘employees remain with the organization because they ought to – it is the ‘right thing to do’ (Bansal et al., 2004: 236).

Finally, calculative commitment means that individuals remain in their employment relationship due to the costs they associate with leaving their employment. In the organizational commitment literature, the calculative component is based on either a sacrifice dimension or a lack of alternative (Vandenberghe et al., 2011). On one hand, the calculative sacrifice commitment relates to the fear of losing all the gains that one made in his/her employment. On the other hand, the calculative alternative commitment refers to the idea that individuals remain in employment because they perceive a lack of employment alternatives on the labor market. Thus, individuals showing calculative commitment can feel that they are ‘locked in’ their job (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Roxenhall & Andrésen, 2012; Sharma et al., 2006), and they ‘remain in the organization because they need to’ (Bansal et al., 2004: 236). In sum ‘they cannot end a relationship because of economic, social, or psychological costs’ (Bansal et al., 2004: 238). These three dimensions of cost are related to the concept of ‘constraint-based relationship maintenance’ (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997). The concept relies on the idea of dependency, meaning that an individual feels forced to stay in a relationship. Not only could it be economically
too costly for an individual to quit his partner (or in this case, his employer) due to the lack of alternatives, it could also be too costly socially to do it towards his colleagues, his friends or his family, for instance.

In our study, calculative commitment is defined by the sense of guilt an employee feels due his social or economical cost of quitting the organization. Indeed, employees could feel guilty to leave because of their dependency, because they are ‘aware that relationship-specific investments already made in time, effort, money, knowledge etc. may be lost, that new costs may arise and that new relationship-specific investments must be made (‘switching costs’) if the relationship concerned comes to an end’ (Roxenhall & Andrésen, 2012: 89). In a rural context like that of our study, there are not many economic alternatives, even less in the financial sector, and everybody knows everyone in a social way. An employee of FCPA could feel socially guilty to quit his employer, hence staying in that ER due to calculative commitment. Consequently, it remains important to study the impact of HPWPs on the perception of a co-operative difference and on the three components of organizational commitment.

**Conceptual framework and research propositions**

Based on this review of the literature and on the results of Meyer *et al.* (2002), a conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1. Linked to our first research objective, it seeks to identify how HPWPs may influence both the employees’ perception of a co-operative difference in the *caisses populaires*, and two types of organizational commitment, namely affective and normative commitments. A next step is to analyze the link between the perception of the co-operative difference and calculative commitment. Two hypotheses are then tested. The first one suggests a direct positive link between these two concepts of a
perceived co-operative difference and calculative commitment. The second hypothesis suggests that the co-operative difference affects calculative commitment indirectly, through the employees’ affective and normative commitment. A higher perception of the co-operative difference should have a positive impact on both affective and normative commitment. Finally, as suggested by previous results (Meyer et al., 2002), a positive relationship is expected between the three types of organizational commitment.

![Figure 1. Conceptual framework](image)

Using that framework, two statistical treatments (structural models) were compared, using HPWPs bundles that are defined differently in order to observe the influence of the bundles definition on the other organizational variables. Although bundles may be defined in an idiosyncratic way, research has shown different types of bundles that may influence perceptions and commitment in distinctive manners (Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003; Luna·Arocas & Camps, 2008; Fabi et al., 2011).

In this research, a first model defined the HPWPs bundles accordingly to Subramony’s (2009) meta-analysis of the links between HPWPs bundles and firm performance. According to this synthesis, HPWPs are split in three bundles: skill-enhancement,
motivation-enhancement and empowerment-enhancement. This first model, thereafter called the \textit{meta-analysis-based approach} allows us to validate the theoretical HPWPs bundles in the specific context of co-operatives.

A second model identified HPWPs bundles from an exploratory component factor analysis. In this case, thereafter called the \textit{exploratory factorial approach}, a whole series of variables (statements) concerning HPWPs were gathered into factors according to their explanation of the variance of the observed data. The resulting factors were then named through a subjective interpretation of the statements they contained. This allowed us to define bundles of HPWPs that are more specific to the co-operative environment in which the research was conducted, with the hope that they provide a richer explanation of their influence on the perception of a co-operative difference and on the organizational commitment.

**Data bank and bundles definition**

The questionnaire used in this study was administered online to the employees of the \textit{Fédération des caisses populaires acadiennes} (FCPA) and those of 13 credit unions. The FCPA is a second level financial service co-operative whose several credit unions operate in regions of the province with a strong French presence. Its total assets represent $3.2 billion.

The questionnaire comprised 92 items of information, including questions, statements and demographic information. As part of this extensive survey that served several purposes other than those of this research, several questions concerned HPWPs while only a few concerned affective, normative and calculative commitment. However, several validated questionnaires from the literature, like those of Appelbaum \textit{et al.} (2000), Malhotra \textit{et al.} (2007), Lee \textit{et al.} (2001), Meyer \& Herscovitch (2001) and Pececi &
Rosenthal (1997), were exploited for the construction of the questionnaire on the concepts of bundled HPWPs and organizational commitment. All the statements were measured using a scale from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5), including a “no response” option (6).

The population consisted of 888 individual respondents, including all the employees of the FCPA and the 13 local credit unions, with the exception of the chief executive officer of the federation and the general managers of the 13 caisses populaires. Employees are all members of the co-operative network because of their automatic inclusion in the direct pay deposit service. However, they cannot stand for boards of director of local caisses populaires (New Brunswick, 2015, par. 84e) but have the right to vote in annual general meetings. As members, they have access to patronage dividends. This bond of association may be a source of commitment.

We obtained 578 completed questionnaires (156 for the FCPA employees and 422 for the credit unions), for an excellent response rate of 65.1%. The FCPA human resources department offers local caisses populaires managers and employees training, evaluation, salary policy, help to recruit new employees, and so on. Since the federation offers HRM services to its local caisses populaires, both databanks were treated globally as part of a centralized system.

Not enough information was available on this population to validate the representativeness of the sample. The distribution of the population by gender was our only benchmark where women held 82.3% of the positions in the participating co-operatives. A total of 80.4% of the respondents to the survey were women, resulting in the underrepresentation of women in our sample.

The main socio-demographic characteristics of respondents were the following: the two main age groups were the 36-45 years old (28.4%) and the 46-55 years old (37.9%); respondents lived with a
partner (83.9%), and the majority had dependent children (58.3%); French was the mother tongue in 98.8% of the cases; 88.6% occupied a full-time job and had some college education (36%) or university education (47.9%); they earned between $ 30,000 and $ 79,999 (78.3%), held an executive position in 11.1% of the cases and supervised employees in 13.3% of the cases; on average, respondents had been in the labour market for 22.8 years, working with the FCPA for 14.8 years, and in their current position for 7.6 years.

HPWP bundles. In the first meta-analysis-based approach, we stayed as close as possible to the HPWP bundles proposed by Appelbaum et al. (2000) and Subramony’s (2009). Appendix A identifies the statements used for each bundle and their respective sources. Table 1 presents data about the construction of the three bundles, showing their acceptable internal reliability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bundle</th>
<th>Number of statements</th>
<th>Cronbach α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To define the HRM bundles of the exploratory factorial approach, 24 statements on HPWP were processed in a component factor analysis using SPSS 21 software, with orthogonal rotation to minimize cross loading, as well as eigenvalues superior to 1, and a loading factor ≥ 0.6. The statistically significant Bartlett’s test of sphericity (sig. < 0.001) indicates that sufficient correlations existed among the statements (variables) to proceed to the analysis (Hair et al., 2010). This resulted in a list of five factors defined by 20 statements, accounting for a satisfactory 62.72% of the variance.
Appendix B presents the resulting factors with the corresponding Cronbach α, their respective statements and their loadings. Four statements were rejected because of their lack of loading in any of the factors.

The resulting factors were given the following subjective interpretation because of the statements they included: Empowering Supervisor Leadership (6 statements about workers’ respect from their supervisor and participation in the workplace), Skills Development (4 statements about training), Empowering Corporate Culture (4 statements about managerial culture of work context), Motivation – Performance (4 statements), and Motivation – Workplace (3 statements).

To assess the stability of the factor structure, a similar factorial analysis was performed on two random split subsets of the data set (Appendix B). According to these results, the stability of the structure is acceptable since the same factors were retained, even if the factor loading gap between the total sample and the sub-samples exceeded the significant 0.1 in two factors: item 30 in Empowering Supervisor Leadership, and item 47 in Skills Development (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

**Latent variables.** At the second and third levels of relations in the conceptual framework, the two models included the same four latent variables. The co-operative difference variable was composed of four statements (Cronbach α = 0.79) based on the perception of a collectivist management style as explained by Purcell (1987). They included an engagement because the organization is co-operative, the feeling of being part of a team and being important to the co-operative organization and of contributing to its mission. Then, the affective commitment variable consisted of two statements (Cronbach α = 0.61) issued and adapted from past research in HRM research (Peccei & Rosenthal, 1997). Although the Cronbach’s α is below the usual
0.70 limit to be considered acceptable (Nunnally, 1978), the validity of this value is found acceptable down to 0.60 (Robinson et al., 1991). The main reason to explain this weak value is that only two items measured the concept (Hair et al., 2010). For normative and calculative commitment, the questionnaire included two statements, also issued and adapted from validated questionnaires (Lee et al., 2001; Malhotra, Budhwar & Prowse, 2007; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). The fact that normative and calculative commitments were monitored using only one statement is a limitation of this research due to the multiple purposes of the extensive questionnaire. The fact that the statements were issued from validated questionnaires allows us to believe, however, that they monitor the commitments they intend. Appendix C identifies the statements for each latent variable and their respective sources.

RESULTS

Selecting for the estimation method implies that we first check for the normal distribution of the different variables. As in many surveys about employees’ commitment and satisfaction, our data are positively biased. Appendix D presents normality test results based on Shapiro-Wilk test for all the statements. Normality is rejected for all of them. This appendix also presents mean and standard deviation for the different statements.

Since the data are ordinal and non-normal, a recommended estimation procedure is the diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS). As stated by Mîndrilă (2010: 65), in contrast to maximum likelihood (ML), “DWLS provides more accurate parameter estimates, and the fit of the model is more robust to variable type and non-normality”. This confirmatory factor analysis, or structural equations modeling, was performed with Lisrel 9.
The results of the structural equations for the meta-analysis-based approach are presented in figure 2.

![Figure 2](image)

**Significance level:** * (10%), ** (5%); *** (1%); **** (0.1%)

**Figure 2. Results for the Meta-analysis-based approach**

On its part, figure 3 shows the results for the exploratory factorial approach based on previous factor analysis. Several relations were found to be statistically significant between the HPWPs bundles, the co-operative difference, affective and normative commitment and finally, calculative commitment. Only the statistically significant relationships are shown on both figures. These results are further discussed. Marcoux et al. (2018) use this model to explore the impact of socio-demographic factors on the perception of co-operative difference by employees and organizational commitment.
DISCUSSION

The first objective of this research was to identify the determinants of a perceived co-operative difference through usual HPWPs. According to the results from both the meta-analysis-based approach and the exploratory factorial approach, the perception of a co-operative difference is determined by HPWPs on skill development and empowerment.

More specifically, the bundle on skill development from both models included several training practices, namely providing the employee with initial and on-going training for the actual task, providing training that allows for the exploration of other opportunities, and informing of the training activities that are available.
Regarding empowerment, the meta-analysis-based bundle included a range of practices concerned with communication from the management, employees’ authority to decide, and the consideration of their ideas and opinions by the supervisor. In the exploratory factorial approach, the practice of empowerment evoked the sharing the corporate culture as it included communication from the management, the fact that high management could be trusted in what they said, that communications conveyed values like work quality, and that there was a spirit of co-operation among the employees. Finally, the exploratory factorial approach brought another determinant for the perception of the co-operative difference in the practice of empowering supervisor leadership from the direct supervisor of the employees. Direct supervisors need to inspire trust, to help their employees reach their fullest potential, to treat them fairly and consider their abilities in order to make decisions. Besides the interest of identifying practices that foster the perception of different way to function in co-operatives, answering this objective brought a better understanding of what has been suggested as being a different management style in co-operatives. Indeed, results show that employees perceive a specific functioning of co-operatives through management practices like HPWPs.

The second objective of the research was to verify if a relationship existed between the perception of a co-operative difference and the outcomes of a greater organizational commitment. As expected, the results from both the meta-analysis-based approach and the exploratory factorial approach show that the HPWPs bundles influence the organizational commitment of the employees.

In the meta-analysis-based approach, the interesting part is to note that affective commitment is influenced by motivation practices only and that there is no direct link between the three
HPWPs bundles and normative commitment. According to our results, the two other bundles of skills development and empowerment affect the employees’ perception of a co-operative difference before they can reach, indirectly, both affective and normative commitment. In other words, our results indicate that the HPWPs of skills development and empowerment both influence affective commitment through the perception of a co-operative difference. Moreover, enhancement of the normative commitment with HPWPs depends on the building of a co-operative difference before. These observations bring new knowledge to the relationship between HPWPs and organizational commitment, showing that the perception of a specific management style – here the co-operative difference – would be required to enhance the employees’ organizational commitment.

As anticipated and following previous results (Meyer et al., 2002), calculative commitment is positively influenced by affective and normative organizational commitment. Considering that calculative commitment corresponds to a sense of guilt in our study, this type of commitment probably is influenced in a social way, meaning that the individuals feel guilty if they leave since their relationships at work are based on meaningful interactions with the members of the organization (Kahn, 1990). However, no significant relationship appears between the perception of a co-operative difference and calculative commitment. The fact that the perception of a co-operative difference influences both affective and normative commitments, but not calculative commitment, allows us to conclude that the perceived co-operative difference acts as a mediating variable between some HPWPs and the latter types of organizational commitment.

The results from the exploratory factorial approach are even richer. The practices on empowerment through the supervisor leadership and the sharing of a corporate culture show a large-
range impact on the perception of the cooperative difference, and on the affective and the normative commitments. Although several past studies have shown a positive impact of empowerment practices on organizational commitment (Freire & Azevedo, 2015; Malhotra *et al.*, 2007; Macsinga, Sulea, Sârbescu, Fischmann & Dumitru, 2015), no other studies have been done, to our knowledge, on the mediating role of a cooperative difference between those variables.

Through the mediating role of a perceived cooperative difference, the Empowering Supervisor Leadership included the employees’ perception of their ideas taken into consideration, of their authority to make decisions, of the support received from their supervisor in developing their potential, and of a fair treatment by the managers. As such, our results corroborate the findings of Meyer *et al.* (2002) on the relationship between the empowering transformational leadership of the supervisor and the employees’ commitment and between the perception of justice and the commitment. Moreover, they confirm the findings of Rhoades & Eisenberger (2002) on a relationship between the employees feeling supported by the organization and their commitment.

Of direct influence on affective and normative commitment, and enhanced by the perception of a cooperative difference, the Empowering Corporate Culture gathers specific managerial practices. These practices bring employees to perceive they can trust their manager when promises are made, enhance the frequency and quality of communication, put forward a cooperative mindset, and make work quality a priority for management. This way, employees tend to develop their trust towards management, and then build a significant feeling of belonging with their organization for they feel honesty from their managers and a sense of being part of the organization’s success.
Our results find echo in the results of previous studies. For example, Simard et al. (2005) discuss the mediating role of the distributive, interactional, and procedural justice between the sharing of information and the affective commitment of employees. Moreover, Zhao et al. (2007) show the existence of a relationship between the psychological contract and the affective commitment. In this sense, our findings suggest managers should develop direct communication channels between them and their employees and make sure that they achieve their promises to the employees. In fact, a better frequency of communication can strengthen the employees’ will to commit to their organization. Of importance, also, is that management actively listen the employees during their relational communication. If on the one hand, they transmit a message, they also have to carefully listen and provide a following to the information provided by the employees. This relates to the analysis made by Zhao et al. (2007) on the importance of the psychological contract in maintaining a fructuous work relationship in the organization. Not only does management have to be attentive to the needs and preoccupations of its employees, it also has to demonstrate its sincere efforts to answer them. Moreover, managers shall have a credible and honest discourse in the opinion of the employees. In other words, they must avoid at all price any promises they would not be able to hold. If by inadvertence it were to happen, they would have to explain it. Otherwise, this could result in a psychological contract breach, generating often irreversible feelings like distrust, frustration and anger on the part of employees. In such case, consequences may be disastrous for the organization at the level of organizational commitment and of a perceived co-operative difference.

Regarding Skills Development practices, our results reach similar conclusions to those of previous studies linked to career development (Meyer & Smith, 2000), to the development of the
employees’ commitment towards their organization (Malhotra, 2007) and to their level of performance (Feroz, 2014). Considering our results on the influence of Empowering Supervisor Leadership and Skills Development practices, managers would profit from taking into consideration the opinion of their employees when they make decisions. They should delegate more responsibilities and support their employees through HPWP\s such as training, coaching and mentorship to ensure that employees have the abilities to develop more skills, not only to improve the organizational performance, and rather to demonstrate the employees their true potential for advancement in the organization.

It is possible to find in this kind of practices and their positive perception by employees a way to enhance their identification with the organization, and especially, their perception of a beneficial cooperative difference towards their organizational commitment because their work relationship is concretely based on norms of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960).

Taking into account the few empirical studies conducted on HPWPs in the specific context of co-operative enterprises, this study contributes to the knowledge that the perceiving a cooperative difference plays a mediating role between HPWPs and employees’ organizational commitment. This study goes beyond the previous theoretical and conceptual studies. On the one hand, our results find echo in the previous work of Davis (2006) and the Cooperative Social Capital Management (CSCM) model highlighting that “the cooperative values, principles and structure provide cooperatives with their competitive advantage” (Davis, 2006: 69). On the other hand, our results advance knowledge in the area of managing people in co-operatives. Indeed, analysis of the data highlights the positive influence of specific HRMPs, especially empowering practices and skill development, on employees’ behavioral outcomes, and that employees perceiving a cooperative
difference enhance that link. In this way, our study tends to show that the employees, in a co-operative context, go beyond their employment contract because their organizational affective commitment takes its source in the specific management style permitting them to meet their own beliefs, values and expectations (Davister, 2007).

According to these findings, it would be important that managers in co-operatives integrate in their HPWPs both the values and principles inherent to co-operative organizations and their management, such as democracy, equity, solidarity, autonomy, information sharing and training. Together with the employees perceiving this co-operative difference, should put forward empowering practices of the supervisor leadership and of the corporate culture, as well as skill development ones. Namely, practices should include frequent and quality communication, active listening, realisation of promises, taking into account of opinions, capability of decision-making, supervisor’s support, feeling of equity, advancement possibilities, training, coaching, and mentoring that all call out to co-operative values and principles. As a result, HPWPs can contribute to develop a specific co-operative difference, which will in turn, generate positive effects on the employees’ level of affective and normative commitment.

Another interesting point is to compare both approaches for their goodness-of-fit to explain the observed data. Based on Mîndrilă (2010) suggestion of statistical tools to evaluate the validity of measurement models, we assessed the quality of our structural equation models (Table 2).
Table 2. Statistics on the relative fit of the models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Meta-analysis-based Model</th>
<th>Exploratory Factorial Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)</td>
<td>0.069</td>
<td>0.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)</td>
<td>0.973</td>
<td>0.989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the first indicator, RMSEA, a lower statistic is better. Values between .05 and .08 indicate a fair model fit, indicating that the exploratory factorial model gives a better result. The second indicator, which reflects the size of the fitted residuals, also indicates a better model when its statistic is lower. The SRMR also supports the factorial model. Finally, AGFI indicates how much variance the proposed model accounts for. Values above 0.9 are generally considered acceptable, while an AGFI value of 0.95 indicates that the proposed model fits the data very well. So, for this last indicator a higher statistic is better. Both models perform well, but the exploratory factorial model better fit the data once again (Hair et al., 2010). This suggests that the study of HPWPs set in bundles would profit from an exploratory factorial analysis whenever possible since the resulting empirical model could better describe the influence of the HPWPs on specific organizational variables. In fact, this kind of analysis contributes to better understanding the context of co-operatives for it seizes the coherence existing between some HPWPs and the democratic management principles of cooperatives. Specifically bundled HPWPs can create synergies which positive impacts are identifiable on the employees’ perception of a co-operative
difference and their organizational commitment. For this study, we conclude that the exploratory factorial model is the best one to understand, in the context of FCPA, the relationships between HPWPs, the co-operative difference and organizational commitment.

CONCLUSION

In a labour market with increased competition among employers to attract and retain skilled employees, the FCPA and its many financial service co-operatives face the challenge of retaining their workforce. This creates pressure on the co-operatives and hence has an impact on their strategic activities of HRM, sometimes resulting in SHRM that mimic those of the capitalist sector. Nevertheless, the specific principles that guide co-operatives in their governance and management promote a different functioning of the HPWPs, as perceived by the employees, even when the practices are similar to those of the capitalist sector. This perceived co-operative difference would be of strategic importance for the FCPA as it could play a role in the known relationship between HPWPs and the organizational commitment of the employees.

Based on the idea that the FCPA employees may perceive a co-operative difference, this research first aimed to identify the determinants of the co-operative difference through usual HPWPs. Its second objective was to verify if a relationship existed between the perceived co-operative difference and organizational commitment. To answer these objectives, two conceptual approaches were compared: one called the meta-analysis-based approach that involved classic bundles of HPWPs, and the other called the exploratory factorial approach that used HPWP bundles generated by a main component factorial analysis.
Both models demonstrated that the employees perceived a co-operative difference that was directly related to some HPWPs in the FCPA co-operatives. This brings new knowledge to the understanding of co-operatives in demonstrating that employees perceive the suggested distinctive functioning of co-operatives through management practices like HPWPs. In the meta-analysis-based approach, HPWPs bundles of skill development and empowerment determined the perception of a co-operative difference. An expected better fit was observed in the exploratory factorial approach, where HPWPs bundles of Empowering Supervisor Leadership, Empowering Corporate Culture, and Skill Development enhanced the perception of a co-operative difference. The results of both approaches also showed that HPWPs influence selectively the perception of a co-operative difference and the employees’ organizational commitment. A unique contribution of this study is to show the mediating role of perceiving a co-operative difference between HPWPs of empowerment and skill development, and organizational commitment. In other words, HPWPs influence commitment mostly indirectly, through a perceived co-operative difference. Among the few empirical studies that examined the relationship between HPWPs and commitment in the specific context of co-operatives, this research also brings the concept of a perceived co-operative difference and its mediating role between HPWPs and the organizational commitment.

In the more detailed exploratory factorial approach, the results also underline the large impact of empowering the co-operative employees with the corporate culture and the direct supervisor leadership. Even more, the Empowering Corporate Culture bundled practices directly affected three components of the model, namely the perceived co-operative difference, employees’ affective commitment, and their normative commitment. An empowering corporate culture, along with HPWPs empowering supervisor
leadership and training, were found to ultimately help in retaining employees’ commitment in the co-operative. Besides the interest of identifying successful HPWPs in the context of financial service co-operatives, these results expand our understanding of bundled HPWPs, showing that some bundles, like empowerment, may play a more active role in enhancing organizational commitment in the specific context of co-operatives.

These results are of interest for co-operative managers too. With a focus on specific HPWPs like Empowering Corporate Culture, Empowering Supervisor Leadership, and Skill Development, they could contribute to build a co-operative difference in the workforce and from these efforts, develop organizational commitment. It also means that efforts to sensitize the employees to the different principles and functioning of co-operatives should be deployed before investing in activities aimed at growing commitment to the co-operative.

Research on the determinants of the employees’ perception of a co-operative difference has to continue due to its high potential in better understanding and achieving high-performance work system (HPWS). For instance, the results of this research are limited to the study of one co-operative network, and it would be necessary to look at other co-operative sectors and to compare with capitalist enterprises. The specific situation of financial service co-operatives may have an impact on the results. We must also look at other measures of normative and calculative commitment. Future studies using longitudinal data should also determine the influence of organizational transformation on employee’s commitment. Also, future work should verify the employees’ knowledge of the co-operative difference since this paper is limited to using determinants of a perceived co-operative difference. A qualitative approach would better grasp and analyse this knowledge. Finally, the work on the development of a scale to
measure the perception of the co-operative difference is an important future research topic.

REFERENCES


Mîndrilă, M. (2010). Maximum likelihood (ML) and diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS) estimation procedures: A


Appendix A. Bundles of the Meta-analysis-based approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bundles</th>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Skill</strong></td>
<td>36. (FCPA · <em>Caisse populaire</em> ABC) provides as much ongoing training as I need. [1, 2, 5] 37. (FCPA · <em>Caisse populaire</em> ABC) provides training to help me explore other opportunities within the organization. [2] 47. (FCPA · <em>Caisse populaire</em> ABC) provided as much initial training as I needed. [2, 3, 5] 48. I am aware of available training and development activities at (FCPA · <em>Caisse populaire</em> ABC). [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Empowerment</strong></td>
<td>10. (FCPA · <em>Caisse populaire</em> ABC) corporate communications are frequent enough. [1, 2, 6] 11. Communications from my division or department are frequent enough. [1, 2, 6] 30. I am given enough authority to make decisions I need to make. [1, 2, 6]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
34. My supervisor is open to hearing my opinions or feedback. [1, 2, 6]
65. Ideas I propose are taken into consideration. [5]
67. My job allows me to develop my abilities. [6]

Further readings:

[2] Best Group Companies (n.d.) Employee Benchmark Report,

Appendix B. Bundles of the Exploratory Factorial approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bundles</th>
<th>Cronbach's α</th>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Empowering Supervisor Leadership</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>30. I am given enough authority to make decisions I need to make. 34. My supervisor is open to hearing my opinions or feedback. 35. My supervisor helps me develop my fullest potential. 43. My supervisor treats me fairly. 46. My supervisor does what he/she says and says what he/she does; therefore, I can trust him/her. 65. Ideas I propose are taken into consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Factor loadings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>Sub set 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. | Skill Development - Training | 0.74 | 36. (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC) provides as much ongoing training as I need.  
37. (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC) provides training to help me explore other opportunities within the organization.  
47. (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC) provided as much initial training as I needed.  
48. I am aware of available training and development activities at (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC). |
|   |   | 68 | 70 | 63 |
| 3. | Empowering Corporate Culture | 0.77 | 3. The managers of (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC) do what they say and say what they do; therefore, I can trust them.  
10. (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC) corporate communications are frequent enough.  
14. I believe there is a spirit of cooperation among employees at (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC).  
15. Work quality is a top priority with (FCPA - *Caisse populaire* ABC). |
|   |   | 69 | 66 | 61 |
| 4. | Motivation - Performance | 0.84 | 6. I receive regular performance reviews.  
7. I understand how I am evaluated in my work.  
8. My supervisor gives me constructive feedback. |
|   |   | 83 | 82 | 84 |
| 5. | Motivation - Workplace | 0.64 | 40. My work area is adequately lit.  
41. My work area is ergonomically correct.  
42. There is adequate noise control to allow me to focus on my work. |
|   |   | 76 | 77 | 74 |
Appendix C. Statements in latent variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bundles</th>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Co-operative difference</td>
<td>18. Since it is a co-operative, my commitment with (FCP <em>Caisse populaire ABC</em>) is stronger. [Original statement]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31. I feel I am contributing to (FCPA * Caisse populaire ABC*)’s mission. [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32. I feel I am important to (FCPA * Caisse populaire ABC*). [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33. At (FCPA * Caisse populaire ABC*), I feel part of a team working toward a shared goal. [1]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Affective commitment</td>
<td>17. I would recommend my friends to work for (FCPA <em>Caisse populaire ABC</em>). [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. I am willing to take on additional projects and tasks in order to help (FCPA * Caisse populaire ABC*) be successful. [4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Normative commitment</td>
<td>21. I would not leave (FCPA – <em>Caisse populaire ABC</em>) right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in the organization. [5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Calculative commitment</td>
<td>16. I would feel guilty if I left (FCPA – <em>Caisse populaire ABC</em>) now. [2, 3, 5]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further Readings

Appendix D. Descriptive statistics and normality test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Descriptive statistics</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. The managers of (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) do what they say and say what they do; therefore, I can trust them.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.99 SD: 0.851 W: .829***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I receive regular performance reviews.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.69 SD: 1.090 W: .854***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I understand how I am evaluated in my work.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.92 SD: 0.918 W: .827***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My supervisor gives me constructive feedback.</td>
<td>Mean: 4.02 SD: 0.901 W: .832***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I find that the performance objectives expected of me are reasonable.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.66 SD: 0.971 W: .851***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) corporate communications are frequent enough.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.91 SD: 0.798 W: .794***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Communications from my division or department are frequent enough.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.91 SD: 0.914 W: .796***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I believe there is a spirit of cooperation among employees at (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC).</td>
<td>Mean: 4.03 SD: 0.757 W: .795***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Work quality is a top priority with (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC).</td>
<td>Mean: 3.88 SD: 0.819 W: .824***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I would feel guilty if I left (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) now.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.74 SD: 1.138 W: .869***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I would recommend my friends to work for (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC).</td>
<td>Mean: 4.03 SD: 0.888 W: .835***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Since it is a co-operative, my commitment with (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) is stonger.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.92 SD: 0.920 W: .862***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I am willing to take on additional projects and tasks in order to help (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) be successful.</td>
<td>Mean: 4.14 SD: 0.853 W: .793***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I would not leave (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in the organization.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.51 SD: 1.124 W: .930***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I am given enough authority to make decisions I need to make.</td>
<td>Mean: 3.97 SD: 1.037 W: .885***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I feel I am contributing to (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC)'s mission.</td>
<td>Mean: 4.20 SD: 0.750 W: .809***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>I feel I am important to (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC).</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>At (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC), I feel part of a team working toward a shared goal.</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>My supervisor is open to hearing my opinions or feedback.</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>My supervisor helps me develop my fullest potential.</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>(FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) provides as much ongoing training as I need.</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>(FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) provides training to help me explore other opportunities within the organization.</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>(FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) provides training or education to help me balance my work and personal life.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>My work area is adequately lit.</td>
<td>4.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>My work area is ergonomically correct.</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>There is adequate noise control to allow me to focus on my work.</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>My supervisor treats me fairly.</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>My supervisor does what he/she says and says what he/she does; therefore, I can trust him/her.</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>(FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC) provided as much initial training as I needed.</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>I am aware of available training and development activities at (FCPA - Caisse populaire ABC).</td>
<td>3.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>I am satisfied with the number of vacation days on an annual basis.</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>I am satisfied with retirement plan benefits.</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52.</td>
<td>I am satisfied with healthcare benefits.</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65.</td>
<td>Ideas I propose are taken into consideration.</td>
<td>3.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67.</td>
<td>My job allows me to develop my abilities.</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** : p < .01