

Individual motives and organizational commitment of temporary agency workers



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Temporary Agency Work (TAW) differs basically from standard work

- **Triangular Relationship:** Temps are employed by a staffing agency and they are assigned to different client organizations.
- **Temps are less privileged than permanent workers:**
 - lower compensation (Kalleberg, Reskin, & Hudson, 2000)
 - less training (Finegold et al. (2005), Galais et al. (2007)
 - higher job-insecurity (DeWitte et al. 2003)
 - low complexity and little autonomy of jobs (Kalleberg & Rognes, 2000).
- **High degree of instability and transition**
High fluctuation in TAW: Most workers are employed for less than a year (Druker & Stanworth, 2004, Antoni & Jahn, 2009, TK report, 2009).

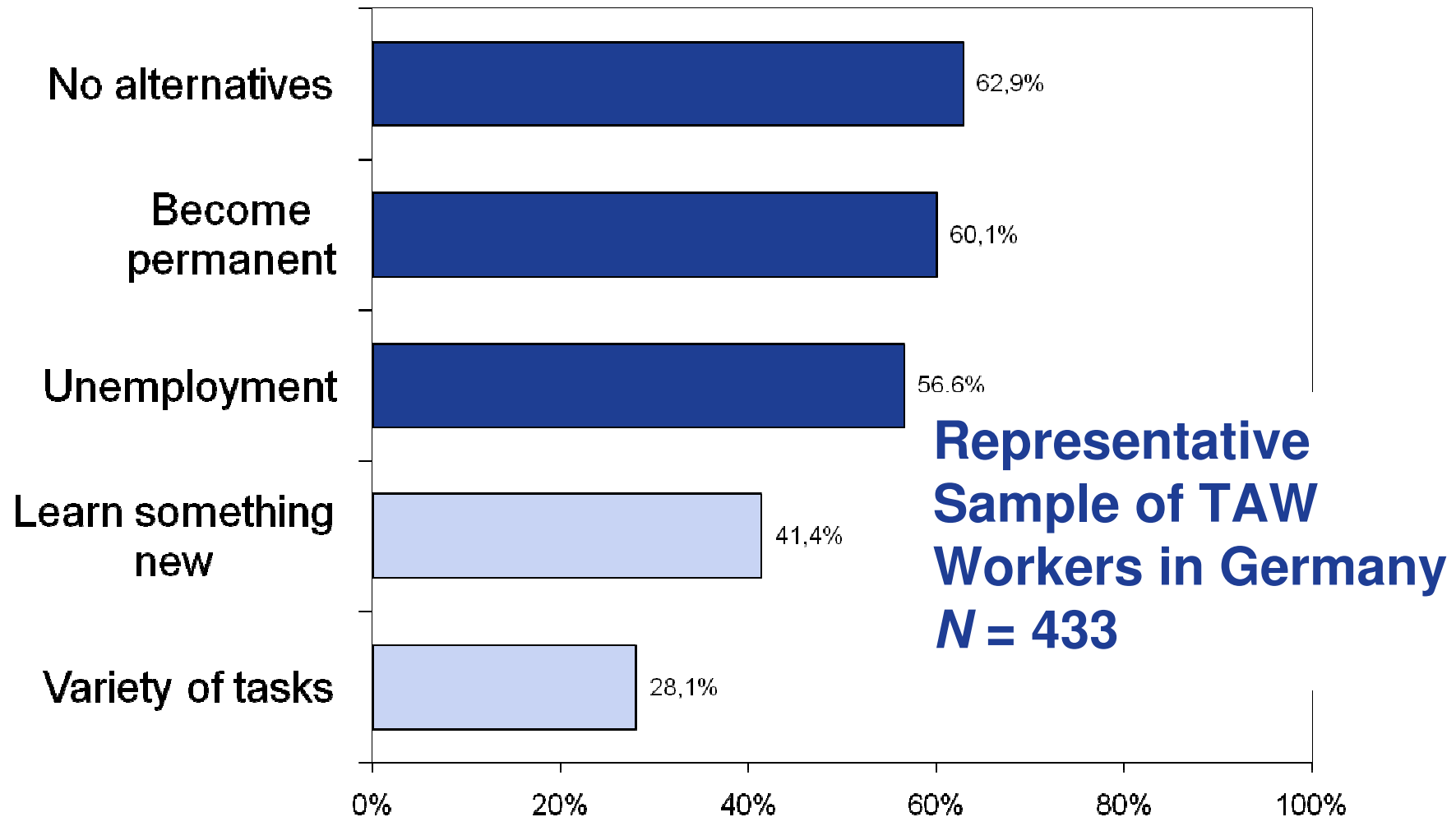


TAW: Nothing But a Stepping Stone

- Involuntary (no, alternatives, unemployment) versus voluntary temps (need for variety, flexibility, learning, contacts etc.). (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2008; Ellingson, Gruys & Sackett, 1998; Feldman, Doeringhaus & Turnley, 1995)
- Push-factors dominate rather than pull-factors.
- The majority of temps are looking for a permanent job and they regard TAW as a transitional period (Storrie, 2002; Von Hippel, Mangum, Greenberger, Heneman, & Skoglund, 1997; CIETT 2000).



Motives of Temporary Agency Workers



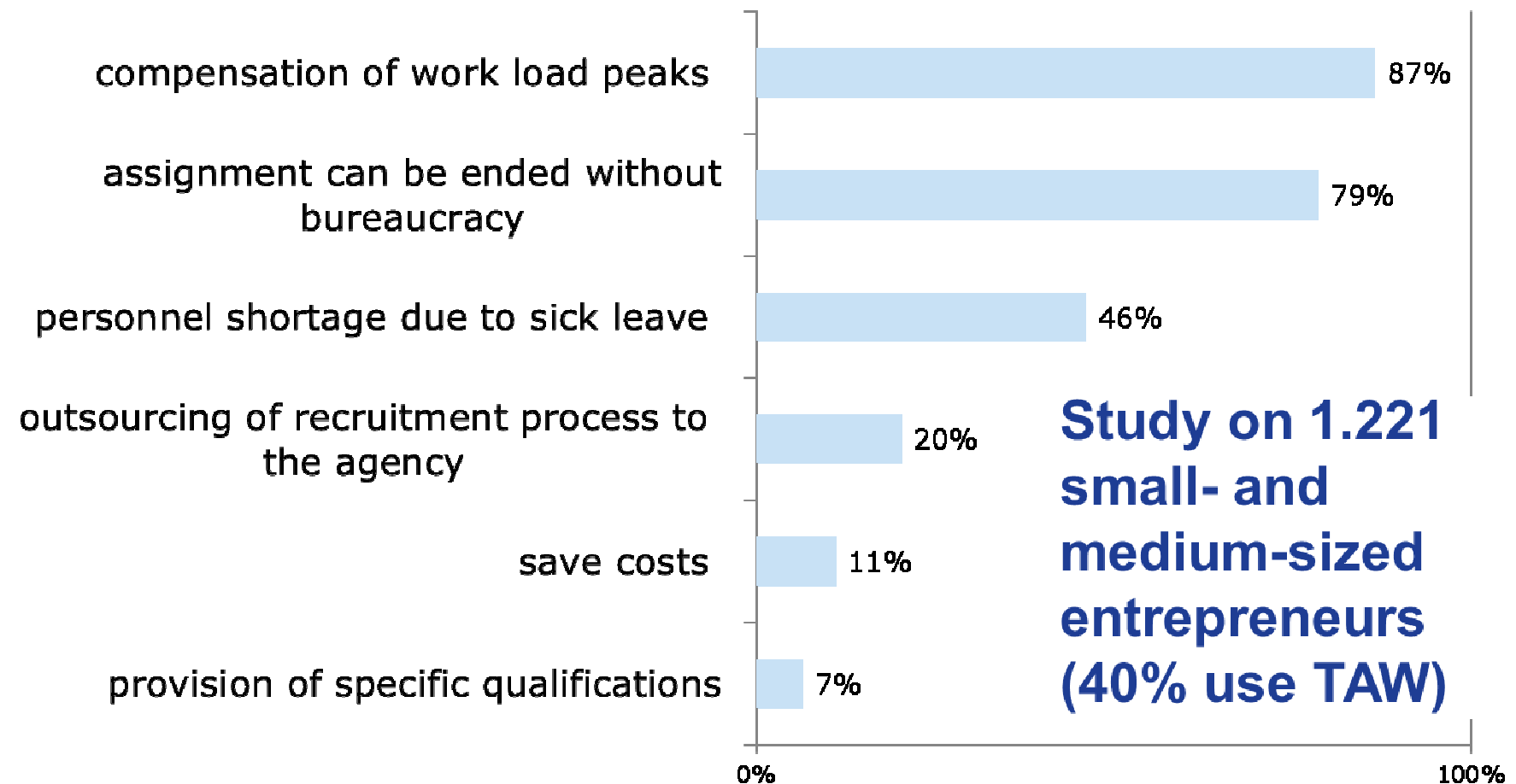
... Individual Motives meet organizational reality ...



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Clients' Motives for using TAW



The Agency: Distant Employer

- **Qualitative study** on the selection process of temps by the agency. Interviews with 19 agents.
- **Role of the agency**
 - Applicants are attracted by the potential client and the assigned jobs. Characteristics of the agency are less important.
 - Ambivalent role of the agency concerning the transition of temps to client.
- **Stepping Stone is a central topic in the recruiting process of temps**

Most applicants are pushed into TAW. Finding a job in the client organization is predominant

- Workers are driven by the need for security and the wish of being a part of the „organizational family“ of the client.



Double-bind in TAW...

- Workers want to belong...to the client.
- BUT: the clients seek for workers without obligation.
- The agency is “far away” and insecure and does not offer an organizational home.

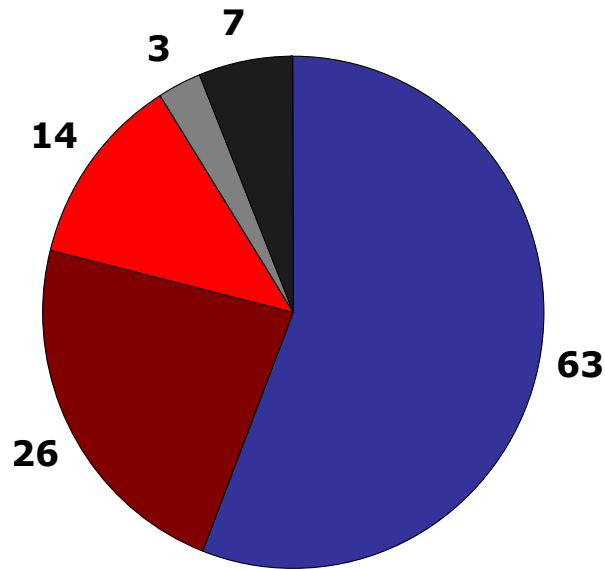


Effects of Motives for Temping on Attitudes and Work-Behavior

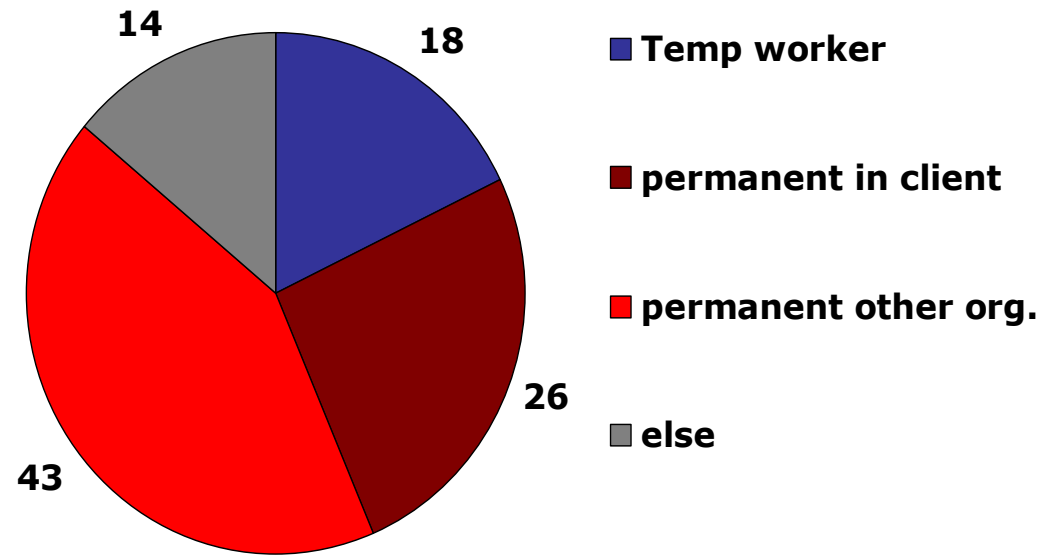
- Conflicting results concerning motives and commitment: Involuntary workers are more committed to the client (stepping stone motive), voluntary workers are more committed to the agency. (De Cuyper & De Witte, 2008; Connelly, Gallagher, & Giley, 2007, Felfe et al., 2006).
- Involuntary motives have negative effects on job-satisfaction. No effects on performance. (Ellingson et al. 1998).
- Motive realization: You can have it if you want? Effects of motives on transition success.
- Does commitment pay out?



Transition into a Permanent Job: Findings from a Longitudinal Study



5 months later



15 months later



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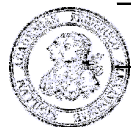
Motives for Temping, Organizational Commitment and Transition Success

Individual Motives (t1)	Commitment		Job Satisfaction		Transition Success
	Client (t1)	Agency (t1)	Client (t1)	Agency (t1)	Job in Client (t2)
Voluntary motives (learning, contact, variability)	.13	-.02	.08	.32**	-.09
Involuntary motives (unemployment, no alternatives)	-.17*	.15	-17 *	-12	.00
TAW is a Stepping stone	.28*	-20*	.08	.27**	.05
TAW is a Makeshift	-.13	.01	-.24**	-.51**	.08



Commitment and Transition into a Permanent Job

	<i>b (logistic regression)</i>
Transition Success (T2)	
Permanent Job in client organization versus TAW	
Weeks pursuing TAW at T1	.25 ⁺
Sex ^a	1.35
Age	.03
Education ^b	-.45
Experience with assignment task	-.20
Involuntary motives	.69
Voluntary motives	-.43
TAW as stepping stone	-.28
TAW as makeshift	-.60
Job-satisfaction Client	.18
Job-satisfaction Agency	-1.34 ⁺
Commitment to the Client	2.44*
Commitment to the Agency	-.17
constant	-2.59



Motives, Commitment and Transition Success

- Weak relationships between initial motives and commitment (higher effects on job-satisfaction).
- Motives have no effects on transition success.
- The attitudes towards TAW count. When TAW is seen as a stepping stone, commitment to the client is higher and agency commitment is lower (but satisfaction with the agency is high).
- Commitment to the client promotes transition success.
- But what when transition fails?



Those who wanted, but did not achieve transition into a permanent job in the client organization – effects on health



Summary and Conclusion

- Initial Reasons / Motives for TAW had no effects on transition into a permanent job in the client organization.
- Perceived stepping stone potential is related to higher commitment to the client.
- Commitment to the client, which includes the wish to become a perm, is related to transition success.
- High commitment is related to an increase of psychosomatic complaints when transition fails.

