A request for organizational beauty: how positive aesthetic experiences contribute to affective commitment

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A REQUEST FOR ORGANIZATIONAL BEAUTY: HOW POSITIVE AESTHETIC EXPERIENCES CONTRIBUTE TO AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT

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Abstract

Organizations for long are dominated by the perspectives of the Good and Truth. The perspective of the Beauty has been neglected by the dominant Scientific management epoch. But now, by the change of type of work to more knowledge-intensive and individual labor, conditioning experiencing beauty could be a feature of 'modern organizations'. Revealing and exploiting aesthetic experiences of employees is in line with the growing attention to emotions in organizations and the affective commitment of employees. However, the relationship between aesthetic experiences of employees and their affective commitment hasn´t been examined before.

This study initially examines aesthetic experiences of 286 employees in 5 professional organizations and secondly investigates the contribution of these aesthetic experiences to affective commitment.

Based on a new framework of organizations aesthetics, the study shows that a list of 30 organizational aesthetic stimuli (OAS) that trigger aesthetic experiences like coherence of things, autonomy, organization mission are fairly evenly divided among the parameters of organization design such as culture structure and strategy. Secondly, aesthetic experiences of employees strongly contribute to their affective commitment, represented by pride, work pleasure and flow experiences.

This study offers quite new insights in aesthetic experiences of employees in professional

organizations and provides ´modern organizations´ the opportunity to exploit aesthetic experiences of employees in future.

For decades organizations have been dominated by the perspectives of the Good and the Truth originated by Plato. Motivated by the strong development of industrialization in the last century, and enhanced by the rules of *Scientific Management*, standardization efficiency and effectiveness dominated manager´s minds and actions. During these ages, the perspective of the Beauty for long has been neglected in organizations (e.g. Guillén, 1997). But now, with the emerging development of knowledge intensive work, organizations seems to realize that the ´human resource´ no longer wants to be managed by outdated rules from the machine age (e.g. Pascale et al. 2000). In ´modern organizations´ employees are triggered by aspects such as responsive and self-organization (Pascale et al. 2000), sensible and sense-making (Hasan et al., 2007; Guillet de Monthouw, 2007), appreciative inquiry (Avital et al., 2008), life affirming (Whitney, 2008), and creating value (Bryan and Joyce, 2005; Zandee, 2008) which all show relations with underlying needs and values of employees. With a changing function of organizations, there seems to be an argument and space for the Beauty perspective in organizations. A dominant focus on functional value of organizations could be changed or enriched by adding aesthetic value to organizations. This attention to aesthetic value meets employees' needs to feel committed to an organization. Affective commitment is can be considered as a type of commitment based on emotional bond of employees with the organization. Aesthetic experiences result via an aesthetic process in an aesthetic judgement and emotional impact which cause emotions.

At the end of the '90 of the last century first contributions on aesthetics in organisations were published. Sandelands & Buckner (1989), Strati (1999, 2000), Ramirez (2005a, 2005b),

Gagliardi (1996), Guillet de Monthoux (2000), Alvesson & Berg (1992) and Linstead & Höpfl (2000) initially has been explored the field of organisational aesthetics. Their ideas mainly focussed on which stimuli (organizational aestheitc stimuli: OAS) such as products and services, desicion making and interior could trigger aesthetic experiences and why this perspective could be interesting to apply in organisations. Figure 1 shows an overview of first suggestions of aesthetic stimuli in work and organizations (De Groot, 2014).

Figure 1   Overview of organizational aesthetics literature (De Groot, 2014)

However, these ideas are not originated from empirical research. Hardly unknown is which aesthetic experiences people have during their daily work and because of what stimuli. In addition, there is no validated knowledge about whether and to which organizational outcomes aesthetic experiences contribute such as affective commitment..

Therefore, this research project contributes to the discourse on organisational aesthetics by offering insights in stimuli which cause positive and negative aesthetic experiences in practice of employees in professional organisations and its contribution to affective commitment.

Organizational aesthetics framework

The field of 'Organizational Aesthetics' initially was explored in the 90s´ by Sandelands and Buckner (1989), Strati (1999, 2000), Ramirez (2005), Gagliardi (1996), Guillet de Monthoux (2000), Alvesson and Berg (1992) and Linstead and Höpfl (2000). Simultaneously this was stimulated by the growing attention of ´human´ issues in organizations like meaning, spiritually and human development at the end of the last century and the budding challenge to combine managing with designing (Simon, 1996; Boland and Collopy, 2004).

Literature on organizational aesthetics aspires to overcome this gap and the few contributions on aesthetics in organizations mainly raise the question whether aesthetics in work and organizations could be an additional or a new perspective on organizations. And they proposed stimuli such as physical space (e.g. Strati, 1999; Alvesson & Berg, 1992), product and services (e.g. Akkermans et al., 2004) or organizational decision-making (Dean et al., 1997) in which employees possibly could experiences aesthetics, building upon a dominant paradigm in literature on aesthetics that aesthetic experiences are triggered by stimuli in the object perceived by the observer (e.g. Goldman, 1995; Zemach, 1997; Wagner, 1999).

For examining and describing aesthetic experiences in organizations we adopted the organizational aesthetics framework developed by De Groot (De Groot, 2014). This framework was developed based on the affective events theory (AET) of Weiss and Cropanzano (1996).

Figure 2 Organizational aesthetics framework (De Groot, 2014)

This theory is based on the idea that employees want to remain in organizations that provide them positive work experiences because they value these experiences and expect them to continue (Meyer and Allen, 1991). And AET was developed for a broad range of affective events, experiences and emotions in organizations. Aesthetics in organizations can be considered as a specific experience with specific features and characteristics. AET is often used and well validated by quantitative and qualitative data in many studies and published in the peer-reviewed literature (e.g. see Fisher and Ashkanasy, 2000;).

The interaction between the object (organizational aesthetic stimuli hidden in organizational design parameters such as structure, strategy and culture and work events) and subject (employees' personal characteristics) proceeds via an aesthetic process. This aesthetic

process will lead to aesthetic judgment (a result of the evaluation of the cognitive mastering stage) and a degree of activation or arousal (e.g. Leder et al., 2004), together causing a emotion such as enthusiast, excited or happy, in particular for positive aesthetic experiences (PAEs).

Affective commitment

Emotions in the context of work and organizations can be strongly related to the phenomenon of *affective commitment*. Meyer and Allen (1991) introduced the concept of affective commitment, which can be defined as 'positive feelings of identification with, attachment to, and involvement in the work organization' (Meyer and Allen, 1991, p.375). The phenomenon of affective commitment is often measured by valuing variables like pride, work pleasure and flow experience (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Therefore in this study we distinguish positive aesthetic experiences (PAEs) and negative aesthetic experiences (NAEs), depending on the aesthetic judgement of stimuli which cause aesthetic experiences by employees.

Affective commitment, often regarded alongside continuance commitment and normative commitment, as one of the components of organization commitment, shows the strongest correlation with job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, role conflict and attendance and is the strongest and most consistent predictor of organizational outcomes like employee retention and performance (e.g. Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; McFarlane and Wayne, 1993).

So, the proposed organizational aesthetics framework aspires to offer a research model to operationalize the first ideas of organizational aesthetics in literature and to collect and order empirical data about aesthetic experiences in organizations.

Research objectives

Initially we want to have a first insight of what people consider as beautiful and ugly in their organization and which stimuli (*Organizational Aesthetic Stimuli: OAS)* trigger aesthetic experiences. The results of the interviews give a first insight into the stimuli in which employees experience beauty and ugliness in their organization. Yet, the interviews were conducted within a limited set of companies using managers as key informants.

To have a better understanding of aesthetic value in organizations a more varied type of respondents were involved. It applies not only a repetition of the question asked during the interviews among a larger and other target group, but also the examination of employees' aesthetic judgment of the list of acquired OAS and the influence of their characteristics like time of employment, age, and education on this judgment. And finally, we want to examine the relationship between the appreciation of OAS and affective commitment of employees (e.g. pride, work pleasure, and flow experiences).

Methodology

Research context

In order to obtain first insight of what people consider as beautiful and ugly in their organization, ten managers from ten randomly selected Dutch organizations were interviewed. This resulted in a unique list of OAS. Three organizations responded to a call in the course of this investigation, supported by CNV and Inaxis (Ministry of Home Affairs), to compete for a place on the list of beautiful organizations in the Netherlands. The other organizations were selected because they were listed or described as beautiful organizations by people or they responded to an appeal via social media. The degree of saturation of obtained data determined the number of managers which were interviewed. After interviewing 10 managers, collected OAS covered all dimensions cited in literature on organizational aesthetics such as products

and services, image or the physical space and no new categories were discovered.

Second, these 10 interviews gave insight in the perceived *revenues* of the attention to beauty. All managers together mentioned 25 perceived *revenues of attention to beauty.* The most frequently cited *revenues* are good image of the organization (mentioned by 60%), high customer satisfaction (mentioned by 60%), high employee commitment (mentioned by 60%), proud employees (mentioned by 60%), and positive feedback about the organization from the environment (mentioned by 50%). Synthesizing these revenues, a strong relationship with *affective commitment* can be determined (e.g. Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Third, we collected data of 286 respondents representing 5 Dutch organizations. These organizations responded to a call in the course of this investigation, supported by CNV and Inaxis (Ministry of Home Affairs), to compete for a place on the list of beautiful organizations in the Netherlands. Three of these organizations also participated in the interviews. We choose for a random design as the phenomena of aesthetics is believed to be a general phenomenon that is present in every business setting. In addition, by selecting a diverse set of companies we are able to look for common factors that influence perceptions of aesthetic value and its outcomes (Mill, 1843).

Data source

In order to obtain first insight of what people consider as beautiful and ugly in their organization managers were interviewed during a conversation of approximately one and a half hour to discover manager's first associations with organizational aesthetics. The answers of the ten managers were registered by taking notes. These notes were converted into 10 stories about beauty in 10 organizations, which were approved by the respondent. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the initial interviews, we worked with a standard questionnaire and the individual stories were approved by the respondents (member check).

Second, 286 Respondents representing 5 organizations were in particular asked to appreciate 31 OAS and to register OAS (426 OAS) which trigger aesthetic experiences. In this survey (offered via internet after sending a personal e-mail with the login code) respondents were also asked (by an open-ended question) what they perceive as beautiful and ugly in their organization to allow for comparisons with the results of the ten interviews. Respondents were selected via *purposive sampling* in order to obtain a balanced mix of personal characteristics like age, sex, education, role in the organization and years of service of random chosen respondents.

Measures

During a semi-structured interview each manager was asked open-ended questions about aesthetic experiences and their perceived effects. The survey for examining employees' aesthetic judgment of 31 OAS was developed based on two sources. First, an exploratory study on phenomena of beauty and ugliness in organizations resulted in a list of 18 OAS which were mentioned by at least 2 out of 10 managers (20%). This list of OAS was supplemented with OAS distinguished in literature on organizational aesthetics.

The survey was divided into two parts: First, the respondents were asked to appreciate the 31 OAS like cooperation, qualities of colleagues, and interior on a 5-points Likert-scale (beauty / ugly: strong agree – strong disagree). Second, respondents are asked to answer open questions, including the questions 'What do you experience beautiful and ugly in your work and organization?'

In open-ended question to reflect on the acquired data of the interviews as well in a statement (proud, job satisfaction, flow, and a grade for organizational aesthetics in their organization) that the respondent scored on the level of application (5 points Likert-scale).

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of this empirical study, we developed a survey in which the selected OAS are categorized according the parameters of the ESH model (structure, culture, employees, management style, strategy and system (Van Burg, 2011). This arrangement creates of form of consistency. This is corroborated by high Cronbach's Alpha coefficients (> .7).

To ensure external validity the survey was completed by respondents of different organizations in order to examine whether results could be generalized (Van Aken, 2007; Van Burg, 2011). Second, the perceived effects of attention to organizational aesthetics (see the interviews) are quantitatively measured during this study..

Analytical approach

The obtained interview data was manually coded (template coding based on categories found in literature). This was preceded by a cross-case analysis. Given the limited number of interviewees and the exploratory nature of the study we took a conservative approach by considering codes that were mentioned by at least 2 out of 10 managers (20%).

To answer the research questions of this study two canonical analyses were performed to examine the relationship between aesthetic experiences and affective commitment and aesthetic value.

A canonical correlation analyses (CCA) was conducted to examine the relationship between two variable sets: set 1, *35 OAS* and set 2, dependent variables proud, work pleasure and flow experience representing *affective commitment*. CCA is an exploratory tool to determine whether two sets of variables are independent of one another or, conversely, determining the magnitude of the relationships that may exist between the two sets (Hair, et al., 2010). This modeling type approach was also used to explain the nature of whatever relationships exist

between the sets of dependent and independent variables, generally by measuring the relative contribution of each variable to the canonical functions (relationships) that are extracted. An important advantage of CCA is 'that they may best honor the reality of psychological research' (Sherry & Hanson, 2005, p.38). Sherry and Hanson argue that most human behavior research examines variables that possibly have multiple effects and multiple causes. Determining data results, such as classical univariate (e.g., analysis of variance [ANOVA], regression) and multivariate (e.g., multivariate ANOVA [MANOVA], descriptive discriminant analysis) statistical methods that separately investigate singular causes and effects may distort the complex reality of human behavior and cognition (Sherry and Hanson, 2005, p.38).

The role of personal characteristics on aesthetic judgment of OAS was examined by conducting a cluster analysis. A cluster analysis is an exploratory tool and data reduction tool that creates subgroups, taxonomies or clusters that are more manageable than individual data and it examines the full completeness of inter-relationships between variables (Hair, et al., 2010). By conducting a hierarchical cluster analysis the 'distances' of aesthetic judgments of all respondents were examined. After profiling the found clusters can be determined.

The qualitative data was manually coded (selective coding, based on the defined categories of OAS after the initial interviews). This was preceded by a cross-case analysis. Given the large number of respondents we took a progressive approach by considering codes that were mentioned by at least 30% of respondents. Secondly, these OAS like cooperation and development opportunities are categorized according to the six organization design variables (strategy, system, structure, culture, staff, management) of the ESH-model, based on the McKinsey's 7-S model for organization design developed by Waterman and colleagues (Waterman et al., 1980). Categorizing the OAS cited by the managers according to the parameters or clusters of the ESH-model we can see that the items are fairly evenly divided

among the parameters, which show first indications that aesthetic experiences are triggered by a wide range of OAS.

Results

Appreciation of OAS

The appreciation of the OAS both within the same organization as well as between organizations exhibits great coherence. *Employee's qualities* are the highest or second highest appreciated organizational aesthetic stimuli (OAS) in all five organizations. Organization goals and products and services score within the top-10 of highest appreciated OAS in four of five organizations. Almost the same applies to the appreciation of employees' work attitude, their goal achievement of employees, work atmosphere (culture), organization mission, the contribution the society and development opportunities score within the top 10 of highest appreciated OAS in three of five organizations.

Overall, employee's qualities, products / services, goals, contribution to society, work ethics, goal achievement of employees, work atmosphere (culture) and mission are the highest appreciated OAS.

The alignment of activities is the *lowest* or *second lowest* appreciated organizational aesthetic stimulus (OAS) in all five organizations. Also the way of being informed (internal communication) and alignment of management and employees score within the top 10 of lowest appreciated OAS in all five organizations. In four of five organizations balance between organizations goals and individual goals, organization rituals, and the coherence of 'things' all score within top 10 of lowest appreciated OAS. In three of five organizations style of management and internal cooperation score within top 10 of lowest appreciated OAS.

It is striking that the standard deviation of almost all outcomes is very low, although it concerns the scores of 5 different organizations with all their own interpretation and of the

OAS. The appreciation for OAS as products and services, qualities and goals of employees, organizational mission and goals, contribute to society show a standard deviation < 1.

Figure 3 Three lists of organizational aesthetic stimuli (OAS)

Remarkable are the differences between these three lists. When the top-10 list of strong correlating OAS (with ´affective commitment´) is compared with the two top-10 lists 'often mentioned' and 'highly appreciated', only little agreements are to observe. On the basis of a theoretical premise of the aesthetics, one is tempted to call that beauty in which one is interested in (e.g. Fairchild, 1991). The list of the appreciation of OAS just shows the appreciation for these stimuli in the organizations of the respondents. They do not reflect on the interest or on the intended level of beauty.

None of the OAS of the top-10 list 'strongly correlating OAS', accept 'culture' (work atmosphere), is part of the top-10 list of 'often mentioned'. Of the top-10 list 'correlating correlating OAS' only 'work atmosphere', 'organization mission', and 'development opportunities', are part of the top-10 list 'high appreciated'. Thus, it is striking that most OAS that exhibit a strong correlation with affective commitment are relatively low appreciated as well as hardly mentioned in the top-10 list of 'often mentioned'. It is further remarkable that OAS with strong correlation with both outcomes are not necessarily highly valued.

The differences between the lists often mentioned, high appreciated and strongest correlation could be explained by several *psychological phenomena*. First, studies of Scherer, Schorr, and Johnstone (2001) and Fisher (2009) show that it is important to remember that positive attitudes are not directly created by environments or events, but rather by individuals' perceptions, interpretations, and appraisals of those environments and events. They refer to the large body of research on appraisal theories of emotion (Scherer, Schorr and Johnstone,

2001) clearly supports a critical role for the appraisal process in determining experienced emotion.

Second, aesthetic experiences are triggered by perceptions. Perception is not necessarily based on reality, but is merely a perspective from a particular individual's view of a situation (e.g. Buelens et al., 2011). And third, it is likely that combinations of phenomena *affect heuristic, mere exposure effect, aesthetic induction, prototyping and familiarity* and *verbal overshadowing* play an important role by mentioning and registering aesthetic experiences. By asking employees what they experience as beautiful and ugly in their work and organization, they possibly will mention stimuli which they initially associate with beautiful and ugly stimuli in ´normal life', not work-related. This could be a first explanation why interior / exterior is mentioned in 87% of the cases. These 'normal life' associations are probably functioning as *prototypes* for their aesthetic categories in their 'working life' (Leder et al., 2004). They feel *familiar* with these and they have a more positive attitude toward stimuli they have seen before (e.g. Reber, 2003), which could be related to the *mere exposure effect* (e.g. Zajonc, 1968).

Respondents are applying aesthetic criteria based on empirical observations and inclined to like and use it as the criterion for evaluation. This could be an explanation why in all cases employees appreciate similar OAS equally high. Finally, also the aspect of *verbal overshadowing* (Melchionne, 2011; Schooler and Engstler-Schooler, 1990) seems to be recognized in the collection of aesthetic experiences. Even if the phenomena of *affect heuristic, mere exposure effect, aesthetic induction, prototyping,* and *familiarity* are not relevant, employees will probably initially mention OAS which can be formulate easily. Particularly in relation to aesthetic experiences, Taylor (2002) introduced the term of *aesthetic muteness:* the difficulty of expressing aesthetic dimensions of experience in words. This could be a consideration why respondents do not mention aesthetic formal properties - to a lack of

meta-language - like coherence of things, represented by OAS like alignment of management with employees, alignment of organization goals with individual goals, alignment of activities and the composition of employees, which all show strong correlation with their final judgment of beauty in their organization. They possibly dispose their 'real judgment', because it is repressed in what they can express in language.

Considering these psychological phenomena, a combination of research methods is recommended. Only asking employees what they experience as beautiful and ugly isn't sufficient. Only by asking respondents to value their appreciation of mentioned OAS as well as to ask their appreciation for revenues of aesthetic experiences like their judgment about beautiful work or beauty in their organization, some of the mentioned psychological phenomena could be recognized and excluded.

Finally, the single OAS can be considered as single objects (as part of a construct, the organization) which cause aesthetic experiences as well as *indicators* of aesthetic value in organizations. The list of OAS (which constitutes the used survey) was categorized according to the design parameters of the ESH model (structure, strategy, employees, system, culture, management style). It can be concluded that all collected OAS are equally distributed over these parameters and that aesthetic value not particularly is represented by one of these parameters.

Influence of personal characteristics on aesthetic judgment

By conducting a *cluster analysis* (see Figure 4) the aesthetic judgment of OAS was related to their personal characteristics such as age and educational level. After profiling the found clusters, three types of personal characteristics show a significant strong deviation from the mean scores, which are *women* (v1), with *age* 35-50 (v2), and 7-10 years *company tenure*

(v4). This group concerns 52 respondents (18%). The aesthetic judgment of all OAS of this group is significantly lower.

Figure 4 Cluster analysis role of personal characteristics on aesthetic judgment

Relationship appreciation of OAS with affective commitment

The main perceived effects of aesthetic experiences of the interviewed respondents concern work pleasure, pride en flow-experience. Together these outcomes represent the phenomenon of affective commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

A *canonical correlation analyses* (CCA) were conducted to examine the relationship between the *set* of 31 OAS (resulting in aesthetic experiences) and the phenomena of *affective commitment*. So actually, this analysis examined the relationship between the components of the lower part of the organizational framework which was used for the empirical studies. The analyses resulted in three canonical functions owing to the number of variables.

The *first* function of the first canonical correlation between aesthetic experience and *affective commitment* (see Figure 5) represents the optimal linear combinations of dependent variables and the canonical correlation coefficient representing the relationship between them. This relationship is strong, regarding their correlation (.70). The significance tests show a very high level of confidence (.000) in the results. By examining the canonical loadings of both two sets, the predictor variables can be determined. These loading would be .30 and above to determine strong correlation (Hair et al., 2010). For set 1 all 31 OAS show a loading between .41 and .78. For set 2 also all dependent variables show loadings >.3 with affective commitment. Dependent variable *proud* shows the strongest (canonical) correlation with affective commitment (.91). Finally *redundancy* was examined. The redundancy coefficient expresses the relation between individual measured variables of a set with the variance of

variables of the other set. For this analysis, the relation is relatively strong (CV2-1: .576).

Figure 5 Relationship 1 Aesthetic experience with affective commitment

The *second* canonical function of this first relationship (see Figure 6) shows a different result. This canonical function represents a second unique and independent relationship between the dependent variables (flow, proud and work pleasure) and independent variables (OAS). Only three of OAS show a canonical loading >.30 with set 1, which are balance between organization goals and employee goals, internal communication, and organizations image. These OAS all concern *system aesthetics* and the relationship might be interpreted as an awareness and understanding of *organizational transparency* which in particular contributes to the *pride* of employees.

Figure 6 Relationship 2 Aesthetic experience with affective commitment

The *third* canonical function of this first relationship (see Figure 7) shows another and unique result. Only one OAS shows a canonical loading >.30 with set 1, which is contribution to society. Also this OAS concerns *system aesthetics* and the relationship might be interpreted as *goal congruence* also contributing to *proud* employees resulting in a good personal-organization fit.

Figure 7 Relationship 3 Aesthetic experience with affective commitment

CONCLUSION

We started this study after concluding that the first contributions on the field of organizational aesthetics largely can be characterized by a high theoretical level and are mainly located in the ideas stage. The mentioned stimuli causing aesthetic experiences by employees such as products and services, desicion making and interior were nothing more than suggestions. This study initially resulted in a list of OAS which triggers aesthetic experiences by employees. The analysis shows that these OAS like cooperation and development opportunities are fairly evenly divided among the parameters of the ESH model. This means that aesthetic experiences are triggered by several OAS representing all the design parameters of an organization like was suggested by the first contributors of organizational aesthetics. Second, this study shows that personal characteristics of employees need to be taken into account during applying and exploiting aesthetic experiences in organizations. In particular the group of *women*, *age* of 35-50, and with 7-10 years *company tenure* show a deviant aesthetic judgment of OAS.

And above all, this study provides a great understanding of the outcomes of attention to organizational aesthetics, in particular to affective commitment. We showed that a set of 31 OAS, to a large extent based on the OAS found in the study described above, strongly correlates with *affective commitment* represented by the outcomes pride, work pleasure, and flow experiences.

Due to the canonical correlation analyses can be determined that aesthetic experiences (triggered by OAS) are the *promise* to aesthetic value, to affective commitment and even to performance. Employees want to remain in organizations that provide them positive work experiences because they value these experiences and expect them to continue (Meyer and Allen, 1991). And many studies demonstrate that affective commitment can be considered as

a predictor of performance (e.g. Rhoades et al., 2001). So (positive) aesthetic experiences can also be considered as a *promise* to performance.

Responding to Guillén's opinion that for long organizations neglected the aesthetic context of organisational behavior, organizations now are offered first possibilities for improving their organization by reinforcing employees´positive aesthetic experiences.

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Main references	Main focus / Key Statements
Akkermans et al., (2004), Van Aken et al., (2009)	Process beauty
Akkermans et al., (2004), Van Aken et al., (2009)	Organizational design beauty
Dean (1997), White (1996), Gerstein, (1999); Rindova et al., (2010)	Formal properties (harmony, balance, rhythm, simplicity, repetition) in organization design
Rindova et al. (2010), Peng, Wen-Shien 1988()	Organization as a whole (Gestalt)
Strati (1999), Alvesson & Berg (1992), Taylor & Hansen (2005), Sandelands & Buckner (1989)	The artifacts that constitute the organization's corporate landscape
Strati (1999), Alvesson & Berg (1992, Witz et al, (2003), Taylor & Hansen (2005), Warren (2002)	The physical space of the organization
	The idea that work compromises an essential aesthetic element s
Strati (1999), Alvesson & Berg (1992), Taylor & Hansen (2005)	Organizational decision-making
Dean et al., (1997)	Aesthetic leadership: organizational management that can learn from art (artistic form)
Strati (1999), Alvesson & Berg (1992), Taylor & Hansen (2005)	Product or services beauty
	The images that diffuse internally and externally to the organization
Witz et al. (2003), Akkermans et al. (2004), Van Aken et al. (2009)	
Strati (1999, Alvesson & Berg (1992), Taylor & Hansen (2005)	
Akkermans et al. (2004);, Van Aken et al. (2009)	
Sandelands & Buckner (1989), Dean et al. (1997), Cairns (2002)	
Dean et al. (1997)	

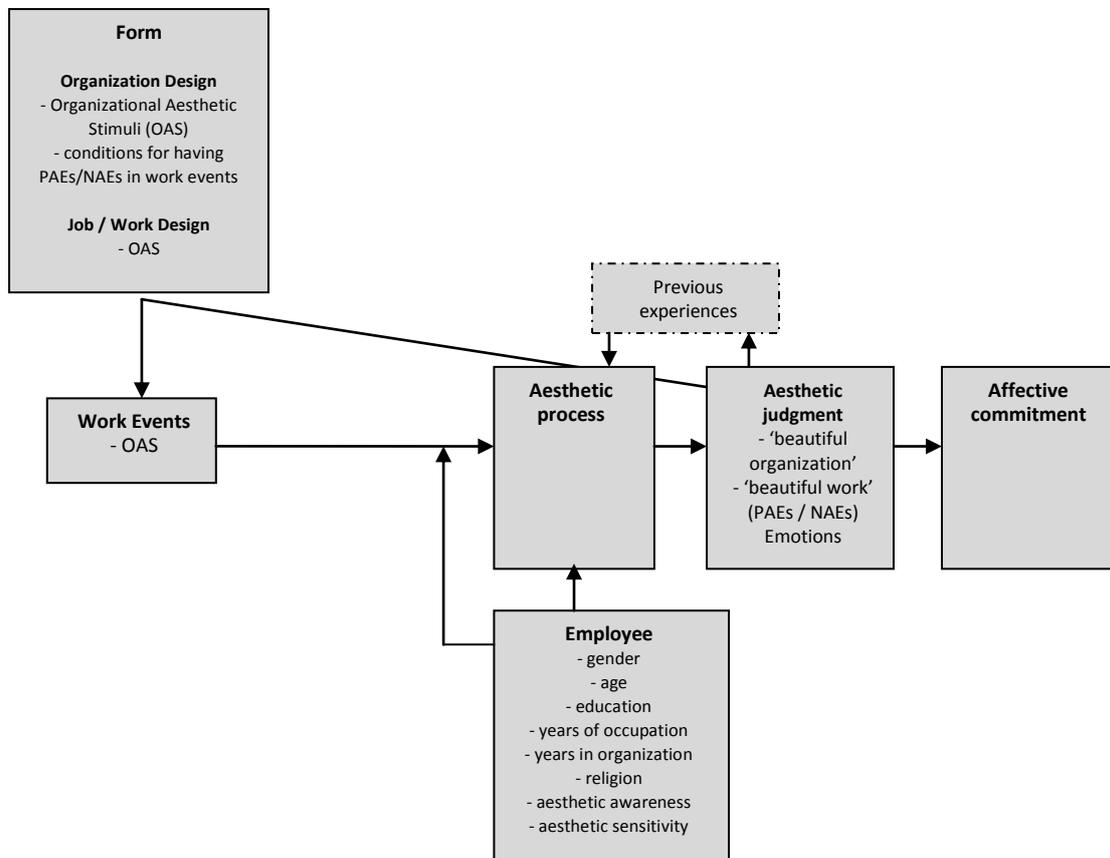*Figure 1 Overview of organizational aesthetics literature (De Groot, 2014)*

Figure 2 Organizational aesthetics framework (De Groot, 2014)

Most mentioned OAS in organization stimuli	Highest appreciated OAS in organization stimuli (on scale of 1-5)	Strongest correlating* OAS with affective commitment
1. Interior / exterior (in 87% of the cases; 39x) STRUC	1. Employee's qualities (4.7) STAFF	1. Work atmosphere (.78) CULT
2. Collegiality / cooperation (in 53% of the cases; 57x) STRUC	2. Organization goals (4.5) STRAT	2. Offered challenges (.75) MAN
3. Development opportunities (in 53% of the cases; 57x) MAN	3. Contribution the society (4.5) STRAT	3. Coherence of things (.74) STRUC
4. Employees (competencies, attitude, ambitions of colleagues; 59x) STAFF (in 53% of the cases)	4. Products and services (4.5) STRAT	4. Business approach (.73) STRAT
5. Autonomy / independence (in 47% of the cases; 36x) SYST	5. Work attitude of employees (4.4) STAFF	5. Alignment between management and employees (.73) SYST
6. Culture (in 47% of the cases; 32x) CULT	6. Work atmosphere (culture) (4.4) CULT	6. Working towards the same goals (.72) CULT
7. Contribution to society (in 47% of the cases; 20x) STRAT	7. Organization mission (4.4) STRAT	7. Internal cooperation (.70) SYST
8. Offered challenges / opportunities in my work (in 38% of the cases; 14x) MAN	8. Goals of employees (4.4) STAFF	8. Style of management (.69) MAN
9. Contacts with customers STAFF (in 31% of the cases; 27x)	9. Development opportunities (4.3) MAN	9. Balance between organization goals and goals of employees (.68) MAN
10. Variety of work (in 31% of the cases; 15x) SYST	10. Image (4.3) STRAT	10. Development opportunities (.69) MAN
	11. Attitude to environment (4.3) STAFF	
	12. Contacts with environment (4.3) STAFF	
* = canonical correlation, all sig <0,5		

Table 3 Three lists of organizational aesthetic stimuli (OAS)

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
v1	Between Groups	1.588	1	1.588	6.340	.012
	Within Groups	69.387	277	.250		
	Total	70.975	278			
v2	Between Groups	8.694	1	8.694	13.121	.000
	Within Groups	183.549	277	.663		
	Total	192.244	278			
v3	Between Groups	.011	1	.011	.005	.943
	Within Groups	598.405	277	2.160		
	Total	598.416	278			
v4	Between Groups	15.921	1	15.921	10.149	.002
	Within Groups	434.517	277	1.569		
	Total	450.437	278			
v5	Between Groups	.285	1	.285	.373	.542
	Within Groups	211.650	277	.764		
	Total	211.935	278			
v6	Between Groups	.068	1	.068	.444	.506
	Within Groups	42.241	277	.152		
	Total	42.308	278			

Figure 4 Cluster analysis role of personal characteristics on aesthetic judgment
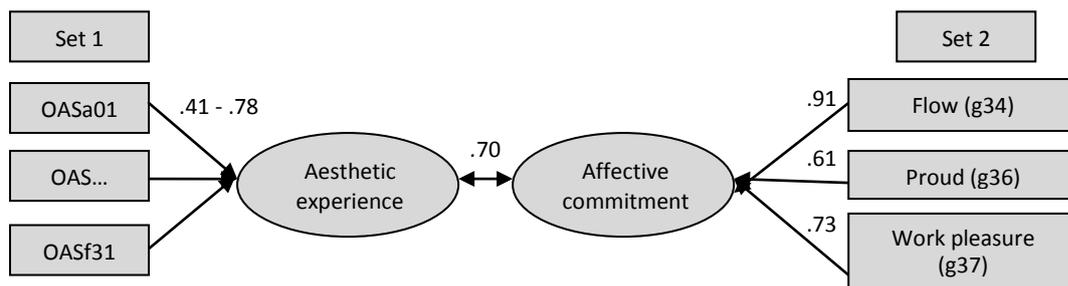

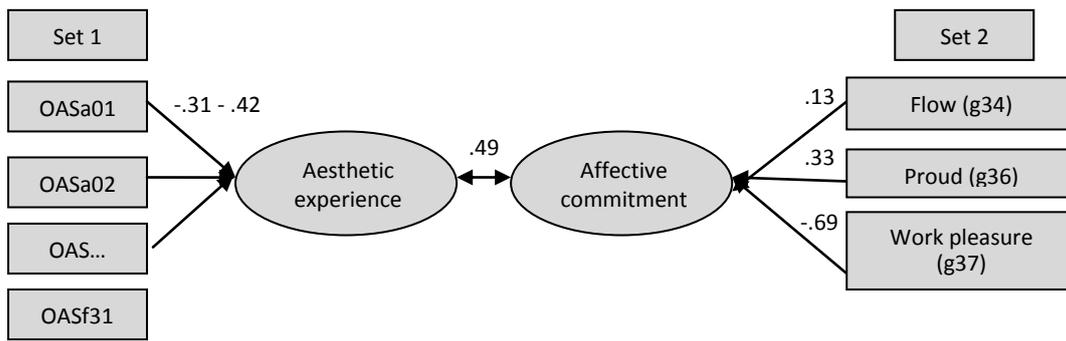*Figure 5 Relationship 1 Aesthetic experience with affective commitment*

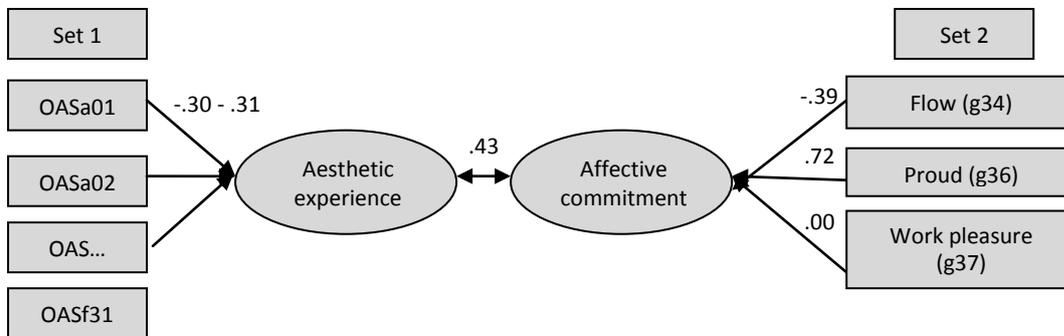*Figure 6 Relationship 2 Aesthetic experience with affective commitment*

Figure 7 Relationship 3 Aesthetic experience with affective commitment