

Organisational Commitment and Organisational Cynicism: the Effect on Employees' Emotional State and Intentions to Leave the Organisation*

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Abstract

To identify the impact of organisational commitment and organisational cynicism on each other, on employees' emotional state and their intentions regarding their workplace in Lithuanian and Polish business organisations. The paper presents part of the results of a wider study conducted in two neighbouring states.

The study was conducted using a questionnaire survey that employed Organisational Commitment and Organisational Cynicism scales. The following subscales were analysed: affective commitment, continuance commitment, normative commitment, Wrightman's Cynical Personality, cognitive organisational cynicism, affective organisational cynicism, and behavioural organisational cynicism. Hypotheses were tested, and differences between countries were identified by means of the linear regression model and the chi-square test.

Our survey has revealed that the growth of organisational commitment in Lithuanian business organisations is hampered by employees' cynical cognitive behaviour and negative emotions. The weakening of the latter determines the growth in organisational commitment. In turn, along with the weakening of actions attributable to organisational cynicism (i.e., when employees' cynical attitudes, cynical cognitive and emotional behaviours, and generally signs of cynical behaviour are decreasing), organisational commitment in Polish business organisations is increasing. Our study presents the findings of unique quantitative research related to the phenomenon of organisational cynicism and organisational commitment within Polish and Lithuanian organisations. Moreover, it provides new knowledge that explains the relationships between phenomena such as organisational cynicism and organisational commitment, thus constituting substantial added value.

Keywords: Organisational commitment, Organisational cynicism, Private sector, Employees' emotional state, Lithuania, Poland

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Introduction

Organisational commitment is considered one of the main factors contributing to the success of the modern human resources management process, leading to better performance of employees in carrying out their main tasks and functions and to higher job satisfaction (Eliyana/Ma'arif 2019; Amin 2022). Meanwhile, organisational cynicism, as an important job attitude that directly affects employees' behavioural patterns towards the achievement of organisational goals (Naseer et al. 2021; Dingba/Ikon/ Onwuchekwa 2022), threatens and increases the risk of failure in human resources management and the success of organisational performance. Therefore, these two concepts are of great relevance to researchers and practitioners seeking the best organisational HR management models and practices.

In addition, the level of individual and organisational goal accomplishment depends on employees' individual social well-being in the workplace – positive emotional state and interpersonal connections (Henniks/Heyns/Rothmann 2022). Employees' desire to leave the organisation is usually based on their unsatisfied expectations of well-being and is a serious concern for organisations, as it strongly affects organisational performance (Moon 2017; Kaufmann/Borry/De-Hart-Davis 2022). Thus, the identification of features of employees' emotional state and their intentions to stay in or leave the organisation may essentially contribute to a successful HR management process.

Previous studies have already demonstrated that strengthened organisational cynicism is related to a weakened commitment to the organisation (Yesiltas 2019; Kras et al. 2019), and both of these phenomena affect intentions to leave the job (Han et al. 2013). According to Mousa (2017), organisational cynicism reflects negative feelings (emotional state) that employees experience in their workplace, which may explain their unwanted behaviour. Therefore, it is no coincidence that studies demonstrate a significant impact of cynical attitudes on the intention to change jobs (Boon/Wynen/Kleizen 2020; Manzoor/Manzoor/Han 2020). However, there is still a gap in knowledge on how the relationship between organisational commitment and organisational cynicism affects employees' emotional state and their intentions towards their workplace.

According to *Social exchange theory*, employees' bonds with the organisation are based on positive and negative relationships, and positive relations (willingness to stay and contribute to organisational goals) require organisational, team and leader support to maintain employees' commitment, trust, economic and social exchange (Cropanzano/Mitchell 2005; Cropanzano et al. 2017). This theoretical approach has already been used to explain the phenomenon of organisational commitment (Ganzah et al. 2002; Meng et al. 2019), organisational cynicism (Munir/Ghafoor/Rasli 2016; Pfrombeck et al. 2020), employees' emotional state (Huang et al. 2016; Mehta 2016), and their intentions to leave

the organisation (Paillé/Bourdeau/Galois 2010; Huang et al. 2016). However, it has never been employed as a theory explaining the abovementioned concepts and relations between them. This theoretical approach also leads to interesting conceptual findings in the research.

Central and Eastern European countries play an important role in the European business sector; however, the organisations of former communist states still face some challenges while implementing modern human resources management models. After an occupation lasting five decades, thirty years ago Lithuania and Poland were liberated from the Soviet Union. The fully sovereign Republic of Poland and independent Republic of Lithuania, as democratic countries, built market economies and had to find ways to maximize their interests and develop educational systems and organisational networks (Posel-Częścik 2001; Godoń/Jucevičienė/Kodelja 2004). These neighbouring countries are characterised by such historical-societal-economical similarities as common cultural heritage, similar development levels, and GDP per capita (Vveinhardt/Sroka 2020). In addition, according to Juchnowicz et al. (2021), some similarities have also been identified with regard to employee attitudes towards the work environment; i.e., the variance in the degree of satisfaction with employment between the Polish and Lithuanian populations was negligible, and the relationship between the interactional dimension (interactional fairness, the quality of interpersonal relations) and salary evaluation was relatively high in both countries. It is important to analyse the influence of the relationship between organisational commitment and organisational cynicism on the emotional state of employees because their state of mind may be related to turnover intentions or their well-being, productivity, and performance. This is especially significant for developing economies such as Poland and Lithuania. The identification and comparison of similarities and differences between Poland and Lithuania may enable organisations in both countries to find the most appropriate models of human resources management in the region. However, there is a lack of research analysing the interrelationships between organisational commitment and organisational cynicism and their impact on employees' emotional states and intentions towards the organisation in Poland and Lithuania. Therefore, this research attempts to form a comprehensive picture and compare it with neighbouring countries within the same region.

This research attempts to answer several problem questions, which may be grouped into three main groups: 1) How does the level of organisational commitment influence organisational cynicism and vice versa? 2) How are the level of organisational commitment and organisational cynicism related to employee satisfaction (un)happiness) and intentions to stay in the organisation? 3) Are there generally any differences in organisational commitment and organisational cynicism between countries such as Lithuania and Poland, and, if so, what are they? This article presents only a portion of the results of the research conducted by the authors.

The purpose of this study is to identify the impact of organisational commitment and organisational cynicism on each other, on employees' emotional states and their intentions with regard to their workplace.

Literature review

Organisational commitment

Organisational commitment is currently a very popular topic of research. It is closely related to the beliefs and desires of employees as well as to a strong organisational culture (values, goals, efforts, and membership) (Yusuf et al. 2022). *The Social exchange theory* states that employees tend to develop high-quality relationships based on their previous experiences of interaction (with whom and how). When employees are treated fairly and respectfully, they tend to view a relationship as a social exchange, to put extra effort or dedication into the job and have more will to become more involved in the job (Herda/Lavelle 2021; Yusuf et al. 2022).

According to previous research, the orientation of organisational commitment must be carried out in several manners towards organisational goals: an affective manner (the employee's emotional attachment to the organisation); a normative manner (social norms determining the level of loyalty to the organisation and the employee's sense of commitment and loyalty to a given organisation); and a continuance manner (a result of the perceived costs of leaving the organisation) (Allen/Meyer 1990; Amin 2022). At the same time, previous studies have emphasised that organisational commitment depends not only on employees' individual characteristics but also on the nature of the organisation, its culture, presented values, and the stimuli provided by superiors. Not all stimuli require financial (economic) outlays because those of a social and emotional nature also play a very important role. They are often appreciated more by employees and require only the commitment of their superiors. They are associated with creating a good work atmosphere and knowledge sharing, using the potential of team members, building trust and strong support of superiors for building team cooperation (Steinerowska 2015). Organisations must pay attention to the significance of interpersonal fairness at all levels and incorporate interpersonal treatment objectives into their policies and performance evaluation systems (Herda/Lavelle 2021). The determinants of organisational commitment are highly significant (see Figure 1), and they can be grouped based on individual (employee's) specificity, job specificity and organisational features.

Table 1. Determinants of organisational commitment

Group of determinants	Characteristics	Source
Demographic determinants	Individual characteristics (age, tenure, service record, education, gender, etc.)	Wołowska 2014; Rafiee/Bahrami/Entezarian 2015; Jehanzeb/Mohanty 2018
	Individual differences (locus of control and task self-efficacy)	Ashfaq/Afid/Ilyas 2021; Kesumawatie/Sumaryono/ Herdijanto 2021
	Professional experience	Jehanzeb/Mohanty 2018
	Previous socialization experiences, level of stress	Cohen 2007
Job determinants	Offerings (salary, recognition, co-workers, promotion, ect.)	Ahmad 2018
	Job characteristics (job field, role conflict, and job ambiguity, etc.)	Rafiee et al. 2015
	Directly relationship to the workplace	Steinerowska 2015
Organisational determinants	Structural characteristics (formality and focus in organisations, organisation size, etc.)	Rafiee et al. 2015
	Involvement from the strategic and functional level	Steinerowska 2015
	Organisational climate	Berberoglu 2018
	Organisational justice (distributive, procedural and interactional justice, internal and external equity)	Hassan 2002; Rakowska/ Valdes-Conca/de Juana-Espinosa 2015; Bajaj/Krishnan 2016
	Organisation support	Rodríguez-Fernández/Herrera/de las Heras-Rosas 2021
	System of rewarding (extrinsic and intrinsic)	Taba 2018
	Employees' happiness	Bajaj/Krishnan 2016

Source: Our elaboration according to mentioned resources.

Organisational commitment is beneficial for the organisation, as it reduces the absenteeism rate and turnover ratio and increases work motivation, thus improving the organisation's productivity, and because of highly committed employees, it improves the performance of the organisation (Jernigan/Beggs/Kohut 2002; Hur/Perry 2020). However, maintenance of the established level of organisational commitment may be affected by negative trends such as organisational cynicism.

Organisational cynicism

Organisational cynicism affects both individuals and organisations. As Gkorezis et al. (2018) state, globalisation trends and the fast pace of technological advancements have created workplaces where employees constantly face challenging work demands and high job complexity. The negative consequence is that job security is no longer guaranteed. In addition, many employees are not happy with their organisations. As a result, people feel that their organisations are not fulfilling their promises (and even betraying them in different ways), which may become the reason for organisational cynicism among employees. If this is also accompanied by a lack (or a low level) of support from fellow employees and/or superiors, employees' behaviour becomes even more negative. Therefore, organisational cynicism is a negative judgement or attitude that originates from an individual's employment experience (Aslam/Ylyas/Imran 2016). However, researchers notice that organisations are expecting more and more from their employees, providing little in return other than a job and pay (Patra/Singh 2012). Organisational cynicism is increasingly observed in companies that are characterised by widely understood unethical behaviour (e.g., corruption scandals) (Alexandra et al. 2017). The increase in employees' and even employers' organisational cynicism may lead to stakeholders' organisational cynicism, embodied in unsupportive stakeholder behaviours, decision-making, loss of trust and even previous partnerships and collaborations (West et al. 2016). However, this research focuses on the employees' approach to organisational cynicism.

In general, three dimensions of organisational cynicism can be mentioned: cognitive, affective and behavioural (Mousa 2018). The cognitive dimension is the belief that organisations lack integrity, which when coupled with a powerful negative emotional reaction leads to disparaging and critical behaviour (Husian/Shahzad 2022). It manifests itself in suspicious thoughts and doubts that one's employer is fair, honest, and sincere (Pfrombeck et al. 2020). In turn, affective cynicism means an emotional reaction towards the organisation, which may include irritation, aggravation, anxiety, and tension. Finally, behavioural cynicism relates to negative behaviours towards the organisation, such as sarcastic humour and negative predictions regarding organisational practices and their future (Khalid 2020). In other words, organisational cynicism is an unfavourable attitude towards the employing organisation (Naseer et al. 2021). All three dimensions of organisational cynicism are relevant to this research.

Organisational cynicism has a number of negative consequences for both the organisation and employees. It reduces organisational commitment (Goodman/Corser/Hartman 2021), resulting in worse performance and, thus, worse results (Brown/Cregan/Metz 2018; Kim et al. 2019) or a reluctance to change (Stanley/Meyer/Topolnytsky 2005; Brown/Cregan 2008; Bakari et al. 2019). In turn, negative consequences for employees include lower job satisfaction (Wu et

al. 2021), poorer interpersonal relationships (Neves 2012), burnout and emotional exhaustion (Akbas et al. 2018), alienation (Chiaburu et al. 2013) and, thus, stronger intention to change jobs (Lorinkova/Perry 2017). Employee cynicism comes to prominence when a discrepancy between managerial declarations of superiors and reality is noticed (Grama 2013; Bergström/Styhre/Thilander 2014) or in a case where there are cultural differences (Schmitz/Froeser/Bader 2018). Cynical employees are less loyal to their supervisors, and this cynicism can interfere with the reciprocity process inherent in the creation and maintenance of high-quality social exchanges at work (Scott/Zweig 2020). In addition, this can also hinder the achievement of the organisation's goals (Nafei/Kaifi 2013). In other words, organisational cynicism negatively affects both employees' performance (Arslan 2018) and organisational performance (Avotra et al. 2021).

Research from previous studies shows that organisational cynicism may be diminished by coworker trust and transformational leadership (Kim et al. 2019) through well-formulated organisational communication (Mousa 2018). That is, when employees experience an open-door communication climate, they experience a sense of psychological safety and do their best. In light of the presented deliberations, there is no doubt that organisations would benefit from actively managing factors that may affect the level of organisational cynicism among employees.

Hypothesis development

Although the literature offers studies that analyse the relationship between organisational commitment and cynicism, it can be stated that, thus far, this relationship has not been thoroughly investigated. At the same time, the literature on the topic presents several studies on the relationship between organisational commitment and multiple variables, such as employee job satisfaction, organisational citizenship, and leadership (Yüksel/Şahin 2017). Existing surveys mostly conclude that employees with cynical behaviour express lower-level organisational commitment. It also works in the opposite way; i.e., employees with a high level of commitment are less inclined to exhibit cynical behaviour (Wanous/Reichers/Austin 2000), which also relates to managers (leaders) (e.g., Rubin et al. 2009). Similar results were found by Barnes (2010), who additionally noted that cynical employees engaged in fewer behaviours above and beyond their job duties were more likely to leave the job. Likewise, Byrne and Hochwarter (2008) claim that performance for cynics is lowest when perceived support is low. The former was also confirmed by Naus (2007), who added lower motivation to the findings. Analysing teaching hospitals in Egypt, Nafei and Kaifi (2013) stated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of organisational cynicism (the cognitive dimension, the affective dimension and the behavioural dimension) and organisational com-

mitment. Furthermore, research done by Altınöz et al. (2011) showed that the higher the organisational commitment of the employees, the lower the cynical attitudes and vice versa. Han et al. (2013) identified that employees' intentions to leave their jobs were directly related to their organisational cynicism and organisational commitment. Finally, Sevgi and Hüseyin (2014) analysed the relationship between organisational cynicism and organisational commitment and indicated that employees exhibited low organisational cynicism and high organisational commitment. The study conducted by Lapointe et al. (2020) has shown that organisational commitment and organisational cynicism are similar to weights on a scale: where greater organisational cynicism is identified, less organisational commitment is observed. However, it should be noted that this study was conducted in a completely different cultural environment (China and Malaysia), and it is not known whether this principle works in European organisations, specifically in Poland and Lithuania. Thus, the question emerges: **(Q1)** If strong organisational commitment has been achieved in the organisation, does this allow us to expect that this will prevent the emergence of organisational cynicism? In general, can the metaphor of scales be used when speaking about the existence of these two phenomena and where is that limit at which one phenomenon can outweigh another?

To answer these questions, the first Hypothesis **H1** is formulated.

H1. As organisational commitment is weakening, organisational cynicism is increasing.

The study conducted by Happy et al. (2019) showed that life satisfaction (happiness) is related to employee commitment and willingness to stay in the organisation. The level of organisational commitment generated by an organisation will hinge on its ability to maintain the needed level of wellbeing for employees. According to previous research, wellbeing can be built on happiness by using employees' psychological strengths, which encompasses the pursuit of meaningful and developmental goals (Garg/Rastogi 2009). Happiness is understood as the rate at which the individual judges desirability and total life quality, including elements such as wealth, health, religion, social support, employment, recreation, etc. (Mehad/Iranpour 2014). Happiness enhances employees' patience, job performance, flexibility, work effort and productivity (Awais/Malik/Qaisar 2015; Bajaj/Krishnan 2016). Employees' happiness is closely related to social exchange relationships (Bajaj/Krishnan 2016), which affect employees' job satisfaction and intentions to stay in or leave the job. Previous studies have found that organisational cynicism can also be considered an important factors in studying whether employees are happy with their organisation, teams, managers and the organisational climate (Aishwarya/Aarthy/Senthilmurugan 2021). When analysing relations between organisational commitment and employees' job satisfaction, it was emphasised that positive emotions (happiness)

and increased satisfaction, in turn, could help an employee remain with the organisation (reducing the employee's intentions to leave the job position) (Paul/Budhwar/Bamel 2020). However, it is not entirely clear whether, at a given moment, happy employees associate commitment with the rest of their lives, or maybe less happy employees may have the same intentions. That is, **(Q2)** if happy and committed employees were inclined to stay in the organisation for the rest of their lives, could the same also be expected from the employees who feel unhappy? The absence of differences would indicate that happiness is not the only factor making the employee commit for a long time. However, perhaps happiness is the most important condition; therefore, another question is raised: **(Q3)** Would both employees who feel happy at work and those who do not feel happy at work still be unable to work in their current organisation for a lifetime? The positive answer to this question would mean that the feeling of happiness in the organisation is not the most important criterion with regard to intentions to retain a long-term relationship with one's workplace.

Thus, based on the raised research questions, Hypotheses **H2** and **H3** were formulated:

- H2. Both employees who feel happy and those who feel unhappy will tend to connect their lives with the organisation.*
- H3. Employees who do not intend to connect their lives with the organisation will be less committed to it.*

In addition, since the overall level of cynicism is influenced by culture (Stavrova/Ehlebracht 2016; 2019), it can be expected that there may be more differences than similarities in organisations in the two states. Huettinger (2008), who investigated cultural dimensions in business life based on Hofstede's indices, noticed that Lithuania, like Latvia, is closer to the Nordic countries than to Poland or Russia, which are classified as Eastern and/or Central Europe. For example, according to Hofstede Insights data, the power distance index in Poland (68) is significantly higher than that in Lithuania (42). In countries with higher power distance, ordinary employees feel more dependent on their superiors and avoid turning on or contradicting them, unlike in low-power distance cultures that are characterised by lower emotional distance (Hofstede 1991). According to Sauadagar et al. (2018), barriers to information exchange arise in cultures with high power distance, which promotes employees' cynical views of ongoing processes. Furthermore, from a social exchange perspective, leaders who can empower subordinates increase their trust and can reduce their level of cynicism (Sabar et al. 2020). On the other hand, Dasborough et al. (2009) consider that high power distance also means greater recognition of the power difference between leaders and members; thus, cynicism should not increase with regard to leaders. Therefore, the following question is raised: **(Q4)** Can employee

cynicism also differ due to cultural differences between Lithuania and Poland? Thus, Hypothesis H4 is proposed:

H4. Organisational cynicism in Poland will be higher than in Lithuania.

Research methodology

Sample

The conceptual approach of this study is based on research into organisational commitment and organisational cynicism previously conducted by other authors. Based on the results of research conducted by Audenaert et al. (2020) (N=266 police officers), Lapointe et al. (2020) (N=156 self-initiated expatriates-SIEs and host country nationals-HCNs), Yesiltas (2019) (N=189 nurses), and Han et al. (2013) (N=315 nurses), the authors of this study decided not to single out one specific area of professional activity and to conduct the study in two countries choosing one sector, i.e., business organisations.

Procedures

After random selection of Lithuanian and Polish private sector organisations, the heads of organisations were contacted to obtain permission to conduct a questionnaire survey in the organisations they led. After obtaining the permissions of the heads, it was explained to the research participants that their participation was voluntary; i.e., it was emphasised that this study would be conducted following the principle of free participation in the survey, and informed consent was obtained. Research participants were provided with precise information about the purpose of the study and the use of future results in publishing scientific articles. Research participants were not misled regarding the course of the study and the form of presenting the results; anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed to them. Links to the electronic questionnaire placed on a specialized survey platform were sent to research participants. After filling in the questionnaires, the links were automatically deactivated; an answer could be provided only after marking answers to all statements and questions; there were no incomplete questionnaires in the survey.

The survey involved 1001 respondents working in private sector organisations (501 Lithuanian and 500 Polish employees). The characteristics of the research participants are presented in Table 1 (see Annex), and the characteristics of the organisations they represented are presented in Table 2 (see Annex). However, in the results presented in this article, the characteristics of research participants and the organisations they represented in the context of organisational commitment and organisational cynicism will not be analysed in more detail.

Measures

The survey was conducted using the subscales of Allen and Meyer (1990) (Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Normative Commitment) and Mowday et al. (1979) (Organisational commitment). The items of organisational cynicism were based on the scale (OCS) of Dean et al. (1998), which were used by Durrah et al. (2019), and Nafei and Kaifi (2013). The number of items of combined original scales was 60 (N of Items 1). A Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used for the answers. The questionnaire also included 6 questions with “yes” or “no” answer variants: (1) Do you feel happy being a member of this organisation? (2) Could I work in the same organisation throughout my life? (3) I think it is possible to be committed to one organisation all life; (4) I care about the fate of my organisation; (5) The most important thing for me at work is that I feel good about myself; (6) It is important for me to be useful to my organisation). Performing the analysis of the data of the latter questions, the respondents’ answers were grouped into four groups; the example presents a combination of the first (1) and second (2) question: Group 1 – Feel happy and could work in this organisation their whole life; Group 2 – Feel happy but could not work in this organisation their whole life; Group 3 – Do not feel happy but could work in this organisation their whole life; Group 4 – Do not feel happy and could not work in this organisation. An example of the combination of the third (3) and fourth (4) questions is “I care about the fate of the organisation, and it is possible for me to commit to it”, and an example of the combination of questions five (5) and six (6) is “It is important that you feel good about yourself and are useful to the organisation”. Hypotheses were tested, and differences between countries were identified using the linear regression model and chi-square test.

The survey was conducted in the Lithuanian and Polish languages, and three items of the Organisational Commitment scale (N of Items 2) were rejected after performing the factor analysis. The structure of the questionnaire used for the survey and its psychometric characteristics are detailed in Table 3 (see Annex).

In the subscales of the combined questionnaire, explained dispersion (%), which must be higher than 10 %, satisfies this requirement; i.e., the lowest recorded percentage is 42.25 (while the highest is as high as 84.93). Prime and secondary factorisation (see Columns I *** and II **** in Table 3) also resulted in a high percentage of explained dispersion.

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient values are also high, i.e., the lowest value is 0.76 (the coefficient is acceptable when its value is not lower than 0.7, and the highest value is as high as 0.95). The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient can be affected in ascending order depending on the number of items in the subscale, but in this case, the minimum number of items in the subscale is 4, and the maximum is 15. The highest values of the coefficient were obtained in subscales where the

number of items was 4 (0.94 – Affective Organisational Cynicism Subscale) and 5 (0.95 – Cognitive Organisational Cynicism Subscale).

Despite the obtained high values of Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the Spearman-Brown coefficient, which is calculated by a method other than Cronbach's alpha method, was also calculated, and the result of this coefficient is not affected by the number of items (it is not calculated when there are 4 or fewer items in the subscale).

The minimum value (min) of the factor loading (L) in the analysed subscales is higher than 0.3 in all cases, which indicates that no inappropriate items were detected (the lowest minimum value is 0.35, while the highest is 0.91).

The mean of total item correlation (r_{itt}) in analysed subscales in all cases is higher than 0.2 (the lowest mean is 0.40; when the highest, up to 0.85).

Intercorrelations of the dimensions (see Annex, Table 4) in the case of this sample show statistically reliable relationships between all analysed subscales (i.e., 0.01 and 0.05). The value of Spearman's correlation coefficient indicates a strong relationship when $0.6 < r \leq 0.8$ and a medium relationship when $0.4 < r \leq 0.6$.

Results

Linear regression model

Formulated hypotheses were tested by performing linear regression when the dependent variables in one case are Organisational commitment (Table 5, Part A) and in the other case, Organisational cynicism (Table 5, Part B).

Regression equations:

- Organisational Commitment (LT) = $4.119 - 0.153 \times CO - 0.183 \times AO$.
- Organisational Commitment (PL) = $4.786 - 0.126 \times CP - 0.249 \times CO - 0.109 \times ED - 0.138 \times BO$.

In Lithuanian private sector organisations, the growth of organisational commitment is hindered by the cynical cognitive behaviour of employees and cynical emotions. The weakening of the latter determines the increase in organisational commitment in Lithuania.

Along with the weakening of actions attributable to organisational cynicism (i.e., employees' declining cynical attitudes, declining cynical cognitive and emotional behaviours, and in general declining features of cynical behaviour), the organisational commitment in Polish private sector organisations is increasing.

Regression equations:

- Organisational Cynicism (LT) = $5.465 - 0.255 \times AC - 0.068 \times CC - 0.098 \times NC - 0.716 \times OC$.
- Organisational Cynicism (PL) = $4.547 - 0.251 \times AC - 0.201 \times NC - 0.521 \times OC$.

In the case of Lithuania, the research results show that as affective, continuity, normative and organisational commitment is weakening, organisational cynicism in Lithuanian private sector organisations is increasing.

In the case of Poland, the research results show that along with weakening of affective, normative and organisational commitment, organisational cynicism in Polish private sector organisations is increasing.

The analysis of the results shows that **H1** was confirmed in both countries (see Annex, Table 6, Part A and Part B, respectively).

Chi-Square Test

Hypotheses 2, 3 and 4 were tested, and differences between countries were identified by means of the chi-square test. Tables 6 and 7 (see Annex) present the results of the chi-square test with regard to four groups presented earlier: i) participants who felt happy in their work and could work in their current workplace their whole life (*first group*); ii) respondents who felt happy in their workplace but could not work in it their whole life (*second group*); iii) participants who felt happy in their workplace but could work in it their whole life (*third group*); and iv) respondents who did not feel happy in their organisation and could not work in it their whole life (*fourth group*).

Assessing organisational commitment, there are differences between employees of Lithuanian and Polish organisations belonging to Groups 1 and 3 (Group 1: feel happy at work and could work in their current workplace their whole life; Group 3: do not feel happy at work but could work in their current workplace their whole life). Analysing the results of organisational commitment, it can be seen that there are no differences between the employees of Lithuanian and Polish organisations, belonging to Groups 1 and 3; i.e., the assessments are very similar regardless of whether persons feel happy in their workplace or not – they could still work in the organisation all their lives, which is why they assess all dimensions of organisational commitment in a similar way. Thus, both LT and PL employees assess organisational commitment similarly. Hypothesis **H2** was confirmed.

In the assessment of organisational commitment, there are differences between employees of Lithuanian and Polish organisations, belonging to Groups 2 and 4 (Group 2: feel happy at work but could not work in their current workplace their whole lives; Group 4: do not feel happy at work and could not work in

their current workplace their whole life). Analysing the results of organisational commitment at the level of four subscales, there are no differences between the employees of Lithuanian and Polish organisations belonging to Groups 2 and 4, except for the only OC subscale, where statistically significant differences between Polish and Lithuanian employees were found. Given these facts, Hypothesis **H3** was rejected.

The analysis of the results of organisational cynicism shows that employees of Polish organisations give stronger approval only according to one subscale (CP), while approval of items in CO, AO, BO subscales is given by a larger share of Lithuanian respondents, although the final assessment of organisational cynicism (joint scales) does not show differences between the two countries. Therefore, Hypothesis **H4** was also rejected.

Discussion

The question revisited by our study was formulated as follows: How do organisational commitment and organisational cynicism affect one another, and how does this process in turn affect employees' emotional state and their intentions with regard to their workplace? For both countries, our survey confirmed that the stronger the organisational commitment, the weaker the organisational cynicism, and vice versa, the stronger the organisational cynicism, the weaker the organisational commitment. Our research is in line with the findings of Nafei and Kaifi (2013), who analysed hospitals in Egypt. They stated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the dimensions of organisational cynicism (the cognitive dimension, the affective dimension, and the behavioural dimension) and organisational commitment. Our survey is also in line with the one conducted by Aydin and Gürkan (2016), who stated that employees with cynical attitudes exhibited lower commitment to the organisation. Furthermore, our findings confirm the results of Yesiltas (2019), who investigated nurses who previously worked in hospitals affiliated with the Turkish Armed Forces and studied the connection between cynicism and organisational commitment among nurses in the context of organisational change. He found that the organisational commitment of nurses decreased as organisational change cynicism increased. Similar results were achieved by Chudzicka-Czupala et al. (2017), who stated that organisational cynicism significantly and negatively correlated with work commitment and dimensions of affection for the organisation. Finally, our research confirms the findings of Mousa (2017), who performed a quantitative analysis establishing the relationship between organisational cynicism dimensions and organisational commitment attitudes in public primary schools in Egypt; i.e., correlation and regression outcomes demonstrate negative relationships between the aspects of cynicism and organisational commitment attitudes.

The results of the hypothesis testing do not allow us to state unequivocally that organisational commitment is an efficient and the only “cure” for organisational cynicism. Focusing on measures strengthening organisational commitment, it can be expected that this will have a positive effect on the reduction of organisational cynicism, but these measures alone will not significantly improve the situation; therefore, other ways need to be sought.

In addition, we wanted to know whether there were differences between employees of Lithuanian and Polish organisations with regard to organisational commitment and organisational cynicism. In the case of the former, all participants were classified into four groups (see earlier deliberations). Given this fact, it is hard to state whether our research findings are in line (or maybe in contrast) with other research, as to the best of our knowledge, there is no other survey that would analyse these issues using the same (or at least similar) method. However, it is worth mentioning that Audenaert et al. (2020) investigated the cross-level interaction of leaders’ feedback quality and police officers’ organisational cynicism in relation to affective commitment. Authors who based their assumptions on human resource (HR) theories and Social exchange theory, stating that individuals engage in reciprocal exchanges, expected that police officers who were typically more cynical towards their workplace would hardly be committed to their organisation when their leader provided low-quality assessment, and the results of the study conducted by Audenaert et al. (2020) confirmed this. Furthermore, Lapointe et al. (2020), who surveyed SIEs and HCNs working in the education sector, found that the manifestation of organisational cynicism was stronger among SIEs than among HCNs; the former also felt less affective, normative, and continuance commitment. In addition, stronger breach-organisational cynicism relationships were found among SIEs than among HCNs. Stronger indirect links among SIEs, compared with those among HCNs, were also identified between breach, affective commitment and continuance commitment, when these were mediated by organisational cynicism. Organisational cynicism in principal means an ethical crisis that manifests itself as a violation of moral principles (e.g., corruption, dishonesty, fraud) and has a positive effect on declining organisational commitment and greater employee turnover (Johari/Yahya 2018; Kumasey/Hossain 2020, etc.). In turn, when analysing both countries separately, our findings showed that the growth of organisational commitment in Lithuanian business organisations was hampered by employees’ cynical cognitive behaviour and cynical emotions. Furthermore, weakening of the latter determines the growth in organisational commitment. Along with the weakening of actions attributable to organisational cynicism (i.e., when employees’ cynical attitudes, cynical cognitive and emotional behaviours, and generally signs of cynical behaviour are decreasing), organisational commitment in Polish business organisations is increasing.

The results of the study show that employee happiness and intentions to stay in the organisation are not the most important characteristics that would enable the prediction of organisational commitment. Both happy and unhappy employees who have long-term intentions to link their lives with their current organisation as well as those who do not have such intentions showed similar organisational commitment scores. This contradicts the results of the study conducted by Paul et al. (2020) in India, which showed that there is a relationship between employee emotional state (happiness), organisational commitment and continuance commitment. This mismatch could have arisen due to different methodologies (we distinguished four groups of employees based on happiness and intentions to connect their life with the current organisation) and cultural differences. According to Hofstede's classification of cultural features, Lithuania and Poland are individualistic societies (60 points in both). People in such societies feel less dependent on other members of the society and care more about themselves and their families (Hofstede, 1991). Eisinga et al. (2010) noted that in some cultures, feelings of emotional attachment and feelings related to duty may be separated, while in others, they may not. The study by Fischer and Mansell (2009) has shown that individualistic societies are generally characterised by higher organisational commitment. In addition, organisational commitment also depends on macroeconomic variables. Material dependence of family members on those in paid employment may increase the normative pressure to remain in one organisation. This may explain why, regardless of how happy people feel, organisational commitment was similar in both countries. Similarly, the verification of organisational cynicism between Lithuania and Poland with regard to most scales did not show essential differences. On the one hand, the lack of such differences can be explained, at least partially, by the similar historical experiences of both societies, which encouraged mutual distrust. For example, Gavreliuc and Gavreliuc (2018) link the influence of the communist past on current cynicism in Romania to an internalised model of implicit cognition, which is based on the lack of social capital. On the other hand, Peng et al. (2021), who investigated resistance to organisational change in collectivist and individualistic societies, pointed out common features characteristic of individualism, which they associated with less attention to common interests and a more cynical attitude. All of it does not give unambiguous answers but encourages consideration of features that connect cultures and conduct further study of their influence on both organisational commitment and organisational cynicism.

Our study has some limitations. First, the results of the survey do not provide deeper insights (reasons) into why organisational commitment and organisational cynicism differ in both analysed countries. In addition, the potential common method bias is not used here but may be applied in future papers. Furthermore, the results of research on said topics by sector or job specificity would also be

beneficial. Future research can also be supplemented with a broader scale of determinants and countries.

Conclusions

Although the reduction of organisational cynicism significantly contributes to the increase of organisational commitment and vice versa, our study has revealed the importance of the national context. That is, even in neighbouring countries of the same region, such as Poland and Lithuania, with a number of historical and cultural similarities (for several centuries, the two countries comprised one state organism called the Kingdom of Poland and the Great Duchy of Lithuania), employees may respond to the same factors differently. This is not surprising, as even in countries as close to each other as the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic with common sociocultural and historical pasts, the consumer profiles were placed in different clusters (Kliestikova/Janoskova 2017).

This paper is a part of a larger study, and it presents only those research results that reveal the impact of the two phenomena on each other, on the emotional state of employees, and on employee intentions regarding their workplace. To increase employees' organisational commitment and reduce organisational cynicism, more detailed research must be conducted, paying attention to the formation of a portrait of the cynical employee. Here, the reasons encouraging employees to become cynical about their organisation are of particular importance. The presented study reveals the results of only two countries; therefore, in the future, it would be worthwhile to conduct a study by selecting more countries. It would also make sense to conduct a study by surveying employees of public sector organisations. In addition, previous studies have found that favouritism and nepotism, as manifestations of organisational corruption, have a positive effect on employee cynicism and their withdrawal from work (Abubakar et al. 2017; Arasli/Arıcı/Çakmakoglu Arıcı 2019); therefore, in the future, it would make sense to examine the influence of these and other forms of corruption on the process of formation of employees' cynical attitude and on the links with their commitment to the organisation in greater detail.

This study contributes to the theory in several aspects. Similar to the study conducted by Audenaert et al. (2020), this study was also grounded in human resources (HR) theories and Social exchange theory. First, it presents the findings of unique quantitative research related to the phenomenon of organisational cynicism and organisational commitment within Polish and Lithuanian organisations. Its international approach is thus worth underlining. In addition, the research is based on the analysis of a large sample containing over 1000 respondents in total, which is another advantage. Second, it provides new knowledge that explains the relationships between phenomena such as organisational cyn-

icism and organisational commitment. Therefore, it constitutes a substantial added value of our research. It is significant that responses to factors constituting these phenomena can vary considerably even in business organisations of countries located in the same region.

Our study has several implications. First, a better understanding of organisational commitment and cynicism enables business organisations to initiate change in human resource management policy. This will have a positive impact on the ethical environment and contribute to the increased stability of companies' performance and quality of work and life of employees. Therefore, based on the results of the conducted study, it is recommended that managers of organisations who seek to strengthen employee commitment to the organisation should heed the message that it is not enough to follow general recommendations for improving organisational commitment, as organisations in different countries respond to the constituents of organisational commitment differently. Second, even employees who feel happy in the current organisation will not necessarily have long-term commitments. This is particularly important for international companies seeking to differentiate their human resources policy, which should adapt to a specific national context.

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Table 4. Intercorrelations of the dimensions

Dimensions	AC	CC	NC	OC	CP	CO	AO	BO
AC. Affective Commitment	1	0.441**	0.596**	0.785**	-0.334**	-0.610**	-0.578**	-0.519**
CC. Continuance Commitment	0.441**	1	0.449**	0.515**	-0.199**	-0.349**	-0.315**	-0.262**
NC. Normative Commitment	0.596**	0.449**	1	0.594**	-0.211**	-0.307**	-0.331**	-0.303**
OC. Organisational commitment	0.785**	0.515**	0.594**	1	-0.378**	-0.675**	-0.644**	-0.512**
CP. Wrightman's Cynical Personality	-0.334**	-0.199**	-0.211**	-0.378**	1	0.322**	0.301**	0.201**
CO. Cognitive Organisational Cynicism	-0.610**	-0.349**	-0.307**	-0.675**	0.322**	1	0.687**	0.639**
AO. Affective Organisational Cynicism	-0.578**	-0.315**	-0.331**	-0.644**	0.301**	0.687**	1	0.577**
BO. Behavioural Organisational Cynicism	-0.519**	-0.262**	-0.303**	-0.512**	0.201**	0.639**	0.577**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6. Organisational commitment and organisational cynicism in different groups separately in Lithuanian and Polish organisations

Countries		Lithuania, N=501														
Subscales	No/ Yes	Scales	Group I N = 199			Group II N = 149			Group III N = 34			Group IV N = 119			Chi-Square Test Results	
			N	%		N	%		N	%		N	%		χ^2	p
AC. Affective Commitment	No		30	15.1	52	34.9	28	82.4	107	89.9	195.289	0.0001**				
	Yes		169	84.9	97	65.1	6	17.6	12	10.1						
	No		47	23.6	79	53.0	19	55.9	69	58.0						
CC. Continuance Commitment	Yes		152	76.4	70	47.0	15	44.1	50	42.0	49.872	0.0001**				
	No		51	25.6	97	65.1	16	47.1	90	75.6						
	Yes		148	74.4	52	34.9	18	52.9	29	24.4						
OC. Organisational commitment	No		15	7.5	41	27.5	24	70.6	97	81.5	200.843	0.0001**				
	Yes		184	92.5	108	72.5	10	29.4	22	18.5						
	No		15	7.5	56	37.6	25	73.5	106	89.1						
CP. Wrightman's Cynical Personality	Yes		184	92.5	93	62.4	9	26.5	13	10.9	222.480	0.0001**				
	No		101	50.8	56	37.6	5	14.7	23	19.3						
	Yes		98	49.2	93	62.4	29	85.3	96	80.7						
CO. Cognitive Organisational Cynicism	No		156	78.4	85	57.0	8	23.5	17	14.3	135.972	0.0001**				
	Yes		43	21.6	64	43.0	26	76.5	102	85.7						
	No		181	91.0	134	89.9	17	50.0	37	31.1						
AO. Affective Organisational Cynicism	Yes		18	9.0	15	10.1	17	50.0	82	68.9	171.930	0.0001**				
	No		128	64.3	77	51.7	15	44.1	41	34.5						
	Yes		71	35.7	72	48.3	19	55.9	78	65.5						
BO. Behavioural Organisational Cynicism	No		130	65.3	68	45.6	6	17.6	10	8.4	27.638	0.0001**				
	Yes		69	34.7	81	54.4	28	82.4	109	91.6						
	Organisational cynicism															

Table 7. Comparison of organisational commitment and organisational cynicism in different groups of Lithuanian and Polish organisations

	No/ Yes	Group I, N = 433						Group II, N = 358					
		LT, N=199		PL, N=234		Chi-Square Test Results		LT, N=149		PL, N=209		Chi-Square Test Results	
		N	%	N	%	χ^2	p	N	%	N	%	χ^2	p
AC. Affective Commitment	No	30	15.1	27	11.5	1.177	0.278	52	34.9	77	36.8	0.142	0.706
	Yes	169	84.9	207	88.5			97	65.1	132	63.2		
CC. Continuance Commitment	No	47	23.6	55	23.5	0.001	0.978	79	53.0	43	20.6	40.763	0.0001**
	Yes	152	76.4	179	76.5			70	47.0	166	79.4		
NC. Normative Commitment	No	51	25.6	44	18.8	2.925	0.087	97	65.1	127	60.8	0.698	0.403
	Yes	148	74.4	190	81.2			52	34.9	82	39.2		
OC. Organisational commitment	No	15	7.5	20	8.5	0.147	0.701	41	27.5	30	14.4	9.479	0.002**
	Yes	184	92.5	214	91.5			108	72.5	179	85.6		
Organisational cynicism	No	15	7.5	25	10.7	1.270	0.260	56	37.6	75	35.9	0.108	0.742
	Yes	184	92.5	209	89.3			93	62.4	134	64.1		
CP. Wrightman's Cynical Personality	No	101	50.8	85	36.3	9.137	0.003**	56	37.6	45	21.5	11.068	0.001**
	Yes	98	49.2	149	63.7			93	62.4	164	78.5		
CO. Cognitive Organisational Cynicism	No	156	78.4	226	96.6	34.241	0.0001**	85	57.0	186	89.0	48.264	0.0001**
	Yes	43	21.6	8	3.4			64	43.0	23	11.0		
AO. Affective Organisational Cynicism	No	181	91.0	229	97.9	10.205	0.001**	134	89.9	199	95.2	3.737	0.050*
	Yes	18	9.0	5	2.1			15	10.1	10	4.8		
BO. Behavioural Organisational Cynicism	No	128	64.3	213	91.0	45.832	0.0001**	77	51.7	182	87.1	54.497	0.0001**
	Yes	71	25.7	21	9.0			72	48.3	27	12.9		
Organisational cynicism	No	130	65.3	162	69.2	0.746	0.388	68	45.6	101	48.3	0.252	0.616
	Yes	69	34.7	72	30.8			81	54.4	108	51.7		

	No/ Yes	Group III, N = 36						Group IV, N = 174					
		LT, N=34		PL, N=2		Chi-Square Test Results		LT, N=119		PL, N=55		Chi-Square Test Results	
						χ^2	<i>p</i>					χ^2	<i>p</i>
		N	%	N	%			N	%	N	%		
AC. Affective Commitment	No	28	82.4	1	50	1.262	0.261	107	89.9	53	96.4	2.114	0.146
	Yes	6	17.6	1	50			12	10.1	2	3.6		
CC. Continuance Commitment	No	19	55.9	1	50	0.026	0.871	69	58.0	33	60.0	0.063	0.802
	Yes	15	44.1	1	50			50	42.0	22	40.0		
NC. Normative Commitment	No	16	47.1	0	0.0	1.694	0.193	90	75.6	47	85.5	2.168	0.141
	Yes	18	52.9	2	100			29	24.4	8	14.5		
OC. Organisational commitment	No	24	70.6	1	50	0.377	0.539	97	81.5	53	96.4	6.977	0.008**
	Yes	10	29.4	1	50			22	18.5	2	3.6		
Organisational cynicism	No	25	73.5	1	50	0.521	0.470	106	89.1	52	94.5	1.348	0.246
	Yes	9	26.5	1	50			13	10.9	3	5.5		
CP. Wrightman's Cynical Personality	No	5	14.7	1	50	1.694	0.193	23	19.3	9	16.4	0.220	0.639
	Yes	29	85.3	1	50			96	80.7	46	83.6		
CO. Cognitive Organisational Cynicism	No	8	23.5	2	100	5.506	0.019*	17	14.3	10	18.2	0.436	0.509
	Yes	26	76.5	0	0.0			102	85.7	45	81.8		
AO. Affective Organisational Cynicism	No	17	50.0	2	100	1.895	0.169	37	31.1	15	27.3	0.262	0.609
	Yes	17	50.0	0	0.0			82	68.9	40	72.7		
BO. Behavioural Organisational Cynicism	No	15	44.1	2	100	2.367	0.124	41	34.5	11	20.0	3.750	0.050*
	Yes	19	55.9	0	0.0			78	65.5	44	80.0		
Organisational cynicism	No	6	17.6	2	100	7.412	0.006**	10	8.4	2	3.6	1.331	0.249
	Yes	28	82.4	0	0.0			109	91.6	53	96.4		