THE ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER AMONG HEALTHCARE ASSISTANTS (HCA's) IN DUBLIN – IRELAND

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF AN

MAHRM

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Abstract

This study aimed to assess the turnover of healthcare assistants working in the private nursing homes. It is not breaking news that the sector has continually been depressed with the shortages of staff and loosing as many employees as possible. This study however will look deeper into the critical cause of staff shortages which in this case is the high turnover. The high turnover in the sector is the underlying problem which needs cured. Furthermore, the study will investigate possible efforts of retention strategies in order to curb the increased turnover rates within the private nursing homes.

To explore turnover and retention of nursing assistants, the research study was conducted within the quantitative method, using a cross-sectional survey design. the objectives of this study were to establish if there are any notable differences in turnover rate levels between age groups, gender and nationality, suggest most effective measures for implementation by management to improve the turnover amongst HCA's, establish the most important factors that carers consider when deciding to stay or leave an employment and explore possible factors that contribute to retention of carers.

The findings of the study were that; a lot of nursing assistants were very unhappy with enormous workload they are faced with, they were again very unhappy with their pay which they claimed it didn't match the work and responsibility upon them. They further raised that they didn't not have a good work-life balance within their job and were very unsatisfied with their job which caused them a lot of stress, pressure and many other negative effects in their lives.

Moreover, further discoveries found that, those employees only wanted those named factors above to be implemented and factored in for the management to try and retain them. This was inclusive of revised pay, decreased workloads, work-life balance and job satisfaction.

Finally, the study discovered that failure to implement the factors of turnover and retention may lead to unproductivity, more turnover rates, disengaged workforce, low morale and other prolonged effects such as mental breakdown, physical disabilities and emotional stress.

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ABBREVIATIONS (or Terms)

CNA's…………………………………………………. Certified nursing assistants

HCA's……………………………………………… Health care assistants

HSE……………………………………………. Health Service Executive

GWB…………………………………………… General well – being

CIPD……………………………… Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

NCI…………………………………………. National College of Ireland

FIG………………………………………… Figure

HRM…………………………………………. Human Resource Management

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF STUDY

Over the years there has been a lot of enormous research done on the health care sector in relation to the endless problems this sector faces. As much as a lot of researchers have written on the on-going shortages of staff in this sector the main cadre that they focused on are the doctors and nurses but not so much with the healthcare nursing assistants. The underlying reality is that this sector is challenged with high rates of staff shortages irrespective of availability of potential employees. The 2017 healthcare and retention report revealed that, "the growth of healthcare jobs is outpacing other industries and is expected to account for as much as 39% of all new jobs by 2024". This is mainly the driving force behind finding out the strongest predictors of voluntary turnover and establishing the push factor turnover of HCA's. Furthermore, this literature review will analyse the possible efforts the sector is doing for trying to attract and retain this workforce.

1.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

The following objectives of this study are to:

a) establish if there are any notable differences in turnover rate levels between age groups, gender and nationality,
b) suggest most effective measures for implementation by management to improve the turnover amongst HCA's,
c) establish the most important factors that carers consider when deciding to stay or leave an employment,
d) to explore possible factors that contribute to retention of carers.
e) identify and determine the reasons behind the high turnover intention.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The below research questions have been formulated to attain the above research objectives:

a) Are there any significant differences in the turnover rate levels between gender, age groups, and nationality?
b) What measures can be suggested and implemented to improve the turnover amongst HCA's?
c) Is workplace stress an issue amongst the employees of the nursing homes?
d) What are the most leading factors of deciding to leave or stay?
e) Does turnover affect morale and increase pressure on remaining staff?

1.4 RESEARCH AIM

a) The research aims on finding and analysing the factors influencing the healthcare assistant's decision on whether to stay or leave their employer, and further make

recommendations to the management on how to retain their staff and reduce the turnover rates.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Nursing care assistant are an important part of the Irish healthcare system and elsewhere, by being the backbone of the nurses. They exist across all the healthcare, be it in the private or public hospitals, nursing homes, residential or home care providers. They are seen to provide the basic care for patients including feeding, dressing, bathing, and toileting. Their duties also include observing and reporting changes in patients' physical and psychosocial status under the instruction of doctors and nurses. Bosley and Dale, (2008) believes care assistants play an important role in relieving nurses off routine healthcare tasks as some of the nurses have taken on tasks that were previously the preserve of doctors. Hence the need for more support staff being needed in tasks such as to turn patients, transfer and mobility as well as doing some less technical administration records like the use of epic systems which some of the tasks were previously a responsibility of general nurses (Aluttis, Bishaw and Frank, 2014).

With all the gaps left in between the job responsibilities, it has resulted in a plague of critical shortages across the sector and seemingly causing a lot of pressure and distress to those having to carry the burden each day other work hence result them in quitting their jobs in big numbers for greener pastures (North, N , Rasmussen, E , Hughes, F, Finlayson, M , Ashton, T , Campbell, T & Tomkins, S, 2005). However, the healthcare sector now finds itself in a deadlock of understaffed circumstances and perhaps the situation getting worse every minute of the day. Which is why; this study found it fit to go further to dig in on what really transpires for the big giant (HSE) to rapidly fail to cure the ongoing horror of staff shortages (North, et a l, 2005).

With regards to that, the goal of the study will be to assess the high turnover rates and their cause factors as well as to examine the current retention strategies with the aim of providing new improved ones.

PROFILE OF THE ORGANISATION

This research was conducted in three different and privately owed nursing homes in North Dublin city, Co. for the purpose of ethical and confidentially purposes, the three nursing homes will remain anonymous. But they are however situated around the areas of Swords, Malahide and Finglas areas. They however employ about 201 – 500 employees across their chain of homes which can amount to a maximum number of 5 to 10 homes across Ireland.

They however, have one thing in common, that is they all provide private residential, convalescent and rehabilitation care. And, are all fully registered and approved with the HSE and HIQA standards as well as being recognized in their communities for providing highest quality care standards.

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STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY (SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS)

This research study/thesis encompasses of six chapters. Chapter 1 covers the research area which the background is and contextual of the study, the aims, objectives and sub research questions. It further gives the reader of what the research is about and why it was empirical to have conducted the research as well as the organisational profile of where the study was conducted. Chapter 2, however focused on the literature review of the study. The focus mainly covered the factors which influenced turnover, the definition of the research key terms, and different views of the topic as well as the turnover implications and summarised the chapter. Methodology was the third chapter covered and its focus was to describe the different approaches to research methods, and which the research adopted. It further explained different data methods, their analysis, and samples of the study and then choosing the best possible method for the research at hand. Whereas chapter 4 focused on the findings of the research study while providing evidence by using both the primary source finding and secondary data sources. Chapter 5 on the other hand focused on discussing the finding of the research focusing on the possible turnover and retention factors. Lastly, chapter 6's focus was on conclusion and recommendations of the research project. The recommendations focused on the organisation's retention strategies derived from the research findings.

The hope for the recommendations were that if implemented they would help the management and entire organisations and their industry to curb the turnover rate as well as attracting more people to join the healthcare while still retaining their current employees.

Nevertheless, it is hoped that this research project will eventually provide insights to the management and recruiters of the most vital factors which drive nursing assistants away from the private nursing homes and those which entice them to stay.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will unveil the general research on the factors of turnover and retention of nursing assistants working in the private nursing homes. However, this topic has massively been researched on but particularly focusing on the nurses rather than the care assistants. With that realisation, the researcher found the need to focus the study topic on the nursing assistants as this new era is characterised and marked by a climate of declining retention rates for health care assistants' workers (Jackson, Clare and Mannix, 2002). Available evidence points to that, the rates of staff turnover among certified nursing assistant (CNA's)/healthcare assistants HCA's are in the regions of at least, about 10% in England and ranging from between 12% to 21% across 10 European countries and

about 20% in Canada. Aluttis, Bishaw and Frank, (2014) sighted there is high demand for healthcare assistants' workers and explained the global undersupply of these workers threatens the quality and sustainability of health systems across nations. To further back this up, the trade union SIPTU health division organiser Mr Paul Bell in Ireland also added that; with the new national children's hospital to be opened, there would be an immediate shortfall of about 400 nurses and healthcare assistants according to workforce framework report published in the Irish times (Wall, 2019).

This study intends to assess the possible factors of turnover and its impact as the realisation is for decades the sectors experienced shortages due to high turnover rates which are caused by different circumstances. As in this case; some scholars have argued and pointed out that employees who feel unappreciated and undervalued are exposed to an unsatisfactory quality of work-life hence are more likely to opt to leave the job. Realisation made with regards to health care assistants is that these professionals interact with patients who need sensitive care and attention. Certified nursing assistants working conditions in hospices are not favourable. For instance, they are characterised by long work hours yet with little manpower. Moreover, their work is emotionally, psychologically and physically draining and engaging. This is accompanied by renumeration are not at par with the demands of the job. In addition, poor retention strategies have also been linked to high turnover rates.

This literature review will thereby aim to understand the deeper reasons that drive staff from their work and end up making decisions to voluntarily leave the job, or short stay while the sector is in desperate need for their valuable work.

DEFINITION OF NURSING HOME CARE

According to Pratt (2010) nursing home care is defined as a licensed institution which exist solely for the provision of care and providing all day long personal service to aging and incapacitated adults. The same idea is expressed by Sanford, Orrell, Tolson, Abbatecola, Arai, Bauer, Cruz-Jentoft, Dong, Goel and Hajjar (2015) who expounds that a nursing home is a twenty-four hour on-site dwelling facility which provides health and medicinal assistance to the elderly or those members of the society who are terminally ill. The elderly in this care refers to senior citizens with minimum age of 65 and older.

According to Hoben, Linklater, Carleton, Graham, Estabrooks (2015) majority of persons who are committed to nursing home care services are dependents who rely on other people for assistance. As well, Pélissier, Charbotel, Fassier Fontana (2018) further elaborates that residential care establishments of recent years mostly care for the elderly, individuals who suffer from multiple comorbidities. The kind of assistance usually offered includes mobility, eating, bathing and other daily needs. Freedman and Spillman (2014) furthermore elaborates that nursing home care patients frequently suffer from a range of chronic diseases, disabilities or terminal diseases.

Accordingly, nursing home establishments can be grouped into several categories such as: residential care, residential old aged care, assisted living facilities, nursing homes, long-term care homes. These facilities offer different levels of care and may be privately owned ventures, belong to community care centres, or hospitals. According to Castle, Engberg, Anderson and Men (2007) in most cases nursing home care facilities are usually the ones which experience higher premature departure of nursing assistant.

2.2.1 Types of nursing homes

Nursing care job is normally carried out in different set-up. According to Fochsen, Josephson, Hagberg, Toomingas and Lagerström (2006) there are different types of nursing homes which are outlined as: (i) for profit nursing homes, (ii) not-for profit nursing homes. Subsequently researches elaborate the complex web by explaining that this factor has a bearing on turnover in that the former type of nursing homes in that there are usually very high differences in the management of (a) private organisations, (b) public old age homes.

2.2.2 The role of certified nursing care assistant's CNA's/healthcare assistants HCA's

Literature reveals that the elderly who are committed to nursing care are cared or looked after by two types of nurses being the registered nurse and a certified nursing assistant. As regards to the job description and role of nursing care assistant, Pélissier, Charbotel, Fassier, Fort and Fontana (2018) explain the job description of the two types of nurses and thus state that a registered nurse mainly offers technical care while on the other hand the assistant nurse mainly carries the duty of caring providing the greater part of direct care for residents. That direct care spans from carrying out such tasks as comfort and preventative care, as well as the physical assistance. According to Singh (2010) certified nursing assistants (CNA's) give nursing home residents care with physical assistance of basic day to day activities through hands-on-interaction. In addition, Squires, Hoben, Linklater, Carleton, Graham, Estabrooks (2015) explains that this role encompasses duties that span from tasks of housekeeping, assisting with toileting and feeding.

Additionally, scholars also impress upon the fact that nursing care assistants are the most important personnel in ensuring that the elderly live a quality life as they are the ones who are by their side majority of times. All the afore-mentioned responsibilities are mainly co-ordinated by the registered nurse.

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Scholars have revealed that in Europe, there is a worrying trend where CNA's leave their jobs at a high and alarming rate. The following discussion would start off by explaining concept job turnover. Furthermore, the discussion will go on to discuss factors that push employees of this industry to leave work. The last part of the discussion will be centred on identifying the implications of turnover of nursing assistants together with the appropriate solutions relevant to the problem at hand.

2.3 THE CONCEPT OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Numerous scholars have studied the concept of employee turnover. Examination of literature review on this concept by human resources practitioners and scholars has revealed that general definition of employee turnover is based on termination of work relationship between employee and employer. Literature review shows that employee turnover cannot be bundled into one blanket as there are two main categories of employee turnover namely voluntary employee turnover and involuntary employee turnover (Lee, Hom, Eberly, Junchao, Li and Mitchell,2017).

2.3.1 Types of employee turnover

According to Lee et al., (2017) two types of employee turnover are in existence. With regards to this definition, employee turnover is termination of work relationship or leaving your profession altogether whence bringing us to the realization that this termination can be voluntary or involuntary.

Research has turned out that voluntary employee turnover generally refers to the state of an employee leaving an organization by their own volition (Rubenstein, Eberly, Lee, & Mitchell,2018) while involuntary employee turnover is when an employee's job contract is terminated or instituted by the employer (Lee et al., 2017). According to Rubenstein, Kammeyer-Mueller, Wang, and Thundiyil, (2019) explains that this form of turnover is also referred to as firing or discharge. It's involuntary because it is not the employee's decision to leave the company. The termination can be caused by for reasons such as undesirable job performance, absenteeism or non-obedience of workplace policies (Rubenstein et al.,2018).

2.4 FACTORS WHICH INFLUENECE TURNOVER AMONG CNA's/HCA's

According to Rubenstein et al., (2019) the final act of an employee terminating the work relationship or contract between them and their employee is not a sudden decision which is taken hasty. Job turnover is a complex occurrence which is precedented by multiple causative factors, which is thought over a long period of time (Kramer & Son, 2016). As mentioned earlier by Aluttis (2014), the level of job turnover among CNA's in Europe is quite high. These mass turnover of nursing assistants is significantly related to factors such as lack of professional growth and involvement in work-related decisions and low overall employee satisfaction.

The perspective identified by shows that usually there are different motivating factors that might potentially compel and lead an employee to take the route of voluntary turnover.

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Specifically, Brannon, Zinn, Mor and Davis (2002) have identified three broad categories of factors linked to why CNA's leave the profession namely: environmental factors, job and organizational factors and personal factors in a form of graphical summary, these factors can be represented as this:

Table 1: Factors of Turnover
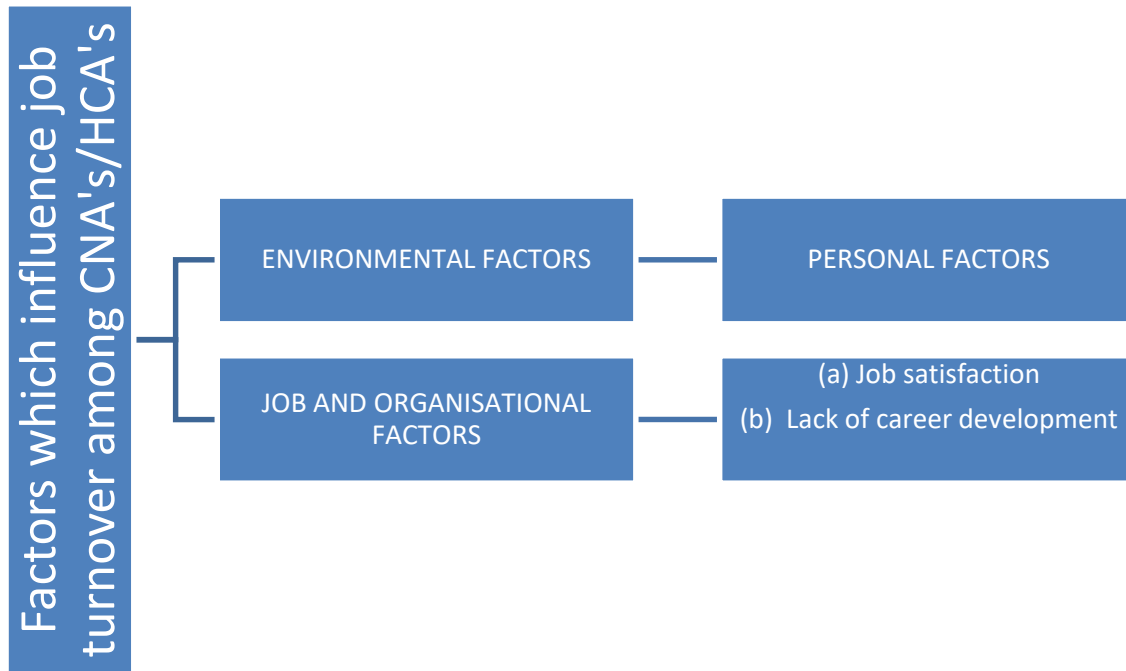
2.5 Environmental factors associated with turnover of certified nursing care assistants:

2.5.1 Job career dissatisfaction

Ferreira and Martinez, (2012) have shared a point of view that as employees to go to work their minds are filled with expectations and desires. Therefore, Edwards, Van Laar, Easton, and Kinman (2009) explained that, as employees go to work, they are concerned with this feeling whence bringing us to the following understanding of defining construct job and career satisfaction as being concerned with the degree to which a job possesses the ability to fulfil and bring gratification to the expectations that person comes with. Furthermore, Ferreira and Martinez, (2012) identified that the concept job and career satisfaction is concerned with level at which a job can fulfil an employee 's expectation, wishes and desires. As well, job and career satisfaction are a broad factor analyzed by looking at various characteristics of the job and the extent to which employees have positive feelings about different components of the job or career (Monyatsi & Nenty ,2012).

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With regards to the nursing assistant profession Heidari, Seifi, Gharebagh (2017) have outlined that unfortunately, within the profession of nursing care assistant there prevails a culture of low job dissatisfaction. Similar sentiments are expressed by Lapane, and Hughes (2007) who argues that certified nursing assistants do not enjoy a healthy job satisfaction. These scholars link this phenomenon to poor pay, irregular shiftwork and hours and work over-load. As well, Tilden, Thompson, Gajewski, and Bott (2012) describe that low job satisfaction throughout the nursing home industry emanates from accusation from family from family members who may point fingers at them for failing to care for their relatives.

2.5.2 General well-being (GWB)

According to Rantanen, Kinnunen, Mauno and Tement (2013) the concept of general well-being focuses on the individual life in totality. As well, general well-being is concerned with the extent to which an employee is happy. Several studies consulted on well-being, revealed that an employee's satisfaction with life is derived from two factors which are so divergent. On one hand Litchfield, Cooper, Hancock and Walt (2016) argue that a person's general well-being is informed by two factors being their state of health and having a feeling of a sense of purpose. However, on the other hand, Easton, S. and Van Laar, (2012) argues that employee well-being is simply influenced by work. Furthermore, he breaks it down by saying that there is an interplay between work and general well-being. He supports this by arguing that work plays a critical role on the level of well-being in that it influences a person's level of happiness or unhappiness as they are able to take this happiness from work sphere to private sphere. Several studies have offered insight that nursing care home industry is highly dominated a lot of reductionism whereby the staff are belittled and dehumanized.

Another factor contributing to the mass exodus of CNA's is poor general well-being. The argument advanced by scholars show that the CNA's industry and its employees have high rate of exposure to human suffering and witnessing death frequently. Available literature on this subject lament that working with the elderly who are less able, weak by nature can be traumatizing. As earlier cited, assistant nurses are the ones who offer direct daily care to elderly residents. As such one can argue that this work has high psychological effects. According to, this aggravated by effect of too much exposure to stressors such as critical illnesses and too much suffering as well as witnessing death frequently can lead to poor general well-being which can lead to termination of work.

2.5.3 Job and organizational Factors Associated with High Turnover Rates of certified nursing care assistants.

Research has divulged that job and organizational factors play an important role in determining whether an employee stays or leaves an organization. Brannon et al., (2002) established that there is a very strong and clear link between CNA's turnover and organizational characteristics. Basically, job and organizational factors are those factors which are related linked to the context within which work is carried out. Studies have found that organizational factors are a strong predator to why these cadre of employees terminate their jobs. Job and organizational factors could be linked to factors such as the job design of being a nursing assistant, renumeration, work related stress.

2.5.4 Job stress:

Abundant research available on job stress identify this factor as an employee push factor for turnover. What research has revealed is that these two factors qualify as push factors behind turnover of CNA's (Kramer & Son, 2016). In terms of definition, Mensah and Amponsah-Tawiah (2014) have defined the factor stress at work as a feeling of anxiety. This anxiety among employee's emanates from work related. Furthermore Atkins, Torf and Spencer (2011) also added that stress at work develops high demands which the employee sees as being beyond their capability while at the same time feel it's beyond their tolerance. On the contrary Schwazer and Hallum (2008) argue that work-related stress does not only occur as a result of extrinsic factors alone but argues that stress at work can be caused by intrinsic factors such as employee realization that they are unprepared to deal with work situations and challenges.

Nursing assistants in general experience extremely high rate of work-related stress. Argument raised by Masum, Azad, Hoque, Beh, Wanke and Arslan (2016) reveals that although a lot of CNA's employees enter this profession moved by compassion for the weak however in this industry they are confronted with a lot of physical and emotional stress which they are not able to sustain. The cause for this work-related stress due to that they perform extremely physically demanding and emotionally draining work within a highly demanding culture. Lapane and Hughes (2007) also clarifies that nursing assistants are the ones who directly give direct physical assistance to patients such as housekeeping, assisting with toilet, feeding as mentioned by Squires et al., (2015). Based on that, Lapane et al., (2007) clarifies that these patients sometimes suffer psychiatric comorbidity with greater levels of challenging and disturbed behavior. According to Wallin, Jakobsson, and Edberg (2015) nursing assistants are more prone to report to suffer work-related stress than other health personnel.

2.5.5 Working conditions of certified nursing assistants (CNA's)

Banerjee, Armstrong, Daly, Armstrong, Braedley, (2015) argues that the high turnover rate within the industry of CNA's is fueled by high work-related stress and demoralization emanating from poor working conditions. Van Aerden, Moors Levecque and Vanroelen

(2015) explain that working conditions is a concept which discusses the working environment and the state of circumstances that employees carry work in of which encompasses both the social and physical conditions. Different working conditions of different cadres are found to prevail in different industries. Working conditions can be analyzed looking at different variables and multifactorial. With nursing assistants, working conditions range from the physical and social conditions (Zhang, Punnett, Gore, 2014). According to Heidari, Seifi and Gharebagh (2017) working conditions of nursing assistants range from factors such as amount of the paid sick days, health insurance, hourly pay rate and work attitudes they are exposed to such as job satisfaction, emotional distress and supervisor and respect accorded by co-workers and society in general in the model.

Evidence revealed shows that the working conditions of nursing care assistants are unappealing. What is clear is that health professional work in a highly demanding work environment, full of challenges. To substantiate that Lu, Zhao, and While (2019) argue that in the nursing care industry, nursing assistants are confronted by profound disrespect from the clients and are exposed to a challenging patient behavior and threat sometimes. Furthermore, Bowers, Esmond, and Jacobson, (2003) state that nursing assistants hold the view that employer agencies unappreciate and undervalue them. These perceptions are fueled by the policies and practices that guide their working conditions. To shed more light on the working conditions of nursing assistants. Furthermore, Gates, Fitzwater and Meyer (1999) explain that in many instances in the process of caring for their patients; are exposed to violent behavior. They cite that regularly nursing assistants experience physical and emotional assaults from clients.

Work-life Imbalance:

Another factor identified as an antecedent to turnover of nursing assistants is job design and lack of work-life balance. The picture revealed by scholars of health care professionals is that the nursing care industry and its professionals unlike other service providers are most vulnerable and precarious conditions such as exposure to communicable diseases, to heavy lifting, hazardous material (Kramer & Son, 2016). With regards to that, its clarified that the work environment and job design of the assistant nursing industry is common that they suffer increased stressed   and burnout. Oftentimes assistant nurses have long periods of exhaustion (both physically and psychologically) and sadness (Josefsson, 2012). According to Kramer and Son (2016) the unfortunate reality is that, most of the time assistant nurses suffer from fatigue due to performing physically demanding tasks such as lifting residents or helping them to bath and suffer psychological exhaustion due to dealing with mentally unstable patients who suffer from diseases like dementia.

According to Kramer and Son (2016) one other outstanding factor related to job design which maybe driving nursing assistants from their job is the high pace of the work environment which also lacks work-life balance. Argument advanced here is that nursing assistant's work in an environment with high irregular shifts and unpredictable working

hours. The results of study undertaken by Alazzam, AbuAlRub, Nazzal (2017) showed that nursing assistants are exposed to the two subtypes of work and family conflict and majority of times they encounter work-to-family conflict in comparison to the family-to-work conflict.

Information which has surfaced is that most nursing assistants in nursing homes do not have a fixed job contracts with a regular shift schedule; they work on calls dependent on availability of work. The challenge associated with irregular and erratic shifts is that these employees are having to deal with the challenge of scheduling their free time around work-hours. Kramer and Son (2016) buttressed that one of the challenges of this erratic schedule is that assistant nurses tend to lose sync with family. In addition, scholars argue that this work schedule is negated in that it deprives nursing assistants the ability to have healthy social life and to engage in any health enhancing behavior and activities outside of their work. Ravenswood and Harris (2016) argues that nursing assistants this emanates from that nursing assistants do not have a predictable schedule that they can work within but because their work programme changes as per the needs of their employers this makes it difficult for them to have to balance between work and personal lives this sometimes becomes a challenge.

PERSONAL FACTORS

Lack of career advancement

According to Schwendimann, Dhaini, Ausserhofer, Engberg and Zúñiga, (2016) majority of CNA's who also have achieved other qualifications are likely to terminate employment within the nursing industry. The reason for this is that majority feel that the job of being an assistant nurse has no career advancement. Nonetheless however, research has pointed out that there are some employees who work in the same industry who are of the opinion that working with the elderly is still one of the best jobs in the world. Reasons given in support of this are that working as an assistant nursing care gives a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment (Eldh, van der Zijpp, McMullan, McCormack, Seers and Rycroft-Malone ,2016). Furthermore, the participants of the study also outlined that caring for the elderly is the outmost act of consideration as well as recognition of the elderly people and the relationships formed, of which they say it brings personal and professional growth.

Lack of attractiveness to the job

Pembroke (2017), a researcher at TASC (Think-tank for Action on Social Change), an independent public education charity which focuses in addressing inequality and sustaining democracy believes the care assistant job are not so attractive or not made appealing hence leave the sector with many shortages. She proclaims that the care assistants work settings, could be the reason that drives them away. She added on to that the nursing care job is less attractive especially in the private sector. The reason given in support of this claim is advanced by Regan (2018) who explains that in private sector, HCA's mainly are employed with temporary contracts, which offers no guarantees

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for hours of work. Moreover, she cites examples of zero-hour contract, which is a type of contract between an employer and employee/ worker where the employer is not obliged to provide minimum or specific hours and the employee signs an agreement to be available for work when they are required. The type of contract makes one to live on a day to day bases with no plans for future nor budget and certainly there are no guaranteed hours and no sick leave she added. Moreover, since there are nursing care assistants who work in residential and offer home care, they are confronted with issues of long commute from their place of residence to their workstations (O'Brien, 2015). Argument presented here is that these nursing carers must do long commute between their clients which unfortunately their meagre salary is not able to meet these expenses (Pembroke, 2017). Further, a care assistant Elizabeth Cloherty; interviewed by O'Brien (2015) in the Irish Times, also added that the lack of security to the job also drives the workers away; and further claimed she can't even apply for a mortgage even after having had worked for three years with her employer. The carer continued to cite that sometimes one fears if they will have a job next day.

Implications of staff turnover:

When a company experiences high rates of turnover then it suffers the loss of losing valuable knowledge carried out with employees. Therefore, leading it to have many implications along the way. These implications may amongst others be related to low employee morale which may stem out from increased workloads and responsibilities due to insufficient staff, or low morale on new employees who are not immune and are struggling to learn the new duties and procedures, thus adding to job stress, job dissatisfaction. Health care assistants (HCA's) shortages have been a serious challenge to the efficiency and effectiveness of any health-care delivery system (Fang, 2014). Further, an Irish Independent newspaper also revealed that nursing homes warned they were in a danger of having to close beds due to staffing shortages. These crises however' were not only faced by the nursing homes only as it meant the A&E overcrowding would escalate since nursing homes are a safety valve in relieving them. In addition, with all the evidence, it points out that the sector is in deep crises with the recruitment of healthcare assistants.

SUMMARY

The literature research pointed out that there are high levels of CNA's turnover rate across the healthcare sector even though the work is in so much demand. The CNA's play a big role in the sector as they relieve nurses and free them to deal with more complex issues or more serious cases while the daily work still being looked after. Research however has illustrated most of the possible factors or triggers of high turnover rate amongst CNA's in all different setups. Some of the mentioned triggers include; undesirable working conditions, job stress, working life imbalance, lack of career development, job dissatisfaction, general well-being and that the job was unattractive. In addition, the study further looked at the high demands of the job which do not match its renumeration hence causing demotivation and desire/intentions to leave the job. Moreover, the study looked

at the implications that high turnover brings with, it revealed that a lot of strain and pressure was put on the remaining staff due to increased workloads and responsibilities. Further, the implications were affecting other stakeholders like the government owed facilities which found relief to their overflowing packed beds as it was revealed that, nursing homes got the pressure of these facilities but with high increased shortages of staff they were faced with closing some facilities or reducing their admissions.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The mandate of this chapter is to discuss the methodological framework used during the research study in order to fulfil the objectives of the study. Methodological approach is a vital process for the success study in the sense that it involves data collection which gives the researcher an opportunity to get access to crucial information to test if conditions are favorable to the objectives whence making it possible able for him/her to analyze and establish a relationship in the study (Kumar & Phrommathed, 2005). Therefore, it is the backbone of the study.

This chapter will discuss the methodological framework followed to gather data and analyze, the research approach, research design, measuring instrument, validity and reliability of measuring instrument, population sampling techniques, data collection techniques, data analysis used to achieve the problem at hand' high turnover rates amongst nursing assistants.

3.2 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Methodological approach according to Hopkins (2008) is described as the course of action which is employed by the researcher to investigate a problem or establish a relationship between two factors in an attempt to accomplish the objectives of any study. There are basically three approaches which are at the disposal of researchers (Winter, 2000). Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009) also confirm the statement and further clarify that the three methodologies at the disposal of researcher which can be used in order to achieve the objectives of the study. These methodological approaches are listed as qualitative, quantitative or a mixed method. What is apparent here is that there is clear distinction of data collection procedure between these approaches. In terms of explanation, Horn (2009) clarifies that quantitative research methodology is a procedure where the researcher explains social phenomenon by relying on utilising statistics (of the respondents) which are collected and then analysed. What happens then is that thereafter a conclusion is derived from these. Furthermore, Saunders et al (2012) also explain that quantitative is normally used as a synonym for any data collection techniques like questionnaires. On the other hand, Choy (2014) explains that qualitative research approach is a type of research outlook which restricts itself to explain social phenomenon by using in-depth information about human behavior which is collected through using non-numerical data such as interviews, analysis of images, video clips. Furthermore, Cooper et al, (2014) buttresses that mainly qualitative research methodology seeks to answer questions about why and how people behave in the way that they do or when a researcher wishes to gain an understanding of underlying opinions, motivations and reasons. Further, Hopkins (2008) explains that qualitative research is normally used by researcher when they wish to discover a phenomenon which they do not know what they might expect.

Lastly, Schindler and Cooper (2014) explain that both quantitative and qualitative techniques as well as the data analysis procedures could both used in the research design and be known as mixed research approach. Moreover, the two main methods thus quantitative and qualitative have their unique strengths and weaknesses which will be stated on the table below:

Table 2: strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Quantitative	Enables for fast data collection as it takes a shorter time to distribute and collect hence making it less time-consuming analysis. Enables the researcher to collect data from large numbers of respondents. - The researcher methodology is more scientific and objective and reduced personal bias. - It's good for examining feelings and motivations. - There are many statistical analysis tools available for the researcher to analyse data.	Takes a long time to record the responses clerical efforts. It requires skill to analyse the data. - Knowledge produced may be too abstract and general for application to specific local situations, context and or individuals. - Needs more sample of the population studies for more accurate results (Uduma & Sylva, 2015).

Qualitative	- Data is enabled to be collected in a natural setting. - It determines possible cause of an event in another perspective as that given quantitative research (Horn,2009).	- Interpretation is usually biased because it is influenced by the researcher's perspective. Conclusions are not generalizable because the subjects are few and possess unique characteristics compared to typical respondents. - data gathering is often time consuming - Analysing data takes longer

Extracted from Uduma & Sylva, (2015) and Horn (2009).

Data gathering techniques

One vital stage of research or any study is data collection. Literature shows that there are two types of data collection namely primary and secondary data collection (Saunders et al, 2009). According to Glen, (2018), primary data is explained as the data that is collected at first hand by the researcher. Normally, this is achieved with the use of methods such as surveys, interviews, observation and or experiments. On the other hand, further explanation provided is that secondary data is data that relates to the data gathered from past gathered from studies, surveys, publications, archives and experiments which were run by other researches (Glen, 2018). In majority of situations, typically, researchers begin their exploration with secondary data by going through the literature and other publications to get more understanding of the research study as well as to have a good understanding of the issues to be expected on the research topic. Also, it is important to realise that secondary data is invaluable information nonetheless (Grey, 2013).

Hox and Boeije, (2005) has outlined the advantages of using secondary data. He states that secondary data has an enormous advantage on saving resources in particular the researcher's time and money. As well, gives the researcher the ability to analyse larger data sets like for instance the use of data collected by governments. Moreover, the researcher argues that secondary data collection provides unremarkable measure. Cowton (1998) emphasized that this method is beneficial for sensitive situations. According to Cooper and Schindler (2014) this method also brings about advantages of providing comparative and contextual data as well as leading the researcher to unforeseen and or unexpected discoveries. However, there are disadvantages attached to using secondary data which Cowton (1998) identifies at the information may sometimes

may have been collected for a different purpose that does not match one's need or their research aims and objectives.

Similarly, primary data also has its unique advantages and disadvantages. Hox and Boeije (2005) cited that the advantage of using primary data is that the researcher would has full control of the data they collected. What that's means is that, the researcher uses the data and tailors it to their study, they make it relevant to what they are studying. More over the researcher also contends that the primary data are original as they would have been collected focusing on the research topic hence would make the degree of accurate very high and credible. Bradley, (2010) also in favour as is of view that all the data collection procedures would have been carefully chosen and operationalising done in favour of what was to be measured. Accordingly, Bradley, (2010) on the other hand believes the primary data collection can come at cost and be expensive as the researchers must start their research from scratch and go through all the stages of research till the end like finding participants, may be need to travel to them in person depending on which data method had been adopted like interviews, and then organise materials and running the study. Lastly Sindhu, (2011) is also of the view that primary data had a disadvantage of limited time, and space to carry its research and may also suffer to get participants as it desires. The research method choice for this study was a qualitative research approach.

MEASURING INSTRUMENT

For this research to achieve its objectives and gathering data on the assessment of employee turnover among healthcare assistants (HCA's) in Dublin Ireland, I used primary data collection method using of a survey questionnair. According to Winter (2000) survey questionnaire can take two forms which with the main aim of soliciting data from the intended respondents. These are close ended questions or open-ended questions (Winter, 2000). Furthermore, since the questions in a questionnaire are classified according to their nature. These two types of questions are used based on what type of information they wish to solicit from their respondents. Questions that take the form of close-ended, their aim is to gather determinable and objective data, and are used in quantitative research while those that take the form of open-ended and are subjective and do not involve numbers are classified as qualitative research question such behaviors, preferences and facts (Horn, 2009). Both types of questions can be used simultaneously in a questionnaire. Notwithstanding that, it is advisable to balance their number when creating questionnaire (Saunders et al., 2007). In addition, questionnaires may have been widely used for research because they are cheap, convenient, less hassle involved, easier to derive and obtain data from a larger pool in a very short period (Saunders et al., 2007).

The proposed questionnaire for this research has been divided into two sections, section A and B. The section A is a biographical scale comprising of eight questions. Seven of these are closed-ended questions and one question being an open-ended question.

The second part of the questionnaire, section B comprises of three parts with a total of twenty-six questions. This section is the most crucial and significant part of the study. The questions are grouped as below:

a) Staff turnover and retention related scale – 14 questions
b) Workplace stress – 6 questions
c) Possible recommendations for increasing staff retention - 7 questions

This proposed questionnaire is measured on a five-point Likert scale, consisting of options: strongly disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. To measure the respondents' opinion regarding turnover of CAN's in Dublin, questions are coded such that strongly disagree = 1 and strongly agree = 5. This scale was developed by Rensis Likert in 1932.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Within the walls of research methodology, researchers must consider the technical considerations of the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument used. According to Saunders et al (2012), it is important for a researcher to carry out an internal validity of the data collection instrument and for that a technique termed validity and reliability is used. Saunders et al (2009), has explained that validity and reliability test of a questionnaire ascertains that the questionnaire at hand measures exactly what the researcher intends to use it for as well as checks its ability to produce stable, consistent results and findings if used in a different group of set-ups. (Saunders et al., 2009,). Again, validity on the other hand will be focused and concentrated on whether or not the findings are really about what they appear to be about". (Saunders et al., 2009). Golafshani (2003) as well concurs with this and supports this by stating that validity and reliability throughout the entire research project would be vital and emphasised its necessities. These necessities would not only be important for one's own work but crucial for other researchers and interested parties in the near future who might need to look on past trends to make sound conclusions or make recommendations based on one's findings. Further, investors and management of private nursing homes may also use the information contained in this research project to make informed business decisions.

To measure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire on staff turnover, formally tested questionnaires used by (Walsh, 2015) and who further did a pilot test was used. It was developed based on (Das and Baruah 2013) findings of similar research.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Study site

This research was conducted in three private nursing homes. The study sites are situated in the north of Dublin city, between 8 -12 kilometers of Dublin city Centre and around the areas of Swords, Malahide and Finglas. However, the nursing home names will remain anonymous for ethical consideration purposes. All the three homes are run privately with each of them having their chain of nursing homes run in different parts of the country.

Population

For this study, the targeted population was drawn from care assistant working for the nursing home healthcare and having been deployed to at least 1-year of experience working for the company. This would also include HCA's working either on permanent or contractual basis meaning part time work. Moreover, this study set the following boundaries:

a. HCA's who are working on full time or on contractual basis/part-time.
b. HCA's who have been employed for more than 1-year period with same employer,
c. Newly recruited employees from other companies (they might have switched from home care/Agency for a nursing home).

Population sample

As mentioned above, the research study will use three private nursing homes in North Dublin. All the chosen homes are run as a group of companies owning at least 3 to 5 homes in different parts of Ireland and each having a capacity of 201 – 500 employees. But for this study the focus will be only on one nursing home per each group, which will have a capacity of around +/-100 employees across each home. This however will make each chosen nursing home to have a range of 40 - 60 healthcare assistant. One home had 47 HCA's, the other had 62 while the last one had 41 HCA's hence making the population of this study 150 across the three nursing homes.

Each home offer services ranging from Alzheimer's care Centre, nursing home, adult mental unit from as high dependency patients to respite and independent patients. The homes comprise of full time, part-time, agency staff and bank staff who mostly are student nurses. Within the healthcare assistants, there are senior carer's who may have earned the position of senior carer from long service and generally their pay will be slightly higher than general HCA. Shifting from the healthcare assistants, the nursing homes also employ different staff such nurses, CNM 1,2,3; Doctors and other supporting workers like the kitchen staff, cleaners, IT, HR and finance departments.

Sample size and sampling techniques

One of the intriguing and significant cornerstones of undertaking a research is when it comes to gathering data that uses a sample size correspondent of the whole population (Bartlett et al. 2001). A sample is a pre-determined portion of the population used by researchers to provide vital data in a research. It is however a statistical population consisting of research respondents and participants (Kotrlik and Higgins, 2001). For this research project the sample as already noted was the healthcare assistants working in three north Dublin private nursing homes. And the sample size was 150 total population with only 123 questionnaires answered and returned to the researcher. Even though all the participants were not able to return all the questionnaires, the response rate was quite high at 79%.

The population for this study was too small to have taken a small portion of the population and measure specific characteristics from it. However, the researcher had the option to use the survey census as the sample population was too small and because the research population of the study was well defined hence making it ideal and practical for data collection of the entire population from each participants/respondent. The survey census is a 'technique of gathering data/information from where an entire population in the study is included in the data collection exercise (Singh & Masuku, 2014). Moreover, Brown (2015) added that it was highly possible for data collection from all the participant in a population. Furthermore, there is a great advantage in using the survey census technique when the population is already small because it will be needed to deduce conclusive results on the high employee turnover rates as it then gives more room for workable questionnaire in case of unreturned, spoiled and unanswered questionnaires which may not feet the purpose.

GAINING ACCESS

The researcher gained access to their research as they used the nursing homes which they previously worked in through agency work. This gave the researcher know where to go and who to seek permission from because of the long-term relationships they had with management. However, all the documentation and permission to carry the research was presented the first time the researcher went to seek permission. Moreover, as the researcher also worked with almost 80% of the staff, it was less challenging to convince them to partake in the research. Lastly those that the researcher was not able to forward the questionnaire to, some of the staff volunteered to forward the questionnaire to the other which made the process even smoother as all the staff then were reached out to.

Data collection

Initial contact to relay the message of intent to undertake research will be made physically to the three different private nursing cares facilities. Whereupon, a permission to seeking to undertake researcher was also hand-delivered to each nursing home for filing purposes. Both homes later gave an approval and access to their web link where the questionnaires could be sent. But the researcher found it necessary and fit to visit the participants during their handover briefings to debrief them as well as explaining the perimeters of the research. During this physical firstly point of contact the purpose and objectives of the study were communicated to private nursing homes officials in North – Dublin during their handover meetings for both morning shift and night time staff. Also, during the meetings with staff/ research participants, the researcher's guaranteed of the confidentiality and ethical moral of the research. Further it was explained that all the responses were anonymous which added to the security and confidentiality of each person's data. Participants were also requested to complete the questionnaires online. In addition to that, some respondents asked to directly be sent the questionnaire link to their social media accounts Facebook and emails as they felt it was convenient for them.

In closing, the researcher shared with all the respondents that the expectation was that the exercise would run for a week from the day they were given so for the researcher to

start their findings at one go and after which the questionnaire link was to be closed, and no other respondents would be able to answer after its closure.

Data collection Instrument

The information will be collected through a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire used for this research was distributed through using survey monkey tool and distributed to the sample population via the link to different platforms. Survey monkey is an online tool which allows one to launch any kind of online survey research or project. It allows the researcher to tailor their surveys according to their defined target and or audience

Witmer, Colman and Katzman (cited in Saunders et al, 2009), believe that the use of online survey development cloud-based software tools is an acceptable way to use the internet as they have a way of increasing the chances of anonymity for participants and as well the respondents cannot alter the questionnaires. This method like any other method had its own advantages and disadvantages. The positives of using this tool amongst others was that; its cost effectiveness, can cover a wider population in a short time, it gives and allows the participants to answer the questions when it's convenient for them and where ever they may be and still be able to open in any type of device e.g. phones and tablets. On the other hand, the downfall of this tool may be late completion, failure to respond or even incomplete questions with skipped ones (Anderson, 2009). The respondents were again given a week time frame to complete the questionnaires for the researcher to start their analysis having all the data required to do so. The questionnaire was designed to assess the factors that affect workers decision to stay or leave an employer as well as possible recommendations that could be made to an employer to increase staff retention. The questionnaire consisted of 9 biographical scale questions and 27 staff turnover and retention questions.

Data analysis

According to Simonsohn, Simmon and Nelson (2015), data analysis has many different methods to be used after the researcher has collected the respondents from the participants. The quantitative data analysis can be undertaken using software products such as i) excel spreadsheets, ii) access data base, iii) survey software like (snap, google forms, survey monkey, statPac, ultimate survey and zoomerang to name a few) and lastly the SPSS software (Horn, 2009). Furthermore, Horn (2009) added that the qualitative data analysis also needs different tools to validate and enter their non numerical data it dealt with. It is believed that since the sources are different, they will slightly vary in terms of how they will be represented as well (Simonsohn et al. 2015). Many literatures have categorized the sources into two camps; i) the sources already in a text format such as (emails, meeting minutes, diary entries and notes), ii) the sources in a non-text format such as (notes, incident forms, interview tapes and handwritten diaries). However, as they have been split into two categories, Saunders et al., (2009) explained that non-text sources were to be transcribed into text as most analysis require the data to be in text form or computer file. And the closest procedure to get the file into text would be likely to

use the speech recognition software (SRS) in reading the document to a word document (Horn, 2009). Furthermore, Saunders et al., (2009) also added that there are other qualitative analysis that do not need transcriptions of the non-text sources like using part-audio transcriptions, outsource the transcription and or use the qualitative analysis software tool; the NVivo which has become the most frequently used and valuable tool for timely and successful completion (Horn, 2009).

However, to serve the purpose of this study, quantitative data analysis using survey software product will be adopted and using the survey monkey software for the successful completion of the data analysis. The software package generates questionnaires, or one can upload the already generated one to the database. It has enhanced functionality for web and mobile based surveys. And further has several analysis tools that can generate cross tab tables, statistical output and produce a whole range of graphic outputs (Horn, 2009).

Moreover, this was adapted as it was relatively easy to learn, seemed more convenient in a time restricted space, cheap to administer and was environmentally friendly as less or no paper copies were used. In addition, the software package generated data output and charts which were easier to export to different software's like SPSS, PPT (power point), and XLS (excel) for further statistical analysis. However, after the questionnaires were returned online, they were then followed by capturing the responses on an Excel spreadsheet. Following this exercise of collection, numbering and capturing descriptive statistical analysis will be performed on the responses of the participants with use of graphs to analyse.

CONCLUSION:

This chapter focused on the methods adopted to conduct the study. It looked at the different methodological approaches in research methods and their analysis. It further explained them and choose an approach which suited this study. Further, this chapter used a questionnaire as the main data collection for investigations. And, analyzed it using software surveys while further exporting the responses of the participants to Excel spreadsheet and used different graphs for their analysis. Moreover, the research explained their research participants thus, the study sites, population and population sample. And finally, it explained how the researcher got access to undertake their survey which were carried out in three private nursing home in Dublin.

CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis obtained in this research will be discussed. The data was collected through a software; survey monkey tool and then exported to excel sheet and further transferred to word for analysis and findings. The research will present its result in a systematic manner making it easier for gathering conclusive and well-informed conclusions especially for the reader. For the research to reach its mandate, vital primary data were collected from 123 participants with an average completion rate of 79% within an estimated typical time spent of only 7 minutes or less. The research was opened for a maximum of one week and was sent through a weblink to the three nursing home pages as well as social media via WhatsApp and Facebook to try an reach out to all the carer's working in these facilities in case they had no access to either one of the named collectors. In total, the weblink had 52 responses collected and the social media stood at 71 responses. The survey was designed to have a total of 34 questions divided in three pages/parts; the demographics (x8 questions), staff turnover and retention question (x20 questions) and the possible recommendations for an increase in staff retention (x6 questions). However, it is important to note that some questions were skipped hence the research ended up with only 79% completion rate as the rest was regarded as spoiled and invalid.

Furthermore, the objectives of this study were:

a) to establish if there are any notable differences in turnover rate levels between age groups, gender and nationality,
b) to suggest most effective measures for implementation by management to improve the turnover amongst HCA's.
c) to establish the most important factors that carers consider when deciding to stay or leave an employment.
d) to explore possible factors that contribute to retention of carers.
e) to identify and determine the reasons behind the high turnover intention.

However, in-order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

f) Are there any significant differences in the turnover rate levels between gender, age groups, and nationality?
g) What measures can be suggested and implemented to improve the turnover amongst HCA's?
h) Is workplace stress an issue amongst the employees of the nursing homes?
i) What are the most leading factors of deciding to leave or stay?
j) Does turnover affect morale and increase pressure on remaining staff?

Findings

In this chapter, the findings of the questionnaires will be displayed using charts to make it easier for the reader. Findings from the three different nursing homes will be combined and the additional data observed will be found under each chart. This chapter will be divided in 6 categories which will be entirely be based on answering the sub research questions and objectives.

Section A – Demographics:

The sole purpose of section A was to find out the demographics of the participants/respondents and help answer the research objective; *"to establish if there were any notable differences in turnover rate levels between age groups, gender and nationality"* figures 3,4 and 5 will demonstrate those findings;

Figure 1 – what is your gender
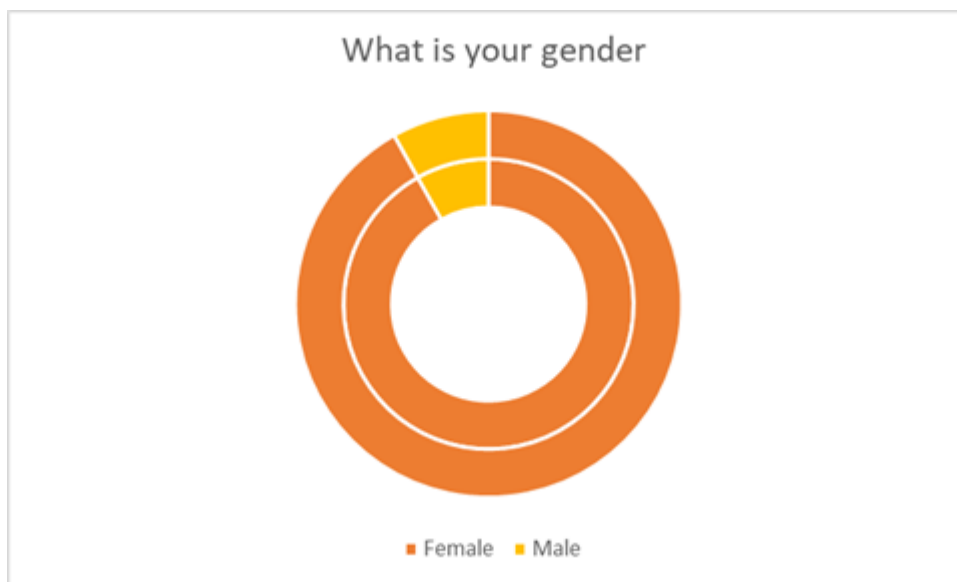
This question here was about the gender of the participants and looked more like a good number of women took the nursing jobs than man. From a total of 123 respondents, there were 113 women whom responded and only a total of 10 males took part. That's 91.87% of females than just a mere 8.13% of males. And also, there was a breakdown of the age groups in the sector, the below chart explores;

Figure 2 - What is your age group?

Answer Choices	Responses	
18-24	8.13%	10
25-44	47.97%	59

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45-54	31.71%	39
55-64	12.20%	15
65+	0.00%	0
	Answered	123
	Skipped	0

This second question of the demographic questions was about the participants age groups. There were 123 respondents in total and non were skipped. Most of the respondents were aged between 25-44 years of age which accounted for 47.97%, followed by a good percent of 31.71% from the 45-54 age group. With surprising small number of 8.13% of 18-24 age group. Also, there were no respondents for the age 65 and above which likely had retired the service.

 And the last part of the objective was about the nationalities of the participants working in the nursing home. The results were demonstrated by the below graph and explained below it.

Figure 3 - what is your nationality?
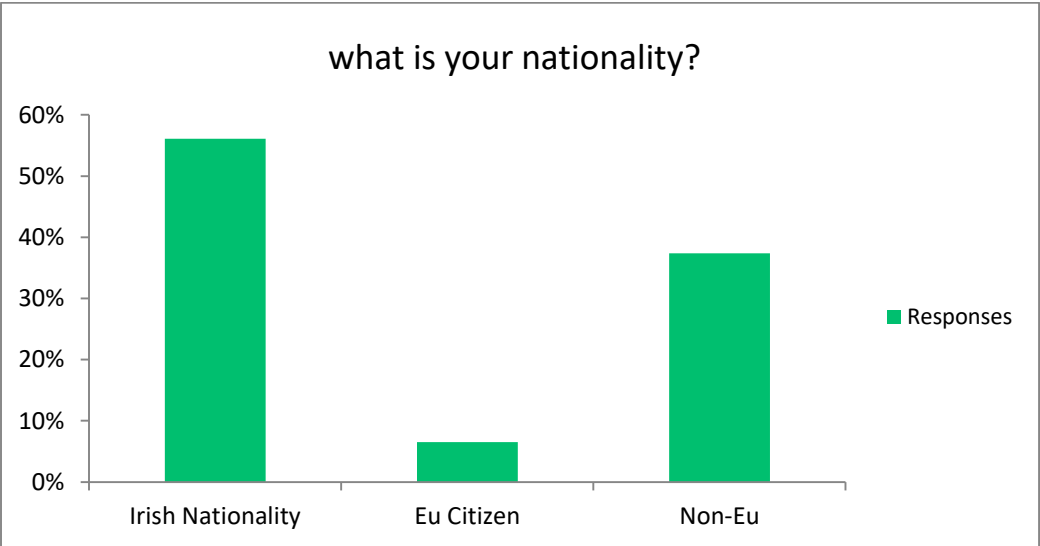
This third question was thrown in to see which nationalities worked in those facilities more. Without any surprises, the Irish topped the numbers with a 56.10% thus 69 of the 123 respondents worked as healthcare assistants in nursing homes, while another good number of non-Eu also occupied jobs as carers with a 37.40% (46) and lastly a small number of Eu nationalities lacked behind with a total of only 8 of the 123 respondents making just 6.50%.

Section B – Effects of turnover on staff:

This part of the section was carried out to help answer the sub research question **"Does turnover affect morale and increase pressure on remaining staff"**, the researcher asked the respondents to answer at least 7 questions which intended to answer the research question. These questions were a mixture of workplace stress questions and about the strains that were put on the remaining staff when their co-workers left their employment.

The overall findings were that:

When employees left their jobs/employers then the remaining staff suffer and or carry the burden as their workload increased as demonstrated in fig 6. Also, fig 7 showed that turnover effects brought down workplace morale on those who remained with their employer as the others left. Furthermore, there was also a realisation that job stress in general played a part in turnover as most participants felt they were very much stressed with their jobs. Again, fig 9 on the other hand found out that big numbers of remaining employees felt the pressure of those who quit their jobs as they too wanted to now follow their path of leaving their employees. Thus, saying the leavers influenced or enticed the decisions of those who remained behind. However, there were some respondents as well who stood their grounds as they choose in good numbers that the leavers didn't really affect or influence them anyhow. Lastly the big revelation was that, turnover played enormous impact on the overall productivity of the company as a good number of respondents agreed and felt that when other co-workers quite their jobs then it affected their productivity as shown in fig 10. And in addition, most participants also showed they often felt under pressure at work but not unhappy nor depressed about their work; fig 11 and 12 flaunted those results.

However more of the graphics and their individual findings will be found on the below charts:

Figure 4 - When an employee leaves, the workload increases.

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WHEN AN EMPLOYEE LEAVES, THE
WORKLOAD INCREASES.
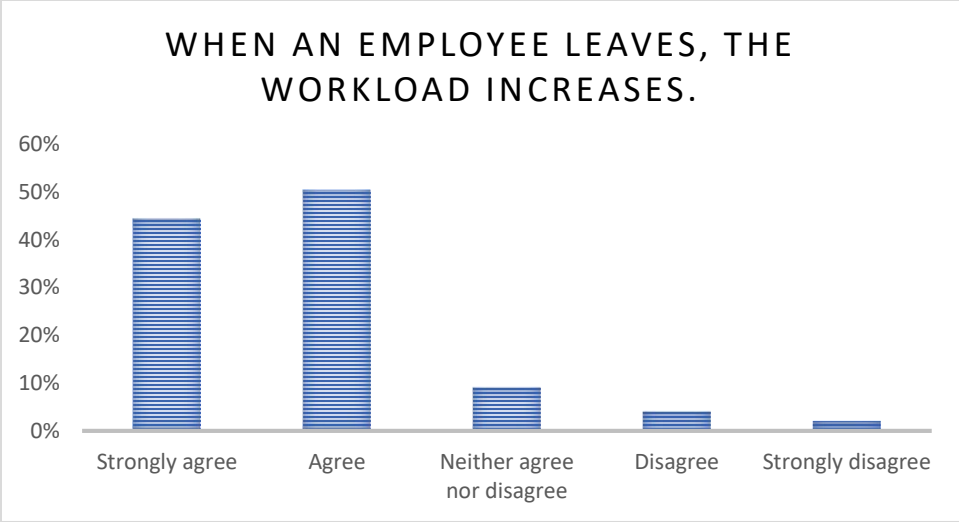
The purpose of the above question and finding was to find out if the workload of the nursing homes staff increased once their co- workers left the jobs. The most common answers agreed that indeed the workload increased once others left their jobs. A total of 45.9% agreed, followed by those who strongly agreed at 40%. The other 8% neither agreed nor disagreed, and a further small number of 3.7% disagreed while just an inch of 1,8% strongly disagreed.

Figure 5 - When an employee leaves, workplace morale is affected.

When an employee leaves, workplace morale is
affected.
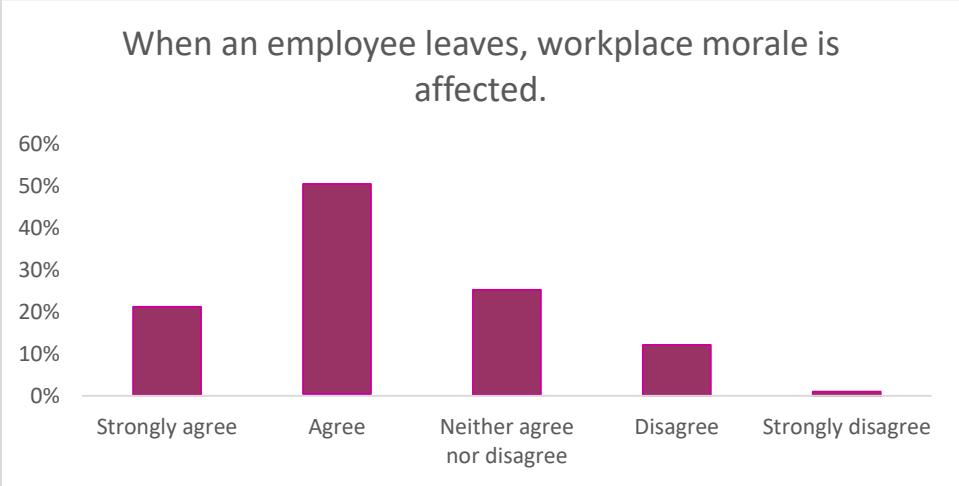
The purpose of this question was to find out whether the workplace morale was affected anytime an employee left their job. The findings were showing that higher agreements were in favour that indeed the morale was affected whenever their co-workers left their jobs. A high percentage of 45.9% agreed with the statement, while a further 19% strongly agreed as well, but also had a good number of 23% whom were in middle or unsure. There seemed to have been a shift in the respondents as a dramatic fall/decrease then also felt they disagreed with the question. However, those were small numbers as

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compared to the agreed ones as only 11% disagreed while a tip of a nail at 0.92% strongly disagreed with statement question.

Figure 6 - Your current job is stressful.
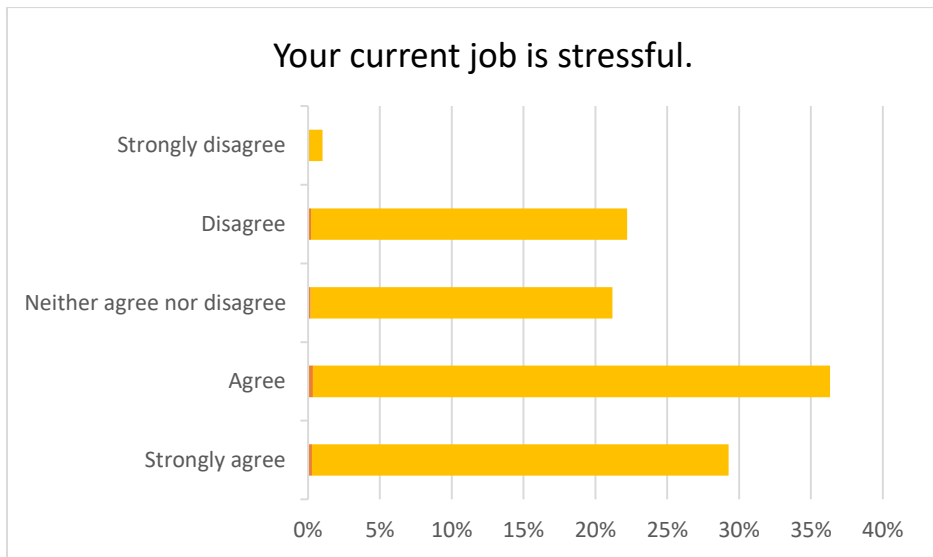
The finding from this question revealed that 33% of the respondents agreed that their nursing homes jobs were stressful while a further 27% also strongly agreed with the statement question that their jobs were stressful. The two agree answer choices topped the list while the disagree came least on the findings. There were also an additional 19% total participants who neither agreed nor disagreed that their jobs were stressful. Also, on the bottom list, the findings determined that 20% disagreed while 0.92% disagreed that their job was stressful.

Figure 7 - When an employee has left, you felt like leaving too.
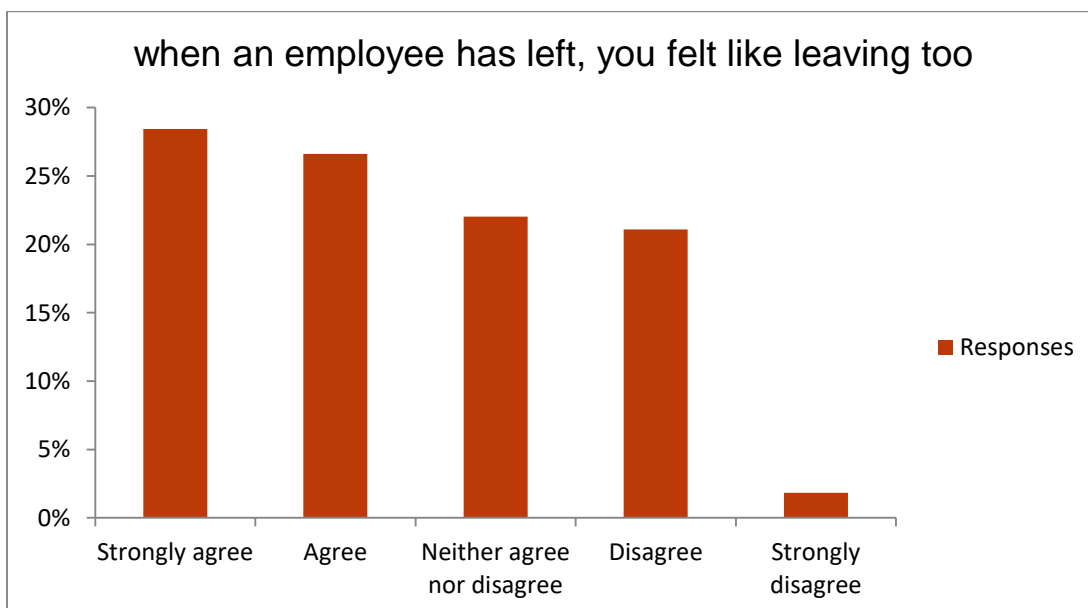
The findings of the above statement questions realised that; almost each single option had a good response to it with at least 2% marginal differences in between, except only the last option of strongly disagree which had a huge gap between the rest of other answer options. The results showed that, the highest number strongly agreed with a 28.4% majority and followed by a those who agreed with a slightly low margin and a total of 26.6%, followed by yet again a decreased value of those whom were neither in agreement or disagreed with a 22.1% and lastly the strongly disagreed set at only a 1.8%.

Figure 8 - When an employee has left, it has affected your work productivity.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly agree	20.18%	22
Agree	45.87%	50
Neither agree nor disagree	17.43%	19
Disagree	15.60%	17
Strongly disagree	0.92%	1
	Answered	109
	Skipped	14
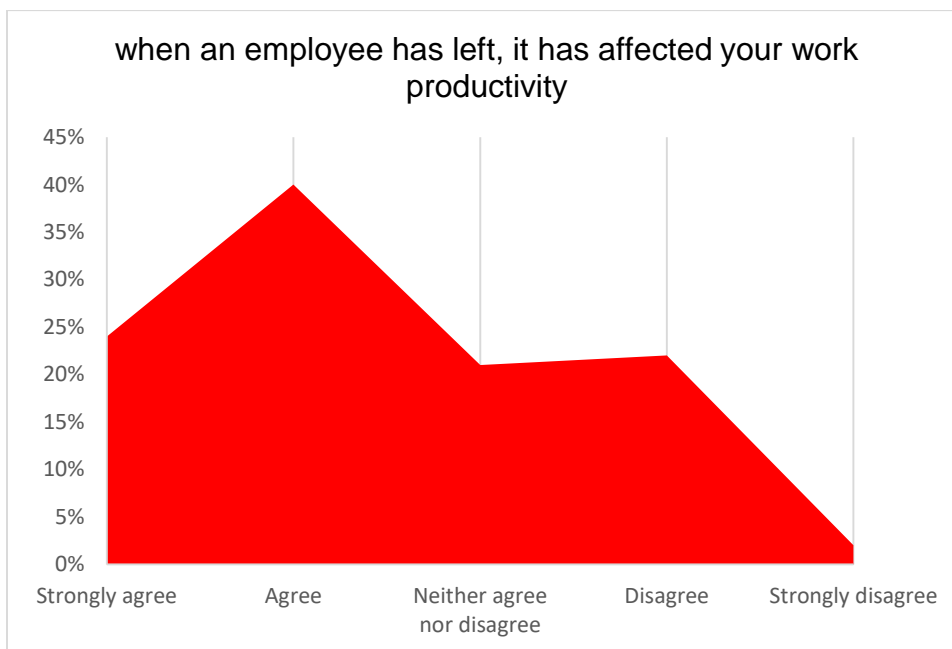
The purpose of this question was to find out if the employees in the three nursing homes felt that when an employee has left, it has affected their work productivity. The most common answer was that 50(45.9%) of the respondents agreed that when employees

left, it then affected their productivity. The second most chosen answer was 22(20.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed that when employees left, it then affected their productivity. The third then chosen answer choice was 19(17.4%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that when employees left, it affected their productivity. Sitting on number four was 17(15.6%) whom disagreed that when employees left, their productivity got affected and finally on number five was 1(0.92%) who strongly disagreed that when employees left, their productivity was affected.

Figure 9 - I often feel under pressure at work.
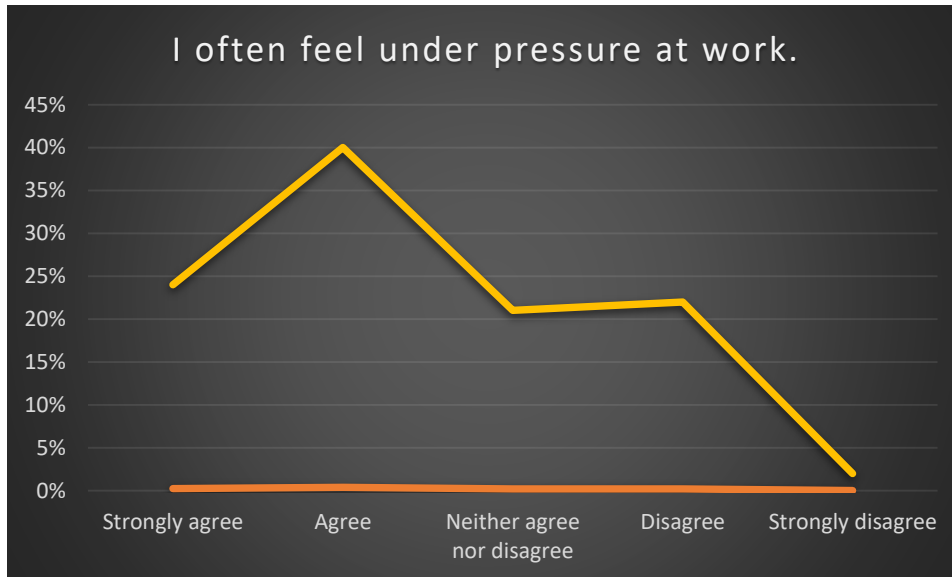
The purpose of this question was to find out if the employees of the nursing homes feel under pressure when at work. The findings received showed that, indeed most of the employees felt under pressure with them agreeing to a 36.7% (40) respondence out of the total 109 survey. The second highest 22% (24) respondents strongly agreed that they did feel under pressure at work. The third common answer received were from those who disagreed with a 20% (22), while the forth neither agreed nor disagreed with a 19.2% (21) and the latter strongly disagreed with only a 1.83% (2) that they felt under pressure at while at work.

Figure 10 - Recently, I have been feeling unhappy and depressed about my work.

Recently, I have been feeling unhappy and depressed about my work.
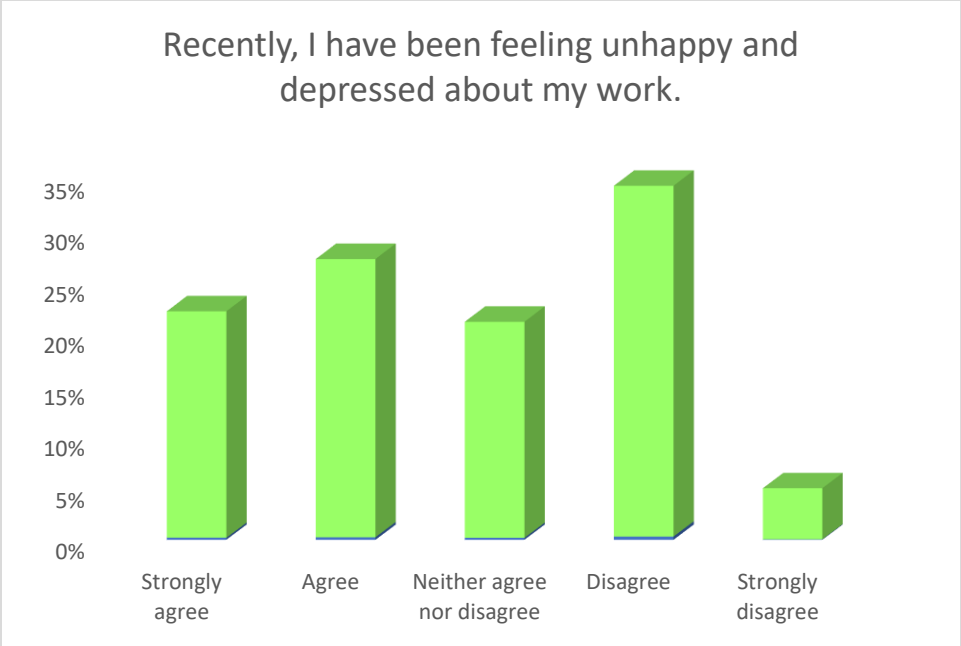
The other factor which was measured was whether the employees felt unhappy and depressed about their work. Likewise, the respondents gave their different feelings and the highest respondents disagreed with a majority of 31.1% (24), while the second highest agreed with a 24.8% (27) that they felt unhappy and depressed about their work. The third highest again strongly agreed with a 20.1% (22) that they felt unhappy and depressed about their work but with just a little drop in fourth place, neither agreed nor disagreed with a 19.2% (21) that they felt unhappy and depressed about their work. Lastly, just a small number which accounted to a 4.6% (5) strongly disagreed they felt unhappy and depressed about their work.

Section C - Job and Organisational influencers of staff turnover:

This part of the section was carried out to help answer the research objective *"to establish the most important factors that carers consider when deciding to stay or leave an employer"*. The researcher used an open-ended question first to get the most reasonable answers and then followed with few more closed ended questions using the Likert scale as the measuring tool for opting to leave or stay. The questions asked the participants the degree of importance a certain factor may influence their decision to either stay or leave their employer.

The findings were as follows:

Figure 11 - What are your reasons for leaving your previous employment…?

From the word cloud the bold words played a huge impact in the decision to leave. There were several reasons that the respondents gave as seen on the above cloud demonstration, but some rated more than others. The bigger and bolder the words the higher rating they had and the smaller; the lesser rating they had.

Most of the respondents noted they left their previous jobs because of poor pay with it being the highest on the list, while other they left because their employers did not care about the wellbeing of their staff, and there was no respect for them as employees. The third most rated from the list was work, most respondents responded that there was too much workload and wanted to change whilst others felt the work was been spoiled by bad management who guilty conscious their staff if they did not want to take more work or cover shifts. Further on the top list was hours, which the respondents noted they left their previous jobs because they hadn't had enough hours, they travelled good number of hours from client to client and with low mileage pay. Some responded that the 12 hour shifts in nursing homes were too strenuous with poor renumerations. Lastly on the top list was job, which most respondents felt they just needed to change the job and do something different or something totally new from what they did before.

Also, after looking at each of the 11 factors that carers considered when deciding to stay or leave employment, the researcher now populated a graph to see which of them topped as being the most important while comparing the results of those who agreed versus those who disagreed. The below graph will however show the results as per their ranking in which the level of job satisfaction was the most important factor considered when deciding to stay or leave the employer, and work-life balance set on number 2, while in number 3 was the relationship that the organisation had with its patients. In number 4,

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was the size of the workload and number 5 was a tie between purpose of the vision, organisational culture and level of significance of the job. Amount of flexibility set on number 6 and level of autonomy was in position 7. To the researcher's surprise; training and development came second last important factor the care assistant considered when deciding to stay or leave their employer but with no surprises on the last position set the public reputation of the organisation when deciding to stay or leave the employer.

In addition, refer to the appendices section for more singular graph elaborations used for this part.

Table 3 – Factors considered by CNA's to stay or leave employment

Answer Choice	Strongly Agree & Agree	Neither agree nor Disagree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree
Level of Job satisfaction	81.65%	11.01%	7.34%
Work life balance	76.64%	14.02%	9.35%
Relationship the org has with its patients	68.87%	16.04%	15.09%
Size of workload	67.29%	13.08%	19.62%
Organisational culture	66.35%	16.82%	16.82%
Level of significance of my job	66.06%	17.76%	16.51%
The purpose or vision	66.04	16.98%	19.81%
Amount of flexibility	64.22%	15.60%	20.18%
Level of Autonomy	63.30%	26.61%	10.09%
Training and Dev	60.38%	19.81%	19.81%
Public Reputation of the organisation	40.19%	37.40%	22.43%

Section D – Employee Retention:

This part of the section was carried out to help answer the objective **"*to explore possible factors that contribute to retention of carer's".*** The researcher wanted to know what it was that carers wanted most to make them stay longer in their jobs or entice them to stay rather than quitting their jobs either to HSE, agency work or change their field altogether and moving away from private nursing homes.

The findings were that:

From all the 12 choices displayed for the respondents, there were at least 5 choices which displayed higher values than the rest. The factors deemed most attractive by the participants with a higher rating was pay at 74.7% (65), workload at 51.72% (45), work life balance at 48.28% (42), management support 45.98% (40) and job satisfaction at 42.53% (37). Which concludes that for companies to try retaining the nursing assistants in the private nursing homes, they would have to improve pay scales, workload, work-life balance, and give more support to their employees as well as looking into their employee job satisfaction.

The below graph illustrates those findings:

Figure 12 - Please indicate which of the below factors would appeal/attract your decision to stay in employment if improved or executed.

Which of the below factors would appeal/attract your decision to stay in employment if improved or executed
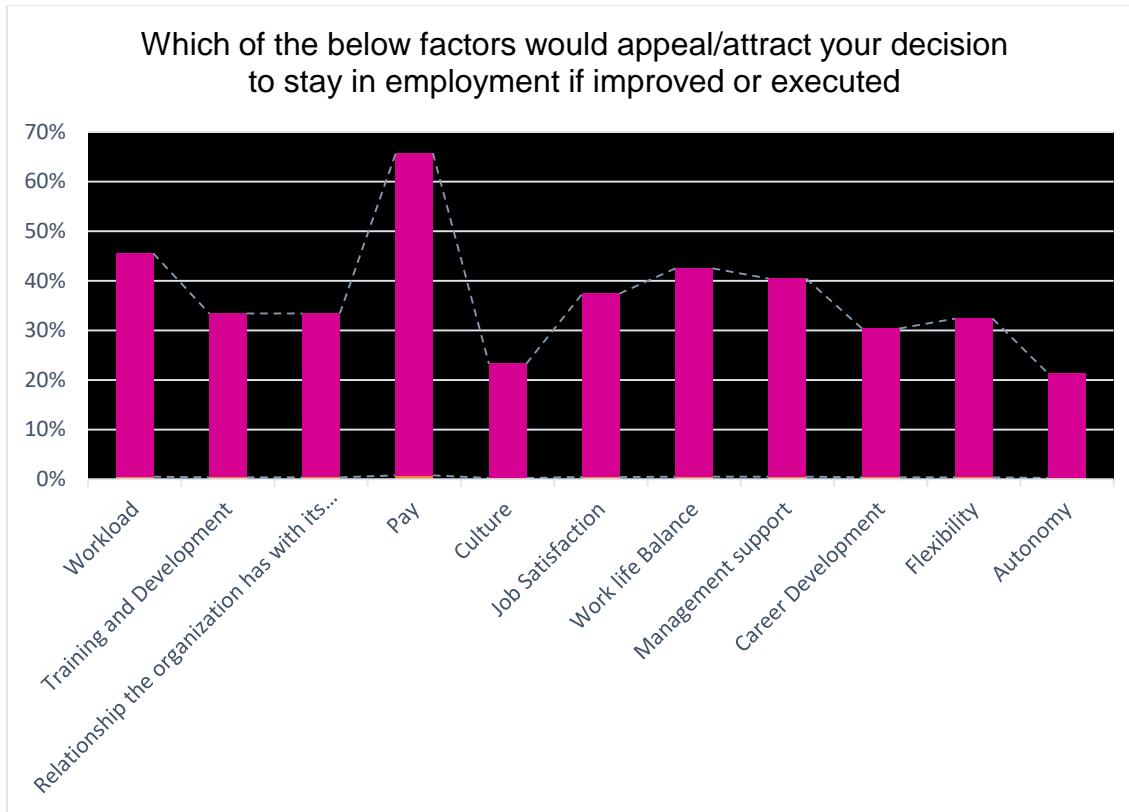
Section E – Reasons for turnover intentions:

This part of the section was carried out to help answer the objective *"to identify and determine the reasons behind the high turnover intention".* This question here was to try understanding the reasons which drove the nursing assistants away from their private nursing homes jobs to elsewhere.

The findings were that: From the five highest rated responses from the previous question, the participants also noted that all the factors listed were important even though some were more important than other.

a) Low Pay:

The explanations on pay were that the private nursing homes pay was far less than the HSE ones and that wages did not match the job they did as the workload demanded more from them. Moreover, other respondents added that they were more experienced but still got paid very little which drove them to seek for other employment where they will be recognised for their experience.

b) Workload:

More explanations pertaining number two on the list was workload, most respondents who choose this factor believed that the nursing homes had high workload hence putting a lot of pressure on staff and resulting in low quality of work. Moreover, the respondents

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felt they were being overworked where there were shortages as they will be doing another person's work on top of theirs. In addition, they felt that the workload and responsibilities for carer's kept increasing day by day and affecting them physically and mentally while pay remained stagnant.

c) Work-life Balance:

On the third top list was work-life balance, the respondent's feedback was that it was important for them to have a good work-life to clear their thoughts before their next shift. In addition, some added that a good work-life alleviated stress while some carers believed a good work and social life balance was good for them as they might then get over worked because of the already demanding job.

d) Management Support:

The fourth highest on the list was management support; the respondents felt that management weren't supportive enough. They felt they had to carry the load on their shoulders which made it more straining on top of their daily job pressure and engagements.

e) Job Satisfaction:

The last higher rated amongst the 12 factors was the job satisfaction. Most of the participants felt the care worker job was unsatisfactory as it paid less, was stressful, demanded a lot and overworked hence undervalued. Some stressed the job was the toughest among all the healthcare jobs as they were more hands on than the rest of other cadre. Also, some respondents gave feedback that there was no career progression which made it less attractive and some added that the job was mentally, physically and emotionally draining.

Below is an illustration of how participants responded:

Figure 13 - Please explain why you have indicated this factor as most appealing/attractive.

With this last question being a continuation from the above question, respondents were further asked to elaborate on why they chose their answer as the most important. This question again was a chance for more valid data to be obtained from the respondents. The below visual representation was to give the reader a sense of how the respondents participated in their choosing. Word cloud works in a way that the font size of a word depicts the frequency or importance of the word in text.

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will enough staff factors happy company need affect important
time pay life work makes job clients good
working environment employees factors important care support workload

Section F – Employee Participation in the company:

This part of the section was carried out to help answer the objective "to suggest other effective measures for implementation by management to improve the turnover amongst HCA's and increase staff retention"

Findings were that:

Communicating more with staff about what is happening in the organisation, if implemented would indeed improve the turnover and increase staff retention. The findings received were an overwhelming agreement as opposed to disagreement. The staff surveyed strongly agreed with a 60.4% (58) and a 36.5% (35) agreed that communicating more with them about what was happening in the organisation would certainly increase retention efforts. There were none respondents who were unsure or were caught up in the middle. However, there were few who disagreed at 1.04% and a 2.08% who strongly disagreed that communicating more with them about what was happening in the organisation would certainly increase retention efforts. See Appendix D - fig 28 for a further illustration on the above findings.

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Another factor which was measured to find out whether communication more with staff about issues that affected their job would play an important role in efforts to retain more staff. The findings resulted in 64.6% strongly agreeing that the practice would be important, and a further 31.3% agreeing it would still be important in efforts to retain them. There were just a handful who neither agreed nor disagreed at 2.08% and a further 2,08% who strongly disagreed that communicating more with them about issues affecting their job would not be important in trying to retain them. Lastly the finding showed that there were no respondents who disagreed with the statement question. See also Appendix D - fig 29 for the results.

The other practice investigated was whether the provision of more job-related training was important to the nursing homes staff in efforts to try and retain them. The findings found that most employees strongly agreed at 55.2%, and another set agreed with 36.5% while 6.3% were caught up in the middle that the provision of more job-related training was important in retaining them. Furthermore, there were only two respondents who disagreed with the statement question thus 1.04% disagreed while a further 1.04% strongly disagreed. See Appendix D - fig 30 for the demonstration.

Lastly fig 31, found that allowing more staff participation in the decision-making process would be important in helping the management retain or encourage more staff to stay with them. The findings obtained showed that more care assistants strongly agreed with a 52.08%, another set also agreed with a 40.6%, and just a 4.2% neither agreed nor disagreed, while there were none who disagreed but there were a 3.2% who strongly disagreed with the question at hand. See Appendix D - fig 31 for more details.

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION
INTRODUCTION

This chapter is an elaboration of the prevision chapter, chapter 4. The purpose of it is to expand on the results that were found in relation to the objectives of the study. This research was assessing the turnover among nursing assistants in a private nursing home environment. The study had set five objectives in attaining of profound conclusions. This objectives were to; i) establish if there were any notable differences in turnover rate levels between age groups, gender and nationality, ii) suggest most effective measures for implementation by management to improve the turnover amongst HCA's, iii) establish the most important factors that carers consider when deciding to stay or leave an employment, iv) explore possible factors that contribute to retention of carers and v) identify and determine the reasons behind the high turnover intention and one sub question which was to find out if turnover affect morale and increase pressure on remaining staff. For easy understanding, the researcher set sub headings based on each sub research question or objective. The sub headings were;

a) Demographics
b) Effects of turnover on staff.
c) Job and organisational influencers of staff turnover.
d) Employee retention.
e) Reasons for turnover intentions and
f) Employee participation in company.

This way most of the questionnaire findings were then broken down/divided to be used under each sub heading. A further illustration and discussion will be seen below under the next following heading.

THE MAIN FINDINGS

Demographics:

 ''to establish if there were any notable differences in turnover rate levels between age groups, gender and nationality''

This section found out that more woman than man worked in the private nursing homes. This could have been influenced by the social stigma that still lingers which were triggered in the times when gender roles were still strictly defined (Tri-Pham, 2018). Also, the age group which was seen active for this job ranged between 25 – 44 years of age possibly because of their activeness. Masum, Azad, Hoque, Beh, Wanke & Arslan, (2016) pointed out that nurse assistants are confronted with a lot of both physical and emotional job stress due to that they perform extremely physically demanding and emotionally draining work. Furthermore, the study also realised that more Irish nationalities were the ones occupying HCA's jobs in high percentages than the non-Eu and Eu citizens. This however could have been influenced by non-citizen not able to acquire work permits/visas, O'Regan (2018) explained that the government had restrictions in place particularly on the issue of employment permits despite having ready supply of workers in nearby countries such as in the Philippines.

Effects of turnover on staff:

''Does turnover affect morale and increase pressure on remaining staff''

The main findings for this sub research question was that; turnover brought different impacts every time a staff left. The remaining staff were faced with increased workloads and low levels of workplace morale as they were seen to carry the leavers workload on top of theirs, Nikravin and Frauenheim (2014) believes those impacts not only affect the workers but can affect the employers as the end results would mean the workers may end up looking for more less demanding jobs. Furthermore, the researcher found that leaver also attracted those remained to also seek alternative work as they wanted them to follow their path. Moreover, the productivity of the company would be impacted hence records go down due to insufficient labour and manpower, (Fox, 2017).

Job and Organisational influencers of staff turnover:

''to establish the most important factors that carers consider when deciding to stay or leave an employer''.

From the primary data collection that was carried out, the findings were that; carers viewed pay or wages as on the most important factors they considered when deciding to leave or stay. The discussion around this was that, carers felt they were not well paid while doing an intensive job. Different sources also sighted that when employees felt renumeration was poor they tend to seek other options which would pay them well. They noted that human beings not only care about their jobs but also want to feel they are worth what they are doing as well as a feeling of appreciation by being paid well. Moreover, general well-being, workload, bad management and work pressure were some of the factors which carers considered when deciding to leave or stay. Scholars' also revealed that when working conditions are not desirable, workers leave. Furthermore, Aerden, Moors Levecque and Vanroelen (2015) argument reveals that working conditions of nursing care assistants are unappealing hence will result in high turnover rates.

Employee Retention:

''to explore possible factors that contribute to retention of carer's''.

The surveyed carers expressed that good pay/wages, reasonable workload, work-life balance, managerial support and job satisfaction were some of the top factors which they considered when deciding to stay with their employers. A positive work environment played a huge impact in a worker's life, because it provided a feeling of contentedness (Ferreira and Martinez, 2012). They also outlined that when employees go to work their minds get filled with expectations and desires. Moreover, these factors seemed to be very important to them as they had high rankings than the rest of the other 12 factors they were presented with and had choose from. In addition, as those were the factors, they believe have an influence on them to not leave, the management will have to make all things possible to centre their strategies around for keeping their employees. Furthermore, Siptu health division organiser Mr Bell stressed it was time the healthcare assistants received an upgrade to their salaries, he claimed most public and private companies had all suspended the job evaluation reviews since the economic crash back in 2008 but the healthcare assistants job and their responsibility had changed dramatically over the years (Wall, 2018). According to Tropeano (2015), a healthcare job could be a highly demanding and stressful field which needs a great personally so to serve the clients with a calm demeanour and healthy outlook but could only be achieved if they too had a good supporting system, someone who will listen to their cries, appreciate their efforts and provide all the resources and guidance in order to avoid burnout and stress. Which lies in the hands of the management to prove a health environment and avoid unnecessary turnover.

Employee Participation in the company:

"to suggest other effective measures for implementation by management to improve the turnover amongst HCA's and increase staff retention"

The other findings to increase staff retention if improved or implement by management was that, carer's wished to be more involved in decision making especially when it came to their job-related matters. They further wished for better improved communication within the workplace, thus connecting with people rather than just talking. Bosworth (2017) also support the motion that good communication within the workplace brings about powerful benefits such as having more engaged employees who can better align with the company policies, procedures and the entire aims and objectives. More over he also felt especially in the healthcare sector, another benefit of engaged employees can create better client relationships as their work involves more client facing interactions every minute.

How the findings relate to the literature:

Almost all the findings related to what the literature had found. The literature emphasized more on those factors which influences turnover such as the environmental, personal and organizational factors which included sub headings such as working conditions which broadly talks of the work environment and all the existing circumstances it brings with and affect labor; for example, job hours and physical aspects and all the responsibilities of the job. Which in a sense it covers general wellbeing, job satisfaction, work-life balance, job stress and training and development.

The main findings were that in the working conditions were not satisfactory they then drive away employees or push them away to seek for better opportunities and or offers. For example, if the workload was too heavy and with no support, then it affects employee's morale and increase pressure and frustration while at the same time driving productivity down. and further due to those frustrations, turnover increases and retention strategies are failed.

CHAPTER 6 – RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION
INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the proposed theory is measured practically in line with the findings and objectives of the study. It has never over the years that its breaking news that the healthcare sectors face shortages across their field. With these shortages comes departments suffering more than other, one sector also struggling more than the other. In this study, the focus was on private sector for privately owned nursing homes. Only three homes were used for this study.

The recommendations however were drawn from the research objective findings, especially from questions which directly asked the respondents what they wished could be done to make happy and stay with their employers. The participants did come with their suggestion which transcribed of their feelings.

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Many of the employees however, felt they would not hesitate to leave their jobs due to low pay that was offered to them even though their job responsibilities changed drastically over the years. The researcher however with all the research done, feels its ideal for the nursing homes to increase their employees pay which ranges from only 10 to 11, 50 per per hour while at least merging it to the HSE pay scales as they were losing more of their workers to HSE who had enticing benefits as well. The new upgraded HSE scale illustrate below;

Table 4 – HSE pay scales

CONSOLIDATED SALASY SCALES FOR HSE (1st April 2019) – in Euro			
Job	1ST year scale (€)	2nd year scale (€)	3rd year scale (€)
General healthcare assistant	27, 647	29,306	30,302
Care-assistant (intellectual disability)	26, 303	27,320	28, 700

Furthermore, it is important to realise that every year there is an increment on the HSE staff while with nursing homes the salaries are stagnant for years before an increment could be done.

However, because this development will come at a cost to the homes, it is still highly recommended as it will curb unnecessary turnover and while increasing retention. Also, this could benefit the companies in future by having to have saved from losing lots of staff and avoiding costly recruitment and training and development of new staff.

Another recommendation that the researcher strongly feel should be implement or improved is a non-costly strategy of communication. The findings saw to it that a lot of carers were unhappy with poor communication within their workplace environments. This could be developed by having group meetings or briefings as well as coming up with team building sessions where employees and their management meet up to discuss about the work matters and bring suggestions on how they could be addressed. Furthermore, the researcher also every home should have suggestion boxes which management make follow up on every month end and debrief their workers because that way it will give employees some re assurances that their cries or suggestions are taken into consideration. Further to this recommendation, the researcher recommends that the suggestion be anonymous as this will give room for free speech without any fear building up.

Finally, the researcher also recommend that the management should keep recruiting more but enough staff for the work required as this will prevent the workers to have too

much workload which they all criticised in large numbers. Reducing of workload will mend a lot of surfacing problems such as work stress, work pressure, job dissatisfaction and burnout. It will also prevent unnecessary over time and long working hours which at the end can result in a failed work-life balance situation as the workers get no rest or time for their selves. The suggestion for this recruitment however would be to absorb the already readily made and available staff from the agencies that are used to cover shifts in times of shortages on the floor. Furthermore, the researcher suggests the management hold talks with a few agencies which they will use for their cover ups and suggest they are open to permanently absorb their employees which been sent to their facilities for cover up if later the employees wish to switch from agency work to more stable routined work. Because if the management absorb employees who have worked in the premises before, then chances of spending nothing on them to start producing results are 0%. Because ultimately, they will be familiar with the staff, clients, routine, management the workplace policies and procedures.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the research study was able to full fill its obligation of assessing the turnover of healthcare assistants' workers in the private nursing homes. The main aim was to investigate what were the driving forces which influenced the workers to quit their jobs. Also, the researcher further wanted to understand what the workers deemed as important to them which would entice them to stay in their jobs for long. However, all the answers to the main objectives and sub research questions were fully attempted. In summary of the main findings; was that workers were very unhappy with their workload, with their pay and felt they did not have a good work-life balance as well as being dissatisfied with their job which were also the main reasons which they quit or resigned from their jobs. Moreover, the same influencers which triggered them to leave work were the exact same to what they wanted from their management. Thus, to improve or implement those factors in question for them to be retained. Moreover, it was discovered that turnover does not only impact the employer but deeply affect the workers who carry the burdens with them

each day. Some of those impacts if not managed in time could lead to serious issues such as mental breakdown, physical disabilities, emotional stress and low morale and at work.

Finally, it is hoped that this piece of study has shed some light on the areas of turnover and retention strategies as well as their implications. And further hope they could be implemented in private nursing homes as the focus was on them.

Scope for Further Studies:

As this study was done only in private nursing homes, it will be interesting to do a further research of same but this time focusing on public nursing homes as already lots of work research has previously been focusing more on only the nurse's for both private and public owned entities. After the public owned nursing home is undertaken, it could then bring in the possibility of comparison and make final judgment and see who has more advantages over the other.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The nursing home Ireland (NHI) manages over 437 private and voluntary homes proving over 22, 342 beds (nursinghomeIreland, 2018), however as much as there were so many homes that could have been part of the study only three nursing homes were chosen as they were closer to the researcher's home and the researcher had worked there which made it easy to get access and permission to do the studies. Also, the research had limited time to conduct the study. Even though only three homes were used for conducting the research, the researcher feels that the data obtained from all the three nursing homes accurately reflected the opinions, situations and mindset as it is in the Ireland nursing home industry.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

This study has put in place all measures possible to reduce amount of harm and risk to the participants by promoting ethical behaviour throughout the research process and activities. Bartlett et al (2001) believes observing ethics is an important procedure meant to protect the participants. First and foremost, the researcher attained the ethical clearance from the college to go ahead with their research and for confidentiality assurances of the participants. Secondly, for further certainty and protection of the respondents, the researcher went to the population sites that's the nursing homes involved to seek for permission from its management and explained what the research entailed as well as all the efforts put in place for ethical practices. Furthermore, after the directors gave permission for the study, the researcher found the need to go in person to meet all the parking persons and explain about the research and to answer questions that they may had. More again, all the questionnaires had an introductory letter attached explaining and giving assurance of participants anonymity and voluntary partake to the

study. Lastly the questionnaires did not ask for any disclose such as names and explained that all the information kept was solely for the attainment of the master's in human resources management while the information be kept only for the duration of the research.

REFLECTION/PERSONAL LEARNING STATEMENT

The research study was about the assessment of employee turnover among healthcare assistants working in private nursing home in North – Dublin. This topic was chosen as the researcher works as a healthcare assistant in an agency which sends her in different places but only to nursing homes and hospitals for the past 5 years. During the 5-year working experience, the author noticed that most of the Healthcare workers not only change work rapidly around the healthcare sector but also quite the jobs frequently and in big numbers. Also, the author realised during her time in the healthcare sector, there are lots of shortages across the industry and endless recruitment which fails to meet the demands of the sector.

Hence why the author found it fit, curious and exciting to peruse the research topic at hand. With the experience of working in the sector, the researcher never realised that

there were so many factors influencing employees to quit their jobs especially in the health sector. The researcher did a lot research whilst working on the research topic but realised there was lots and lots of research done on the nurses rather than the nursing assistants. First, it seemed like a change to find the theoretical studies pertaining to only the healthcare assistants. However, after doing the research structure to be followed, it then seemed the challenge had been overcome.

However, the researcher wondered how she was going to complete the thesis given the limited time availed. But through the determination and focus the author bowed to writing at least 1000 words per week until the end of August so to leave room for corrections and advise from her supervisor.

Throughout the research there were several, mistakes encounter but with the supervisor's advice the, mistakes were corrected. As the researcher used quantitative research, there was much to learn especially the different tools of analysing the data. One had to be familiar with different methods and their analysis tools and techniques in order to make the best decision for their analysis. Found this part challenging but rewarding at the same time. Throughout the research study, the author felt that she could have explored the SPSS tool and use it for her analysis but found there wasn't really need for it as the survey software worked best for her, it didn't require much learning and was very easy to use especially with the author's limited research time. Having completed the research study, the author felt her questionnaire asked a whole lot of questions which ended up not being used specially to answer the research sub questions and the objectives. Lastly as the research study progressed, the author grew confidence, the writing and researching skills improved because before the study' her referencing and linking of paragraphs were not of good standard.

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An Exploration of Job, Organizational, and Environmental Factors Associated with High and Low Nursing Assistant Turnover

Australian Health Review [Vol 25 • No 2] 2002136 The nursing workforce in Canada and Australia: two sides of the same coin CHRISTINE DUFFIELD AND LINDA O'BRIEN-PALLAS

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A – COVERING LETTER

08 Maple House

Applewood

Swords – Dublin

07 July 2019

Dear Participant

Re: ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER AMONG HEALTHCARE ASSISTANTS (HCA's) IN DUBLIN IRELAND…

I am a postgraduate student at the National College of Ireland undertaking a Master of Arts in Human Resource Management.

This study involves the gathering of information through the administration of questionnaires to healthcare assistants of three private nursing homes in Dublin who have at least 1-year experience in the field and are on either permanent or contractual basis/part-time contracts.

Your response is critical. Please note that no one from your organization will see your questionnaire. No information will be released that might identify any individual. Be assured that the information gathered shall only be used purely for academic purposes. Please do not omit any questions. This is not a test, but simply a measure of your attitudes to the factors that influence your experience at work.

Your noble co-operation towards the success of this exercise is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Neo K. Boatametse (Researcher)

Contacts: 089 959 8558,

email: nboatametse@yahoo.com

APPENDIX B – QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A - BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION SCALE

Please indicate your selection with (√) where appropriate:

1.   Gender

Male	Female

2.   Age group

Under 25	25-35	36-45	46-55	56 or older

3.   Nationality

Irish Nationality	Eu Citizen	Non-Eu

4.   How many years have you been in the nursing/care industry?

1 year	2 to 3	4 to 10	11 to 20	More than 20

5.   What is your current level of Care qualifications?

Pre-Nursing	Full Fetac level 5 care support	1-3 Fetac modules (minor)	5 modules (Major)

6.   How many hours per week do you work?

Less than 20hrs	Just 20 hrs	Between 20 & 30	Between 30 & 45	More than 45

7.   Which department do you work in?

Care of the older person	Alzheimer's	Mental health	Disability support	Other's

8.   Please state your main reason for leaving your previous place of employment.

_____.

SECTION B – STAFF TURNOVER AND RETENTION RELATED SCALE

This questionnaire is designed to assess the factors that affect your decision to stay or leave an employment. Please do not omit any questions. This is not a test but simply a measure of your attitude to the factors that influence your experience at work.

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	The public reputation of the organization would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2.	The relationship that the organization has with its patients would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	The purpose or vision of the organization would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	The organizational culture would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The training and development opportunities available would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	My work life balance would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The size of my workload would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The amount of flexibility I have in my working hours would be an important influence on me leaving.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The level of significance or importance of my job would be an important influence on me staying.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The level of autonomy that my job provides would be an important influence on me staying.	1	2	3	4	5

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. The overall level of job satisfaction I have would be important influence on me staying.	1	2	3	4	5
12. When an employee leaves, the workload increases.	1	2	3	4	5
13. There are enough tools and resources for the job.	1	2	3	4	5
14. When an employee leaves, workplace morale is affected.	1	2	3	4	5
WORKPLACE STRESS					
15. Your current job is stressful.	1	2	3	4	5
16. The working environment is positive.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Workplace stress has made you consider looking for another job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Workplace stress affects your productivity.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I often feel under pressure at work	1	2	3	4	5

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
20.	Recently, I have been feeling unhappy and depressed about my work.	1	2	3	4	5
Possible recommendations for increasing staff retention: This section examines possible recommendations that could be made to an employer to increase staff retention. Please indicate how important the following practices (if implemented) would influence your decision to stay or leave an employment.						
21.	Communicating more with staff about what is happening in the organization would be important.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Communicating more with staff about issues affecting their jobs would be important.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Providing more job-related training would be important.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Allowing more staff participation in the decision-making process would be important.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Increasing pay in line with performance or contribution would be important.	1	2	3	4	5

26. Please indicate which of the below factors would be the most important in making   a decision to stay or leave an employment.

Autonomy	

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Training and Development	
Relationship the organization has with its Patients	
Pay	
Culture	
Work life Balance	
Job Satisfaction	
Management support	
Career Development	
Workload	
Flexibility	

27. Please explain why you have indicated this factor as most important.

_____.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire!!!!

APPENDIX C – JOB AND ORGANISATIONAL INFLUENCERS OF STAFF
TURNOVER

Figure 14 - The relationship that the organization has with its patients would be an important influence on me leaving.

The relationship that the organization has with its patients would be an important influence on me leaving.
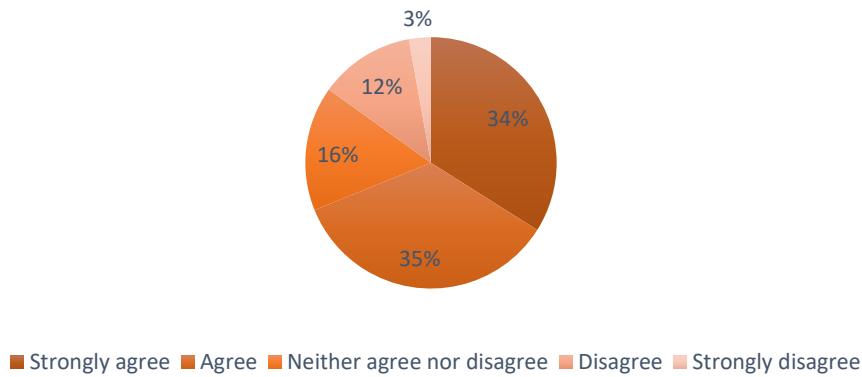
From a total of 123 respondents, 17 skipped the questions. However, the results showed that most of the respondents felt they strongly agreed and agreed with the factor that the relationship an organisation had with its patients would influence them leaving. Those responses accounted for 34% and 35% respectively. About 16% neither agreed or disagreed, while those who disagreed were 12% and strongly disagreed set at a mere 3%.

Figure 15 - The purpose or vision of the organization would be an important influence on me leaving.
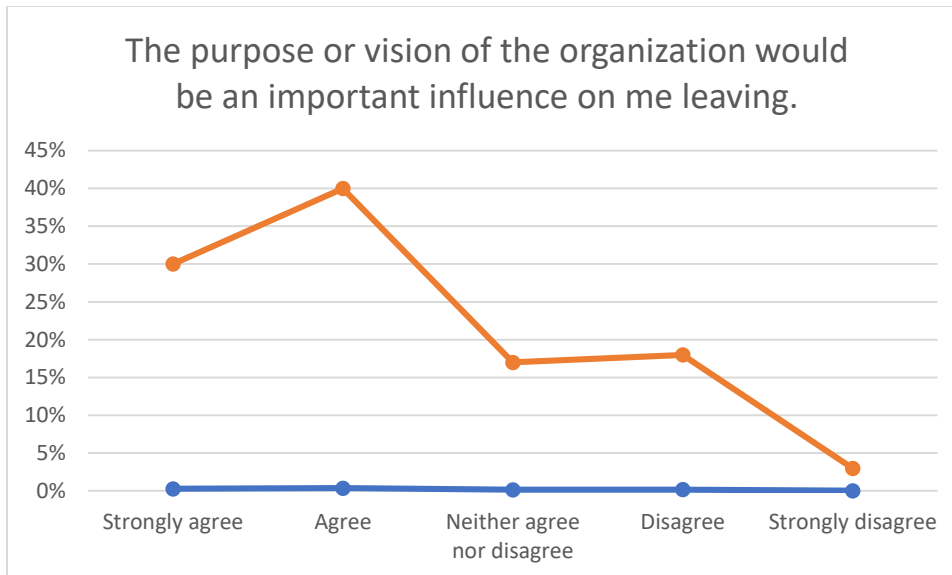
The findings from the question indicate that, a total of 37.7% agreed, followed by a total of 28.3% of those whom strongly agreed with the question at hand and the numbers dropped down to those who disagreed at 17%; the ones who were stuck in the middle by a total of 16% and a final 3% of those who disagreed.

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Figure 16 - The organizational culture would be an important influence on me leaving.
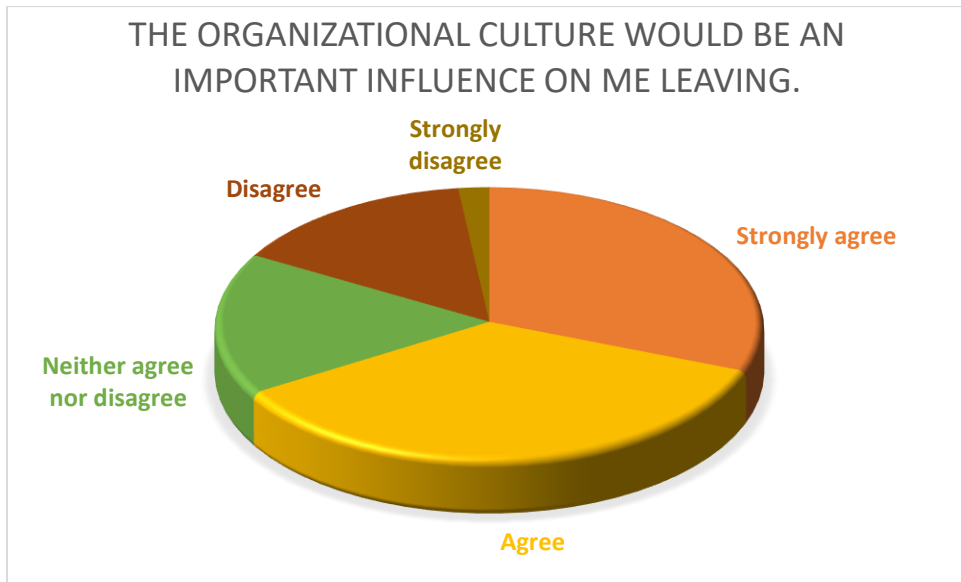
The finding on this factor determined that 36% of the respondents felt and agreed that this factor would be an important influence on a decision to leave, followed by a good 31% of whom strongly agreed, then a 17% were caught up in the middle and a slight decrease of 15% disagreed with the statement and finally just an inch of 2% strongly disagreed with the statement question.

Figure 17 - The training and development opportunities available would be an important influence on me leaving.
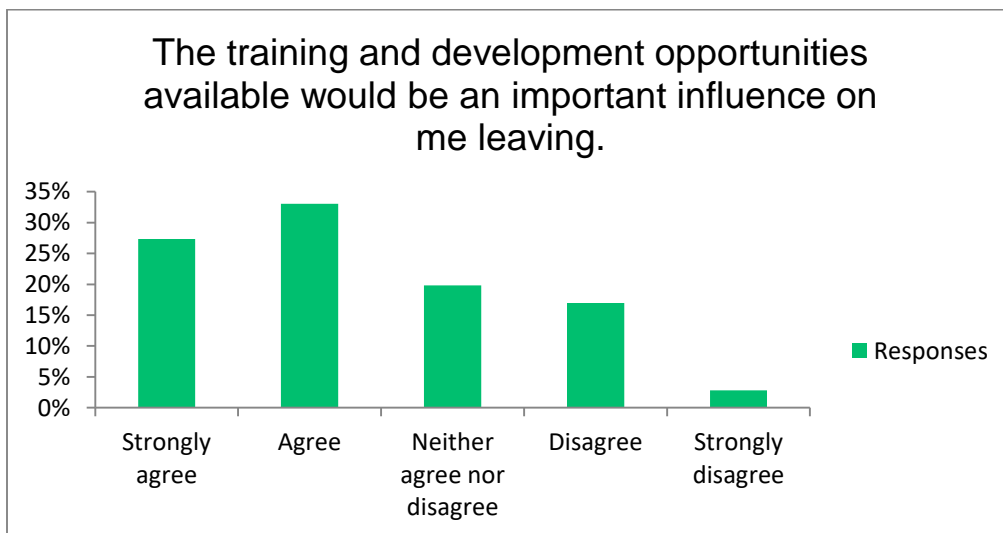
The findings from this factor determined that 33% of participants agreed that the availability of training and development opportunities would be an important influence on

them leaving, while 27% strongly agreed, 20% neither agreed nor disagreed, 17% disagreed and a final 3% strongly disagreed.

Figure 18 - My work life balance would be an important influence on me leaving.
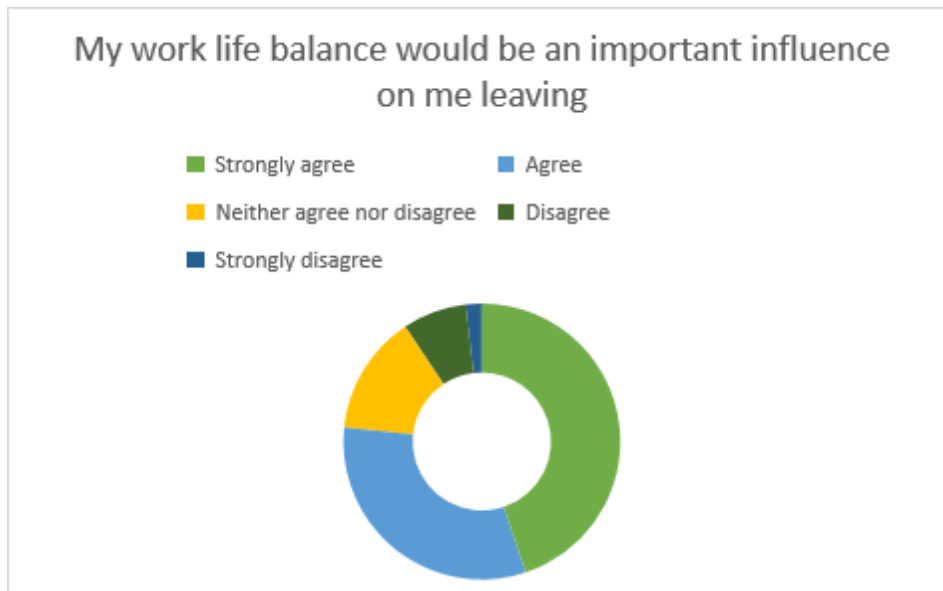
The findings from this question resulted in 44% of participants strongly indicating that the factor would be an important influence on them leaving, followed by those who agreed with at 32%, and neither agreed nor disagreed at 14%, and only 7% disagreed while a final 2% strongly disagreed.

Figure 19 - The size of my workload would be an important influence on me leaving.
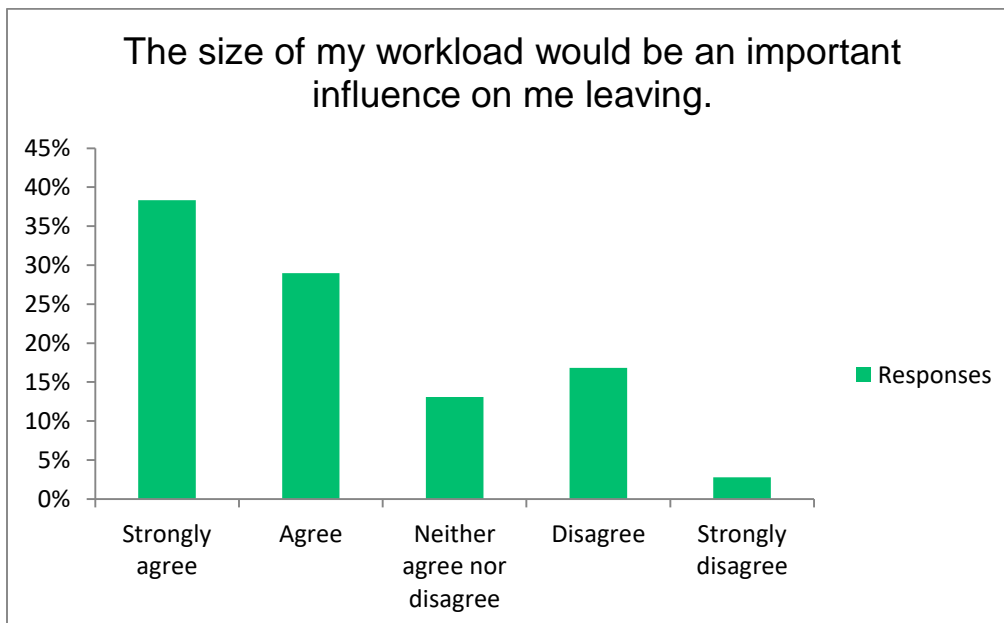
The other factor that was measured was the size of the workers workload, whether they considered it an important influence while making decisions to leave an employer. The findings resulted in 38% of respondents strongly agreeing, 29% just agreed, and 17% disagreed, while those whom neither agreed nor disagreed set at 13% and a final 3% strongly disagreed.

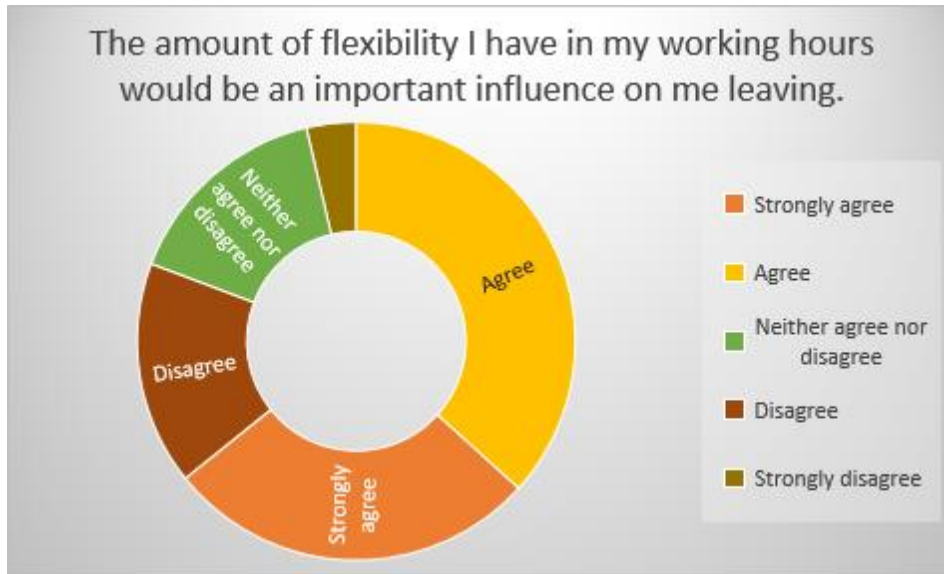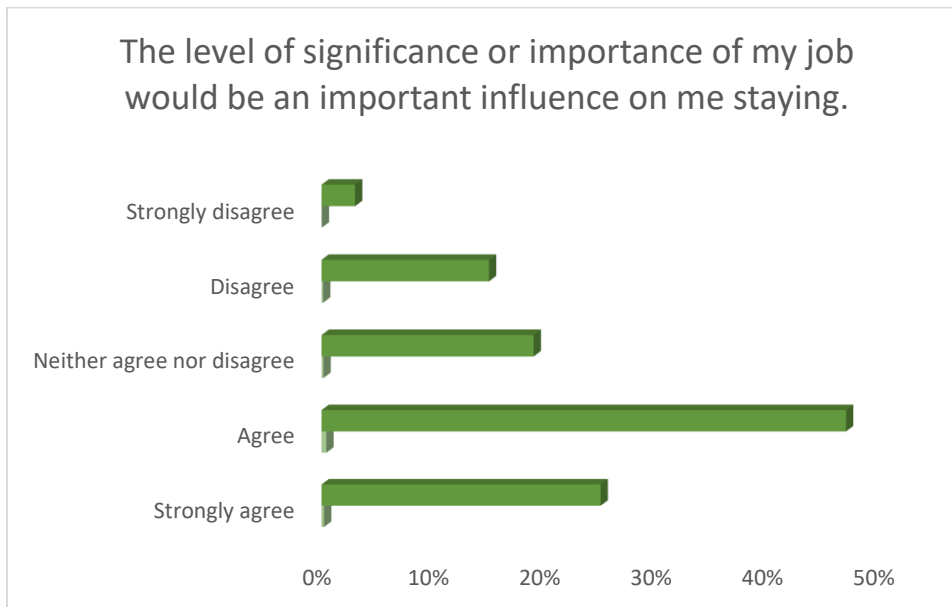**Figure 20 - The amount of flexibility I have in my working hours would be an important influence on me leaving.**

Figure 21 - The level of significance or importance of my job would be an important influence on me staying.


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The next factor measured by the questionnaire was the level of significance of the job. The findings determined that still respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the factor was an important influence in making them stay with their employer. They agreed in high margins of 43% and another 23% for strongly agreeing, while neither agree nor disagree had 17% and those in disagreements below at 14% for disagreeing and a 3% for strongly disagreeing.

Figure 22 - The level of autonomy that my job provides would be an important influence on me staying

The level of autonomy that my job provides would be an important influence on me staying.
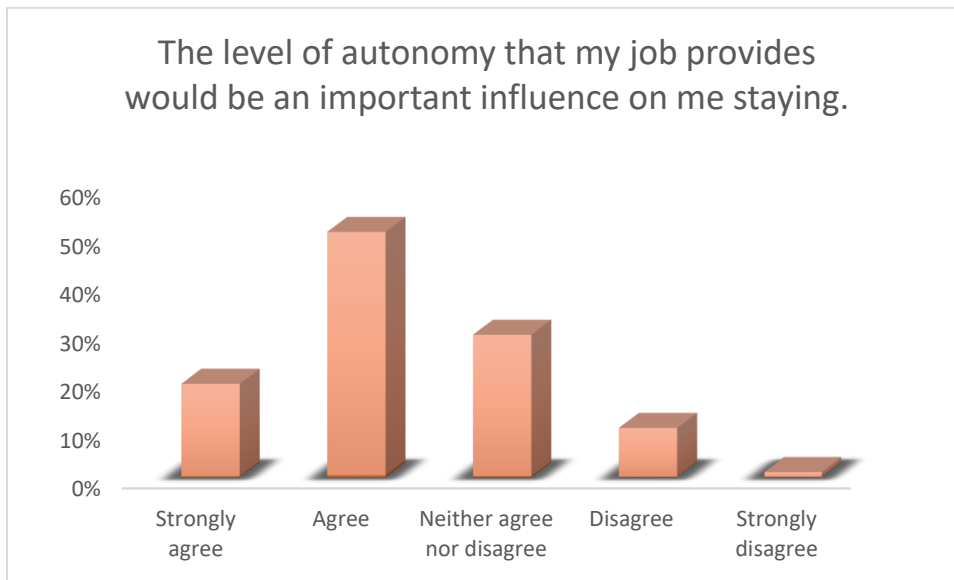
The other factor examined in the questionnaire was the level of autonomy in the job. To surprising figures, it really seemed autonomy had a huge influence on the decision to stay. A massive 45.9% agreed they would stay while another 17% strongly agreed, which as well made over half (69) of the total respondents at a total of 109. However, there were still those whom were not sure whether it did play a part or not, with a total of 27%, and a very small figure accounted to those who were not in agreement; those who disagreed stood at 9% and the strongly disagreed ones at 0.9%.

Figure 23 - The overall level of job satisfaction I have would be important influence on me staying.

65
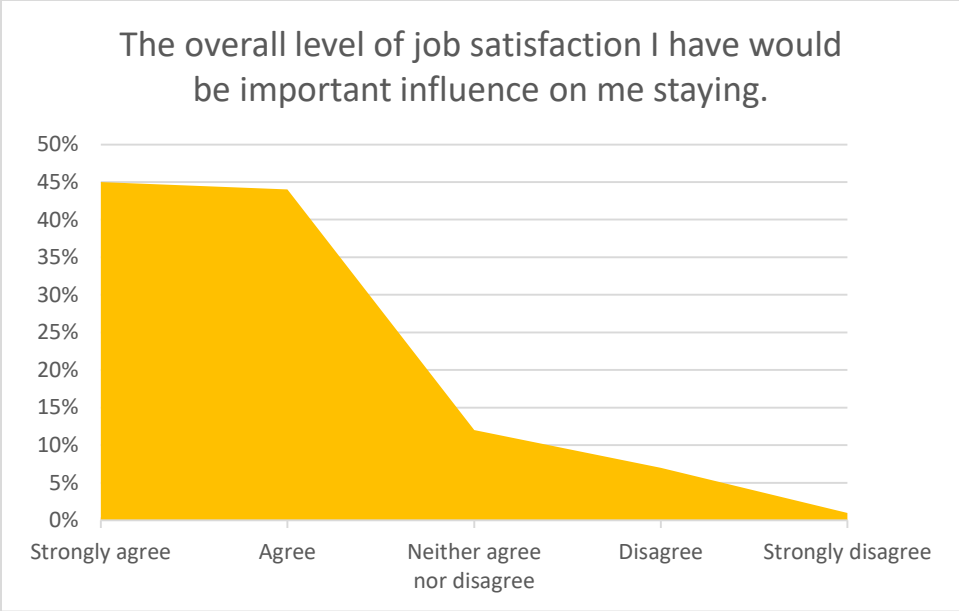
The findings from this question revealed that both who strongly agreed and those who agreed felt very strong about level of job satisfaction while considered to stay. The results show that those in agreement topped the numbers with strongly agreeing at the top with 41% and those who agreed at 40%. Those figures alone made at least 82% of the overall survey population. Then there were still those who were not certain and stood at 11%, those who disagreed at 6% and least of all those who disagreed at just 0.92%.

Figure 24 - The public reputation of the organization would be an important influence on me leaving
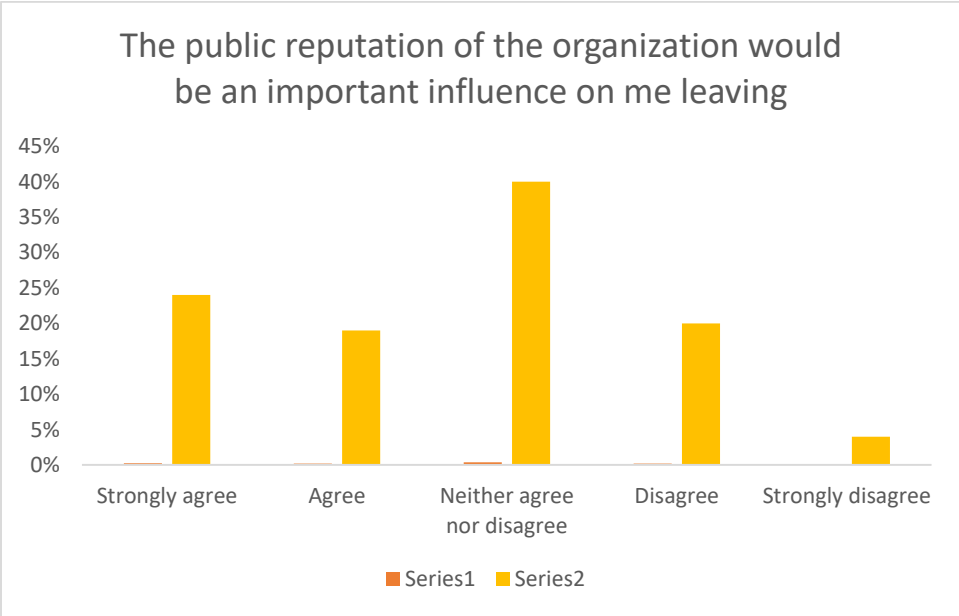
The findings to the above question found that, many of the respondents neither agreed nor agreed with the statement question with a total percentage of 37.4% thus 40 people

of the 107 whom responded as a total of 16 people skipped the question. While 22.4% strongly agreed with the statement a further and close margin of 17.8% agreed and 18.7% disagree. However, there were those respondents whom felt the question at hand was not an important influence if they wished to leave their employer as they strongly disagreed with the statement with a 3.74%.

APPENDIX D – EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN THE COMPANY:

Figure 25 - Communicating more with staff about what is happening in the organization would be important.
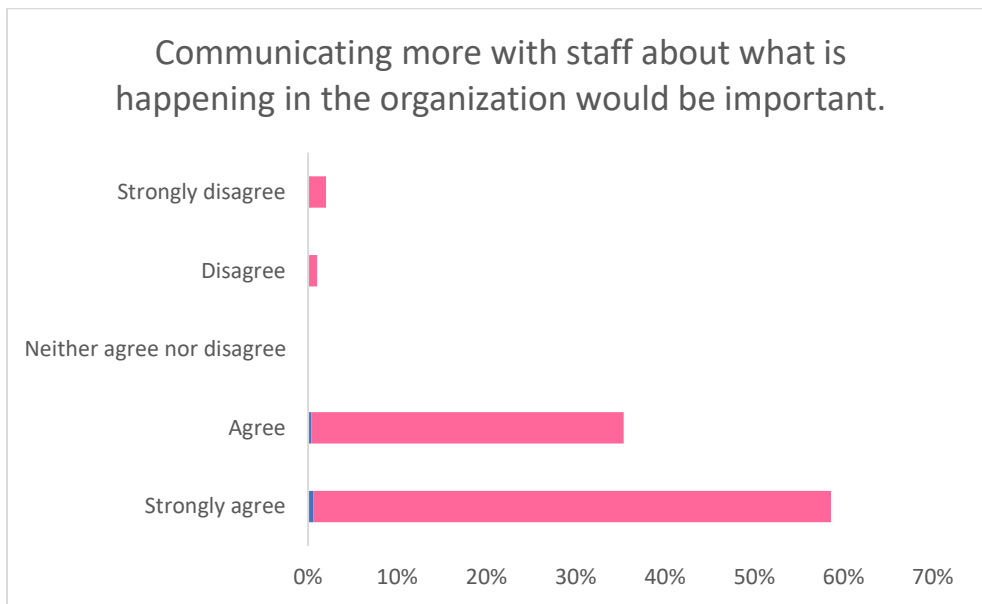

Communicating more with staff about what is happening in the organization would be important.

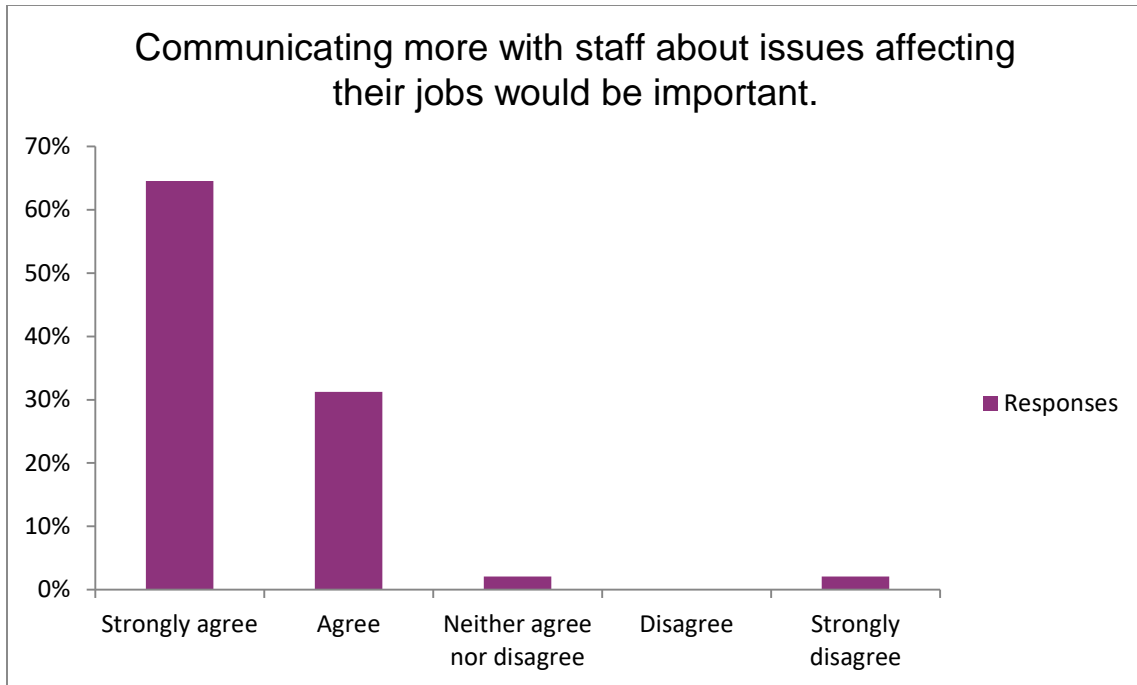**Figure 26 - Communicating more with staff about issues affecting their jobs would be important.**

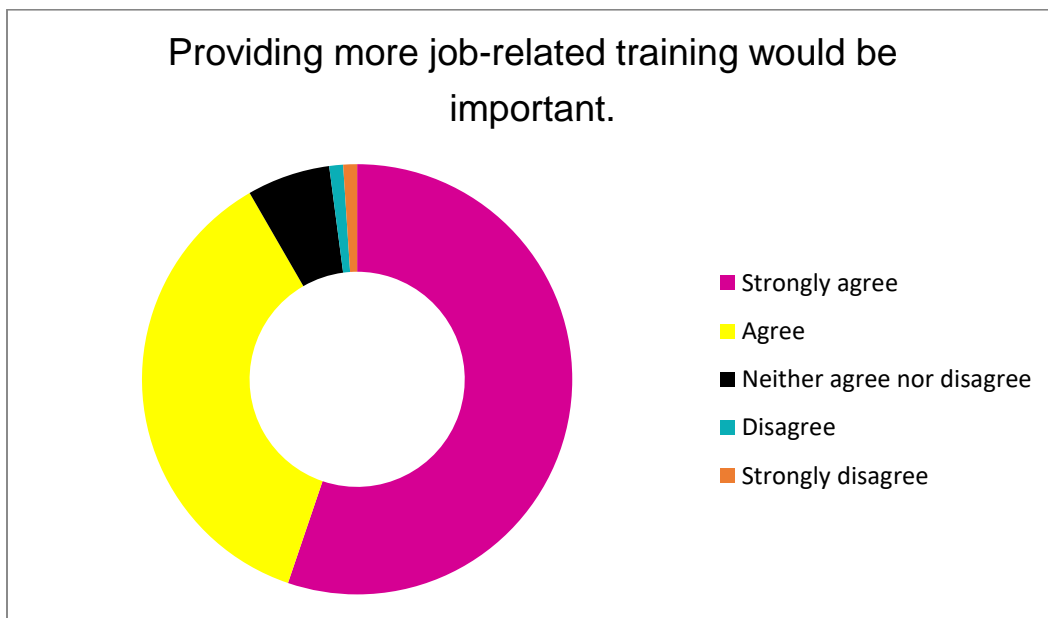**Figure 27 - Providing more job-related training would be important.**

Figure 28 - Allowing more staff participation in the decision-making process would be important.

Allowing more staff participation in the decision-making process would be important.