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*To investigate whether employee compensation, job flexibility and working conditions predict job satisfaction in the retail industry*

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M.A. in Human Resource Management

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## **Abstract**

Job satisfaction has currently become an area of interest due to its association with job performance. Employers have noticed that when employees are satisfied, they tend to perform well and feel secure enough to stay committed to their organisation. Following this, it was imperative to investigate factors that kept employees satisfied at work. More specifically, the aim of the study was to investigate whether employee compensation, job flexibility and working conditions predict job satisfaction in the retail industry.

**Methods:** 74 participants were invited to take part in the study and were assessed based on their satisfaction with compensation, flexibility and working conditions. Participants were then asked to indicate how satisfied they were with their current organisation and working environment. Based on their responses, factors were grouped together in order to investigate their relationship.

**Results:** All continuous variables (compensation, flexibility and working conditions) were found to be positively correlated with job satisfaction, indication that high levels of continuous variables were associated with high levels of job satisfaction. However, when a multiple regression analysis was run, flexibility and compensation did not have a significant, statistical relationship with job satisfaction. In fact, only working conditions remained as the highest predictor of job satisfaction. Moreover, categorical variables (age, gender, years of service in retail and job position) did not predict levels of job satisfaction. This suggested that the results found concerning the continuous variables were applicable to the whole current population.

**Conclusion:** Results of the current study contribute to previous research findings and have formulated a foundational understanding towards the investigation of core predictors of job satisfaction in the retail industry. Further implications suggest that future research should replicate results with a larger sample and updated measures. More clinical implications and recommendations are discussed.

**Research Students Declaration Form**  
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## **Chapter 1- Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is arguably a huge issue in any organisational sector. It is known to be a fairly new term that pretty much describes the degree at which an employee feels satisfied in their job (Waqas et al, 2014). A manager would want to ensure that their staff is happy with their job. In addition, a manager must have the right attitude when dealing with their employees because they hold a significant influence that could either motivate or demotivate their workers (Wnuk, 2017). In this day and age, job satisfaction is a huge and important area that all businesses should aim to study. In the past, authors such as Shokoufe et al. (2012) have raised their concerns towards employees' lack of work quality since the majority were not satisfied with their jobs. Similarly, it has been found that job satisfaction is somewhat related to job performance (Bakotic, 2016). Bakotic found a stronger correlation between both factors which explained that the more satisfied a person was in their job, then the better they would perform at work. However, when it came to explaining the relationship from work performance to job satisfaction, the correlation was weak. This suggests that an employee performing well at work doesn't necessarily mean that they are satisfied. Understanding this relationship aids in providing answers for the procedures of keeping an employee satisfied so that they would perform well and not the other way around. Therefore, the current research study at hand aims to aid in the research towards job performance while primarily focusing on job satisfaction.

Research has found that management styles play a significant role in a company, accounting for almost up to 65% of an organisation's success (Yeh & Hsieh, 2017). Moreover, the authors undertook a survey amongst Taiwan's employees working in architectural firms in order to figure out the application of management styles that would potentially improve job satisfaction in the workplace. Yeh and Hsieh (2017) recorded that the participants that were placed in a survey leaned towards management styles that involved what is known as "participatory incentives" and "goal & performance orientation" (p. 194). With regards to participatory incentives, Yeh and Hsieh found that employees liked being valued by their supervisors and liked having their opinions heard and being incorporated into the organisation. In addition,

employees felt that managements' provision of incentives gave them an opportunity to bring out their best for the company, thus making them relevant. It is, therefore, evident that employees remain satisfied at work if they feel that they are very much engaged with the company to the point that they are a part of its success. In relation to goal and performance orientation, Yeh and Hsieh concluded based on their findings that employees would naturally reach an organisation's goal if they feel that they are trusted enough to work collaboratively with management as colleagues to achieve the optimum level of performance within the firm. Furthermore, Yeh and Hsieh found it important to add that the use of management styles should be applied differently to individuals within these firms based on their various backgrounds. This was because it was viewed that individuals with different demographics responded either more positively or somewhat positively to the current management styles. Thus, Yeh and Hsieh found that it would be imperative to maintain satisfaction levels by catering different management styles to various grouped individuals.

In contribution to the work of Yeh and Hsieh is an old ideology of McGregor's (1960's) X and Y theory (Bertelsen, 2012). According to Bertelsen, it appears to be confirmed that employees are motivated by management styles. It is conceptualised that some managers don't believe their members can motivate themselves intrinsically (Theory X), which often results in managers using a reward or punishment based management style in order to exercise their authority over their employees (Bertelsen, 2012). In contrast, Bertelsen has also concluded that management that believes in their workers (Theory Y) often tend to motivate them by allowing them to engage in collaborative exercises that builds them up in skill often increases their levels of satisfaction.

Current research in the Information Technology (IT) industry has also highlighted the importance of keeping employees satisfied at work since satisfaction is found to mediate between an employee either remaining with their organization or transferring (Wnuk, 2017). In doing so, the author has aimed to investigate the factors that positively correlate with job satisfaction. It was found that the role of a supervisor is key in determining the satisfaction of employees and thus concluded that the attitude of management will determine the attitude of employees (Wnuk, 2017). In other words, if supervisors portray a positive attitude, look after their workers and aid in the best way they can, then it would lead an employee to feel valued and content with the

level of support offered to them and appreciate their position within the firm. Another study in the IT industry also added that employees are likely to be satisfied in their fields if they belong to an organisation that centres its values on treating its workers fairly and giving each employee the opportunity to grow significantly in their area of work (Sharma, 2017). Sharma also concluded that an organisation is in a position to keep its employees satisfied if it has a good reputation. Therefore, it is important that an organisation shouldn't find itself being known for firing their staff for the wrong reasons, being sued consistently or for engaging in various scandals. Such behaviour potentially leads to employees leaving their jobs or being uncertain of their position in the firm (Otechere-Ankrah, Tenakwah & Tenakwah, 2015).

In contribution, a Pakistan study aimed to understand job satisfaction among university staff members through a process that promoted the ideology of ethics and values within an organisation (Asad, Naseem & Faiz, 2017). The authors found that employees were highly satisfied and seemed to go beyond what they were instructed to do at work when they felt that members treated them fairly and showed genuine love which gave them a sense of belonging. Asad et al. further implied that management and employees would have to create an organisation with an atmosphere centred around virtue. The essence of this is to create productivity and maintain high levels of satisfaction within the organisation and to eliminate any appearance of hostility amongst each other (Asad et al. 2017).

Motivation can also be said to contribute to the concept of Job satisfaction (Mathe, Pavie & O'Keeffe, 2012). Bertelsen (2012) observed a few theories of motivation that could be relevant in understanding employment behaviour. The author explored Maslow's (1954) "hierarchy of needs", which outline the order in which an individual achieves their needs. Normally, the first order of needs, which are normally located at the base of the hierarchical pyramid, are the basic daily survival needs. These normally consist of water, food and shelter. Taking an employment perspective, these needs are generally met when one is working and thus, this acts as a motivation technique to remain in employment. Eventually, an individual meets their needs all the way to the top of the pyramid which comprises of one's self-actualisation. In this section, it is theorised that an individual would have felt that they are safe, respected, acknowledged and feel that they are motivated and satisfied enough to clinically execute their tasks with innovation and skill (Bertelsen, 2012).



Another contributing motivation technique is Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory (Keenan, 2015). Keenan summarised the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to explain how they positively influence job satisfaction and remove dissatisfaction. Intrinsically, the author explained that individuals are naturally self-driven to take the initiative to work and achieve their goals. Extrinsically, they are influenced by outside factors (usually employment rewards) in order to happily complete their tasks. Understanding this theory could potentially aid management in the knowledge of their employee; knowing which motivational techniques are beneficial for the individual or the group in question in order to keep them satisfied.

## **1.2 The Importance of Job Satisfaction**

In the healthcare sector, authors have highlighted that health providers such as nurses and doctors have a crucial role seen as they are looking after lives (Heydari, Meshkinyazd & Soudmand, 2017). Furthermore, they noted that it would be reasonably imperative to maintain high levels of satisfaction at work given the nature of the job and so as not to make critical errors. In addition, management wants to have highly motivated employees who love their job because they're likely to perform exceptionally to complete organisational goals and retain competitive advantage against other organisations (Vorina, Simonič & Vlasova, 2017). According to Mckinsey there is a phenomenon known as the "war for talent" (as cited in Lynton & Beechler, 2012, p. 567) which conveys a message that talent has become scarce. It is because of this, that the authors in China have not only set out strategies to win talent, but to provide workplace values to retain them also.

unfortunately, many employees are still dissatisfied in the in their field of work. Researchers have suggested based on investigation that this is often due to poor conditions at work, problems between employees and employers due to lack of respect, or the unending struggle to feel appreciated at work (Deriba et al., 2017). It is because of this, that employees eventually perform less effectively, experience employment hostility, cause organisational productivity to decline and eventually end up destroying the image of the company (Otchere-Ankrah, Tenakwah & Tenakwah, 2015). Employee retention also appears to be a huge issue in today's world and remains a challenge which has become largely problematic as more employees are frequently leaving their jobs (Arekar et al., 2016; Faurote, 2017). Faurote explained that members have become less loyal to their company due to various factors, resulting

in 4 out of 5 of employees leaving and looking to move to new jobs worldwide. Deriba et al. (2017) have further added that many workers migrate due to lack of services in their countries, which in return frustrates the balance of the working environment and results in employee dissatisfaction.

Since job satisfaction is broad and can be interpreted and explained in different ways, it is important to note the core factors which are said to be related to it. Amongst many factors, it is known that compensation (Cha, 2008), flexibility (Michel & Michel, 2015) and working conditions (Wang et al, 2015) are predictors of job satisfaction. Being able to test and understand which factor contributes effectively to satisfaction should prove to be noteworthy and should allow management to be able to modify their training methods in order to accommodate for that particular factor upon discovery. In the Irish educational sectors, empirical research highlighted the need to understand what keeps a graduate worker satisfied in an organisation, even beyond the sheer love for their job (Moloney, 2015). The author found that graduates indicated a genuine interest for their job and what it entailed, but were also interested in finding out the working conditions and how much they were getting paid. This implies a relationship between knowing what causes one to accept a job and what influences one to stay with the job.

### **1.3 Purpose of Research**

The aim of this research is to investigate whether employee compensation, job flexibility and working conditions predict job satisfaction in the retail industry. While many research studies try to investigate how satisfaction results in performance and other factors related to staying committed to the job (Srivastava, 2013), this study aims to find out the factors that predict job satisfaction. In other words, “what is it that makes and keeps an employee satisfied at work?” Is it the pay and benefits, the number of hours one works, or is it possibly the working conditions? Is it possible that all these factors relate to each other and if so, at what level of significance does each relate to job satisfaction? Since research strongly supports that a satisfied employee generally performs well in their job (Bakotic, 2016), then finding out which key factors contribute to job satisfaction is highly imperative. In the same manner, majority of the research that was found to have a significant correlation between satisfaction and performance was mostly found in organisational sectors in contrast to the retail sectors. Therefore, for the purposes of replicating results in a completely new sector; retail, the

project aims to aid in fortifying the validity and reliability of the relationship between satisfaction and the 3 contributing factors. In addition to that, finding out which factor best contributes to job satisfaction is beneficial for management as it gives them the knowledge of what they have to work on if they want their employees to perform better at work and maintain high levels of productivity against competitive organisations. Observing if the three independent variables are significant contributors is also important because it gives the management diverse and innovative ways to strengthen their companies. Demographics such as age and gender have also been previously known to be correlated with job satisfaction (McNall et al. 2010). Therefore, a close examination of these factors would need further assessment. Finally, majority of significant research has been undertaken in various parts of the world and fewer parts of Europe. In fact, leading countries like the U.S are acknowledging the need for employee happiness with almost 89% of employees expressing high levels of job satisfaction (Faurote, 2017). Being able to replicate similar results with majority of the sample of respondents in the retail stores based in Ireland could provide knowledge which will raise awareness concerning the importance of keeping employees satisfied and improving levels of retention. On the contrary, if results cannot be replicated, then it could show just how much training that management in Ireland might need in order to maintain and raise levels of satisfaction.

#### **1.4 Research Structure**

This dissertation will be segmented into approximately six chapters which will each contain topic and details of the nature of the study. Initially, the study will introduce the topic and will contain a general background of the topic in question. This is where the reader will gain an understanding of the importance of the study and why it is worth reviewing. Furthermore, the reader will be able to understand how other organisations have highlighted the importance of the topic itself. Finally, the chapter will contain the aim of the study, the rationale (purpose) and the factors that will be needed to complete the study.

Chapter two will provide a literature review drawn upon theoretical and empirical research. This chapter will go in depth in describing compensation, flexibility and working conditions, along with their relationship with job satisfaction. Finally, a conclusion will be drawn, which will aim to find the link between the factors mentioned above to address the procedure of the current dissertation.

Following up on the literature review, the third chapter will contain the current research question. Several hypotheses will be noted in order and clear objectives of the question will be listed out per hypothesis.

Chapter four will contain the research methodology. This is where the researcher will explain the nature of the design, the tools and methods of which the data was collected, the size of the sample and the way in which data was analysed and tested. This chapter will also include any ethical considerations that were made prior to and during the collection of data.

The fifth chapter will include the results of the study by means of data analysis and tests that were illustrated in the previous chapter. This is where the researcher will convey a series of descriptive results, along with various tests in order to observe the results that are relevant to the hypotheses.

The sixth chapter will contain a discussion and conclusion of the overall research. In this chapter, the researcher will briefly illustrate the findings which are mentioned in the introduction and literature review in order to assess whether the results correlate with the current study's findings. Based on the new findings, the chapters will list out the possible limitations of the study along with its strengths and will also suggest further recommendations for future research. Finally, a conclusion will be finalised in order to convey the learned knowledge and to close the study.

## **Chapter 2- Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Since research confirms that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and job performance (Bakotic 2016, Srivastava, 2013) it is important to explore a few factors that significantly contribute to job satisfaction in order to ensure that employee performance levels are always kept high. Current studies confirm that employees naturally express levels of satisfaction when their working environment centres its values on trust, respect and meaningful organisational relationships (Miller, 2017; Faurote, 2017). In addition, the author has mentioned that employees love to feel that they are secure, are given the opportunity to grow with the organisation and are well paid. However, for the purposes of this study, the research shall focus on compensation, flexibility and working conditions.

### **2.2 Compensation and Job Satisfaction**

In an organisational context, pay, wage or salary, is a form of compensation from an employer to an employee as a reward for the work that an employee puts in to aid their employer on a weekly, monthly or yearly basis (Chaudhry et al 2011). In theory and through empirical research, it is argued that pay is highly correlated with job satisfaction (Cha, 2008). However, authors have argued against such a notion and have concluded that higher levels of pay rates are actually more associated with lower levels of satisfaction in the workplace (Young et al., 2014). Young et al. noted that this was unexpected but also interesting because it served the notion that when employees become organisationally secure, they tend to want to pursue more knowledge about their field in order to obtain happiness that money couldn't buy. Additionally, about 61% U.S employees have deemed compensation to be important in the workplace (Faurote, 2017). Unfortunately, Faurote exclaimed that a large number of that population (35%) were not content with the compensation they were receiving. Consequently, a longitudinal study revealed that being overpaid can lead to dissatisfaction (Sauer & Valet, 2013). The authors saw that the results indicated that there has to be a balance between receiving satisfactory payment and going beyond fair pay rate.

Interestingly, Cha (2008) found that a high paying salary rate encouraged employees not only to be satisfied with their jobs, but also in trying to retain them. In a Hawaiian

study of a number of government employees, empirical research suggested that about 68% of the population responded well to pay compensation playing a significant role in keeping them happy at work (Vales, 2014). Empirical comparative research was also taken amongst 320 employees in private and public sectors within the organisation (Chaudhry et al. 2011). Chaudhry et al. initially found that employees in the public industry experienced higher levels of job satisfaction than those in the private sector, with respect that both sectors' levels of satisfaction were positively influenced by the pay they were given. Interestingly, the authors also concluded that there was an ideology that allowed employees to feel that pay, depending on the nature they received it, was somehow connected to them being secure in their job.

While empirical research does support that pay is somewhat linked to job satisfaction, it is important to explore just what type of compensation employees prefer the most. In order to assess this, current research was undertaken to investigate whether a significant sample of approximately 13,657 employees in 1,293 workplaces were potentially driven by pay that they had worked for, profit- related pay, or by owning shares within the company (Ogbonnaya, Daniels & Nielsen, 2017). The nature of the study was cross-sectional. The data was analysed using various measurements to get the outcomes for each of the independent variables. Ogbonnaya et al. found that out of the three variables, job satisfaction was positively correlated with individuals' performance-related pay. This meant that employees were satisfied if they felt that they were being paid based on their performance at work. Their discussion implied that employees' zeal to work would eventually lead to financial benefits such as getting a pay rise, which in return would benefit management and employees, and would improve the organisation's productivity. Furthermore, Ogbonnaya et al. concluded that this factor gave employees a sense of involvement within their company and developed strong trust with their managers. Based on the nature of the study and the sample size, the study proved to be a valid and representative of its population, thus, making it a study worth assessing and replicating in other nations.

A similar study in Rural China observed a few factors that contribute to job satisfaction, with financial compensation being one of them (Chen et al., 2017). 39 employed doctors from 5 locations in China took part in a voluntary qualitative study which took approximately 50 minutes and was ethically approved to pay them as a way to compensate for their time. Chen et al. found that the majority of doctors (56%)

viewed salary satisfaction as one of the crucial factors to keep them satisfied. The authors viewed that this was because employees felt that their excessive workload was high and did not correlate with their pay, which they found to be relatively low. Other employees further added that they felt less valued in their field of work and felt less motivated to carry on doing the work presented to them. Based on previous research that associated positive monetary benefits with job satisfaction (Rimmer, 2015; Tanne, 2012; Pathman et al. 2002), Chen et al. concluded that that it would be important for doctors to receive adequate income which would compensate their workload.

In contrast to the previous findings, research has also aimed to observe the role that pay compensation plays in naturally motivating employees at work (Olafsen et al., 2015). The study used a convenient sample of about 166 employees who worked for Norwegian banks. Alongside the perception of “pay”, the authors looked at other factors that could potentially contribute to employees’ satisfaction and motivation. Primarily, Olafsen et al. saw a correlation between pay and a positive attitude towards pay. This suggested that employees found their pay to be justified and fair towards their work organisation. However, this was not found to be directly linked to employees’ motivation. This suggested that there was no causal relationship between the both despite the similarities. In fact, Olafsen found that employees felt more intrinsically motivated by the level of support that offered towards their needs. Furthermore, the authors indicated through their various limitations that further investigation was needed to further asses the relationships in depth as opposed to relying on measures such as employees’ self-report. Also, Olafsen et al. suggested that a more representative sample would be needed in order to assume and ensure that the results would be replicable in other business industries.

Finally, it has been found that pay compensation, although it had a weak correlation, was still significantly related to satisfaction at work (Malik, Danish& Munir, 2012). Malik et al. Further explained that the weak correlation suggested that further studies should aim to look at other contributing factors as opposed to salary rewards alone. Given these fundamental findings, retail industries were not investigated in this much depth.

### **2.3 Flexibility and Job Satisfaction**

Organisational flexibility is described as an effective strategy because it gives the employee the freedom to take care of organisational affairs as well as ensuring that they have time to take care of matters in their personal lives (Michel & Michel, 2015). In other words, it relates to ensuring that employees have a good work-life balance. This means that an employee has the advantage to complete their workload effectively at work as well as being able to go on dates, play games or complete household chores on a daily or weekly basis. In accordance with this, European research has found that flexible hours are more favourable to younger employees who engage in part-time work while engaging in academics, and older employees who no longer wish to work relatively long hours (Origo & Pagani, 2008). In theory, Michel & Michel observed that an employee who is given the flexibility “benefit” often feels that the organisation values them enough to care about their well-being and to support them with external matters that an employee may be going through, which in return would result in the employee feeling secure and being more productive in the workplace.

Strong previous and current research is in full support of the ideology of flexibility in the work place. Empirically, Michel & Michel found that Work flexibility served as a great moderating factor between factors that are linked to job satisfaction. With that being said, flexibility at work was found to be somewhat positively related to employee satisfaction as it gave the employee a strategy to manage life at work and at home (Michel & Michel, 2015). Galinsky (2015) further emphasised the importance of flexibility in the workplace, highlighting that it not only benefits the individual, but also tends to save a lot of money for businesses on an annual basis. In addition, Galinsky also implored companies to enable the “culture of flexibility” because it has been known to significantly play a big role in ensuring that employees are satisfied and stress free enough to remain and innovatively engage in their field of work (2015, P. 30). Lu et al. (2008) have drawn upon previous research and have found positive benefits associated with flexibility at work. Similarly, they found that results were replicable in Western countries, indicating that managing the promotion of flexibility in the workplace and the demotion of excessive workloads is essential.

A study aimed to investigate the implication that flexibility has towards job satisfaction and employee turnover (McNall, Masuda & Nicklin, 2010). The authors observed from previous studies (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002;



Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985) that managing responsibility at work and at home has become increasingly challenging, causing a clash between both roles. As such, McNall et al. (2010) proposed to investigate how flexibility might create a significant balance between work and family responsibilities. Their sample consisted of 220 participants who were employed in various sectors and were invited through an email to take part in the study's online database. The data was analysed quantitatively and was measured using a series of likert scales. The study found that providing flexible hours to employees and being able to pick relative working days during the week provided employees with a good balance between working and dealing with family affairs. This finding was, therefore, positively associated with an increase in job satisfaction and employee retention, and a decrease in employee absenteeism. Although the study was valid and sound based on the nature of its sample, it had its limitations in relation to its reliability. McNall et al. noted that in order to eliminate any bias, data should be analysed using more than just one source. Furthermore, the authors proposed for future researchers to undertake a longitudinal study to observe if the results would be replicable over time. In their conclusion McNall et al. found their results to be similar to those in previous studies and further suggested that organizations should now aim to provide an environment that promotes a work-life balance in order to accommodate a new culture for their employees which in return would result in lower turnovers and an increase in satisfaction.

A recent quantitative study taken from the Jordanian private airline sector contributed effectively in aid of previous studies, highlighting that there is a positive correlation between the presence of flexible working arrangements and high levels of job satisfaction and work-life balance (Rawashdeh, Almasarweh and Jaber, 2016). The results indicated a significant value of (0.022), suggesting a positive relationship between flexible working arrangements and job satisfaction, since the value was below the T-value of (0.05). In the same manner, the significant value (0.000) suggested a present positive relationship between flexibility and work-life balance since the value was below the T-value of (0.05). The findings indicated that employees were satisfied with employers who offered flexible working arrangements because it showed that their personal lives were also being catered for in this way. Although sample size was relatively low and appeared restricted to one organisation, the researchers did make some relevant points which can be applicable to other organisations and should be taken into consideration. Rawashdeh et al. (2016) added that every organisation should

be able to include their employees into planning and figuring out which flexible arrangements would potentially work for them. This would not only maintain retention levels, but would also make employees feel that they are a part of the organisation's plans and success (Asad, Naseem & Faiz, 2017).

Research from the Bosnian and Herzegovina's IT sector supports that efficient workers normally have a positive work-life balance which is influenced by accurate flexible work arrangements (Riđić, Avdibegović & Bušatlić, 2016). Furthermore, the authors highlighted that above half of the participants indicated that their work-life balance levels are satisfactory but also need to be enhanced in order to maintain levels of retention and reduce high levels of work and life related stress. Furthermore, there appeared to be no significant association with regards to demographic results in relation to how they viewed the ideology of flexibility (Riđić, Avdibegović & Bušatlić, 2016). This meant that every employee, despite their age, gender, family status and distance of travel from and to work, felt that flexibility was highly important and applicable to their lives. Although the study was focused solely on the IT sector, it had representative sample that positively contributed to previous research which made it valid and reliable towards other IT sectors within the Bosnia and Herzegovina region. Although, future research would have to look towards other IT sectors and perhaps include new sectors which would represent the whole European region.

Additionally, a Talent Development (TD, 2015) survey provided statistics which explored the importance of flexibility in the workplace. Initially, it was found that over 60% of respondents argued that productivity is being negatively affected by a series of burnouts at work which is also highly impacted by overworking. Out of 100%, the highest percentage of the population added that providing flexibility in the workplace would positively impact their levels of satisfaction. Finally, it was observed that employees would rather seek either a good paying job or a job that significantly balances their personal lives and their lives at work.

In contrast to the findings above, a representative sample of 407 Turkish service sector workers were invited to take part in a study which aimed to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction, flexible arrangements and job security (Zeytinoglu et al., 2012). The authors found that there was no relationship between flexibility and job satisfaction. In fact, participants were more concerned about job security. For the Turkish employees, Zeytinoglu et al. found that having a job was all that mattered at

the point in their lives given the scarcity of employment. Therefore, it didn't matter whether the benefits and environmental conditions associated with the job were present or absent, as long as they had a job they felt they belonged in. Furthermore, the authors noted that flexibility was already part of Turkey's basic values, meaning that it was possible that employees did not see it as an issue, or that it was a factor that was important enough to affect them during employment.

Although research is strongly in support of flexibility in the workplace, its application is equally imperative for any growing or thriving organisation. However, it is a wonder as to whether this knowledge is being used to its full potential. For example, previous research confirms the importance of flexibility in the workplace given that it is positively associated with employees' nature of their job and their work-life balance (Sharafizad, Paull & Omari, 2011). However, this study also highlighted that certain staff members don't often get a reasonable amount of flexibility due to the nature of their job as compared to other staff members within the university organisation. Therefore, it was seen that this potentially proves to be problematic as it may affect the balance between work and their personal lives and might induce stress to employees due to the excessive workload, which might also potentially lead to an increase of employee turnover or an imbalance between staff members (Sharafizad et al. 2011). This means that employees with greater workloads might start to feel that they are unfairly treated compared to other staff members with better flexibility benefits. Thus, further room for improvement has been suggested for the future in order to accommodate for all staff members in relation to creating a better work-life balance.

### **2.3 Working conditions and Job Satisfaction**

The ideology of working conditions covers a broad range of topics but is often associated with factors such as health and safety measures in the work place, hours being worked on a daily basis, flexibility considerations, work training, having a good working environment etc. (Croucher et al 2013). Although previous research suggests that working conditions can be overlooked due to other more pressing factors (Zeytinoglu et al., 2012), it is imperative to highlight the importance of such conditions. For example, it seems unrealistic and unethical for an employee to work in environmentally unstable conditions, or for them to work excessively for long hours without breaks or well-deserved holidays. With that being highlighted, empirical

research has noted that providing ideal working conditions has given rise to job satisfaction levels amongst nurses in Shanghai (Wang et al, 2015). Wang et al further contributed that it is imperative that these conditions be kept at optimum levels in order to ensure that nurses maintain and improve their levels of happiness within their field. Additionally, it was observed that management ought to take the responsibility of providing their employees with a challenging work environment so that they could keep young employees such as those in the nursing sector to remain satisfied (Goh et al. 2015). The authors found that this was highly imperative to mention because a significant percentage of employees were already exhibiting low levels of satisfaction and were intending to leave the organisation and thus, causing a problematic depletion of staff within the workplace.

In comparison to pay, it was interesting to see that about 87% of participants valued working conditions more in relation to how it contributed to their happiness in and outside of work (Vales, 2014). Relatively, Garcia-Serrano (2011) was concerned with how their previous research (2004) highlighted the importance of working conditions and how they were particularly related with employee retention. Garcia-Serrano also added that it was imperative for large firms to control for working conditions as large firms are generally more affected when it comes to levels of employee satisfaction. With that, Garcia-Serrano proposed that the structure of larger firms ought to be revisited and maintained, given the consideration of its size. This finding gave rise to the importance of being able to accommodate for employees within firms based on their size. Garcia-Serrano had seen that providing exceptional working conditions in bigger firms was important and had to be evident compared to smaller firms so that the size could be differentiated. For example, growing babies are given milk to give them strong bones to grow into mature adults. Accordingly, during the growth period, growing children are given different types of food to maintain and increase that growth which baby milk can no longer help with. This is the case with firms. Based on the nature of its size, greater responsibilities towards working conditions are required to accommodate for employees within the firm.

Additionally, empirical research has been previously conducted to investigate the level of influence that the working environment has on the level of satisfaction at work (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). The rationale of the study was with accordance to the fact that it is important to satisfy employees with good working conditions due to

current research that supports that to get the best out of employees, one must be able to provide the best for them. The data was quantitatively analysed and taken from a sample of 210 Pakistan employees randomly selected from banking sectors, telecommunications and education institutes. The results indicated that good working conditions have a great influence achieving job satisfaction suggesting that organisations need to ensure to incorporate a good working environment for their subordinates. Raziq and Maulabakhsh found it imperative to note that such findings were key seen as they benefited both parties in the organisation, thus, resulting to a better employer-employee relationship. Furthermore, this finding explained that if a satisfactory environment is met, the likeliness of employees' levels of commitment, productivity, performance and organisational identity would also be high.

Given the found importance of positive working conditions towards positive job satisfaction, recent research has aimed to investigate the factors that have an influence on working conditions across the globe and more specifically in public hospitals (Manyisa & van Aswegen, 2017). The study took a literature review approach and drew its conclusions based on previous relevant studies that have looked at a few of the contributing factors over time. Primarily, the study found that severe workload negatively affects conditions at work. For Tomic and Tomic (2008) heavy workload is responsible for employee fatigue, which leaves employees highly dissatisfied at work, causing them to make errors related to patient's healthcare and further causing intentions to quit their jobs (as cited in Manyisa & van Aswegen, 2017). Furthermore, Manyisa and Van Aswegen contributed based on previous research that employees under such workloads run the risk of potentially harming themselves and contracting mental and physical illnesses due to the nature of their job and fatigue.

Secondly, the risk of contracting severe illnesses such as HIV/AIDS is equally crucial towards the working environment. As such, it has been found that over 40% of patients have contracted AIDS and have been admitted to several south African hospitals (Pillary, 2009, as cited in Manyisa & van Aswegen, 2017). Due to the nature of the incurable disease and the negative working environment, the authors found that employees often have the fear of themselves being infected by HIV/AIDS due to the burden of patients, which might potentially lead to healthcare providers to make crucial accidents that might cause an infection due to fatigue. Due to this, the authors

added that stress could also lead to unwanted needle injuries to staff, leading to unwanted infections from such an environment.

Thirdly, Manyisa and van Aswegen observed that working excessively beyond the required hours is equally damaging to employees' health. Drawing from previous researchers (Barger et al., 2009; Van de Colff & Rothman, 2009) Manyisa and van Aswegen noted conditions such as obesity, depression and even suicide as some of the psychological, mental and physical illnesses that employees could contract as a result of workload and excessive working hours.

Finally, among other contributing factors to working conditions, Manyisa and van Aswegen found that employees are often negatively affected in their organisations due to the lack of staff and support. With that, the authors noted that it is often common for nurses and doctors to be left to carry out tasks without support, despite the fact such tasks might be so crucial and in need of assistance from other experienced personnel. In terms of health and safety, this easily suggests that the working environment needs improvement especially since patients' lives are involved as well as the well-being of employees. With the acknowledgement of so many errors in the past, Manyisa and van Aswegen were then able to assess the previous aspects associated with such negative factors towards the working conditions and were then able to offer correct long term solutions in aid of improving working conditions across the globe.

In contribution to the crucial need to maintain a good working environment especially among the healthcare sector, a longitudinal study (2006, 2008, 2013) had previously aimed to investigate the working conditions among healthcare providers in nursing sectors (Ulrich et al., 2014). An online survey was taken by over 8400 nurses who answered a series of questions concerning how they perceived the current working conditions in their sectors. Ulrich et al. found that there has been a decline in working conditions compared to the last time (2008) that investigations took place. Participants highlighted several factors such as respect between colleagues to have decreased, thus raising a concern towards the quality of their services within their fields. These findings indicate that the working environment is one that should be carefully monitored throughout the years in case other worrying factors arise while catering for other problematic factors. For example, if it happens that lack of communication is a

big factor in one year, one must be weary of other factors such as bullying which might potentially arise while working on communication.

To confirm some of the findings above, previous research published 2 years before Manyisa and van Aswegen (2017) also highlighted the risks faced by women that were associated with negative working conditions, specifically caused by long working hours (Caruso, 2015). Caruso noted that one's physical well-being is negatively affected, causing severe illnesses which are counterproductive. In a healthcare sector, this means that it would be unethical and would make no sense for ill patients to receive treatment from an ill caregiver. With regards to flexibility, Caruso noted that employees' social life is affected due to bad working conditions which cause employees to have poor relationships and negative moods towards a healthy work-life balance. Furthermore, it was noted that productivity levels are also negatively affected, thus causing lower levels of satisfaction, performance and further risks of danger. Therefore, Caruso suggested that sleep should be incorporated and placed in high importance by management in order to reduce potential risks, promote better working conditions, increase levels of satisfaction and productivity, and maintain employee engagement.

## Chapter 3- Research Question & Hypotheses

### 3.1 The research aims and objectives

Following compelling recent and past evidence, this study aims to do a cross-sectional study in order to investigate whether factors such as compensation/ reward, job flexibility and working conditions (independent variables) can predict job satisfaction (dependent variable) among employees in the retail industry. The research will focus on four specific Hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, & H4)

**H1. Employees who are highly satisfied with their compensation (reward) will more likely record higher levels of job satisfaction.**

Previous literature strongly supports that compensation plays a key role in affecting job satisfaction. This hypothesis will aim to observe a close link between this relationship and will observe the level of satisfaction that employees currently have with their current compensation.

**H2. Employees who are satisfied with flexibility provided at work will most likely be satisfied with their job.**

Although there is a positive relationship between flexibility and job satisfaction how many can admit that they are satisfied with the flexible arrangements that are currently being offered in their workplace? This hypothesis will aim to investigate this and prove whether this is consistent with previous literature or whether there are contrary findings.

**H3. High levels of working conditions will predict high levels of job satisfaction.**

How do people find their current working environment; do they feel valued by their employers, are they happy with flexible hours, is there a sense of job security, is there too much workload which might potentially lead to stress, or is their work-life balance negatively affected? Majority of these questions have been listed out in previous literature as potential factors that affect working conditions. The current study also aims to explore this and link the findings with job satisfaction.

**H4 i) The role of demographics towards job satisfaction**

The research also aims to take demographics into account. More specifically, it will aim to see if there are different levels of job satisfaction within participants depending



on their age, gender, years of service in retail and position within the retail sector. By doing this, the study will gain an understanding concerning which variable strongly predicts job satisfaction.

**H4 ii) Which of the independent variables (Compensation satisfaction, Flexibility satisfaction or satisfaction with working conditions) is the strongest predictor of Job satisfaction?**

Given that all factors might be significant contributors to job satisfaction (as indicated in past and recent literature). It would be interesting to observe which independent variable is the strongest predictor towards the dependent variable. This gives aid to organisations looking understand what key factor they should work on, as well as understanding the room for potential improvement in the other two factors.

Finally, it would also be interesting to observe whether the three independent factors are in any way correlated. This might serve to infer that it is important to have all the proposed factors regardless of which one is more significant as the other two independent variables might mediate between themselves and the dependent variable.

## Chapter 4- Research Methodology

### 4.1 Participants

The study invited a total number of 74 employees who were randomly selected from various retail stores through a series of online social media databases (Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram & WhatsApp). The purpose of random selection was to ensure that every employee within any organisation in the retail sector had a chance of being selected, and therefore assumes that the outcome result of the selected participants can be interpreted as an overall outcome for all workers in retail (Kothari, 2004). The study initially contained 75 respondents but one had to be excluded due to a number of outliers within their data. Within the 74 participants, the age ranges were split into 4 subgroups, going from 17-54. The youngest age group (17-24) contained the majority of respondents (N= 54, 73%), followed by the second youngest (24-34, N=17, 23%), the eldest (45-54, N2, 2.7%) and the second eldest (35-44, N= 1, 1.4%). Members who were 25 years or older were eventually placed into one subgroup (N=20) to allow for a clear comparison between frequencies. The study itself contained more females (N= 47, 63.5%) than males (N= 27, 36.5%). The highest subgroup of employees served the retail industry for up to 3 years (N=53, 71.6 %) while the lowest subgroup served for more than 20 years (N=2, 2.8%). Due to the size of the sample, any member who served in retail for more than 3 years were placed under one subgroup (4 years or more, N= 21). Finally, most of the staff members were sales associates (N= 43), followed by cashiers (N= 17), team leaders (N=7), Store managers (N= 4) and supervisors (N=3). Supervisors, managers, and team leaders were placed under one category (Managers/Supervisors N=14) due the size of the sample. All staff members were placed into one group and were asked the same series of questions throughout the study (See Table 1 for full details).

**Table 1:** Frequencies for the current sample of retail workers on each demographic variable (N = 74)

Variable	Frequency	Valid Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
17-24	54	73
25 or older	20	27
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	27	36.5
Female	47	63.5
<b>Years of Retail Service</b>		
1-3 Years	53	71.6
4 years or more	21	28.4
<b>Position</b>		
Sales Associate	43	58.1
Cashier	17	23
Managers/Supervisors	14	18.9

Note: These frequencies are for all categorical variables.

#### 4.2 Measures & Procedure

In order to address the variables in question, participants were invited to complete 4 different types of questionnaires which were to be answered voluntarily. With that being said, in the case that participants decided that they did not wish to go ahead with the study, they were given consent that they don't have to complete any of the questionnaires. For the study to function, participants had to have access to social media networks which were mentioned in the "participants" sub-chapter mentioned above. Students were also to be familiar with "Google Forms", which was used as a platform that contained all the various questionnaires that were applicable to the study. Google Forms was able to split questionnaires into 6 distinct sections.

**Section 1** introduced the nature of the study and provided the participants with an information sheet. The information sheet contained what the aim of the study was and a reason why participants played such a key role in the study. This was to alert participants that they would be spending some time to answer important questions that

would potentially shape the nature of research. To ensure that results were unbiased and answered in truth, participants were informed that their identity would remain anonymous, along with the option to withdraw their questionnaire at any time they wished not to go ahead with study. Furthermore, if respondents had further questions concerning anything they didn't understand, the researcher ensured to provide their contact details, along with the details of their supervisor (See Appendix 1).

In **Section 2**, participants were given 4 demographic questions to answer. This allowed the researcher to observe the different age groups that individuals belonged to, the number of males and females within the study, the total number of years that each subordinate served in the retail sector and the current position that was held by each individual. (See Appendix 2).

In **section 3**, After the participants had completed the demographic questionnaire, they were asked to fill out what is known as a "Compensation Satisfaction Measure" questionnaire by Locke (1971, as adapted by Lu et al., 2011). The questionnaire was a 7 point likert scale questionnaire containing 6 questions in relation to how strongly they agree or disagree with rewards and benefits in the workplace. The nature of this questionnaire was to observe participants' behaviours and attitudes toward monetary benefits and their satisfaction towards them. The reliability and validity of this questionnaire was previously tested using "Cronbach's alpha", scoring 0.76 which is said to be statistically reliable seen as it above the Cronbach's alpha 0.70. In order to confirm this consistency, this research ran a new reliability test for the same questionnaire. The new results confirmed that this questionnaire is still presently reliable (Cronbach's Alpha 0.81) This meant that it was suggested to be satisfactory for use in similar research studies such as this. However, it is important to note that when this questionnaire was used by Lu et al. (2011), insignificant results were found in relation to what their study attempted to measure. (See Appendix 3).

**Section 4** invited participants to fill out a "Satisfaction with Flexibility Facet Measure" (Rothausen, 1962) which aimed to process how satisfied employees were with work flexibility at work by using a 5 point likert scale. This questionnaire contained 5 questions which aimed to gain an understanding of their perception towards flexible arrangements within their organisation. Rothausen found the questionnaire to be reliable as it had a high Cronbach's alpha score of 0.87. When the test was presently

run for this research study, the results still found the questionnaire to be fairly reliable (Cronbach's alpha 0.74) (See appendix 4).

The "Workplace Organization Indices" (Boreham et al, 2016) questionnaire was then presented in **section 5** to get participants' opinions towards working conditions in their sector. This section sought participants to answer a total number of 23 questions which were each measured using a 5-point scale. In this section participants were to give an account of their satisfaction towards their working environment with regards to their relationship with employers, flexible arrangements, job security, workload pressure, work related stress and work-life balance. The questionnaire previously scored 0.85 on the Cronbach's alpha scale suggesting high consistency and reliability. New reliability scores for this study indicated that the questionnaire was still consistent with a score of 0.71 on the Cronbach's alpha scale (See appendix 5).

Finally, a general "aggregate job satisfaction" questionnaire was included in **section 6** to observe how participants felt about their current workplace (Gonzalez-Roma & Hernandez, 2016). Participants were given 13 questions which asked them to rate how satisfied they were with the features that were present at work. This questionnaire was done in such a way to gain an overall understanding of how participants felt based on the factors that were included in the previous questionnaires. All the aggregate measures had previously scored 0.91 on the Cronbach's alpha scale which suggested that the questionnaire was good useful for this study based on its reliability. New reliability tests now confirmed a 0.92 score on the Cronbach's alpha scale. (See appendix 6).

To send the questionnaire to working class members, Google Forms was able to create an address link that would direct people to answer the questionnaire upon clicking the link. Due to the popularity of online social mediums, it was easy to send the link to thousands of people on Facebook, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram and student emails from the National College of Ireland. These links were sent randomly to group pages with workers, private pages and public social pages. The link was sent for almost a month respectively so as not to cause a burden on social networks. For the study to go ahead, participants had to give their consent. The questionnaire itself took approximately 10-12 minutes to complete, respectively. Upon completion, participants were asked to forward the questionnaire to other members due to the large pool of respondents in social networks. This was done as an attempt to reach other

members that the researcher could not reach and to attain a representative sample overall. However, participants were not obliged to do so if they were not comfortable with the idea. After a month, when a reasonable sample was collected, responses were recorded for analysis in relation to the hypotheses. Due to the time of ethical approval and scarcity of employees, no pilot study was undertaken. Instead the questionnaires were sent to the supervisor, who approved of the measures based on their merits.

### **4.3 The research design**

The project implemented a “within-groups” cross-sectional design which only required one group within the retail population. Cross-sectional studies are essentially known to use “survey type” questionnaires that aim to describe and interpret results concerning the relationship between variables (Kothari, 2004). As mentioned above, participants were required to fill out a demographics questionnaire which recorded their age, gender and the sector they belong in within their organisation. Participants were then asked to complete 4 different types of questionnaires which aimed to explore their views towards compensation, flexibility at work and working conditions. All individuals were also required to participate in an overall job satisfaction questionnaire. The project utilised a deductive/ quantitative approach as it was concerned with measuring the number of participants that fell under a variable and how well they scored in the given variables. The use of deductive research in this case ensured that the information and results portrayed by this group would possibly be used to make inferences and conclude upon the overall population in the proposed industry. Initially, all information concerning participant demographics and questionnaires was gathered from a questionnaire tool known as “Google Forms” which then converted all participant data to Microsoft Excel in order to keep a record list of all the collected information. Excel was used to recode all the variables from words into numbers in order to record accurate statistical analyses. From Excel, data was exported to a statistical analysis software known as SPSS (version 24). Landau and Everitt (2003) understand SPSS to be a software tool that allows a researcher to examine and interpret data depending on what output they expect to receive. E.g. manipulating two variables (independent towards dependent) in order to get a significant outcome. Therefore, SPSS was used for inferential statistics to examine the relationship (correlation) between the 4 variables mentioned above. It also initially gave an account of descriptive statistics, which described participants’ demographics and observed what variable best described them.

#### **4.4 Ethical Considerations**

For the study to commence, a research proposal was sent to the ethics committee who had to approve of the research. Thus, it was imperative for all ethics to be brought into consideration prior to and during the study. The researcher observed that potential ethical issues would arise. Primarily, it was foreseen that participants might not be aware of what they had to do in the study. In an attempt to address this, all participants were given accurate information prior to the start of the questionnaire. Followed by this, participants also had to mark that they had read the information sheet and understood the terms and conditions of what the study was about before they could engage to the next page. This information was given electronically through various social media databases. Contact details were also given if there were more concerning issues that the information sheet might have not covered. Participant privacy was also foreseen be another potential issue. Thankfully, participants were informed that the questionnaire software that would be used (Google Forms questionnaire) did not require them to disclose their name but would be given a participant number instead. To ensure that participant information would not be tracked down, the study acknowledged that participants would be invited from different types of retail organisations and made sure that the names of those companies would not be disclosed. This was also done to make sure that organisations would not be singled out and that their reputations would not be jeopardised.

Additionally, there was no intended distress that would put any participant at risk of harm. Therefore, all questionnaires were examined to ensure that no emotional distress would be inflicted to the individual. Furthermore, all questionnaires were deemed to be reliable and fit for use. No participant belonged to a vulnerable group since the study focused on participants in employment. In case participants were not comfortable disclosing their actual age, the demographic section provided them with an age group that was fitting for them. In this way, nobody would know the actual age of a participant and there would be no one to track the actual age or further information of any participant. Furthermore, due to the nature of such sensitive information, any data that was collected from the participants to the researcher was placed under the researcher's responsibility. In essence, the researcher was responsible for making sure that any data entrusted to them wouldn't be passed on or "be leaked" to the wrong hands. Researcher to participant confidentiality was observed and information concerning participant results was to be issued to them individually if requested.

Should the participant not request for any results, the researcher and supervisor found it imperative that all data should be destroyed electronically and shred physically by the end of the university semester (August,2017). Finally, it was important for the researcher to respectively share the link on social mediums in order to avoid what is known as “spam” which is a serious offence to social networks.



## **Chapter 5- Results**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS to give an account of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The purpose of descriptive statistics was to describe participants' data with regards to their demographics and responses from the questionnaires. This meant finding the average number of responses based on the 5 testable sections mentioned in the methodology section, finding the standard deviation of these responses in comparison to the average and finding any possible ranges. Frequencies were run to give a clear indication of how many participants were recorded in the study and how they were divided accordingly within the categorical variables (as outline in Table 1).

Inferential statistics were then used as a step forward in order observe any relationship between the continuous variables. This involved running "Pearson correlations" to examine the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable. Correlations were also run to examine the percentage at which each independent variable was positively or negatively related to the dependent variable. Finally, Multiple regression analyses were also run to indicate how well each of the predictor variables (independent) could explain their relationship with the criterion variable (dependent). With the standard multiple regression analysis, all predictor variables were entered together in order to investigate which was the strongest variable within the whole study. The multiple regression analyses were also able to run correlations within the predictor variables in order to examine how they significantly relate to each other.

### **5.2 Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics were used to give an account of all the continuous variables that were present within this study, as outlined in table 2. The average score for total job satisfaction (13 items) was 48.09 (SD 13.62, median= 49.00, range= 13-77). At the 95% confidence interval, the study determined that the true population average ranged between 44.94-51.25. These findings indicated that the job satisfaction levels amongst the current population were positive. The mean compensation score (6 items) was 21.20 (SD= 7.51, median= 21.00, range= 6-37). The true population mean, according to the 95% confidence interval, lay between the 19.46-22.94 range. This meant that

responses towards compensation satisfaction were relatively low to moderate within the current population. The average score for Flexibility (5 items) was 16.03 (SD= 3.68, median=16.00, range=5-25). Confidence intervals conveyed that the true population lay between the 15.18-16.88 range at the 95% level. These results conveyed that flexibility satisfaction was low with accordance to the present sample. The mean score for working conditions (23 items) was 74.84 (SD= 9.55, median74.00, range 50-204). The 95% confidence intervals indicated that the true mean population lay between the 72.63-77.05 range. These results indicated a positive response towards working conditions within the current population (See Table 2 for full details).

**Table 2:** Descriptive statistics of all continuous variables

	Mean (95% Confidence Intervals)	Std. Error Mean	Median	SD	Range
Job Satisfaction	48.09 (44.94-51.25)	1.58	49.00	13.62	13-77
Compensation	21.20 (19.46-22.94)	0.87	21.00	7.51	6-37
Flexibility	16.03 (15.18-16.88)	0.43	16.00	3.68	5-25
Working Conditions	74.84 (72.63-77.05)	1.11	74.00	9.55	50-104

**Note.** N=74

### 5.3 Inferential Statistics

#### Correlation Analyses

The study used a Pearson correlation analysis to examine if there was a significant relationship between each independent variable and job satisfaction. Therefore 3 segments of correlational analyses were run against the dependent variable.

The relationship between compensation and job satisfaction was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a moderate, positive correlation between the two variables ( $r = .44$ ,  $n = 74$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This indicates that the two variables share approximately 19% of variance in common. Results indicate that higher levels of compensation satisfaction are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction.

The relationship between flexibility and job satisfaction was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were

performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a moderate, positive correlation between the two variables ( $r = .38$ ,  $n = 74$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This indicates that the two variables share approximately 14% of variance in common. Results indicate that higher levels of flexibility satisfaction arrangements are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction.

Finally, the relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables ( $r = .58$ ,  $n = 74$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This indicates that the two variables share approximately 34% of variance in common. Results indicate that higher levels of positive working conditions are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction (See Table 3 for full details).

**Table 3:** Correlations between all continuous variables

<b>Variables</b>	1	2	3	4
1. Job Satisfaction	1			
2. Working Conditions	.58**	1		
3. Compensation	.44**	.39**	1	
4. Flexibility	.38**	.47**	.32**	1

**Note.** Statistical significance: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

#### Multiple Regression Analyses

Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine how well job satisfaction levels could be explained by seven variables including gender (being female or male), age, years of retail service, job position, compensation, flexibility and working conditions.

Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The correlations between

the predictor variables and the criterion variable included in the study were examined. Five of the seven predictor variables were significantly correlated with the criterion variable, and these significant effects ranged from  $r = -.23$  (age) to  $r = .58$  (working conditions). The correlations between the predictor variables were also assessed with  $r$  values ranging from  $-.27$  to  $.63$ . These results indicate that there was no violation of the assumption of multicollinearity and that the data was suitable for examination through multiple linear regression analysis (See table 4 for full details)

**Table 4** Correlations between all categorical and continuous variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.Jobsatisfaction	1							
2.Age	-.21	1						
3.Gender	-.84	.04	1					
4.Years of service in retail	-.23*	.63**		1				
5.Position	.06	.19	.24*	.16	1			
6.Compensation	.44**	-.27*	.01	-.25*	.08	1		
7.Flexibility	.38**	.06	.03	.11	.02	.32**	1	
8.Workingconditions	.58**	-.08	.05	-.12	-.05	.39**	.47**	1

**Note.** Statistical significance: \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

Since no a priori hypotheses had been made to determine the order of entry of the predictor variables, a direct method was used for the analysis. The seven predictor variables explained 44.7% of variance in job satisfaction levels ( $F(7, 66) = 7.62, p < .001$ ). Only one of the seven variables were found to uniquely predict job satisfaction levels to a statistically significant level: working conditions ( $\beta = .45, p < .001$ ) (See Table 5 for full details). Interestingly, job position, compensation and flexibility also positively predicated job satisfaction levels to a certain extent. Unfortunately, the

multiple regression analysis found these predictions to have been statistically insignificant.

**Table 5:** Multiple regression model predicting Job Satisfaction scores

	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>β</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>CI 95% (B)</b>
<b>Model</b>	.45***				
Age		-.09	-2.79	3.67	-10.12/ 4.54
Gender		-.13	-3.64	2.66	-8.94/ 1.67
Years of service in retail		-.11	-3.19	3.63	-10.44/ 4.06
Position		.14	2.32	1.68	-1.03/ 5.67
Compensation		.16	.29	.20	-.10/ .67
Flexibility		.14	.50	.40	-.30/ 1.30
Working Conditions		.45***	.65	.16	.33/ .96

**Note.** N =74; Statistical significance: \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

## **Chapter 6- Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion**

### **6.1 Discussion**

The fundamental aim of the current study was to investigate whether employee compensation, job flexibility and working conditions influenced job satisfaction in the retail industry. The rationale behind this was to introduce a new industry that hasn't really been included in previous studies concerning the ideology of job satisfaction and underlying factors that are related to it. Initially, the researcher observed that there were many studies which supported the fact that workers who were highly satisfied at work were also likely to perform well at work, thus increasing organisational productivity (Bakotic, 2016). This current study aimed to take a "one step back, two steps forward" approach by acknowledging that since performance is influenced by job satisfaction, then it would be noteworthy to investigate factors that predicated high levels of job satisfaction. Undertaking this research not only aimed to fortify previous findings, but also to provide organisations with possible strategies and recommendations behind factors that significantly contribute to job satisfaction.

To introduce the study and to give an understanding of what was being assessed, the researcher gave a brief background behind job satisfaction. It was found that job satisfaction remains a crucial factor in today's business that needs to be implemented by any organisation that wishes to thrive above and beyond its competitors (Wnuk, 2017; Vorina, Simonič & Vlasova, 2017). Moreover, in the last few years, organisations have noticed that there are negative aspects associated with job dissatisfaction. For example, the likes of Shokoufe et al. (2012) have associated poor work quality with job dissatisfaction, highlighting that people aren't doing well at work because they're not happy. In addition, dissatisfaction has been found to be associated with staff turnover and intentions to leave (Wnuk, 2017; Otchere-Ankrah, Tenakwah & Tenakwah, 2015; Arekar et al., 2016; Faurote, 2017). Workers have expressed their frustrations towards why they're not happy at work, with majority feeling that they are treated less fairly and unfavourably either by other employees or by management (Deriba et al., 2017; Ulrich et al., 2014). To add more insult, adding excessive workload has contributed to higher levels of dissatisfaction (Chen et al., 2017; Sharafizad et al. 2011; Manyisa and van Aswegen, 2017).

It has also been previously found that talent has become scarce (Lynton & Beechler, 2012), propelling organisations to find better strategies to retain their staff. Organisations have since found that it is imperative to find ways to motivate their employees, drawing upon techniques from the likes of Maslow, Herzberg and McGregor (as cited in Mathe et al.2012; Bertelsen, 2012; Keenan, 2015). Additionally, current research has found that management styles have significantly contributed to job satisfaction, indicating that employees feel more satisfied at work if they feel that they are valued by their organisations (Yeh & Hsieh, 2017). Conclusively, compensation, flexibility and working conditions have also been found amongst many factors that positively predict job satisfaction (Cha, 2008; Michel & Michel, 2015; Wang et al, 2015).

In order to achieve fundamental aim of the current study, four hypotheses were proposed. First, it was hypothesised that subordinates who were satisfied with their compensation would also be highly satisfied at work (H1). Secondly, it was hypothesised that individuals who were satisfied with their work's flexible arrangements would also experience high levels of satisfaction at work (H2). The third hypothesis suggested that high levels of working conditions would predict high levels of job satisfaction (H3). The fourth hypothesis (H4) was split into two parts. The first part took demographics into account and suggested that categorical variables (age, gender, years of service in retail and position) would predict job satisfaction. The second part of the hypothesis included the continuous variables (compensation, flexibility and working conditions). The ideology behind grouping the categorical and continuous variables together was to gain an overall understanding concerning which variable was the most significant and strongest predictor of the criterion variable (job satisfaction). Finally, the study took an interest to investigate whether there was a positive relationship between any of the three continuous variables. This was to infer that it might be important to take every variable into account regardless of which variable was the strongest predictor.

#### Compensation (H1)

When correlational analyses were run, it was found that compensation was moderately, significantly and positively related to job satisfaction. This meant that higher levels of compensation satisfaction were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. In other words, the more satisfied individuals were with their

compensation, then the more likely they were to be satisfied with their job. These findings were consistent with current studies (Faurote, 2017; Ogbonnaya, Daniels & Nielsen, 2017; Chen et al., 2017), which have highlighted that compensation is important in the workplace, especially if that compensation is earned based on the level of effort that subordinates put in at work. Further notion behind this also suggested that employees would feel that their level of work effort would be acknowledged enough to one day put them in position of promotion or a pay rise (Ogbonnaya et al, 2017). Possible reasons for the outcomes behind this current relationship might also be linked to previous studies by the likes of Cha (2008) and Vales (2014) who have found that pay significantly predicted levels of satisfaction at work on the basis of job security. Moreover, it could be possible that individuals found their pay to be fairly satisfactory and didn't perceive it to go beyond their job description (Sauer & Valet, 2013). In other words, given that this was a sample of retail staff, it might be fair for them to assume they would be paid according to their level of expertise and not receive a lower pay check that might insult them or one that is too high. Therefore, this supported that the alternative hypothesis is true. Compared to the other two continuous variables, compensation was the second strongest predictor of job satisfaction.

In contrast, when multiple regression analyses were run, results indicated that compensation did not significantly predict job satisfaction. Although this was surprising, it was consistent with findings by Young et al. (2014) who found that high compensation rates were associated with lower levels of satisfaction, suggesting that employees looked for opportunities to be more knowledgeable in their fields and to be more secure with their jobs. Similarly, employees were less motivated by compensation and more given to the level of support that they felt their management should offer them as team members of the organisation (Olafsen et al. 2015). It is important to note that Olafsen et al. expressed their limitations with regards to sample size and inconsistent measurement tools, suggesting that such a study would have to be remodelled and investigated again to give a better understanding of the relationship. A final possible reason in aid of the current study's findings can be explained by findings poised by Malik et al. (2012) who found a weak, significant relationship between compensation and job satisfaction, further highlighting that pay is important but perhaps it would be noteworthy to look at other stronger predictors that work accordingly with pay in order to predict job satisfaction.



Given the two perspectives offered by both analyses, it can be concluded that the findings based on this hypothesis are somewhat positive. Although the multiple regression analysis rejected the hypothesis, it is still important to note that a significant relationship still lies between compensation and job satisfaction.

### Flexibility (H2)

A moderate, positive relationship between flexibility and job satisfaction was found according to the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The significant results indicated that high levels of flexibility were associated with higher levels of job satisfaction. Similar to H1, this means that individuals who were satisfied with their organisations' flexible work arrangements were also likely to be satisfied at work. Previous studies have confirmed the findings of the current study. For example, employees are said to enjoy an organisation that promotes flexible arrangements because it gives them a work-life balance (Michel & Michel, 2015; McNall et al, 2010). This allows employees to feel valued at work because they feel that their organisation cares enough to allow them to take care of both work affairs and household responsibilities in an orderly manner. Possible benefits associated with the current findings are innumerable. Previous research has applauded the culture of flexibility and has encouraged organisations to apply it since it has been positively associated with increases in satisfaction, decreases in stress and effective levels of workload maintenance (Galinsky, 2015; Lu et al., 2008). Galinsky further added that the culture of flexibility has proven to be cost effective compared to when flexible arrangements were not incorporated. In addition, it has been found that employees who are offered flexible hours not only experience high satisfaction levels, but are also likely to stay with their organisation for a long-term basis and less likely to be absent from work (McNall et al. 2010). It is noteworthy to mention that the benefits mentioned above have been an end-product associated with the positive relationship between flexibility and job satisfaction. In saying that, results of the current study assume that individuals positively responded in such a manner because they've already experienced these benefits, or simply because these benefits are still being experienced and enjoyed.

Surprisingly, the multiple regression analysis conveyed that there was no statistically significant result between job satisfaction and flexibility. In fact, of the three continuous variables, the correlational analysis indicated that flexibility was the least

predictor of job satisfaction. A possible explanation for this might be similar to the Turkish study by Zeytinoglu et al. (2012) who found that there was no positive relationship between both factors. In fact, much similar to Young et al. (2014), the Turkish study found that individuals cared more about actually having a job and being more secure with their job, making these factors their primary focus. This indicates that perhaps members belonging to the given retail sectors don't care much about flexibility as much as they care about having a job. Another possible explanation for the current findings might be related to the TD survey (2015) that implied that majority of the working population have encouraged organisations to provide accurate flexible working arrangements in response to the previous dissatisfaction due to excessive workloads and burnouts. Following this, it might be possible that the current study found negative results because improper or no flexible arrangements have been incorporated.

Much like the findings provided by H1, it is still imperative to note that a positive relationship was found between flexibility and job satisfaction was found regardless of the multiple regression analysis. It can, therefore, be said that the alternative hypothesis stating that "employees who are satisfied with flexibility provided at work will most likely be satisfied with their job", is true. In saying that, it might be worth proposing a future qualitative study in order to observe the underlying issues behind this relationship.

### *Working Conditions (H3)*

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient revealed a high, significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction. More specifically, it was found that high levels of working conditions were associated with high levels of job satisfaction. This infers that employees are generally satisfied at work, provided that working conditions are satisfactory. These conditions include a series of factors (Boreham et al., 2016). First, staff members have to feel that their relationship with their mentors or managers is built on respect in such a way that their foundational relationship allows both members to see each other as a team. Second, flexible arrangements have to be incorporated in order to give individuals a work-life balance. Thirdly, Individuals have to feel that they are secure within their organisation without the ideology that they could be fired at any time. An individual would also have to work in such a way that their daily workload is manageable and that there is no

excessive pressure they can't handle. Finally, an employee would have to make sure that their organisation's daily routines doesn't affect their health or induce any stress beyond measure. The current study suggests that an organisation that is able to accommodate for these factors is likely to keep their employees satisfied. These current findings are consistent with Vales (2014) and Garcia-serrano (2011) who not only found that working conditions were valued more than pay, but also that they were effective enough for employees to have the intention to stay with their company. Interestingly, this finding was justified because the recent correlational test showed working conditions to have had a more positive relationship than flexibility and compensation with regard to its association with job satisfaction. In addition, Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) have found commitment, productivity and employer-employee relationship to be some of the benefits associated with having a good working environment. Furthermore, the literature review by Manyisa and van Aswegen (2017) found some factors that have negatively affected working conditions in the past which can be used to explain findings of the current study. It was found that employees were experiencing severe workloads, risks of contracting illnesses, long working hours and lack of staff support, which caused staff members to be heavily dissatisfied, fatigued and potentially contracting physical, psychological and emotional illnesses which then resulted to dissatisfaction. It is because of these findings and the depth of the 'working conditions questionnaire' that the current study can assume that employees appear to be satisfied at work because they're not experiencing any factors that have been found to have a negative effect on working conditions in the past. Finally, findings in the current study can also be explained by Ulrich et al. (2014) and Caruso (2015) who have highlighted that organisations should centre their values on factors such as respect between colleagues, to ensure a highly collective working environment, and work flexibility, to ensure that rest is catered for against severe workloads and continuous burnouts.

Unlike H1 and H2, the third hypothesis was still a significant predictor of job satisfaction when a multiple regression analysis was run. Interestingly, the results not only showed that working conditions were the highest predictor of job satisfaction, but also that they were only significant predictors in comparison to all of the categorical and continuous variables. Therefore, the third hypothesis and the second part of the fourth hypothesis were supported by the current study. This is justified in a way given that compensation and flexibility have been found to be inconsistent predictors of job

satisfaction in comparison to factors such as job security (Zeytinoglu et al. 2012; Young et al., 2014), whereas findings behind working conditions have been consistent and have strongly leaned on the importance of having such a factor for any organisation that wants to keep their subordinates happy. Moreover, this justification is supported by the fact that job security is one of the factors, alongside flexibility, that is covered by working conditions (Boreham et al., 2016).

#### Demographics (H4)

With regards to the first part of H4, when demographics were considered, it was found that age, gender and position were not significantly related to job satisfaction. “Years of service in retail” were somewhat related to job satisfaction. However, that correction was negative, suggesting that either higher years of service would be associated with lower levels of job satisfaction, or that higher levels of satisfaction would be associated with lower years of service. Therefore, the first part of H4 proved that the role of demographics did not have a significant role in explaining job satisfaction. These findings were inconsistent with McNall et al. (2010) who found that an individual’s gender and age is positively related with levels of satisfaction at work. A possible explanation for this is that perhaps previous studies have not focused on demographics in depth in relation to how they correlate with job satisfaction. With demographics containing categorical variables, perhaps a qualitative study would serve as a better analysis tool to further assess how job satisfaction affects one’s gender or age in any way. With that being said, gender and age have been previously found to have had no significant difference in their view towards flexibility (Riđić, Avdibegović & Bušatlić, 2016). In a way, this finding is positive because it assumes that current positive findings concerning flexibility, compensation and working conditions are applicable to the whole population regardless of age, gender, length of service and even position in the workplace.

#### Continuous Variables

The study also recorded that it would be interesting to observe whether flexibility, compensation and working conditions were related in any way. The correlation analysis recorded that all variables were moderately and positively related to each other. This meant that high levels of any of these variables would be associated with high levels of other variables. This was important to know because the study assumed that all of these variables were important predictors of job satisfaction, even though

one was deemed the strongest predictor of the three. In this way, it is no surprise that “working conditions” is the strongest predictor because the variable did involve flexibility as part of the important factors of the working environment. Knowing this also highlighted the importance of grouping these variables together in order to positively explain the dependent variable.

## **6.2 Implications & Recommendations**

The recent study provided the field of Human Resource Management and the retail industry with empirical evidence that was replicated from previous findings within other business sectors. Implications can then be provided in order to aid the business field and other sectors that haven’t been previously assessed. Initially, it is important note that job satisfaction plays a significant role that carries weight in every organisation. Heavy evidence supports this and lists out severe consequences associated with dissatisfaction at work (Heydari, Meshkinyazd & Soudmand, 2017, Lynton & Beechler, 2012, Deriba et al., 2017, Otchere-Ankrah, Tenakwah & Tenakwah, 2015, Arekar et al., 2016; Faurote, 2017). Based on these findings, it is strongly recommended that growing and thriving organisations should be aware of these consequences to ensure that they do not negatively affect their employees. Secondly, since this is one of the few studies that has gone in depth in observing the relationship between the predictors of job satisfaction, it gives a foundational understanding towards the area of focus within the retail industry. Since majority of the results were positive, this gives future researchers an opportunity to replicate these current findings around this sector perhaps with a bigger sample and newer measurements similar to the ones used in this study. Therefore, this implies that the current findings are noteworthy and relevant to the retail population with room for further improvement in the retail sector.

With regards to the relationship between compensation and job satisfaction, Faurote (2017) found that compensation satisfaction was highly linked to job satisfaction. Unfortunately, it was found that most individuals were not satisfied with their income. Following up with the current study’s consistent results, it is recommended that organisations should make interventions that might give them an insight concerning how their subordinates feel with their current compensation. This poses future implications for researchers to examine a closer relationship between the two factors to investigate what it is that ensures the existence of this relationship. In addition,

research supports that employees love to be compensated for the work that they feel they contributed significantly in (Sauer & Valet, 2013). Since compensation is more than just monetary benefits, it is recommended based on those findings that organisations should consider compensating their employees with benefits such as discounts or holidays for completing several projects within an allocated target time.

Findings regarding flexibility imply that allocating flexible arrangements at work are not enough to keep employees satisfied. Although there is a positive link, the results imply that flexibility should be accompanied by other relevant factors in order to strengthen that prediction. Based on these findings, it is recommended that flexibility should not be excluded in the workplace. This means that organisations should still try to include their employees in their plans to give them a better work-life balance for the sake enhancing productivity in the workplace and eliminating unwanted stress in employees' personal lives. Therefore, future studies should still include flexibility as an important factor in the workplace. Additionally, two studies viewed "job security" as an important predictor of job satisfaction above compensation and flexibility (Zeytinoglu et al. 2012; Young et al., 2014). Since this study only covered job security as a small part under "working conditions", the findings imply that a further assessment should be investigated in order to give a broad understanding of its importance in an organisation.

Finally, while being knowledgeable in the area of job satisfaction is crucial, it is equally imperative for an organisation to remain consistent. Longitudinal research suggests that some working conditions tend to decline overtime (Ulrich et al., 2014). Following up on this, it is recommended for organisations to consider taking monthly or yearly reviews concerning working conditions in order to find out if their employees have any concerns throughout the year and to maintain employee satisfaction levels.

### Limitations

Despite the success of this research and positive findings, there were several limitations that possibly had an effect on this study. One of the weaknesses of the study was the small sample size. Initially, the researcher proposed to have a sample of 150 participants. However, time did not allow for such a sample and respondents were not as easy to find. In addition, the sample was somewhat imbalanced, with categorical groups being predominant over other groups (i.e. more females than males). One could argue that this is not a relevant sample size to represent the whole retail population.

However, this is one of the first studies to make such a cross-sectional analysis in the retail industry. Considering the positive results, the study has somewhat set a foundation for future researchers to build upon these results and to incorporate much larger representative samples. Furthermore, it is important to note that the sample was selected randomly and participants were anonymous, ensuring for a strong possibility of honest answers. Another limitation is with regards to the reliability of the measures. Granted that all questionnaires were still reliable when the reliability tests were run again, it was worrying to see that the “satisfaction with flexibility facet measure” (Rothausen, 1962) and the “workplace organization indices” questionnaire (Boreham et al, 2016) had now scored lower on the Cronbach’s alpha scale compared to their scores in previous research studies. One could wonder about the consistency of the measure and how this score might change in the future. In saying that, it is helpful to know that the measures are still reliable and should be statistically measured in the future before use. Better yet, it would be helpful to find or formulate more up-to-date measures for future research.

It was positively encouraging that the study was quantitatively analysed because it gave some useful figures for future research. However, a qualitative analysis would have measured the quality of the relationship between variables and would have given respondents more of an open field to speak about their thoughts towards job satisfaction as opposed to answering a few questions that might have limited them from truthfully speaking their mind. In saying that, it is important to note that the questionnaires were relatively extensive and tried to cover most of what the study was looking to investigate. Finally, like majority of the previous studies, the current research used a cross-sectional design, which made it harder for the researcher to infer causality concerning the research findings. It would be recommended for future researchers to try and use a longitudinal design and to also propose pilot studies since this research did not.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the current study has formulated a foundational understanding towards the investigation of core predictors of job satisfaction in the retail industry. The findings associated with this study contribute effectively to previous results that were found in other business sectors. It gave a better understanding towards the role of compensation and flexibility in the workplace. In addition, it gave an understanding

of what employees are currently interested in at the moment, ranking working conditions as the strongest predictor of job satisfaction. Surprisingly, the study also observed new factors that the current study had not considered as predictors of job satisfaction. Interestingly, it was encouraging to find that there was no significant difference found between all categorical variables. This meant that the current findings were applicable to the current retail population regardless of age, gender, years of service in retail or even one's job position. Given the clinical implications behind these findings, it is highly recommended that employers should utilise these predictors in their organisations. Since it is evident that not all organisations are the same, employers should investigate the factors that work best for them and their employees in order to encourage a harmonious working environment. Developing a culture behind compensation, flexibility and working conditions might require some training. Employers could also potentially look into getting well achieved organisations to train both the employers and their staff in order to maintain job satisfaction levels for a long-term basis.



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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

#### *Information Sheet*

As part of my postgraduate degree at the National College of Ireland, I am carrying a research study that aims to investigate whether employee compensation, job flexibility and working conditions influence job satisfaction in the retail industry. You are invited to take part in this study as it aims to replicate results which will aid in knowledge of maintaining job satisfaction levels in a new organisational industry. The study will be supervised by Dr Philip Hyland, who is a current member of staff in the National College of Ireland.

The study will implement a cross sectional design within one group. You will be asked to fill out a number of questionnaires which will assess how you feel towards pay and benefits, workplace flexibility and working conditions in your organisations. Initially you will be asked to fill out a few demographic questions regarding your age and gender and if you wish, the organisation you work for. Overall, the questionnaire should take about 10-15 minutes to complete.

Please be aware that all responses are kept anonymous and also that you have the right to withdraw from answering the rest of the questionnaire at any time.

Should you have any pressing queries at all please don't hesitate to contact me or my supervisor at [philip.hyland@ncirl.ie](mailto:philip.hyland@ncirl.ie). Should you wish to access your results, please be aware that the results will be provided from August 2017 if you would contact me on the email address below.

Thank you for your time and co-operation

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### **Appendix 2**

#### *Demographic questionnaire*

*Please answer the following questions*

1. Age: 17-24, 24-34,35-44,45-54, other\_\_\_
2. Gender Male/Female
3. Years of service in retail: 1-3, 4-7, 8-11, other\_\_\_
4. Position: Store Manager, Sales Associate, Team Leader, Cashier, other\_\_\_

### **Appendix 3**

#### *Compensation satisfaction Measure (Adapted from Locke (1976))*

Test Format: The measure uses a seven-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree).

CS1: The compensation I have now is satisfying.

CS2: My compensation is directly related to my task performance.

CS3: When I choose my job, the compensation is the first thing I think about.

CS4: I am satisfied with the reward system in this company.

CS5: If I have a better job performance, I will get rewards.

CS6: When I get rewards for my job, my company publicizes it.

#### **Appendix 4**

##### *Satisfaction with Flexibility Facet Measure*

Test Format: Items are rated on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree or strongly dissatisfied (1) to strongly agree or strongly satisfied (5).

- (1) The extent to which management accommodates family responsibility needs without any negative consequences
- (2) The opportunity to perform your job well and yet able to perform home-related duties adequately
- (3) The ease of getting time off for family as needed
- (4) The opportunity to do part-time or flex-time work without being penalized
- (5) The amount of flexibility in work scheduling

#### **Appendix 5**

##### *Workplace Organisation Indices*

Test Format: The Workplace Organization Indices has 23 items with items measured on five point scales of 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree; 1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree; and 1 = never to 5 = all of the time

##### ***Participative management***

1. I am generally satisfied with my relationship with my immediate manager or supervisor.
2. Management is generally interested in my suggestions for how we can work better.
3. Management generally keeps me informed about things that will affect me and my job.
4. I cannot influence my immediate supervisor's decisions/actions that affect me.
5. I do not feel that I can trust the management in this organization.

***Flexible work hours***

6. I have no flexibility about my hours of work.
7. I am able to take a day off on full pay to attend to personal matters.
8. I am able to take a day off at my own expense to attend to personal matters.
9. If I need to start work late or leave early occasionally, it is generally OK to do so.

***Employment insecurity***

10. The security of my job depends on regularly working extra hours.
11. My employer regularly puts off people if business declines.
12. Some family members in my household are likely to lose their jobs in the next 1 month (i.e. get retrenched/fired/not have a contract renewed).

***Workload pressure***

13. I feel that I cannot possibly finish my daily workload in a normal work day.
14. I believe the amount of work I have to do interferes with how well it gets done.
15. I feel I have too heavy a workload.

***Work stress***

16. Problems associated with my job tend to directly affect my health.
17. The demands of my job leave me feeling stressed.
18. Problems associated with my job have kept me awake at night.

***Work-to-life interference***

19. After work, I come home too tired to do things I had planned to do.
20. My job keeps me from spending the amount of time I would like to spend with my family.
21. The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfil family responsibilities.
22. I have so much work to do in my job that it takes time away from my personal interests.
23. My family/friends dislike how I am preoccupied with my work while I am with them.

**Appendix 6**

*Aggregate Job Satisfaction Scale (González-Romá, V., & Hernández, A. 2016)*



Test Format: This 13-item measure utilizes a Likert scale with six response options (1 = very dissatisfied, 2 = moderately dissatisfied, 3 = slightly dissatisfied, 4 = slightly satisfied, 5 = moderately satisfied, 6 = very satisfied).

Please indicate how dissatisfied/satisfied you are with the following work features by choosing one of the following response options:

(1) Very dissatisfied

(2) Moderately dissatisfied

(3) Slightly dissatisfied

(4) Slightly satisfied

(5) Moderately satisfied

(6) Very satisfied

(1) The work you do

(2) The salary you get

(3) The promotion opportunities you have

(4) The training opportunities provided by your company

(5) The physical working conditions you have (light, temperature, noise, etc.)

(6) The direct supervision you receive

(7) The human resources management in your company

(8) The company management

(9) The personal relationships with your co-workers

(10) The company, considered overall

(11) The functioning of your work team

(12) The coordination among members of your work team

(13) The opportunities to participate in the decisions that affect your work team