Equal but different: Workplace impact on turnover in two correctional treatment centers

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Abstract

High turnover is an existing and unwanted phenomenon in many organizations. Previous research has focused on predicting turnover and Intention to leave (ITL) focusing on single variables. This thesis used previous rates of Prison Officer turnover in two maximum security prisons and assumed these work places to differ significantly towards each other in rate of turnover. Work-place factors in relation to ITL were investigated using QPSnordic. The two facilities are the only two maximum security prisons in Sweden and have comparable legislation and demographic variables. The study was performed using a cross-sectional design. The Exit, Voice, Loyalty, and Neglect-instrument (EVLN) was used when measuring Prison Officers intention to leave their employment. Results show that there was no significant difference in ITL, but the factors related to ITL differed between the facilities.

Keywords: Turnover, Intention to leave, Prison Officer, QPSnordic, EVLN-instrument.
Lika men ändå olika – Arbetsplatsens inverkan på personalomsättningen inom Kriminalvården

Sammanfattning


Nyckelord: Personalomsättning, Intention to leave, Kriminalvårdare, EVLN, QPSnordic.

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Work is a major part of an individual’s life. Looking to a person’s entire lifespan we spend approximately 40-45 years of our life at work. Consequently, work is one of the most important factors affecting many individuals general wellbeing. The literature suggests many possible reasons for a person to leave his or her current job assignment. These reasons can be both work-related or of a more private nature. What actually makes a person shift from thinking about changing his or her job to actually quitting varies. According to Schaufeli (2004) investigating the possible impact of working conditions on turnover is important for an employer considering staff subjective well-being, productivity, and ultimately financial factors.

Theoretical framework

Hackman and Oldham proposed a model in 1980 to understand how job characteristics impact job outcome; “The Job Characteristics model”. According to their point of view, there are five crucial job characteristics (task identity, autonomy, task significance, skill variety, and feedback) that influence three critical psychological states (experienced meaningfulness, experienced feeling of responsibility for work outcome and knowledge of actual results). These states can for example be influenced by the following situations. If the work situation is set up in a way that the individual doesn’t get any feedback on his or her job performance, he or she can’t respond to what’s actually achieved with adequate feelings of for example pride, sadness or anger over the performance. Secondly, the individual needs to have a sense of responsibility for job outcome. If the quality of the individual’s work is decided by external factors such as the manager, other co-workers or a manual instead of his or her own effort or initiative, the individual has no possibility to experience pride over a good performance or sadness over a poor performance. In addition to this, the individual needs to have a sense of
meaningfulness that the work is of importance to him or her. If the work is unchallenging and uninteresting no intrinsic motivation for work is developed even if he or she does have responsibility and receives feedback. According to Hackman and Oldham all three of these states must be present in order to develop and preserve a genuine intrinsic motivation for the work. Figure 1 describes how the “Job characteristics model” results in motivation for work.

**Figure 1.** The “Job characteristics model” by Hackman & Oldham (1980).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job characteristics</th>
<th>Psychological states</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skill variety</td>
<td>Meaningfulness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task identity</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>High intrinsic motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task significance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Knowledge of results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The criticism against this model has mainly revolved around whether this is a model for intellectual work where the employee has a long education and where he or she values independence, meaningfulness and a great deal of feedback (Kaufmann & Kaufmann, 2005).

In the seventies Robert Karasek introduced a model to analyze how work related stress factors can explain cardiovascular diseases; “The Demand-Control Model”. Since then, this model has been further developed in collaboration with Töres Theorell and is now a well known model for analyzing psychosocial work factors and their impact on health (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). The main constructs of the model, demand and control are defined by Karasek and Theorell (1990) as follows; Demand consists of qualitative elements, for example level of difficulty and contrarious psychological demands, as well as of measurable quantitative issues such as ergonomics and work pace. Demands are regarded as psychological stressors in the work situation, for example high workload and inadequate amount of time to perform tasks. The control construct is the individual’s subjective
perception of being able to make decisions regarding his or her work situation but also to what degree the individual has the possibility to use skills and knowledge. Control also covers to what degree the work is stimulating for the individual.

According to Karasek and Theorell (1990) the amount of demands and the degree of control that the employee has over his or her situation has a profound effect on the individuals experience of the work and health. The control aspect has a key role by acting as a mediator of how the demands are perceived. In short, a high level of demands in combination with a low degree of personal control over the situation creates a state of negative tension which in the long run can increase the risk for psychological and physical ill health (see figure 2).

*Figure 2.* The “Demand-Control-Support model” by Karasek, Theorell & Johnsson (1990).

The high level of demands creates an arousal which can’t be used optimally due to lack of personal control. The combination of high demands and high personal control can on the other hand lead to a state of positive arousal which facilitates development and learning according to the model. The higher the personal control is perceived to be, the higher demands the person can handle without any negative side effects. Since then, the model has
been extended by an additional researcher, Jeff Johnsson, with a third dimension, social support (Karasek & Theorell 1990). The social support is mainly considered to be a moderator of perceived level of stress. If the perceived level of social support is high, according to the model, it will affect how the individual experiences a stressful situation and how the individual reacts concerning emotions, actions, and physical responses under stress. This implicates that social support works as a buffer against stress. Employees who consider themselves to have a good social support at work have been reported to develop less stress symptoms than others (Karasek & Theorell, 1990).

Each of the three factors; demands, control and social support can be divided into different elements. Demands can be divided into physical and psychological demands. Physical demands are often ergonomic issues, awkward positions, heavy lifts and work pace. Psychological demands can in turn be divided into quantitative (for example the perception of “how hard you work” or ability to keep deadlines), cognitive, and emotional demands. Control is regarded in a similar way in the model. It is divided into ability for the individual to make own decisions and challenge. Ability to make own decisions refers to what degree the employee can control circumstances in his or her own work, for example work pace, breaks, and participation in decision processes at higher organizational levels. Challenge refers to in what degree there are opportunities for the employee to use his or her skills and to expand his or her competence, i.e. how challenging the work is. Finally the social support can also be divided into instrumental or emotional support. Instrumental support contains generally material support such as equipment, resources, and time. Emotional support regards the support given by team leader, co-workers or by other people outside work. Consequently, the worst possible combination according to this model is work with high demands, low degree of control, and low social support.
Karasek’s and Theorell’s model has likewise been the target of criticism. Fletcher & Jones conducted a study in 1993 to investigate the model. They argued that the variables demand and control do play an important role but that psychological stress and ill-health can’t be predicted by this model alone. Nevertheless they implicated that social support seemed to have a greater importance which also was implemented in the model later on by the addition of Johnsson’s work (Karasek & Theorell, 1990).

There has been very little research directed towards a prison staff population concerning job turnover. Dollard & Winefield (1998) investigated the demand-control-support model originally developed by Karasek & Theorell (1990). This study investigated a Correctional Officer workforce in terms of stress and strain but did not specifically deal with questions concerning turnover and intention to leave (ITL). However, the results obtained in this study focus on relations between certain work related factors and job satisfaction which in turn has been shown to influence ITL and actual turnover. This finding has been replicated by multiple studies, not concerning prison staff.

Typically, research has found that intention to leave is influenced by multiple factors. Brannon, Barry, Kemper, Schreiner & Vasey (2007) linked work overload and lack of upward mobility to ITL in a sample of direct care workers. Communication, age, promotion opportunities, and education were all found by McCarthy (2007) to correlate with ITL in a sample of nurses. Conklin & Deselle (2007) found a link between organizational commitment and ITL in a sample of pharmacy faculty members. In a meta-analytical approach Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner (2000) found organizational commitment to be strongly linked with ITL. Pilar, Sanchez, Perez & Jimenez (2004) investigated non-work factors in relation to ITL, they found that multiple non-work factors correlated with ITL (i.e. marriage, moving, and family obligations).
Moreover Acker (2004) found that organizational conditions (e.g. social support, opportunities for professional development, and role conflict) worked as a strong predictor for job satisfaction and ITL in a sample of social workers. Coomber and Barriball (2007) suggested from the statistical associations in their study that high stress and poor leadership leads to job dissatisfaction and increased turnover in a sample of nurses. McCarthy, Tyrrell & Lehane (2007) found job satisfaction to be a strong predictor of ITL in a sample of nurses. Castle, Engberg, Anderson & Men (2007) investigated the link between job satisfaction and intention to leave (ITL). These researchers found that low job satisfaction was associated with high ITL and actual turnover in a sample of nurses in the USA. Meyer, Allen & Smith (1993) also investigated nurses. Their study focused on the link between organizational commitment, professional work behaviour, and job satisfaction. These constructs were found to be positively correlated. Job satisfaction, in turn, was linked to ITL. Nogueras (2006) investigated the link of occupational commitment, education and experience with intention to leave the nursing profession. In line with the results obtained by Meyer et al. (1993), Nogueras (2006) found that education and experience both increased occupational commitment which in turn is related to ITL.

In a study by de Croon, Sluiter, Blonk, Broersen & Frings-Dresen (2004) intention to leave in a sample of Dutch truck-drivers was investigated. The authors found that stressful work characteristics (i.e. work demands, control, and fatigue) were linked with higher ITL. Manlove & Guzell (1997) investigated tenure and choice of other jobs as a key aspect of intention to leave in a sample of child-care workers. They found that there were differences based on the location of the workplace (i.e. rural or city locations) and also that increasing tenure was related to a decrease in ITL. Intention to leave in the cooking occupation was investigated by Young & Corsun (2009). They found that work demands and work conditions...
were related to ITL. Their results were inconclusive but pointed at the fact that high work demands and bad working conditions were linked with a higher ITL.

**Voluntary turnover rates**

Voluntary job turnover is defined as the type of turnover when an employee for whatever reason voluntarily quits his or her job. Data was obtained from the National Prison and Probation Administration in Norrköping regarding the actual turnover rates for Kumla and Hall over the years 2006 to 2009. The data was obtained in the form of percentages described below and no other measures were received, therefore the sample size and other absolute numbers is not known to the authors. The percentages were compared towards each other to obtain possible differences on percentage level between the two groups. For 2006 the percentage of workers voluntarily leaving the job as a Prison Officer was 3.9 % for Kumla and 10.1 % for Hall (Z=2.54, *p*<.01). For 2007 the percentage was 7.7 % for Kumla and 4.9 % for Hall (Z=-1.05, ns). For 2008 the percentage was 5.0 % for Kumla and 5.7 % for Hall (Z=0.14, ns). Finally the percentage for 2009 was 2.5 % for Kumla and 9.1 % for Hall (Z=3.05, *p*<.01). Thus the most recent data indicate that Hall has a higher voluntary turnover rate than Kumla. It is the correlates of this assumed difference in turnover that we are interested in studying. As a proxy for turnover this study is using intention to leave (ITL). However, there is no guarantee that the turnover rate will be higher in Hall for the year of 2010, when this study was performed. Only when data on voluntary turnover is recorded can the premise for this study be verified.

The link between demands, control and social support is of interest for the present study because of the characteristics of the job as a Prison Officer. According to a study performed by Nylander, Bruhn & Lindberg (2008), this occupational group does experience high demands in form of psychological demands, low control due to “formal rituals” (i.e.
rules and daily routines) and by the fact that they are bound to strong legislation. Nylander et al. (2008) also stresses the importance of social support.

**Aim of the study**

Work related factors, ITL, and turnover are complex constructs to understand. Our aim is to try to understand how ITL may be affected by different work factors. Many previous studies have found associations between vast numbers of work related factors and ITL. High commitment, social support, role conflict, level of stress, promotion opportunities and leadership have for example been reported to be related to job satisfaction (Acker, 2004; Coomber & Barriball, 2006; Meyer et al., 1993). Job satisfaction has in its turn been associated to ITL (Castle et al., 2007; McCarthy et al., 2007) which in turn helps to predict turnover (Liljegren, 2008). Therefore the aim of the study is divided into four objectives.

1. Firstly; the authors set out to investigate possible differences in ITL between the facilities. The hypothesis is that the prison of Hall, which is assumed to have the higher rate of turnover also, would display a higher value in ITL.

2. Secondly; the authors aimed to compare the two facilities towards each other using the General Nordic Questionnaire for Psychological and Social Factors at Work (QPSnordic) scales. The scales measure subjective workrelated opinions concerning the workplace. Following the first hypothesis that ITL would differ between the facilities, the hypothesis is that the Hall and Kumla facilities also will differ significantly from each other on the QPSnordic scales.

3. Thirdly; the authors wanted to investigate possible correlations between psychosocial work-related factors and ITL.

4. Fourthly; the authors endeavoured to compare the sample as a whole to a Nordic reference group concerning psychosocial work-related QPS scales. The hypothesis is
that working as a Prison Officer is significantly different from other occupational groups.

**Method**

**Population**

Data for the study was collected via survey among the total population of Prison Officers in Class A prisons in Sweden. Prison Officer as a title exists throughout the penal sphere but there are some differences in the actual work assignment depending on the security level of the prison. Typically there is more focus on security and less focus on treatment and therapy with increasing security level. Also, there are some differences in legislation depending on the security level (Regeringskansliet, 1974). This is sufficient for the authors to consider the Prison Officer work staff at Class A prisons as a population in itself.

**Criteria for inclusion**

Staff in the two facilities holding the title of Prison Officer who held a permanent post were included. This was chosen as the title of Prison Officer exists in both facilities. Furthermore, the title of Prison Officer is stipulated by the Swedish Prison and Probation Service and current legislation (Regeringskansliet, 1974). This means that a Prison Officer at the prison of Hall has the same work assignments and tasks as a Prison Officer at the prison of Kumla. This equality is a premise for the comparison between the two work-forces in the current study.

**Criteria for exclusion**

Staff that held other titles (i.e. medical staff, administrative staff and managerial staff) and also Prison Officers not holding a permanent post (i.e. temporal employees and substitute staff) were excluded from the study. Furthermore, staff on extended leaves (i.e. leave of absence, parental leave and sick leave) was also excluded from the study, simply because they are not present in the work-place.
Ethical considerations

The study was approved by the board of directors in each prison facility. This is required by the National Prison and Probation Administration of Sweden (HQ) when performing any kind of research on a prison staff population. The authors regarded the participants’ confidentiality as a crucial part of the administration process. The accompanying note informed that participation was voluntary and the data would be handled confidentially as well as instructions about how the data would be processed and stored. The collected questionnaires were stored in a locked room throughout the research process.

Description of population

The initial population consisted of 158 women and 331 men. This makes a total of 479 people altogether. Because of the exclusion criteria (i.e. different types of leaves) this number was reduced to 447 Prison Officers. Of these 281 was stationed at Kumla (180 men and 101 women) and 198 at Hall (146 men and 52 women). Kumla and Hall are the only two prisons in Sweden with Class A (i.e. maximum) security. The security rating of a facility depends on, among other things, the ability to withstand escape, the ability to withstand breakout attempts, and the ability to handle unruly clientele (Kriminalvården, 2010). These two prison facilities are also two of the biggest prison facilities in the country, Kumla has the capacity of housing 249 inmates and Hall has the capacity of housing 203 inmates (Kriminalvården, 2010). In most respects the two prisons are to be regarded as equivalent. They house the same type of inmates with the same type of criminality and sentences. There is also an internal education program for Prison Officers. This education is the same throughout the nation, regardless of where the Prison Officers work. Furthermore, existing legislation and common practice throughout the system ensures that equality is obtained across the Swedish Prison and Probation Service.
Description of respondents

The number of administrated questionnaires was 447 in total (262 in Kumla and 185 in Hall). Of these a total of 139 were answered which gave a response frequency of 31.1%. The response rate was 104 (39.7%) for Kumla and 35 (18.9%) for Hall. The number of non-responses is high. Participation in the study was voluntary and that can explain a portion of the non-responses. Another possible explanation was given to the authors by the officials at each facility. These officials warned the authors about the fact that the Prison Officers are “Survey-tired” and that the Prison Officers participate in multiple surveys on any given calendar year. This may influence the Prison Officers negatively as they answer many surveys and simply gets tired of it. Data describing mean values regarding age, gender, and years of service are presented in table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Entire population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall</td>
<td>Kumla</td>
<td>Whole sample</td>
<td>Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( n )</td>
<td>35 (25%)</td>
<td>104 (75%)</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>198 (41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( n ) (male)</td>
<td>26 (74 % of Hall respondents)</td>
<td>58 (58 % of Kumla respondents)</td>
<td>84 (60 % of all respondents)</td>
<td>146 (74 % of the facility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( n ) (female)</td>
<td>9 (26 % of Hall respondents)</td>
<td>44 (42 % of Kumla respondents)</td>
<td>53 (40 % of all respondents)</td>
<td>52 (26 % of the facility)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean age (( sd ))</td>
<td>40 (11.7)</td>
<td>42 (10.2)</td>
<td>42 (10.6)</td>
<td>43 (11.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (( sd ))</td>
<td>41 (11.8)</td>
<td>42 (10.0)</td>
<td>42 (10.6)</td>
<td>44 (12.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (( sd ))</td>
<td>36 (10.7)</td>
<td>43 (10.4)</td>
<td>41 (10.7)</td>
<td>40 (8.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
<td>25-62</td>
<td>25-65</td>
<td>25-65</td>
<td>24-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-60</td>
<td>28-65</td>
<td>25-65</td>
<td>24-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean years of service (( sd ))</td>
<td>6.3 (7.1)</td>
<td>8.3 (9.0)</td>
<td>7.8 (8.5)</td>
<td>11.9 (11.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (( sd ))</td>
<td>6.9 (7.9)</td>
<td>8.5 (10.1)</td>
<td>8.0 (9.4)</td>
<td>13.3 (12.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (( sd ))</td>
<td>4.6 (7.9)</td>
<td>8.0 (7.3)</td>
<td>7.4 (6.9)</td>
<td>8.0 (6.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. \( n \) = number of participants, \( sd \) = standard deviation
**Demographic comparison**

We were first of all interested to see if the obtained sample could be considered representative of the Class A prison workforce. As shown in table 2 the mean age corresponds well between the sample and the respective population.

Table 2

Two samples independent t-tests comparing mean ages between the entire sample, male sample and female sample towards the respective population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entire sample t</th>
<th>Male sample t</th>
<th>Female sample t</th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hall sample – Hall population</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumla sample – Kumla population</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entire sample – whole population</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p* < .05. **p** < .01.

The entire sample (d = .23) as well as the Hall sample (d = .38) had a statistically significant lower mean years of service than the respective population and as described, the analysis with Cohens d gave moderate effect sizes. This is also true for the male part of the entire sample (d = .28) and the Hall sample (d = .40). The female part of the sample had no significant difference towards the population. The Kumla sample reveals no significant differences towards its respective population.

Table 3

Two samples independent t-tests comparing mean years of service entire sample, male sample, and female sample towards the respective population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Entire sample t</th>
<th>Male sample t</th>
<th>Female sample t</th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hall sample – Hall population</td>
<td>2.86**</td>
<td>2.60*</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumla sample – Kumla population</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entire sample – Entire population</td>
<td>2.91**</td>
<td>2.88**</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* *p* < .05. **p** < .01.

Z-tests was performed to investigate the deviation in sex distributions towards the population. Sex distributions between the sample and the entire population corresponds relatively well with 74% of the Hall sample consisted of male respondents which is an exact match of the sex...
distribution in the Hall population \( (Z = 0, \text{ns}) \). The Kumla sample revealed a slight difference in sex distribution of the sample compared to the entire population. The male part of the Kumla sample amounted to 58\% compared to 64\% males in the entire sample \( (Z = 0.96, \text{ns}) \).

**Work-related scales and factors**

In this study a questionnaire called General Nordic Questionnaire for Psychological and Social Factors at Work (QPSnordic) (Dallner et al., 2000) was used to measure different factors of work environment. This questionnaire also contains demographic questions about age and tenure in present employment. The questionnaire was developed by the Nordic Council of Ministers to obtain information about a variety of work-related psychosocial factors (Lindström et al., 2000). QPSnordic has been validated on several occasions (Dallner et al., 2000; Lindström et al., 1997) concerning construct and criteria validity. The instrument has since been used in several large-scale projects each spanning more than 1,000 individuals (Bergström, Brodin, Bertilsson & Jensen, 2007; Björklund, Grahn, Jensen & Bergström, 2007) further acknowledging its validity, reliability, and use. Moreover, Wännström et al. (2008) found that it has good psychometric properties and that it is a good instrument to use across a variety of occupations.

The questionnaire is a 123-item, self-assessment instrument intended for workplace interventions and research which was published in 2000 and is available for download on the internet (Nordiska ministerrådet, 2000). 118 of the 123 items is work-related, the other five items are more demographic in nature (e.g. questions about sex, age, and educational level). Six of the remaining 118 items is questions about work that are absolute in nature (e.g. “How long have you been working on this workplace”), and are not considered to be subjective constructs. The remaining 112 items are the actual items measuring possible differences in subjective perception of the workplace and work life. These items are divided into 26 scales and 2 sets of items not included in any scale. The scales consist of two to five items.
respectively and purport to measure different aspects of work life. The items are answered on a 5-point scale where 1 (very rarely or never) is the lowest, 3 (sometimes) is medium and 5 (very often or always) is the highest answer (e.g. item 13: “Do you need to work overtime?”). For all these scales and also for every specific item, reference data is available at a descriptive level. This makes it possible to compare results from a study, not only on item-level but also on scale level, to a valid reference group. The reference group consisted of 2010 persons from a variety of occupations and sectors (Dallner et al., 2000). Sectors included are; healthcare, public administration, private service, and industrial production among other sectors. However, employees in correctional facilities are not included in the reference group.

The items on the QPSnordic measure 13 different work-related factors. Items are grouped to match commonly used constructs in earlier occupational research. These factors are: “Work Demands” (physical and psychological demands of the workplace), “Role Expectations” (clarity of job description and the respondents role at the workplace), “Work Control” (possibility to influence his or her own work), “Work Predictability”, “Work Mastery” (the subjectively perceived mastery in his or her work), “Social Interaction” (the amount of support from co-workers and manager including bullying and harassment), “Connection Work/Private life” (if private life affects work in a negative way and vice versa), “Work Importance” (how important his or her work is to him or her), “Commitment to Organization”, “Group Work” (to what extent group work occurs and how appreciated it is), “Motivation for work” (what motivates him or her to work), “Leadership”, and “Organizational Culture” (for example to what extent the organization is competitive, supporting, rigid and/or has a culture based on equality). The difference between the scales and the factors is that the scales as a concept has been invented by Dallner et al (2000) to obtain meaningful data compared to a Nordic reference group. The factors represent
constructs commonly investigated in the field of organizational research and reference data for these constructs (other than on item-level) is not available.

In order to aid interpretation of the statistics produced each item among the factors was examined and, if found necessary, reversed. For example, item 12-25 concerning “Work Demands” are designed in a reversed manner compared to the rest of the questionnaire. The items that have been reversed are item 12-25 in “Work Demands”, item 41-44 in “Role Expectations”, and item 105-106 in “Connection Work/Private life”. A low endorsement on these items relate to a positive attitude towards the factor. When reversing these items, a high endorsement relates to positive attitudes, as is the case on the rest of the factor groups. This was only performed on the factor groups. The scales are untouched and treated according to the QPSnordic manual instructions.

**Intention to Leave**

The dependent variable ITL is commonly defined as the subjective estimation of an individual regarding the probability of leaving an organization (or job) in the near future (Mowday et al., 1982). In this study, a subscale originally based on the Exit, Voice, and Neglect measurement (EVL) by Hirschman (1970) was used. The exit dimension in this measurement has been linked to turnover and ITL. It has been developed and used in a variety of research fields. Hagedoorn, van Yperen, van der Vliert and Buunk (1999) found that job satisfaction was negatively related to the exit-dimension in a sample of teachers. The exit-dimension was also examined by Kolarska and Aldrich (1980) who found that people left an organization as a result of organizational decline in performance. The version of the EVLN-subscale used in this study was one created by Haagedorn et al. (1999). The items are answered on a 5-point scale where 1 (very rarely or never) is the lowest, 3 (sometimes) is medium and 5 (very often) is the highest (e.g. item 1 in the ITL-scale: “Consider opportunities to change work-place”). Since the respondents in this study are of Swedish
nationality, a translated version in Swedish was used (Liljegren, 2008). Both the English and the Swedish scales have been shown to mirror an employee’s turnover intentions as well as actual turnover and produce excellent internal reliability estimates, Cronbach’s alpha=.90 (Liljegren, 2008).

Procedure

The Authors readied the surveys by putting a copy of QPSnordic, a scale measuring ITL, an accompanying information-note (see appendix 1 for Hall and appendix 2 for Kumla) and a self-addressed envelope into a second envelope. The envelopes for Kumla were delivered in person and the envelopes for Hall were delivered by mail. Surveys at both facilities reached the respondents on the same day. The participants had three weeks to fill in and return the questionnaire. No reward was offered for completion of the survey and no reminder to fill in the questionnaire was sent out. After the three weeks the authors went in person to collect the questionnaires at each institution.

Statistical analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS 17 (SPSS Inc, Chicago, IL, USA). The statistical methods used in this report are independent t-tests investigating mean differences in the dependent variable (ITL) between the two facilities. Independent groups t-tests investigating deviation in the standardized scales between the sample and the QPSnordic reference group. Cohen’s d was computed to gauge the magnitude of statistically significant group differences. If Cohen’s d exceeds .20 this is generally considered a small effect. Cohen’s d of .50 a moderate effect and statistics of .80 and above are thought of as large effects. Pearson’s correlations between the QPSnordic factors in the sample and the dependent variable, ITL were computed. Z-test was used to test the difference between the two independent correlations obtained at each facility in relation to ITL. Independent z-tests for comparing two
proportions were used to compare sex distributions, rates of turnover and responses concerning bullying and harassment.

**Results**

**Question 1: Is ITL higher on the Hall facility?**

Since the authors assumed a discrepancy in turnover rates between Hall and Kumla there was first of all reason to investigate if the dependent variable, ITL, differed between Hall \( M = 14.81 \) for ITL \( (sd = 5.8) \) and at Kumla \( M = 14.03 \) \( (sd = 5.4) \). This gave no statistically significant difference on ITL between the facilities \( (t (137) = 0.68, ns) \).

**Question 2: Did Kumla and Hall significantly differ towards each other on the QPSnordic questionnaire?**

The two samples differed in two of the scales, both on which the Hall sample obtained significantly lower values. On the scale “Social Climate” the difference between the samples was significant on the \( p < .01 \) significance level. The second scale that obtained a significant difference was “Support from co-workers” which was significant at the \( p < .05 \) significance level. The effect sizes for these differences were weak in both cases \( (d = .11) \). None of the other scales obtained a statistically significant difference and the observed differences although statistically significant are only tentatively considered to reflect differences in self rated working conditions.

**Question 3: Where there stronger and more correlations at the Hall prison facility?**

Several of the independent variables were related with ITL as table 4 describes. These correlations are moderate on the sample as a whole but if investigated at facility-level the pattern of correlations is more distinct. A high endorsement on each QPSnordic factor relates to positive attitudes about the workplace. A high score on the dependent variable intention to leave (ITL) relates to endorsements made by participants regarding the probability of leaving the organization (or job) in the near future. Nine out of thirteen of the factors had statistically
significant negative correlations with ITL at Hall meaning that a high score on a QPSnordic factor (more positive attitudes to workplace conditions) was related to low scores on the dependent variable. The meaning of these correlations and their relationship to ITL by facility is further commented on in the discussion section of this report.

Table 4

*Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients between ITL and the QPSnordic factors as well as statistically significant differences between Hall and Kumla with regard to these correlations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ITL entire sample (n=133)</th>
<th>ITL Hall (n=32)</th>
<th>ITL Kumla (n=101)</th>
<th>Z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work demands</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>-.54**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>2.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role expectations</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>-.59**</td>
<td>-.34**</td>
<td>1.53 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work control</td>
<td>-.19*</td>
<td>-.42*</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>1.50 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work predictability</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>0.53 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work mastery</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.43*</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>2.03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Interaction</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.29</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>1.51 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection work/private life</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>-.47**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>2.08*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work importance</td>
<td>.19*</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>0.91 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to organization</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-.63**</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>1.67*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group work</td>
<td>-.31**</td>
<td>-.55**</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>2.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation for work</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>2.63**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>-.36**</td>
<td>-.53**</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
<td>1.33 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>-.64**</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>2.77**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. n = number of respondents, ITL = Intention to leave  * p < .05. ** p < .01.
Correlations for the whole sample showed a few moderate correlations, only “Role Expectations” and “Commitment to organization” show significant correlation above .40. On Hall, there are a number of strong and significant correlations such as for example “Role Expectations”, “Commitment to organization”, “Group work”, and “Organizational culture”. Kumla show the least number of correlations and they are in general weaker than Hall.

Correlations on seven out of the 13 factors differed significantly towards each other as presented in the last two columns of table 4. This test is consistent with the view that there are significant differences between the independent groups (i.e. The Hall and Kumla sample) concerning which of the independent variables (i.e. QPSnordic work-related factors) that correlate with the dependent variable (i.e. ITL) and that differences between the samples are significant in multiple factors.

**Question 4: Is working as a Prison Officer significantly different from other occupational groups.**

The QPS contains 28 scales and even small differences can be statistically significant if the database is large. Therefore to focus our analyses we used an effect size values as reflecting possible differences between the reference group and our sample of respondents. Notable is that “Quantitative work demands”, “Control of decision”, “Support from friends and relatives”, and “Work centrality” stands out with larger effect sizes compared to the QPS Reference group (see table 5).
Table 5

Independent group t-test comparing scale scores between the QPSnordic reference group and the entire sample of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>QPS reference group (n=2010)</th>
<th>Present study (n=139)</th>
<th>Comparison Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>sd</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Quantitative work demands</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Role conflict</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Control of decision</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Support from friends and relatives</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Inequality</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Work centrality</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Intrinsic motivation to work</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. n = number of participants, M = mean, sd = standard deviation, d=cohens d.*

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Prevalence of bullying and harassment

Two items included in QPSnordic concern bullying and harassment. These items are not part of any scales and the answering options are dichotomous (yes/no). A z-test comparing the proportion of respondents endorsing this item revealed that there were no significant differences between Kumla and Hall (z = .4, p > .05). A significantly greater proportion of respondents in the present study did report having noticed bullying or harassment compared to the reference group (z = 4.52, p < .01). On question 83 (Q83), “Have you yourself been the subject of bullying/harassment at your work place during the previous six months?” 5.8 % of the whole sample answered yes. At Hall 8.8 % answered yes and at Kumla 4.8 % answered yes. Figure 1 shows that there was little difference between the entire study population compared to the reference group (z = .8, p > .05) on question 83. The apparent difference between Kumla and Hall was tested but not found to be statistically significant (z = .4, p > .05).
Discussion

This study set out to investigate possible differences in ITL and which work-related factors that were related to ITL in two prison facilities. No support was found for the first hypothesis; that ITL would differ between the facilities. However, the second hypothesis was confirmed; there were more, and stronger, correlations between work-related factors and ITL at the prison of Hall than at the prison of Kumla. When comparing the entire sample of the Prison Officers it becomes apparent that the occupation of Prison Officer is on average statistically significantly different from work in other occupational sectors. This confirms the third hypothesis. The fourth hypothesis is however rejected. The conclusion is that the two facilities are pretty well matched compared to each other but are significantly different from other occupational groups.

Our interpretation of the results implies that more work-related factors correlate to an employee’s intention to leave at the prison of Hall than at the prison of Kumla. Causal conclusions are not possible to draw as this is a study with a cross-sectional design. Although
intention to leave has been found to have predictive value concerning actual turnover it does not explain the full amount of quitters. At the same time, even though a person responds with high self-reported intention to leave this does not automatically make this person quit his or her job. This has raised a question in the literature about significant events. These events can turn an employee who wants to quit into not-quitting and vice versa (Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Glomb & Ahlburg, 2005). Significant events can be both work related and non-work related. If an employee gets passed up for promotion he or she might see the future in the organization as unclear or unsatisfactory and therefore quit an employment which has, up to that point, been satisfactory. In this case the very special work environment that exists at a Class A facility brings in itself a high-risk work environment. That is, there is a substantial risk of being exposed to events of violence and/or abuse due to the nature of the clientele. Such events could perfectly well be defined as a “significant event” that makes the individual turn thoughts into action. Non-work related factors may be moving house or similar sudden out-of-work happenings. The authors present a model to try to explain the possible links between turnover, ITL, and work-related factors (Figure 2).
Figure 2. Model describing the links between ITL, turnover and work-related factors

The figure shows possible links between the QPSnordic work-related factors, ITL, and turnover. Turnover can be caused by a person thinking and deciding upon it over time but can also occur rather spontaneously. When this happens, for example due to a significant event, the person acts with behaviour possibly in contrast to the intrinsic attitude. An employee might feel satisfied with his or her work but one day gets an offer of another, more attractive, job. The employee might quit the current job without ever having contemplated changing jobs before. This could be the case in the present study. Assuming a difference in turnover the Hall staff may not be more active or interested in changing jobs than the Kumla staff but since they live in an area with more job alternatives, they might receive more tempting job offers and therefore leave their jobs more as a spontaneous act rather than after careful consideration. This could be in line with the significant events discussed by Kammeyer-Mueller et al (2005) and the difference in rural and city locations discussed by Manlove and Guzell (1997).
Based on the theory of Hackman and Oldham (1980), the correlations for the sample at Hall may indicate some problems at the workplace less evident for the sample at the prison of Kumla. Many of the workplace factors are significantly related to ITL at Hall but not at Kumla. According to the job characteristics model, experienced meaningfulness, experienced feeling of responsibility for work outcome and knowledge of actual results should be present in order to develop and preserve a genuine intrinsic motivation for the work. As a number of factors associated with ITL differ at Hall compared to Kumla there might be an imbalance in this organisation concerning these psychological states. For example “Work Demands” is a construct that affects the individual’s possibility to control the working situation (autonomy) and “Motivation for work” might be interpreted to be the individual’s experience of task identity which affects the psychological states meaningfulness and responsibility.

An additional five statistically significant correlations between QPS factors and ITL may also be explained in the light of the job characteristics model (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). High work mastery was related to ITL at Hall but not Kumla. The factor of “Work mastery” can be fitted into the task-part of the theory, with a high work mastery originating from task significance and task variety. These two constructs affect, according to the model, a person’s opinion of meaningfulness of his or her work. With high work mastery one could conclude that people’s sense of motivation and meaningfulness would be higher, but this is only true if the task at hand requires some skill. If a person has high work mastery in respect to easy tasks this could lead to boredom and a lower level of motivation. “Commitment to organization” was related to ITL at both Hall and Kumla and “Group work” was related to ITL at Hall. “Commitment to organization” and “Group work” have a connection with the feedback-part of the theory, with lower amounts of feedback and a more dysfunctional work group acting to lower the amount of positive feedback thus producing, according to the
theory, a lower knowledge of results obtained in work. This in turn is theorized to lower a person’s intrinsic motivation to work.

Moreover “Organizational Culture” was related to ITL at Hall but not Kumla. “Organizational Culture” might be attributed to the meaningfulness-part of the theory. If the culture within an organization clearly acts as an inhibitor for workers and their creativity this might very well act to diminish their motivation for the work. With the Prison Service being an organization highly regulated and legislated this may very well be the case. “Connection work/private life” was also related to ITL at Hall but not Kumla. The observed difference in “Connection work/private life” could be regarded in light of the construct of responsibility. With high out-of-work demands from, for example, relatives, work-factors become less important and therefore act to lower a person’s motivation in the work place. In short, if something outside of the work place is regarded as very important then factors within the work place might loose importance.

In comparison to the reference group the Prison Officers in our sample showed on average some small and moderate differences in responses on the QPSnordic. According to Table 5 the obtained sample had less quantitative work demands (i.e. the employees of the Prison Service feel that they had less to do than the reference group), more role conflict, less control of decisions, less support from friends, more inequality, less work centrality and less intrinsic motivation. It is implied by the theoretical framework that characteristics of the workplaces affect intrinsic motivation. Hackman and Oldham (1980) propose in their model that experienced meaningfulness, experienced feeling of responsibility for work outcome and knowledge of actual results affects an intrinsic motivation for work and it is reasonable to assume that the intrinsic motivation for work may affect turnover. This could have implications for interventions aimed at improving quality of life for a subsample of the Prison workforce. If a person receives information and support on his or her work, it should follow
according to the model that their comprehension of the work and its results become more apparent. This may act to increase a person’s motivation for the work.

The comparison between Hall and Kumla on the QPSnordic scales resulted in statistically significant but weak differences in the "Support from co-workers” and "Social Climate” scales. This could contribute to the explanation of a possible difference in turnover according to Karasek's model. Low degree of social support affects all types of work negatively according to this model (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). In the comparison between the entire sample and the QPSnordic reference group, it becomes apparent that the Class A Prison Officer sample differed on scales concerning subjects concerning demands, control, and support. This is interesting with the basis of the model by Karasek and Theorell (1990) as the sample indicates negative endorsements on many scales that include constructs such as less work demands, less control and less social support in comparison with the reference group. This has implications for the general well-being of the Prison Officers. The theory of Karasek and Theorell (1990) means that a person with high demands, low control and low social support run greater risks of cardiovascular disease and psychosocial ill-health. This is in line with the results obtained in this study concerning control and support, but not regarding demands. However, in this study only quantitative work demands (i.e. having too much to do) were measured, not psychological demands (i.e. threats, anxiety, fears or for that matter physical demands). It could very well be argued that psychological demands are high because of the work environment in the prison. This has not been investigated and remains but as a theory of the authors.

Differences between the sample and the reference group indicate that the Prison Officers have less of control over their work than does the reference group (e.g. Control over decisions). This could be addressed with a deeper analysis and targeted interventions, for example by enhancing information regarding the work by the officials at the institutions. With
such information the Prison Officers might get a higher understanding of their job assignment and therefore a higher level of perceived control.

**Possible contributing factors**

Class A prisons have the most heightened state of security throughout the Swedish Prison and Probation Service. There are two main forms of security; fixed security (i.e. fences, locks, doors, walls etc.) and dynamic security (staff-inmate proximity and interaction). The latter has been shown to act as a double-edged sword. It is supposed to form more working and close bonds between the staff and the inmates. At the same time it puts a great deal of pressure on both the inmates and the staff. The constant closeness makes the opportunities for rest and respite less frequent, something that has been shown to influence levels of stress and fatigue (Crawley, 2004). These constructs have been found to correlate to job satisfaction and ITL as presented above. An unexpected finding was that the responses obtained regarding bullying and harassment from the sample show distinct differences from the responses of the reference group. In the reference group a little more than one in eight respondents answered this question with an affirmative answer, for the sample this ratio was more than twice as high. This reported presence of bullying is unexpected and somewhat alarming. One argument to explain this could be that it acts as sort of a survival mechanism for the Prison Officer. Bantering could perhaps take the edge of the otherwise very harsh and crude environment in a prison setting. However, what some people perceive as banter, another person might perceive as bullying and/or harassment. In some occasions it might actually be a question of plain bullying. The reported level of bullying and harassment is high in comparison to the reference group and might be a contributing element to high turnover rates.

**Geographic location**

Some concern about the location of the investigated facility concerning turnover rate must be raised. Manlove & Guzell (1997) found greater differences in turnover rates in city
locations as opposed to similar workplaces in rural locations. These researchers came to the conclusion that the availability of work influenced a person’s turnover intentions as well as actual turnover. Their conclusions gain further support from additional studies. Other researchers have found similar results when investigating this phenomenon in six European countries (Widerszal-Bazyl, Radkiewicz, Hasselhorn, Conway & van der Heijden, 2008). This holds implications for the present study since the prison of Hall is located in Södertälje which is a substantially larger city than Kumla where the prison of Kumla is located. The prison of Hall also has larger cities, including Stockholm, in its near vicinity than the prison of Kumla. According to Manlove & Guzell (1997) this relationship could imply that the turnover rates would be higher in Hall than in Kumla simply because of the higher existence of job alternatives in those regions. However, a person is more prone to leave his or her job if that person perceives the new job as better than the existing one (Manlove & Guzell, 1997). This implies that it is not only the existence of other jobs but also the subjective desirability of the jobs that is important for a person’s intention to leave and actual turnover.

As earlier research has recognized, the geographical location of a facility could have an impact on ITL and turnover (Widerszal-Bazyl et al., 2008). Earlier research has linked these findings with the higher prevalence of other job alternatives in city settings as opposed to rural settings. A person will only change their job if the job that is available is perceived as better than the current one. Since there are no demands on higher education, most of the Prison Officers lack a higher education thus implying that it is hard for them to get high-status jobs elsewhere. There are of course other factors than work specific factors that can influence turnover and intention to leave. Work-family conflicts have been found to be correlated with intention to leave (Pilar et al., 2004). An example of a work-family conflict might be that the home environment puts high demands on the individual that influences the occupational area of that individual’s life.
Age, Tenure, education, and gender

Variables such as age and tenure can have an impact on intention to leave. Typically, the older a person is and the longer that person has been in the organization the less likely that person is to quit the job (de Croon et al., 2004; Manlove & Guzell, 1997; Pilar et al., 2004). Furthermore, Brannon et al. (2007) found, when investigating a sample of women in nursing occupations, that employees with higher education were twice as likely to indicate high scores on the ITL-scale. Additional research has indicated that this finding is not consistent throughout the field. Coomber & Barriball (2006) found some support that educational level to some extent may affect a person’s ITL, but that this link is inconsistent. Concerning gender differences in ITL, Acker (2004) found that male employees had higher levels of education and longer tenure in the current occupation. The author found these variables to be correlated to reduced job satisfaction, which in turn is relevant to a person’s ITL. An interesting approach would have been to examine possible gender differences in our sample; but this was not the focus in this study and is therefore left for future researchers to investigate.

Choice of method

A questionnaire was used mainly to reach a large number of respondents in a short period of time. It was also used as it is possible to make generalizations to the population as a whole and to compare the results to a reference group. QPSnordic was used as it is a well-validated and standardized test developed for the Nordic countries (Dallner et al., 2000, Lindström et al., 2000). The questionnaire is based on dimensions that build on the demand-control-model (Karasek & Theorell, 1990) and the job characteristics model (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). These properties made the questionnaire well suited to test a possible difference between the prisons and also to a QPSnordic reference group (the reference group consists of a vast variety of people and occupations). As this profession is very controlled by legislation compared to many other professions, one can imagine that this ought to have an
effect on the individual there was an incitement to compare this occupational group towards other occupational groups, that is the QPSnordic reference group. The differences between the facilities and the reference group could provide knowledge to enhance the work by the facilities aimed to improve work related environmental factors in order to improve the Prison Officer’s subjective opinions of the workplace.

Using a questionnaire there is always a risk of self-report bias. The respondents knew that the survey was designed to find differences between the prisons of Hall and Kumla. This could have influenced the respondents to alter their responses in a positive or negative way. For example, the respondents of Kumla might not want to present a “worse” image of their work-place than the respondents of Hall and tailored their answers accordingly, in a positive way. On the other hand, there is always a possibility that some respondents take the chance to really complain about what they might find to be less positive in their work environment. It remains inconclusive to the researchers if there in fact was any self-report bias present.

An additional approach that could be used is the introduction of a qualitative approach along with the current quantitative research strategy. The usage of interviews would have enhanced the results obtained in the questionnaire. It would also have presented unique insight to the answers on the structured questionnaire. Furthermore, such an approach would have served the officials at both of the facilities with more substantial ideas for future improvements and work within this field. This would be especially interesting if the interviewees where both movers and stayers of the organization. Interviewing those who left the organization is a difficulty due to the simple fact that they might be difficult to get in touch with. There would also be a chance that only those who are dissatisfied with the organization would participate or vice versa which also could result in a bias. Another difficulty is that the interview would be retrospective and involve a recollection of circumstances in the past which might prime the memory of the workplace negatively.
Furthermore, an approach such as this could also be affected by demand characteristics, i.e. where participants form an interpretation of the experiment's purpose and unconsciously change their behavior accordingly.

**Limitations of the study and implications for future research**

It is a troublesome fact that no secure conclusions can be drawn on the basis on the data concerning the rate of turnover between the two facilities. This implies that the result on the dependent variable ITL (i.e. no difference between the facilities) might mirror the fact that there are no differences between the samples concerning turnover for the year 2010.

The study obtained a low response rate (17.7% of the Hall population, 37% of the Kumla population, and 31.1% of the whole population). This is considered to be a weakness as the generalization possibilities decrease. The dissimilarity in response frequency also holds implications for the interpretation and generalization of the results. The number of returned questionnaires was more than twice as high from Kumla than from Hall. In previous research it has been found that an employee who holds a negative attitude towards an organization is less likely to participate in organizational surveys. Taris and Schreurs (2007) found that organizations with higher response rates among their employees indicate a more positive attitude towards the organization and their work. This might imply that the real attitude towards this organization could be more negative than these results display. With this insight, conclusions about the results are vague at best.

Another limitation is the significant difference from the sample to the population regarding tenure. This fact makes conclusions about the results uncertain since it is not shown that the sample that has been measured actually is a representative part of the population. In previous research tenure has been found to be related to ITL, with extended tenure being negatively related to ITL (de Croon et al., 2004; Manlove & Guzell, 1997; Pilar et al., 2004).
This implies that a more representative sample would have produced a lower mean ITL for the sample as a whole as well as for each facility.

This study serves as a contribution to the field of research as it in many respects confirms earlier findings. An interesting finding was that even though the ITL did not differ, the factors related to it did. This is something that we have not seen in the field of research. It could imply that even though two work-places in many aspects are supposed to be similar, ITL could be influenced by different work-related factors, both in strength and in number. This finding should be passed on as a central point for future research. Furthermore it is of interest for future research to regard the differences between the sample and the reference group that the occupation of Prison Officers is found to be different from other occupations supports earlier research in the field. Potential interventions of the workplace, and also future research, need to be conducted with these differences in mind.

**Conclusions**

Results from the present study show that there was no difference in ITL but that there were some differences in work-related factors related to ITL between the facilities. The findings are inconclusive at best regarding the link between work-related factors, ITL and actual turnover. This study also attempted to compare the facilities towards each other and also to compare the entire sample towards a Nordic reference group. Even though the study obtained a low response frequency the comparison revealed that the facilities were pretty well matched towards each other but that there were substantial differences between the sample and the reference group on many factors, although the differences on each factor generally were quite small. This indicates that the occupation of Prison Officer is significantly different from other occupations in the Nordic work society. This is necessary to consider if work-related interventions are to be directed towards this occupational group.
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Till dig som är tillsvidareanställd Kriminalvårdare på en klass A-anstalt.

Vi, Henrik Eldblom och Laila Andersen, är två psykologstudenter som går femte och sista året på psykologprogrammet vid Örebro Universitet. Just nu skriver vi vår examsuppsats som behandlar frågan om det är en skillnad i personalomsättning mellan klass A-anstalter i Sverige och om den i så fall kan bero på arbetsplatsfaktorer.

Ditt deltagande i undersökningen är naturligtvis frivilligt, men det är betydelsefullt för undersökningens kvalitet, att du som får enkäten besvarar denna. Ju fler som svarar, desto säkrare blir de resultat som framkommer.

Dina svar kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt!


Den ifyllda enkäten läggs i det medföljande svarkuvertet. Detta kuvert ges till närmsta chef alternativt läggs i postfack tillhörande Ulrika Wass i postrummet i administrationsbyggnaden. Postfacket kommer att vara märkt med ”Enkätssvar”.

Resultatet av undersökningen kommer att återges till deltagarna i lämplig form då undersökningen är avslutad.

Om du har några problem att besvara frågorna eller har synpunkter på frågeformuläret ta då gärna kontakt med någon av oss (kontaktuppgifter finns nedan). Trots att vi förorsakar dig ett visst besvär, hoppas vi att du vill hjälpa oss att öka kunskaperna om detta!

Tack på förhand för din medverkan!

Henrik Eldblom Laila Andersen
0735 – 23 90 99 0707 – 18 63 14
Till dig som är tillsvidareanställd Kriminalvårdare på en klass A-anstalt.

Vi, Henrik Eldblom och Laila Andersen, är två psykologstudenter som går femte och sista året på psykologprogrammet vid Örebro Universitet. Just nu skriver vi vår examensuppsats som behandlar frågan om det är en skillnad i personalomsättning mellan klass A-anstalter i Sverige och om den i så fall kan bero på arbetsplatsfaktorer.

Ditt deltagande i undersökningen är naturligtvis frivilligt, men det är betydelsefullt för undersökningens kvalitet, att du som får enkäten besvarar denna. Ju fler som svarar, desto säkrare blir de resultat som framkommer.

Dina svar kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt!


Den ifyllda enkäten läggs i det medföljande svarskuvertet. Denna kuvert läggs i en postlåda märkt ”Enkätsvar”. Denna postlåda finns vid posten i A-huset.

Resultatet av undersökningen kommer att återges till deltagarna i lämplig form då undersökningen är avslutad.

Om du har några problem att besvara frågorna eller har synpunkter på frågeformuläret ta då gärna kontakt med någon av oss (kontaktuppgifter finns nedan). Trots att vi förorsakar dig ett visst besvär, hoppas vi att du vill hjälpa oss att öka kunskaperna om detta!

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