

Is Pay Really a Driving Influence on the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Irish Health Services?

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to answer the question “Is Pay Really a Driving Influence on the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Irish Health Services?”. There are many different factors, which influence both the recruitment and retention of all employees including pay. The impact of these various factors is investigated in this thesis and the aim is to answer the question is pay the driving factor or are there additional factors which have a greater effect on the recruitment and retention of Irish nurses.

Health services globally are suffering of high turnover. Nursing shortages have been acknowledged as not only a national issue in Ireland but also worldwide. Ireland currently have a growing and ageing population which is putting an increased pressure on existing nursing staff working in Ireland. Currently the Irish Health Services are struggling to fill its nursing vacancies and the country is said to be losing many of its nursing graduates to attractive foreign countries who are seen as offering better pay, working conditions and career progression. This nursing shortage reached its peak when members of the Irish Nursing and Midwifery Organisation (INMO) decided upon strike action in early 2019 and demanded pay increases.

In an attempt to answer the research question, a quantitative method was used. An online survey was distributed through “Survey Planet” to all the participants and received responses from nurses working in both the public and private sector in Ireland. There were a total of 99 responses received from the survey.

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List of Abbreviations

Irish Nursing and Midwifery Organisation – INMO

Gross Domestic Product – GDP

European Union – EU

International Monetary Fund – IMF

Health Service Executive – HSE

Whole Time Equivalent – WTE

Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland – NMBI

The Chartered Institute for Personnel Development - CIPD

Statistical Package for Social Sciences - SPSS

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD

National Health Service – NHS

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The global economic crisis hit Ireland in 2008, at this time the Irish economy was highly dependent on the building sector and property sector. When this collapsed in 2008, the Irish Governments finances fell apart and they were put under increased strain, as a result, Ireland cut its health budget by €3 billion around 20% between the years 2008 and 2013. Ireland's gross domestic product (GDP) shrank by 7% in 2009 (Arie, 2013).

Figure 1 below shows recession severity index scores placing Ireland as the third highest in Europe. In this time, Ireland was required to seek external financial assistance in the form of EU/IMF loans due to the severity of its economic situation. During this time, Ireland passed through the gravest economic crisis in its history, where austerity resulted in pro-cyclical cuts to the health services and its revenue and capital budgets. From 2008 to 2014, the Irish Government introduced cutbacks in numbers and in pay. The Irish Government announced an embargo on recruitment in 2009, which particularly affected the Irish Public Health Care Sector. Nursing and Midwifery staff make up a third of the total health service workers in Ireland. During this time the government instructed all recruitment activity was placed on an immediate hold (HSE, 2009).

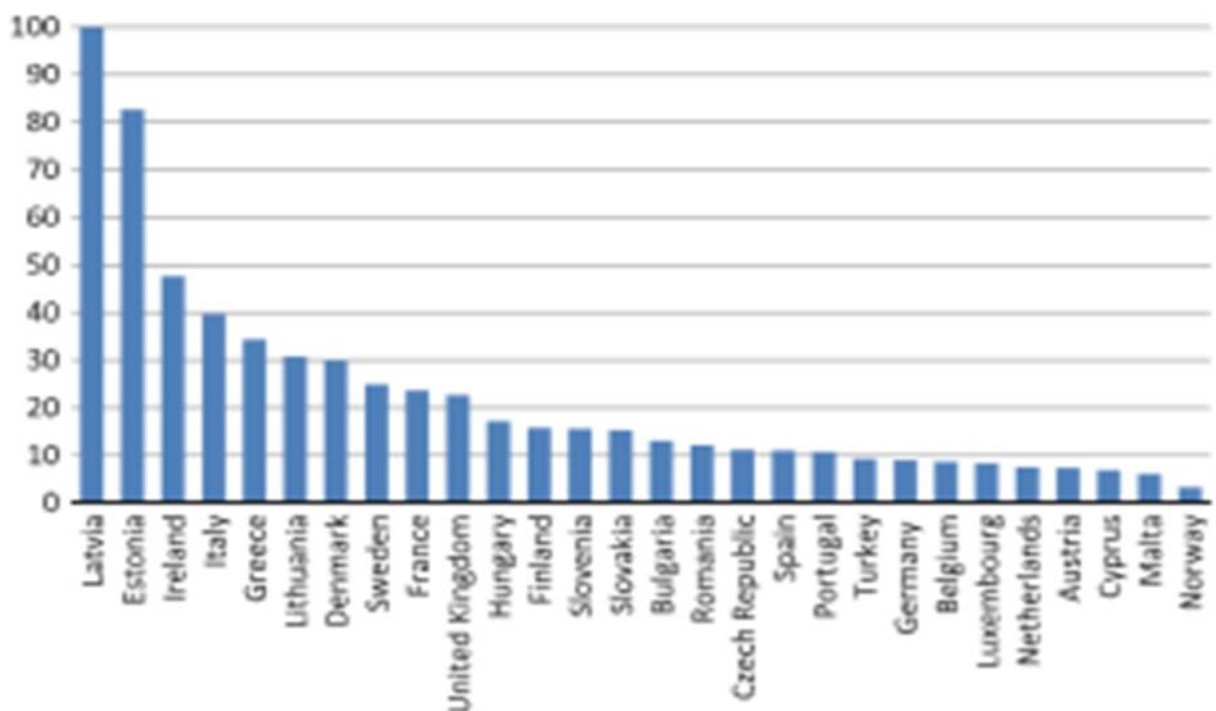


Figure 1: Recession Severity Index 2009 (Int J Health Care Finance Econ, 2013)

1.2 Current Situation

Ireland is presently experiencing a challenging time with regards to nurse recruitment and retention as it is at an all-time low this can possibly be perceived as a result of these previous cuts, which were made, and the embargo which was placed. Irish nurses recently went on strike in January and February of 2019, which was, only ever the second time in The Irish Nurses and Midwives Organisation (INMO) 100-year history that its members have called a national strike. Nurses and midwives in the INMO opted for strike action due to ongoing issues around staff shortages, which they claimed were being triggered by low pay, and as a result are leaving the public health service unable to recruit and retain enough nurses and midwives to safely care for patients. It was reported by the INMO that 2018 saw 108,227 patients without hospital beds, which was a record high. Between 2014 and 2017 the INMO maintained that €24m was spent by the Health Services Executive (HSE) on employing expensive agency staff costing the State much more than permanent staff would as they reportedly struggled to entice nurses into permanent positions. (INMO, 2018).

The rate of nurse turnover within the HSE was 7.9% in 2016 and was seen to have dropped slightly to 7.3% in 2017. In 2016, approx. 4,300 new nurses started in the HSE while 3,500 nurses left and in 2017, approx. 5,000 new nurses started while 3,300 nurses left (HSE, 2017).

The INMO's general secretary Phil Ni Sheaghda (2019) stated, "There is rightly a deep anger and frustration at the conditions in which nurses and midwives are forced to work. There is a large gap between the care we are trained to provide, and what can actually be offered in practice".

The above figures suggest that the HSE was and is struggling to recruit and retain nurses at the level needed. In 2015, It had been promised by the Minister for Health at the time Leo Varadkar that 1000 new nurses would be hired after it was recognised by the Irish government that Ireland was in a crisis. Yet the INMO reported in 2018 that the HSE failed to recruit the required numbers of nurses and midwives in the workforce plan, which was set out for 2017. (INMO, 2018)

Figure 2 shows the numbers of nurses and midwives whole time equivalents (WTE) employed in the HSE between 2007 and 2016, The figure below shows a decrease from 2007 until 2013 it then slightly increases from 2014 to 2017.

Table 1. Annual Nursing and Midwifery Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) Census (Note: the annual census figures include approx. 800 nursing students as WTE per annum)		
December of Year:	Total WTE	Change
2007	39,006	N/A
2008	38,108	-898
2009	37,466	-1,540
2010	36,503	-2,503
2011	35,902	-3,104
2012	34,637	-4,369
2013	33,768	-5,238
2014	34,505	-4,502
2015	35,353	-3,653
2016	35,835	-3,171
2017	36,777	-2229

Figure 2: Nurse and midwifery WTE census showing a decrease in nurses in Ireland (INMO, 2018)

What must also be taken into consideration when looking at these figures is the fact that Ireland is shown to have a growing and ageing population. The 2016 Census shows that population has grown by 3.8% since the previous census carried out in 2011. The 2016 Census also showed that the Irish population is living longer; the population over 65 has increased by 19.1% since the Census in 2011 this is seen below in Figure 3 (CSO, 2017).

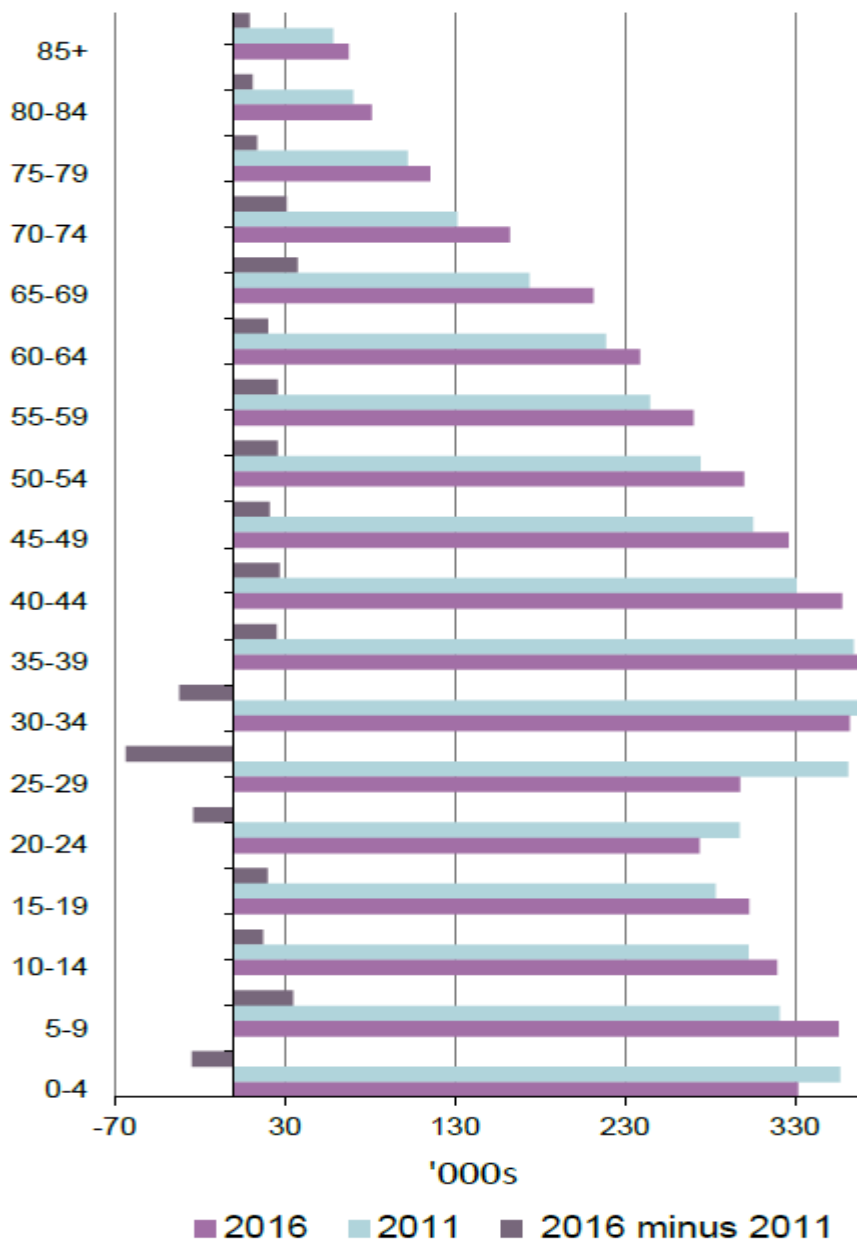


Figure 3: Changes in population structure, 2011-2016 (CSO, 2016)

In the HSE National Service Plan (2018) the above factors are acknowledged and the HSE even state that the trend will continue and forecasts that people aged over 65 will grow by a further 18% between the years of 2019 and 2024. The above factor coupled with the fact that there was a 14% decrease in all graduates in nursing courses in Ireland between 2011 and 2015 validate the different factors that are leading to this nursing crisis (Higher Education Authority, 2017).

Yet contradictory to the above the Irish Government do state there is a growing supply of nurses to the Irish public health system and that this suggests there is a continued interest and attractiveness of nursing as a career (Public Services Pay Commission, 2019).

Heidari et al., (2017) outlines how nurse retention has been recognized by The World Health Organization (2011) as a worldwide priority, due to the fact that developed and developing countries all face a shortage in nursing staff. The supply demand gaps for nurses are reported to be widening internationally leading to serious quality and safety concerns on safe nurse staffing levels worldwide (Halter et al., 2017).

One factor which is bridging the supply demand gap is nurse immigration. Globalization is one of the biggest developments of this century and one of the effects of globalization is nurse migration. Many nurses are moving away from their home country in search of better working and living conditions, higher remuneration and more career development opportunities. As a result, their home countries are left short of the skills which are required. Ireland on one hand benefits from the nurse immigration but also it has a negative impact caused by nurse emigration (Coustas, 2019).

The international phenomenon of nurse migration has led to first world countries such as Ireland having an international labour force. Ireland now relies heavily on nurse migration. According to the Nursing Midwifery Board Ireland (NMBI) in 2017 less than 30% of newly registered nurses received their training in Ireland. The top five countries of non-Irish nurses recorded in 2015 was the UK, Poland, Romania, Portugal & Spain (Walsh, 2018).

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to answer the question “Is Pay Really a Driving Influence on the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Irish Health Services?”. This research endeavours to understand if pay is the main factor or perhaps is the only factor which is affecting recruitment and retention of nurses and leading to the issues which are being faced by the Irish Health Services today. The research endeavours to explore if pay is not the only influence affecting the recruitment and retention of nurses then in this case identify and put forward any other key drivers which are considered important to nurses with regards to their recruitment and retention.

The objective of carrying out this research is to gain a greater understanding of how nurses feel with regards to their role and the importance they place on the various different factors which they weigh up and which influence their decision making on staying in an organisation or leaving an organisation. By carrying out this research this thesis aims to be able to make recommendations on what needs to be done by the Irish Health Services in order to solve or indeed improve the current nursing shortage which is being experienced.

This research will also investigate whether nurses feel that their pay is adequate to their role and whether they feel their workload is manageable. This research will examine how nurses both in the public and the private sector in Ireland feel with regards to different factors such as workload, resources, autonomy, training and development opportunities. Another topic that this research aims to answer is if nurses have emigrated or are considering emigrating and if so what has attracted them to this idea?

As discussed above the sub question which will be explored and answered in this thesis include

- What other factors are important to nurses excluding pay?
- Do nurses feel that their pay is fair and adequate to their role?
- What factors are influencing Irish nurses to move abroad?

1.4 The Significance of the Study

This research plans to explore and investigate thoroughly the question listed above in order to have a deeper understanding of why Ireland are currently struggling to attract Irish nurses into permanent nursing positions and also why Irish nurses decided to overwhelmingly (95%) support industrial action for improved pay and conditions when they haven't felt the need to do this except for one other time in the past 100 years. The nursing shortage along with the turmoil among Irish nurses around pay is a tremendously important topic at this time and if not solved it is believed that it will have a vast negative impact on the healthcare delivery to the people of Ireland. Some of the literature reviewed such as Aiken et al., (2002) has even stated that nurse understaffing is associated with increased mortality rates.

1.5 The Structure of the Study

This thesis will take on the following structure; Chapter 2 The Literature Review will outline previous literature undertaken by academics on employee retention and employee turnover mainly focused on the nursing industry. The chapter will explore the different costs associated with employee turnover and discuss the main factors, which have an impact on the recruitment and retention of nurses in Ireland. These various different factors, which will be explored, include working time, pay, training opportunities, career development, communication with managers and emigration.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology will outline the methodology, which was used in this research, and justify why this particular method was chosen above other methods. This chapter will include the research philosophy and research approach, which was used along with explaining these methods. It will also discuss the sample chosen for this research and explain the reasoning behind this decision.

Chapter 4 Results will report the data results and findings which has been collected from the survey which was distributed to the nurses. Chapter 5 Discussion will then take a deeper look at the overall findings and discuss the results of the survey in depth and will analyse the results along with noting any important correlations or trends found. Chapter 6 will conclude the research and the findings and make any recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Ridley (2012) refers to a literature review as a logical and systematic evaluation of the collected data for conducting research. Furthermore, a literature review is also defined by Machi et al., (2016) as a secondary source that articulates theoretical, methodological, and substantive findings.

This chapter will discuss the different influences, which has an effect on the recruitment and retention of employees and in particular will have an emphasis on the nursing sector.

2.1 Employee Turnover

Armstrong (2009) describes employee turnover as the rate in which people leave an organisation and can of course be disruptive and costly to any organisation. High turnover rates have adverse consequences for not only the quality, reliability and stability of services provided to patients in need such as patient safety, but also for the working conditions of the remaining staff and nurses (Steinmetz et al., 2014).

Employee turnover is one of the biggest challenges facing any organisation today however, employee turnover is undeniably unavoidable in any organisation, as all employees can get sick, quit their job, get a better offer from competitors or are sometimes even dismissed by the organisation if they are not meeting the standard required (Ramya et al., 2016).

Chaudhuri (2014) states how years of literature have shown that committed and satisfied workers are happier employees and as a result are more productive in performing their responsibilities. “At the heart of all excellence at work it is the degree and extent of human commitment that matters most” (Chaudhuri, 2014, pp.73).

There are two types of employee turnover. There is organisational turnover, which is when an employee leaves an organisation, and there is occupational turnover, which is when an employee decides to leave the occupation. For example, if a nurse decided to not only leave their current nursing role in an organisation but also to leave the profession of nursing completely. Occupational turnover is much less common than organisational turnover and most companies would be more concerned with organisational turnover than occupational turnover (Parry, 2012).

Heidari et al., (2017) states that health services globally have suffered from high staff turnover for many years and that the rates of turnover on a worldwide basis are generally categorised as moderate to high level. This particular academic has found that there is a variation among the literature about how turnover is calculated and this can cause issues when trying to get a true reflection in the various literature yet Heidari et al., (2017) states that even still nursing turnover worldwide is categorized as moderate to high.

The high turnover rates in this particular sector can of course be detrimental to the safe supply of the health care system and to the population's health in general. Halter et al., (2017) states that the current nursing crisis, which is being experienced by Ireland has been recognised as an issue of international concern.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) maintain that Ireland as a country has an average of 12 nurses per 1,000 people, compared with the average of 9 nurses per 1,000 people. This is seen in Figure 4 below. This would mean Ireland are above the average however the INMO are of the belief that these numbers do not reflect the actual situation in hospitals where they are struggling to fill the nursing posts and claim that many nursing posts are being left unfilled leading to severe shortages on the ground (INMO, 2017).

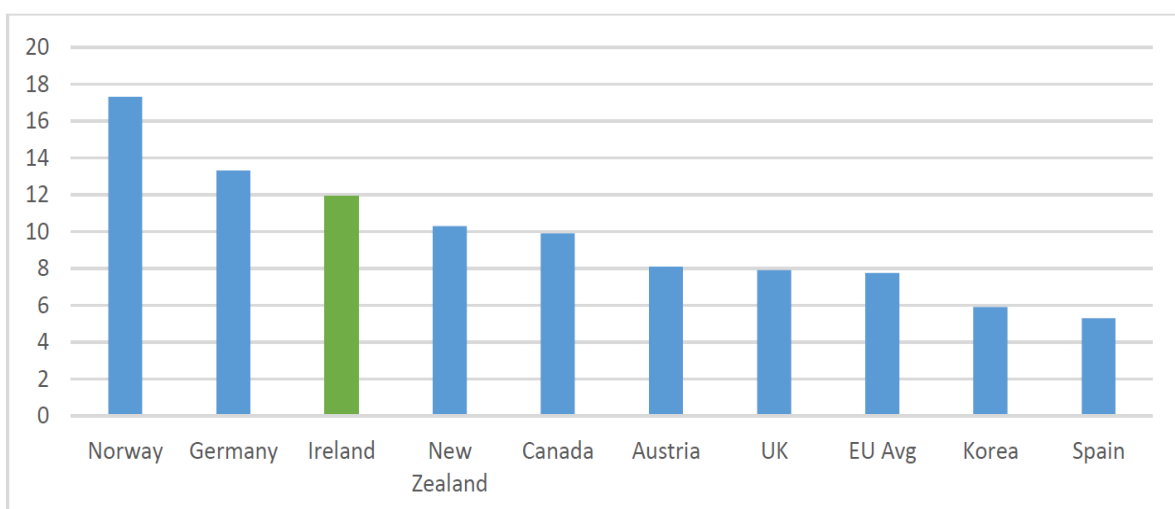


Figure 4: Nurses per 1,000 Population (OECD, 2019)

Chin et al., (2019) suggested that the main reasons for high turnover among nurses include; low control, high demand, low support from managers and high burnout among nurses. Furthermore, Aiken et al., (2002) found that emotional exhaustion, job dissatisfaction and nurse burnout were strongly related to nurse to patient ratio. Interestingly, the study carried out by Aiken et al., (2002) found that the hospitals which had a higher nurse to patient ratio exhibited higher scores for burnout and job dissatisfaction.

2.2 Costs Associated with Turnover

There are many different costs associated with employee turnover both direct and indirect costs such as the cost of advertising, the selection and interview process, induction and training costs for the new employee. Some less obvious additional costs can include patient rescheduling costs and productivity costs for supervisors (Torrington et al., 2011).

A study, which was published in 2004 by Seavey concerning turnover in nursing homes, detailed the costs of high turnover to include direct costs and indirect costs. Direct costs such as recruitment, training, temporary agency fees, increased injuries to remaining staff and bed closures and indirect costs such as inefficient use of manager's time while training new staff, deterioration in the quality of care for the residents, reduced employee morale and loss of consistent staff and practices due to use of agency staff.

The Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD) explain how it is beneficial for any organisation to cost employee turnover so that it is clear how much money could potentially be saved by the organisation by introducing ways of reducing staff turnover. It can be seen as an excellent method of proving why organisations should invest in retention incentives and how beneficial they can be to an organisation (CIPD, 2018).

Taylor (2002) recommends that all organisations explore why people decide to leave an organisation before trying to put in place measures to improve employee retention. Many different academics have attempted to answer the question of what really decides an employees' intention to leave by exploring numerous possible reasons. One particular academic Homsuwan (2017) who carried out a study among nurses and their intention to leave determined four factors which had an influence on a nurse's intention to leave; work department, job achievement, job security and affective commitment.

However, Ongori (2007) believes that even from the vast literature available and surveys carried out throughout the years it is very difficult to determine one standard reason why employees leave an organization or even a profession and that a decision like this can be because of any amount of professional or personal reasons.

2.3 Employee Retention

Employee retention is defined as “A process in which the employees are encouraged to remain with the organization for the maximum period of time or until the completion of the objectives” (Singh & Dixit, 2011, p. 442).

Armstrong (2009) recommends that retention strategies should be based on an understanding of the factors that affect whether or not employees leave or stay. Some retention initiatives include recognition, lifelong learning opportunities, nurse empowerment and of course the working environment (Shimp, 2017). Taylor (2002) is in agreement with the above and suggests that factors such as work-life balance along with career development are seen as very effective aspects to decrease turn over and increase retention among employees.

Vega (2008) states that when employers are having challenges in retaining employees even with an excellent recruitment strategy and effective induction program that it points to the employer not understanding nor providing their employees with what they are looking for. When an employee leaves an organisation, they take all the knowledge and skills they have gained with them and a lot of the time to the benefit of an organisation’s competitor.

Employee retention is often associated with a great package of pay and benefits, however according to some of the literature this statement is not always true, as the issue of employee retention is much more multifaceted. Nurse retention concentrates on trying to prevent nurse turnover and focuses on keeping nurses in an organisation's employment. The main aim of any employee retention program by an organisation is of course to avoid the costs and disruptions associated with a nurse leaving an organisation as previously outlined above.

Khalid & Nawab (2018) state that the purpose of an organisation’s retention strategy is to attempt to make employees loyal to that organisation while at that organisation. They state

that some ways in which different organisations may attempt to do this are autonomy, delegation and career aspirations. When employers provide its employees with opportunities to participate in decisions in relation to their employment then it's believed that an employee retention increases.

A study carried out by Heidari et al., (2017) investigating nurse's retention showed different factors that nurses believed affected retention and these included; shift work, job stress and encouragement / support from managers. Another study carried out by Halther et al., (2017) has shown the impact that staff shortages and a lack of resources have on nurse's intention to leave as an insufficient work force affects the quality of nurse's care on patients.

2.4 Pay as a Factor on Recruitment and Retention

Pay of course is an important factor when discussing the influences on recruitment and retention and yet pay is only one aspect of the total rewards from work. Many different factors have an affect such as the condition that staff work under, the hours they work and the other benefits they may receive (Eberth et al., 2016).

One study carried out by Taylor (2002) has shown that the importance of pay differs between employees in different sectors. Taylor suggests that pay-focused professionals are usually in certain roles such as teachers, nurses, midwives, telesales, clerical and call- centres.

Goal theory suggests that when employees get incentives and specific feedback that they perform better. However, a large number of studies primarily in healthcare came to the conclusion that "merit pay" and "pay for performance" arrangements used in the public sector have been ineffective and had very little positive impact on an employee's motivational and on organisational performance. The studies failed to show a significant relationship between pay and performance (Perry et al, 2009).

Steinmetz et al., (2014) on the other hand states that different studies on the impact of wages on turnover in the health services context in particular have proven to be inconclusive. Although investigation has shown that pay is an important contributor to job satisfaction, pay was not regarded as a statistically important indicator of intent to leave or as a turnover reason among nurses. Recent studies carried out in both Australia and the United States of

America (USA) indicated that it is actually fairness and equality of pay which was essentially more important to nurses than the actual pay was, in other words it is a case of the perceived low pay (Halter et al., 2017).

However, in contrast to the above a study, which was conducted on healthcare employees, not limited to just nurses in three European Union (EU) countries found that employees with a higher wage or a high wage satisfaction are more likely to express an intention to stay. The study showed that besides a high wage, satisfaction with a wage is essential when analysing the factors which influence the retention of health workers (Steinmetz et al., 2014).

The INMO released a report in 2017 comparing the wages of some recognised professional public service grades including nurses, occupational therapists, radiographers, teachers and garda. As seen in Figure 5 below, nurse’s wages are the lowest of all the categories at starting salary and even after 15 years in the role. Furthermore, nurse’s average working hours per week are 39 while some of the other occupations listed were 37 hour working weeks (INMO, 2017).

Grade	After 1 Year	After 5 Years	After 10 Years	After 15 Years	% Increase After 5 Years	% Increase After 10 Years	% Increase After 15 Years
Teacher	€ 37,430	€ 42,261	€ 49,999	€ 58,081	12.91%	33.58%	55.17%
Resp. Technician	€ 37,052	€ 42,936	€ 49,355	€ 52,843	15.88%	33.20%	42.62%
O/T and other AHPs	€ 37,410	€ 42,539	€ 48,114	€ 51,543	13.71%	28.61%	37.78%
Radiographer	€ 35,869	€ 40,850	€ 46,284	€ 49,544	13.89%	29.04%	38.12%
Garda	€ 31,382	€ 41,495	€ 47,793	€ 49,512	32.23%	52.29%	57.77%
Staff Nurse	€ 30,802	€ 36,023	€ 42,644	€ 45,248	16.95%	38.45%	46.90%

Figure 5: Comparisons between nurses/midwives pay and other public servants in Ireland (INMO. 2018)

One interesting hypothesis that was mentioned in the literature was from Heyes (2005) who stated that nursing is a vocation where a vocation is described as a desire from the individual to be involved in a specific activity and that if this is so that increasing the wages for nurses might attract the wrong type of people into the role. He suggests that one of the major

underlying characteristics of nursing may be the opportunity to work in a role where there is a vocational element. However, Nelson & Folbre (2006) strongly disagree with Heyes and they state that this theory is preposterous and that by not increasing wages that these caring, generous and honest people will go to other occupations with higher wages due to their financial responsibilities. argue that no matter how much of a “vocation” these people have they will not put the needs of patients over their own financial needs and perhaps the need of their dependents. Nelson & Folbre (2006) argue that this does not mean they do not have a “vocation” or that they are perhaps “greedy” but that this is the way of the modern economy and that people have financial responsibilities. This places a high importance on pay.

2.5 Working Time as a factor on Recruitment and Retention

One theme that seems to be reoccurring in the literature as a factor influencing retention not only among nurses is working time. Working patterns such as irregular shift patterns, lack of stability and long overtime has been shown to be an important variable on the likelihood of turnover among nurses (Steinmetz et al., 2014).

A study by Halter et al., (2017) conducted among nurses have shown working patterns such as shift work to have directly affected nurse’s intention to leave not only a particular role or employment but also the profession. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) state that job satisfaction is slightly higher among employees who have access to flexible working arrangements. Yet it is significant to note that in the profession of nursing some flexible working arrangements such as working from home, mobile working and flexi time are simply not viable unlike other professions. Irish nurses often work 12-hour shifts, three days in a row which can often be regarded as not only inflexible but antisocial (CIPD, 2019).

A study carried out by Elberth et al., (2016) among nurses in the National Health Service (NHS) showed that job characteristics such as hours, flexibility of hours and timing of hours worked all had a strong impact on nurses and that if some individuals were constrained into certain hours it would result in them exiting the nursing profession into more appropriate employment which offered more desired hours.

On a similar note, another impact on turnover which must be considered is how having children at home has been shown to be linked to turnover. This is important to note especially since nursing is generally a more popular career among women and would have some impact on retention and perhaps the need for flexible working arrangements (Steinmetz et al. 2014).

2.6 Training opportunities and career development as factors on Recruitment and Retention

Training and development is summarized by Armstrong (2003) as a process that provides employees with the necessary skills and knowledge in order for them to carry out their duties to the standard expected of them. Training and development is not simply linked to work related development but also it is an opportunity for an employee to acquire new skills and an opportunity to create progression towards job satisfaction (Armstrong, 2009).

Job satisfaction is described as the level of contentment that an employee has regarding their job. This level of contentment is based on an individual's perception of satisfaction. This feeling of satisfaction has been said to have a positive influence on an employee's productivity and as a result a positive impact on any organisation (Chaudhuri, 2014).

In a study conducted by Sahir et al., (2018) it identified three different factors of motivation for intention to leave among health workers these were; training & development opportunities, employee recognition, and peer relations. Momanyi et al., (2015), states that inadequate training and development opportunities lead to inadequate promotional opportunities and career advancement, which as a result led to intentions to leave by the employee and higher turnover for the organisation.

As stated above training and development opportunities and career development opportunities are closely linked. A significant factor which has been shown to have a negative impact on nursing turnover is a lack of promotional opportunities and professional development available to an employee (Halter et al., 2017).

2.7 Communication with management as a factor on recruitment and retention

Leurer et al., (2007) conducted research among nurses in Canada, which identified communication and consultation as a major negative factor among participants. The nurses who participated in the study expressed a desire for improved communication with managers and more involvement in changes, which affected their day-to-day tasks. The nurses involved in the research felt that they were not listened to and that their ideas were not incorporated into changes made. This all had a negative impact on job satisfaction and on turnover.

Furthermore, a separate study carried out by McCabe and Garavan (2008) observed that visible and genuine support from nursing managers motivated and increased the commitment of the nursing staff. Halter et al., (2017) was in agreement with the above and added that another factor, which was proven to have a positive influence on a nurse's intention to stay and on retention, was supervisor support. Support such as recognition, appreciation, praise and trust given to an employee by a manager or supervisor. The above literature would all seem to show that communication with management and support from management impacts on retention and turnover of staff.

2.8 Emigration among Irish nurses

Another influence to be explored on the recruitment and retention of Irish nurses is nurse emigration. Irish nursing graduates can now emigrate and get their qualifications recognised relatively easy in countries such as Australia, United Kingdom and New Zealand. This makes emigration is an attractive choice to nursing graduates.

Figure 6 below shows data collected by the INMO on the Purchasing Power Parity of nurses working in public sector hospitals in 8 different countries worldwide including Ireland. The figures show how attractive it is to emigrate overseas for Irish nurses in terms of pay.

Country	PPP (€)
Canada	54,536
USA	46,834
Australia	42,446
Japan	40,951
Denmark	37,537
Sweden	34,025
New Zealand	33,502
Ireland	32,718

Figure 6: Purchasing Power Parity of Nurses (INMO, 2018)

However, in contrast the Irish Health Services claim that nursing salaries are competitive both domestically and internationally. The Department of Health claims that Irish entrant nurses earn 21% more in basic pay than a new entrant in the NHS in England. Figure 7 below shows these differences in pay claimed by the Department of Health.

	HSE (EUR)	HSE (GBP = 1.13)*	NHS England ** (GBP)	Difference (GBP)	Difference (%)
1***	30,178	26,706	22,128	4,578	21%
2	30,802	27,258	22,683	4,575	20%
3	31,852	28,188	23,597	4,591	19%
4	33,037	29,236	24,547	4,689	19%
5	34,531	30,558	25,551	5,007	20%
6	36,023	31,879	26,565	5,314	20%
7	37,508	33,193	27,635	5,558	20%
8	38,792	34,329	28,746	5,583	19%
9	40,080	35,469		6,723	23%
10	41,361	36,603		7,857	27%
11	42,644	37,738		8,992	31%
12	43,904	38,853		10,107	35%
LSI	45,248	40,042		11,296	39%

* Exchange rate @ 5/7/2018

** <https://www.rcn.org.uk/employment-and-pay/nhs-pay-scales-2017-18>

*** Pt1 of Scale including 9 months Incremental Credit

Figure 7: Basic pay scales for entry level nursing in Ireland & England (Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, 2019)

The Department of Health also references data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which it says shows Irish nursing pay, in purchasing power parity terms, between 2007 and 2017 was constantly on par with Australia and higher than New Zealand, Canada and the UK. Figure 8 below outlines this purchasing power parity which includes allowances and premiums.

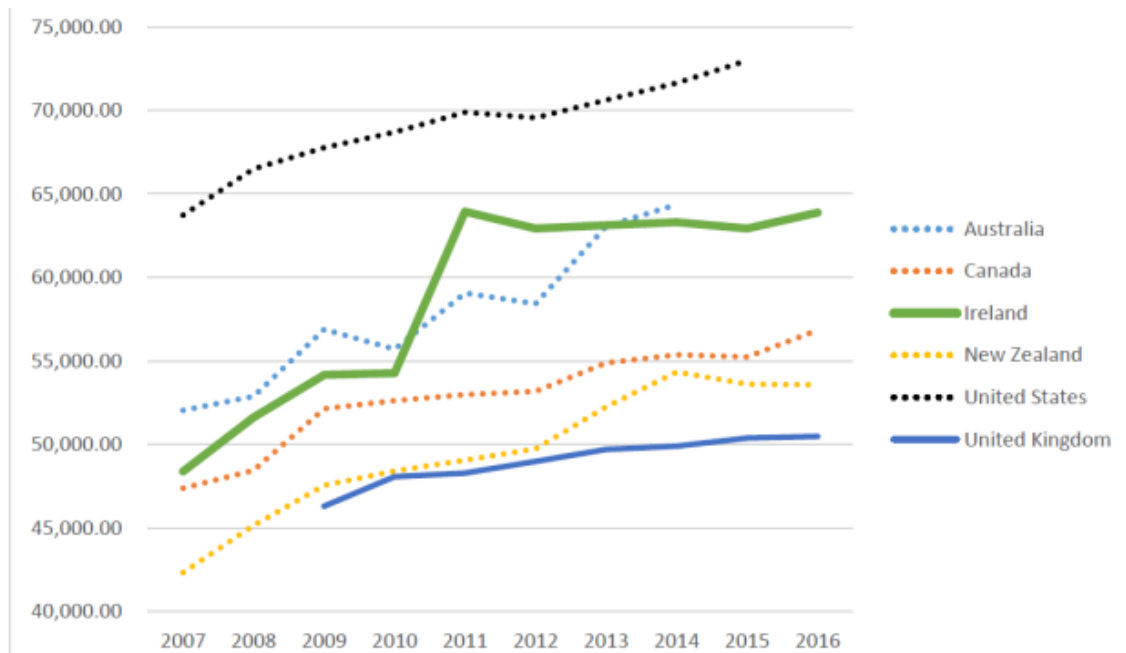


Figure 8: OECD Gross Nursing Pay US\$ PPP (OECD, 2019)

An additional aspect, which is current and unfamiliar, is with regards to how Brexit may affect in terms of the migration of nurses from and to the United Kingdom (UK) in the future, especially since a large number of Irish nurses have emigrated to the UK. It is yet to be seen whether this may have a positive or negative influence on Ireland and on the nursing sector.

2.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature with the belief that that high employee turnover has overall a negative impact on any organisation. With high employee turnover come separation costs to the employer along with a loss of manpower and skills. The INMO has also indicated that high turnover has an adverse impact on the existing staff. In terms of high turnover in the nursing sector, Seavey (2004) states that it directly affects the quality of care which patients receive which as result makes this a matter of public concern.

Numerous reasons are stated by the various academics such as high demand, low support from managers and high burnout, emotional exhaustion & job dissatisfaction as reasons for an employee's intention to leave. Armstrong (2009) along with CIPD states that an organisation should thoroughly investigate why employees are leaving in order to truly put in

place a successful retention strategy. The various academics stated above have pointed different reasons such as autonomy, participation, career development and opportunities as ways by which employee retention is increased.

Pay, working time, training opportunities, career development and communication with management have all been shown to have some impact on recruitment and retention. There are contradicting views in the literature in relation to the importance of pay. As stated above Taylor (2002) and Perry et al., (2009) states the importance of pay among nurses and how essential it is to nurses while Halter et al., (2017) details how it is the perception of the fairness and equality of pay, which matters more to nurses. The INMO has compared Irish nurse's pay with different public sector jobs and nursing pay has been ranked by the INMO as the lowest among them. While also when compared with wages in other countries it is seen as less competitive. However, the Irish Government defend this pay position and maintain that Irish nurses pay is domestically and internationally competitive.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

This chapter is concerned with the methodology which was used in the research of this thesis and sets out to explain the reasons for the chosen methodology. The chapter will outline in depth and justify the methodology and research design used. It will give a comprehensive description of the methods of data collection used. There is no “best” research philosophy to use it is the decision of the researcher to adopt, whichever method they feel is best depending on what they are seeking to know or what research question they are trying to answer (Saunders et al., 2012).

According to Denscombe (2003) there are six key decisions undertaking research and for which a yes answer should be given:

1. Relevance – Does the research matter?
 - Is the research significant with relation to current issues in society today?
 - Will this research build on existing knowledge or theory?
 - Should specific theories be used, tested or developed with regards to this research?
2. Feasibility- Is it possible?
 - Is there sufficient time for design, data collection and analysis of results?
 - Will resources be available to cover cost and time?
 - Will it be possible to gain access to the relevant people and data?
3. Coverage – Are all the right things included?
 - Will the questions cover all of the issues raised?
 - Will there be an adequate number of suitable people or events included to carry out the research?
 - Will it be reasonable to make generalisations on the basis of the data given?
 - Will the desired response rate be achieved?
4. Accuracy –Will the research produce true and honest findings?
 - Will the data be precise and detailed?
 - Are the respondents likely to give full, detailed and honest answers?
5. Objectivity – Will the research produce a fair and balanced picture?
 - How can the research avoid being biased because of personal values, beliefs and background?

- Will the research be approached with an open mind and accept what the findings might show?
 - Is the researcher prepared to recognise the limitations of the research approach that is adopted?
6. Ethics –The rights of those who are in anyway affected?
- How can deception or misrepresentation of research subjects be avoided?
 - Will identities and interests of those involved in the research be fully protected?
 - Can I guarantee the confidentiality of the information given during the research?

Having asked the above six questions set out above the next question to be addressed related to the nature of the research to be conducted. According to Wisker G. (2001) research can be classified as:

- Descriptive
- Exploratory
- Predictive
- Explanatory
- Action

Exploratory research is explained as research which asks the ‘what?’ and the “why” questions. It is commonly used when knowledge is sought on behaviour and causes of symptoms, actions or events. In particular, it seeks to ask questions as to cause and affect relationships between a number of variables and this adequately describes the nature of this particular research. This research and survey explore nurse’s feelings towards different issues such as pay, working arrangements, autonomy and workload. The surveys aim is to understand nurse’s viewpoint on these different areas.

The “Research Onion” as seen below in Figure 9 was developed by Saunders et al., in order to try to develop a method to address the objectives of any research. The researcher uses the research onion by taking the approach of starting on the outside and “peeling” through each layer to help decide which research methodology is best suited to a particular research. This method is a very common and trusted method and for this reason it was used in this research.

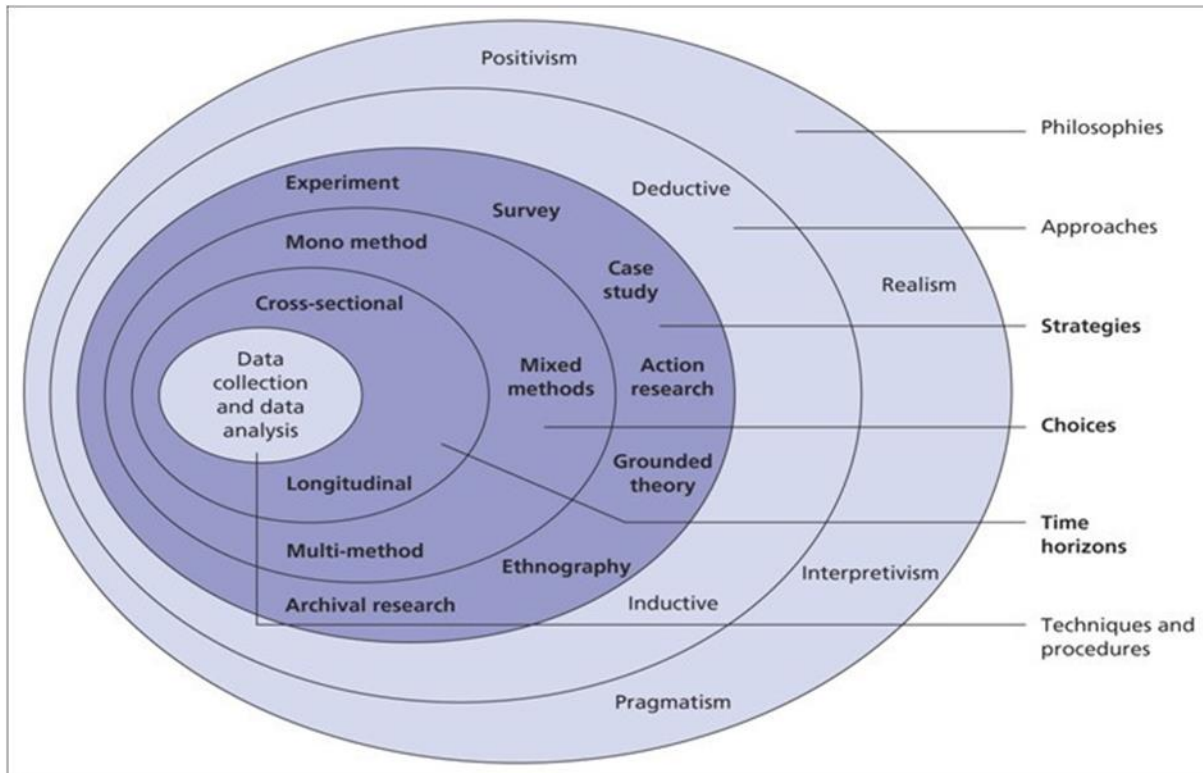


Figure 9: The Research Onion (Saunders et al., 2009)

The main aim of this research is to explore and discuss the various influences including pay affecting nurse recruitment and retention in the Irish Health Services and try to explain why this particular industry cannot seem to retain the much-needed staff. The sub objectives of this research are to investigate whether other factors such work life balance, high workload and autonomy influences on a nurse’s intentions to stay with an organisation and how nurses currently feel regarding these topics in their current roles.

3.1 Research Philosophy

Research is defined by Collis & Hussey (2009) as a process which is carried out to increase knowledge through a systematic process of analysis and investigation. Furthermore, to this statement “Research philosophy refers to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge” (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill, 2012, pp.127).

Epistemology and Ontology are two different research philosophies. Epistemology is related to how we know things and the nature of the data whereas ontology is regarding the data itself and what is in fact true and recognized in reality. Within Ontology there are two different methods and these are objectivism and subjectivism. There are also three different

methods with relation to epistemology and these are interpretivism, subjectivism and positivism (Saunders et al., 2009).

An interpretivism approach is concerned with carrying out research on people rather than on objects, this approach focuses on the subjective meaning of social action. Interpretivism is perception based and is supported by the belief that social reality is very much subjective. A positivism approach tends to use an existing theory to form a hypothesis; this approach prefers to work with facts rather than opinions and attitudes and is driven to discover theories built on empirical research.

3.2 Paradigm Statement

Colin & Hussey (2009) state that many new paradigm statements have evolved throughout the years. These including the following: ontological assumption, epistemological assumption, axiological assumption, rhetorical assumption and methodological assumptions.

An interpretivist viewpoint was used in this research; the reason for this is that this thesis is concerned with human resources, which is above all else is concerned with people and therefore it was believed that this is the most suitable for this thesis as it deals with people and people's opinions and not so much with facts and pre-established theories. This approach is based on gathering opinions and attitudes from employees and in this particular case from Irish nurses. One employee's belief or view may be entirely different to another's. There is no accurate answer to the research question "Is pay the driving factor in the recruitment and retention of nurses" but instead a collection of different beliefs and attitudes.

3.3 Research Approach

Collis & Hussey (2009) explain that research is carried out in order to produce an outcome or a result. There are various different forms of research approaches that can be taken, the first is an inductive approach and the second is a deductive approach. An inductive approach is concerned with developing a theory where as a deductive approach is related to the epistemology of science and concerned with testing a theory, which already exists. With regards to this thesis, an inductive approach was taken due to the fact that the research was asking employees the relevant questions and was able to get a good insight into the opinions and attitudes of employees around the influence of pay among Irish nurses. By doing this,

valuable information and insight was gathered and for this reason it was felt that it was appropriate to adopt an inductive approach rather than deductive approach.

Quantitative research is typically deductive and it usually concentrates on the compilation of numerical data (Saunders et al., 2009). Quantitative research usually assumes that there is only one objective reality. Quantitative research usually involves using surveys or questionnaires on a sample of participants. The information that is then obtained from the sample can be used as an indication of the larger population (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

Qualitative research discovers as opposed to tests variables and this research approach relies on non-scientific research methods. Qualitative methods usually involve using or making observations, conducting interviews or arranging focus groups all of which aim is to determine the reality behind the research matter. Qualitative research allows more flexibility and offers a deeper insight into the research subject. Corbin & Strauss (2008) are of the belief that qualitative research is more dynamic and fluid than quantitative research which they describe as more rigid.

After reviewing both qualitative and quantitative methods and the benefits and limits of both, for the purpose of this study a quantitative method was decided upon for this research. This decision is based upon the ability to obtain results and answers from a larger sample of the population in relation “what” and “why” questions. It was also discovered that this method of research was used mostly in the similar literature, which was reviewed and for these reasons, it was felt that this was the most appropriate method for this thesis. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods was considered at the early stages of this research. Consideration was given at the planning stage to interviewing a number of nurses in order to gain a greater insight in addition to doing the surveys however taking into consideration the time limitations and amount of additional work load this could create it was decided against doing qualitative research. Instead the researcher tried to concentrate on the survey questions in order to gain as deep of an insight as possible and added a free text question to perhaps gain greater insight and the survey be less rigid.

3.4 Data Collection Method

Two different kinds of data were gathered for this thesis, these were primary and secondary data. The primary data is the survey responses acquired from the participants and the secondary data is the literature review which was conducted.

It was felt that a questionnaire/survey was the most suitable tool to be used in this specific research. The questionnaire/survey used in this research is adapted from a peer reviewed study used in 2014 in Florida (USA) by Milman and Dickson, and was originally used to investigate employee's qualities and their awareness and understanding on their work experience. The study was performed on staff in large US theme parks and the study's objective was to try and find out the job attraction to employees and to discover possible predictors for their retention (Milman & Dickson, 2014).

The survey used can be seen in Appendix 1, the Milman & Dickson (2014) survey was slightly adjusted from the original in order to suit this particular research and questions which were not seen as important with regards to this research were removed and some additional questions which were considered may be relevant to this research were added. A question asking respondents whether they were working in the public sector or the private sector was added at the start of the questionnaire. It was felt that it was important to know how many people were working in both sectors answering the survey, as this is significant to note due to the fact that public sector workers and private sector workers receive different pay and benefit packages and for this reason it is important to consider.

A question was also added to the survey in relation to emigration, which was obviously not in the original Milman & Dickman (2014) survey adapted. The question added asked if respondents would consider emigrating abroad or if they have ever done so previously. The following question followed on by asking the respondents who answered yes what had attracted or did attract them to move abroad. This question was a free text answer in order to gain a deeper understanding into this topic. It was believed that this was an important question to ask as the issue of emigration was relevant in the literature review.

Surveys are typically used when examining a certain proportion of the population (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The survey which was used in this research was developed through the Survey

Planet website (<https://surveyplanet.com>) which enables the survey to be circulated and distributed to possible respondents through different internet channels such as email, social media, WhatsApp and other methods of online communication. After creating the survey on the website, the survey was then sent to the respondents to fill in and then the results were organized and compared on the website. The raw data was then exported into a Microsoft Excel document and was further analysed and presented through the tool Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), as it can handle a large amount of information and can assess the information and present interesting trends and correlations from the data collected giving a more in depth overview of the results gathered.

When deciding on the use of an online survey the benefits and weaknesses of using this medium of data collection were considered. The benefits included the ease of distribution and analysis through the internet instead of paper. Although using a paper form of the survey may have resulted in more surveys having been completed it was felt that the online method was more beneficial than the paper based on the additional amount of work which would have had to be completed to amalgamate the paper based results manually rather than the online solution results which could easily be extracted. While it is recognised that the online approach was more impersonal than perhaps other approaches such as an interview or a focus group every effort was made to explain the background of the survey in the invitation to participate and the survey questions were clear, logical and easy for participants to follow in order to avoid respondents perhaps abandoning mid survey.

The first part of the survey which was used asks about the demographics of the employee, which includes employee's age, whether they are in the public or private sector and how many weekly hours they usually work. This was helpful in trying to spot trends when looking at the results and findings. The next part of the survey asked the participants in depth about their role, their pay and the training / career opportunities that they felt were available to them. Finally, the survey asked participants if they would consider or have considered emigrating abroad and if so what were their reasons. The majority questions were framed in the form statements where the participants were given one of four responses for answers as follows: "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree". This was a similar theme as the original Milman & Dickman (2014) survey and the results of this survey could be easily compared against one another when analysing. The full survey used can be seen in Appendix 1.

3.5 Sample

According to Saunders et al., (2012) in any research that is carried out the need for sampling must be considered. When considering which sampling type to carry out in this research both probability and non-probability sampling were both considered. Probability sampling refers to the possibility of all cases from the population being selected is usually equal where as non-probability sampling refers to the researcher choosing the sample that they feel will best answer the research question (Etikan et al., 2016).

The method of purposive sampling was adopted in this thesis, as only Irish nurses were needed to fill in the survey, as this was the relevant sample to the topic. The sample comprises of nurses in both the public service and the private sector in order to evaluate the point of view of both groups and compare the differences among the groups. The researcher handpicked a number of known nurses and then used the snowball effect by asking the initial nurses who were sent the survey to pass on to other nurse friends and colleagues. It was anticipated that a minimum of 100 nurses would participate however this proved much more challenging than expected and took longer to achieve than initially anticipated. However, after exhausting all areas a total of 99 responses were received.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Saunders et al., (2009) defines ethical responsibility as the design of research being “methodologically sound and morally defensible” to all of the participants. Perhaps put more simply by Quinlan (2011), ethical is the ability to differentiate between right and wrong. The use of ethical principles when undertaking research is absolutely necessary. Ethical considerations are vital in conducting any research. This research ensured that it abided to ethical responsibilities and considered all ethical principles.

The ethical considerations to be considered involved the voluntary nature of the participants to partake in the survey and also to withdraw at any time should they wish. All participants were given a choice to complete the survey and no participants were pressured or manipulated into taking the survey. Participants were shown an information sheet and a consent form seen in the Appendices which they had to choose to accept before moving onto the survey itself.

The information sheet explained the purpose of this study, the risks and benefits and who will have access to the results of the study. The consent form confirmed that each participant was consenting to partake in the survey itself. It was ensured that an honest account of the data and all information gathered was given and it was confirmed that any assumptions or opinions of the researcher were not included in the findings and that the thesis is only based on the data collected.

Another ethical consideration taken into account while undertaking this research was the matter of privacy among participants this was addressed and outlined in the information sheet which explained how the participant's anonymity was not even revealed to the researcher as identifying information was not taken such as name of participant or the name of workplace. The issue of confidentiality and the possibility of identifying responses back to a particular hospital appeared to be a major issue for some senior nurse managers from whom support for this research was sought. It was felt that any perceived negativity in employee responses might reflect poorly on the hospital. Participants were not required to identify their employer so the issue outlined above could not arise.

3.7 Power Analysis

Yin (2009) explains how the main goal of reliability is by minimizing errors and biases in the study this was achieved in this survey by using an established and peer reviewed published questionnaire and also by ensuring that the questionnaire was not leading or influencing on participants.

It is essential to acknowledge that the sample size of the participants is not guaranteed to be a true statistically based reflection of nurses in Ireland. Timing and availability of respondents absolutely became a constraint while conducting this research and participant numbers were limited to just 99 participants. It was more difficult than initially anticipated to obtain a high number of nurses and a lower response rate was achieved than hoped for and so the difficulty of achieving higher rates of nurse participation in the survey should be taken into consideration. Another constraint which was also incurred was the fact that none of the respondents who participated in the survey were above the age of 54, as a result, the results excluded a whole age bracket and perhaps this could have an impact on the results and the true reflection of the population.

Because the survey is online and participants were not identified, it is recognised that there is a large element of trust on the part of those who participated voluntarily in the process and a risk that non nurses may have participated. However, it is believed that participants who completed the survey were genuine nurses because of the difficulty experienced by the researcher in achieving the level of participation required and the many contacts made in order to obtain the necessary number of participants.

3.8 Data Analysis

Once an appropriate number of responses were received through the survey tool Survey Planet the data was then automatically transferred into a Microsoft excel document where the information and data was modified into numerical data in order for it to then be transferred into SPSS. Once the numerical information was successfully transferred over to SPSS a number of different non – parametric correlations using the Spearman method were carried out between different sections of the data. This was completed in order to gain a deeper understanding into the findings gathered by the survey in relation to the research objectives. SPSS allowed trends to be noticed and different means and standard deviations to be analysed. The mean, mode, median and standard deviation were all examined when analysis the data.

Chapter 4 Results

This chapter will present the detailed findings of the research which were observed from the survey data which was gathered. The chapter will outline a broad overview of the key elements and trends found from the survey results. It will also analyse correlations found between variables using the method of Spearman's correlation by using the tool SPSS. This specific tool is used to compare ordinal data and to observe if there are any significant relationships between any of the questions.

It is noted that a correlation is significant at the point of 0.01. We can define the strength of the correlation using the guide that Evans (1996) suggests for the absolute value of r:

00-.19 - "very weak"

.20-.39 - "weak"

.40-.59 - "moderate"

.60-.79 - "strong"

.80-1.0 - "very strong"

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The survey was distributed to a number of known nurses and also was requested to be sent on to other nurses known to participants i.e. the snowball effect. A total of 99 nurses participated in the research survey. Of the 99 participants 66.7% of participants fell in the age bracket of (25-44) while 18.2% fell in the age bracket of (18-24) and the remaining 15.2% were in the age bracket of (45-54) none of the respondents were in the age bracket of (55-65). It is regrettable that the survey was not completed by any nurses in this age bracket as this would have given more accurate findings of the overall population.

A majority of 63.3% of participants worked in the public service while 36.4% were working in the private sector. The majority of respondents 75.8% work an average of between 30 and 40 hours per week. This would perhaps indicate the majority of respondents may be employed on full time contracts, which is usually between 37 and 40 hours. The remainder of the respondents, which is 24.2% work between 45 and 60 hours per week. None of the respondent's indicated that they worked less than 30 hours or more than 60 hours per week. The below Figures 10, 11 & 12 outline the above demographic findings from the survey.

Table 1 outlines the results of questions 4 – 15 in percentages. The framework of answers for all of these questions were the same and the choices given for each statement was “strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree”.

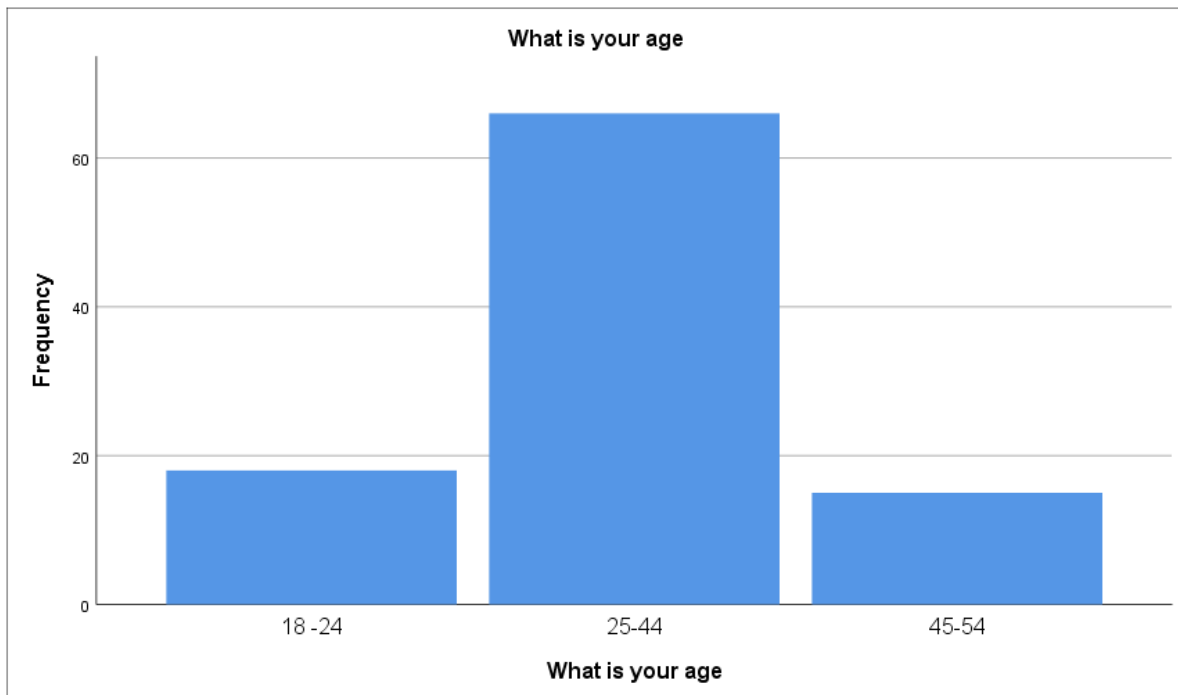


Figure 10: Question 1 Age Frequency

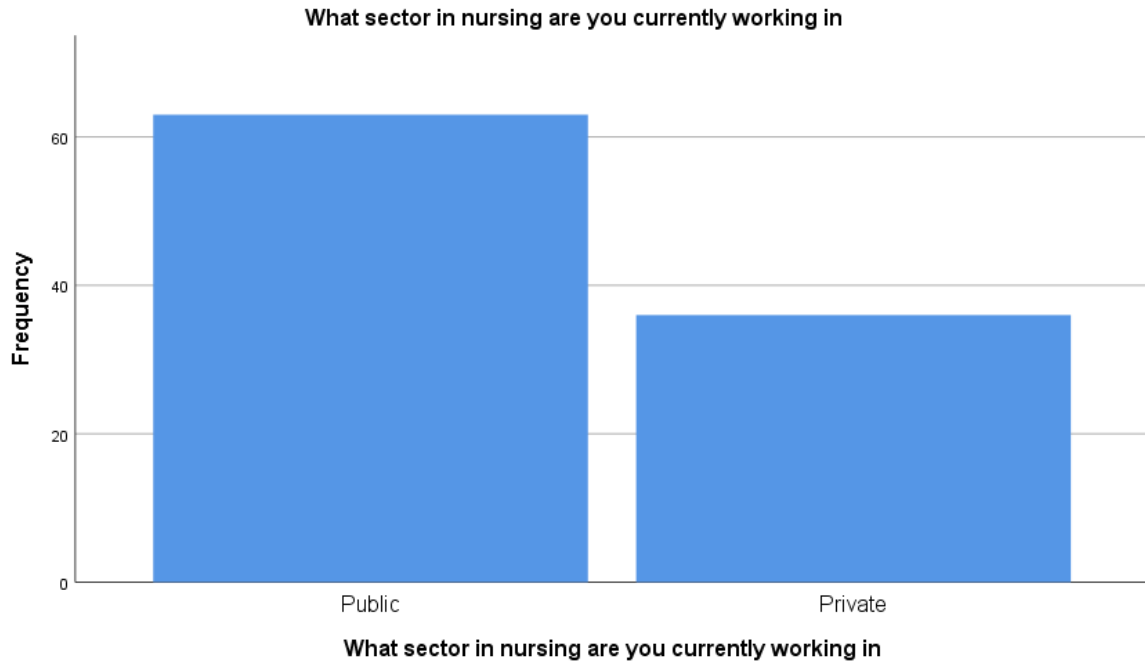


Figure 11: Question 2 Sector of Nursing Frequency

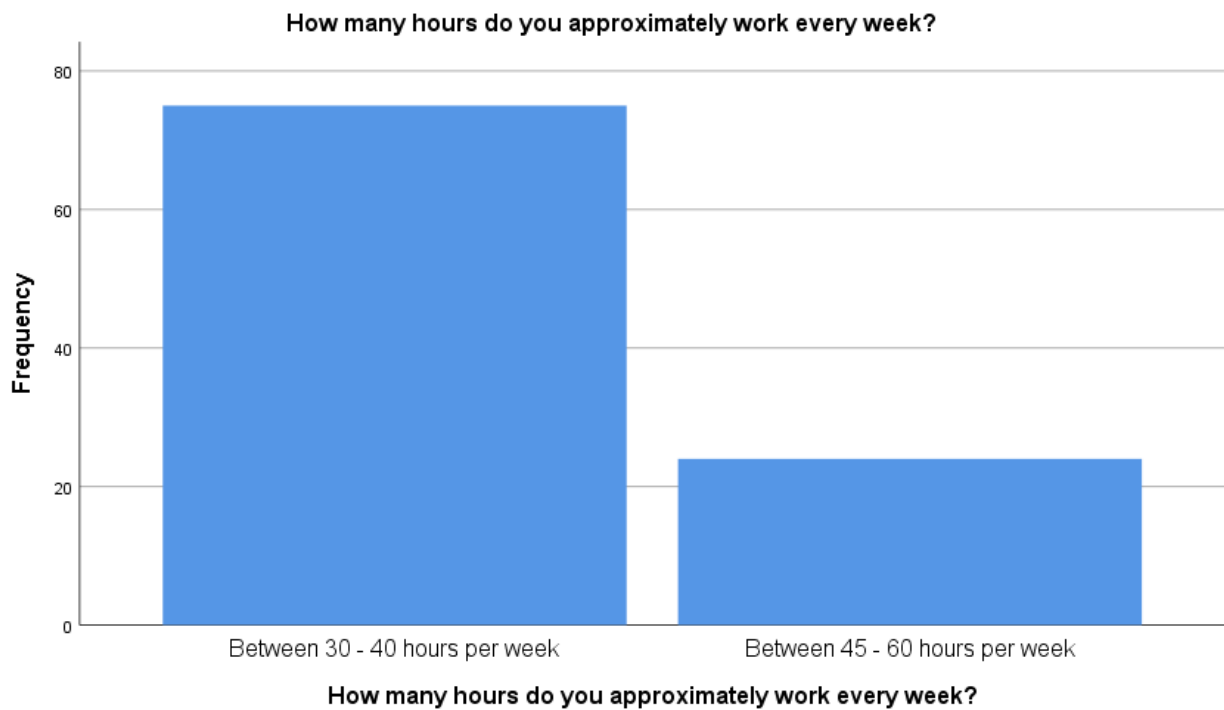


Figure 12: Question 13 Average Hours Worked by Nurses

Table 1: Results in percentages of questions 4 – 15 in the survey

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q4. My job is very challenging	57.6%	39.4%	3%	n/a
Q5. My workload is manageable	9.1%	57.6%	30.3%	3%
Q6. There is sufficient resources and staff available to me	3%	42.4%	33.3%	21.2%
Q7. I feel I am listened to and valued by my managers	15.2%	42.4%	24.2%	18.2%
Q8. There are opportunities for career advancement in my employment	18.2%	48.5%	27.3%	6.1%
Q9. There are training and development opportunities available to me in my employment	18.2%	57.6%	18.2%	6.1%
Q10. My pay is fair and adequate to my role	6.1%	18.2%	48.5%	27.3%
Q11. If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment	27.3%	60.6%	12.1%	n/a
Q12. If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment	42.4%	48.5%	9.1%	n/a
Q13. If there were options for flexible working arrangements it would influence me to stay in my current employment	45.5%	45.5%	9.1%	n/a
Q14. If my pay was slightly higher It would influence me to stay in my current employment	66.7%	27.3%	6.1%	n/a

Q15. If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment	24.2%	54.5%	18.2%	3%
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4.2 Inferential Statistics

This section will outline significant correlations which are listed and described below. All correlations, including non-significant findings are listed in Table 14 in the Appendix 5.. The statistics are discussed per topic below.

4.2.1 Pay

The purpose of this thesis is to attempt to answer the question “Is Pay Really a Driving Influence on the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Irish Health Services?”. The survey was designed to try to answer this question and the survey asked nurses directly about pay. Question 16 in the survey asks “What is the most important factor to you when deciding to stay in your current role or moving to a new role?” and gives the following choices to answer; “Pay”, “Flexible Working Arrangements”, “Size of the workload” and “Being listened to and appreciated by managers”. As seen in Figure 13 below the answers were quite diverse and varied and perhaps interestingly pay was not the most preferred answer but instead the most popular answer among nurses was “Being listened to and appreciated by managers”. 33.3% of nurses chose the option “Being listened to and appreciated by managers is the most important factor”, 27.3% chose “Pay is the most important factor” to them, 21.2% said that “Flexible working arrangements being available are the most important factor” and 18.2% said that the “Size of the workload” was the most important factor to them. It was also observed through the analysis that a moderate positive correlation existed between nurses who answered that they worked in the private sector and their answering with “Being listened to and appreciated by managers”, 16, $r = .556$, $p = \leq 0.00$. Table 2 outlines this correlation.

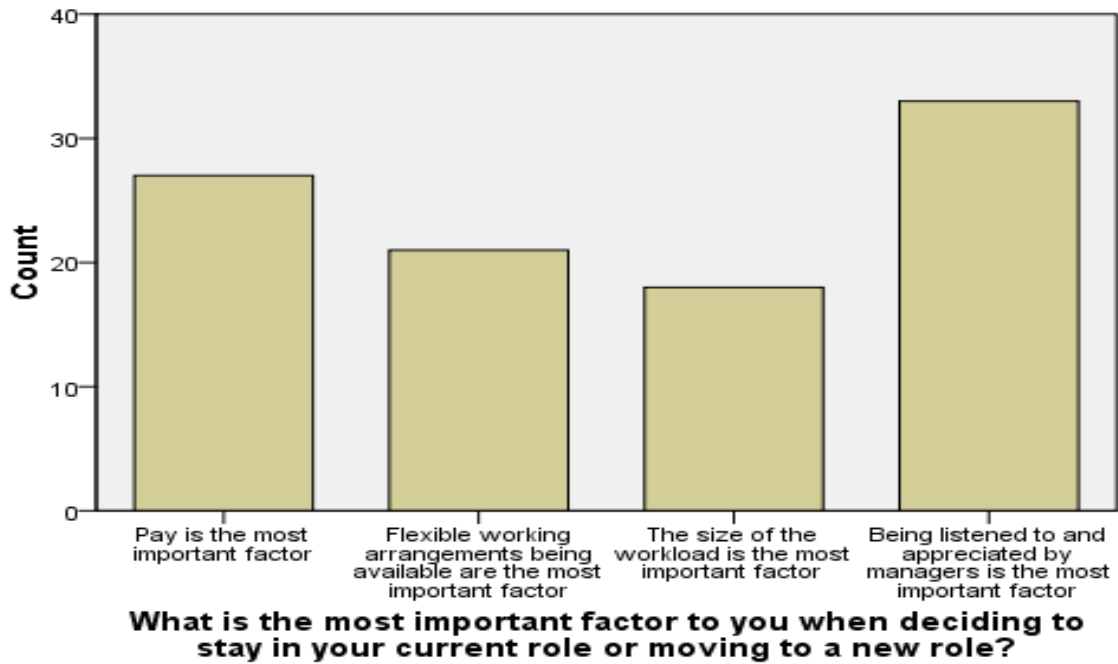


Figure 13 Question 16 Results

Table 2: Correlations of question 2 & question 16

		What sector in nursing are you currently working in	What is the most important factor to you when deciding to stay in your current role or moving to a new role?
Spearman's rho	What sector in nursing are you currently working in	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	99
	What is the most important factor to you when deciding to stay in your current role or moving to a new role?	Correlation Coefficient	.556**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	99

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

Another question asked in the survey with regards to pay is Question 14 “If my pay was slightly higher It would influence me to stay in my current employment” and gives the following answers to choose from; “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Strongly Disagree”. Over half of the respondents 66.7% strongly agreed with the above statement and 27.3% agreed leaving only 6.1% disagreeing and no respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement. There was a strong positive correlation noted between respondents who worked higher hours and disagreed with this statement, $r = .718$, $p = \leq 0.000$. There was also a moderate correlation noted with nurses in the private sector and who disagreed with the statement, $r = .588$, $p = < 0.000$ which can all be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Correlations between question 2, 3 & 14

			What sector in nursing are you currently working in	How many hours do you approximately work every week?	If my pay was slightly higher It would influence me to stay in my current employment
Spearman's rho	What sector in nursing are you currently working in	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.748**	.588**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99
	How many hours do you approximately work every week?	Correlation Coefficient	.748**	1.000	.718**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	99	99	99
	If my pay was slightly higher It would influence me to stay in my current employment	Correlation Coefficient	.588**	.718**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	99	99	99

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

Question 10 in the survey was also related directly to pay and asks respondents if they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “My pay is fair and adequate to my role”. Almost half 48.5% of the respondent’s disagreed with the statement “My pay is fair and adequate to my role” while 27.3% strongly disagreed, 18.2% agreed with the statement and 6% strongly agreed. Overall, the majority of respondents did not agree with the statement. There was a very strong correlation with older nurses in the age bracket of 45-54 disagreeing with this statement, $r = .816$, $p = < 0.000$. The analysis also

showed a strong positive correlation between nurses working in the private sector and nurses who worked more hours disagreeing with the statement. However interestingly the data showed a strong positive correlation between the nurses who strongly disagreed with the statement but answered “No” to question 17 “I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so”, $r = .732$, $p = < 0.000$. The above Spearman correlations are all seen in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Correlations between questions 1, 2, 3, 10 & 17

			What sector in nursing are you currently working in	How many hours do you approximately work every week?	My pay is fair and adequate to my role	What is your age	I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so
Spearman's rho	What sector in nursing are you currently working in	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.748**	.760**	.583**	.881**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99	99	99
	How many hours do you approximately work every week?	Correlation Coefficient	.748**	1.000	.769**	.637**	.659**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99	99	99
	My pay is fair and adequate to my role	Correlation Coefficient	.760**	.769**	1.000	.816**	.732**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99	99	99
	What is your age	Correlation Coefficient	.583**	.637**	.816**	1.000	.575**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	99	99	99	99	99
	I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so	Correlation Coefficient	.881**	.659**	.732**	.575**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	99	99	99	99	99

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

4.2.2 Flexible Working

Question 13 in the survey was concerned with flexible working arrangements, this question asked “If there were options for flexible working arrangements it would influence me to stay in my current employment” and gave the following choices to answer “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree”. Equally, 45.5% agreed and 45.5% strongly agreed with the above statement leaving only 9.1% to disagree and no respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement. The analysis of the data showed that there was a strong positive correlation between older nurses in the 45-54 age bracket and nurses who worked higher hours and disagreed with the statement, $r = .611$ $p = < 0.000$ & $r = .683$, $p = < 0.000$. This can all be seen in Table 5. Yet, as stated above only 21.2% chose “Flexible Working Arrangements” when asked what the most important factor was to them when deciding to stay or leave an employment.

Table 5: Correlations between questions 1, 3 & 13

			How many hours do you approximately work every week?	What is your age	If there were options for flexible working arrangements it would influence me to stay in my current employment
Spearman's rho	How many hours do you approximately work every week?	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.637**	.611**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99
	What is your age	Correlation Coefficient	.637**	1.000	.683**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	99	99	99
	If there were options for flexible working arrangements it would influence me to stay in my current employment	Correlation Coefficient	.611**	.683**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	99	99	99

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

4.2.3 Training & Development

Question 11 in the survey asks nurses to either “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment”. Over half of respondent’s 60.6% agreed with the statement “If there were more training and development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my employment”. 27.3% strongly agreed while 12.1% disagreed with the statement. There was a very strong negative correlation between younger nurses and agreeing with this statement, $r = -.820$, $p = < 0.000$. There was also a strong negative correlation between nurses who agreed with the statement that there “job is very challenging and disagreed with the statement “If there were more training and development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my employment”, $r = -.765$ $p = < 0.000$. This is seen in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Correlations between questions 1, 4 & 11

		Correlations			
			If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment	What is your age	My job is very challenging
Spearman's rho	If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.780**	-.671**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99
	What is your age	Correlation Coefficient	-.780**	1.000	.554**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	99	99	99
	My job is very challenging	Correlation Coefficient	-.671**	.554**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	99	99	99

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

Question 8 asked nurses if they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “There are opportunities for career advancement in my employment” and question 9 asked if they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “There are training and development opportunities available to me in my employment”. The results found a strong a strong negative correlation between nurses who strongly agreed with both statements, $r = -.678$, $p = < 0.000$.

4.2.4 Communication with Management

Question 7 in the survey asked nurses if they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “I feel I am listened to and valued by my manager” 42.4% of respondents agreed with the statement followed by 24.2% who disagreed. 18.2% strongly disagreed while 15.2% strongly agreed. Overall more of the respondent’s agreed with the statement than disagreed. A strong correlation was noted between nurses who disagreed with the above statement and also disagreed with “There are opportunities for career advancement in my employment”, $r = .798$, $p = < 0.000$. This can be seen in Table 7 below.

Question 15 also related to communication with management and asked nurses if they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment”. 54.5% agreed with the statement while 24.2% strongly agreed. 18.2% disagreed and 2% strongly disagreed. The data analysis showed there was a strong negative correlation noted between younger nurses working in the public sector and working less hours agreeing with the above statement. Table 8 outlines these various correlations.

Table 7: Correlations between question 7 and question 12

			I feel I am listened to and valued by my managers	If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment
Spearman's rho	I feel I am listened to and valued by my managers	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.229*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.022
		N	99	99
	If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment	Correlation Coefficient	-.229*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.
		N	99	99

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

Table 8: Correlations between questions 1, 2, 3 & 15

			If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment	What is your age	What sector in nursing are you currently working in	How many hours do you approximately work every week?
Spearman's rho	If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.861**	-.717**	-.821**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99	99
	What is your age	Correlation Coefficient	-.861**	1.000	.583**	.637**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99	99
	What sector in nursing are you currently working in	Correlation Coefficient	-.717**	.583**	1.000	.748**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	99	99	99	99
	How many hours do you approximately work every week?	Correlation Coefficient	-.821**	.637**	.748**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	99	99	99	99

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

4.2.5 Emigration

Question 17 in the survey asks nurses to choose “Yes” or “No” to the statement “I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so”. Just over half of respondents 57.6% chose “Yes” while 42.4% answered “No” as outlined in Figure 14 below.

There was a very strong positive correlation noted between nurses working in the private sector who disagreed that their job was challenging and choosing no to the above question, $r = .881$, $p < 0.000$ & $r = .990$, $p < 0.000$, seen in Table 9.

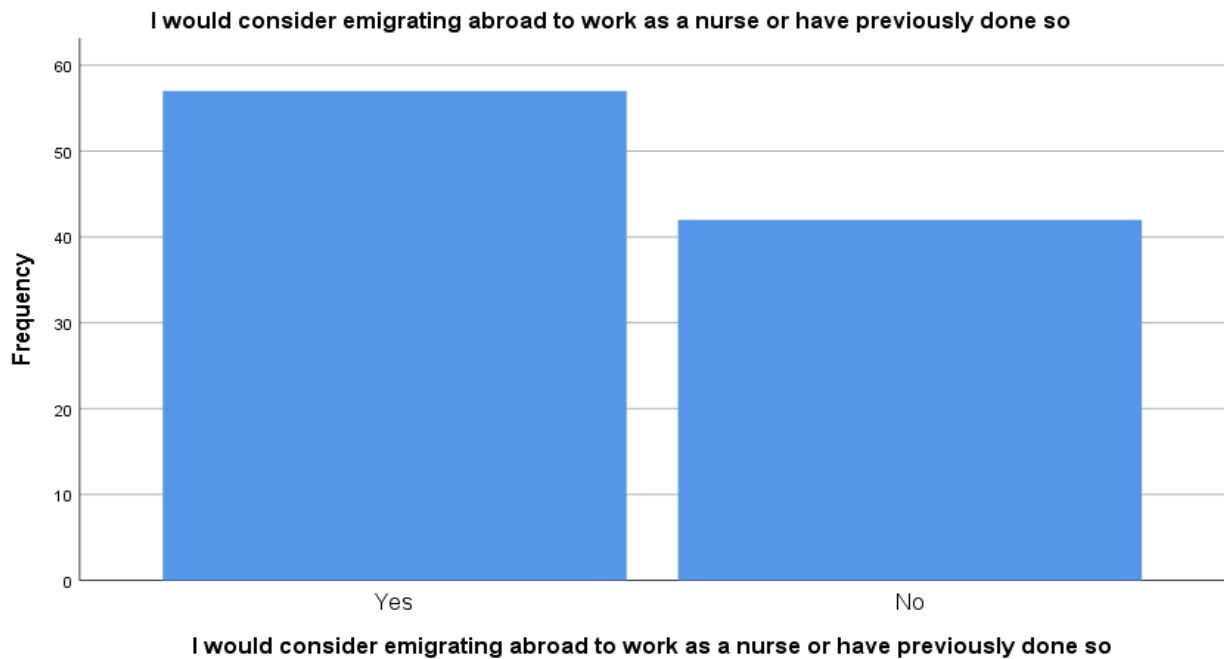


Figure 14: Question 17 Emigration frequency

Table 9: Correlations between questions 2, 4 & 17

		What sector in nursing are you currently working in	My job is very challenging	I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so	
Spearman's rho	What sector in nursing are you currently working in	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.826**	.881**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	99	99	99
	My job is very challenging	Correlation Coefficient	.826**	1.000	.990**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	99	99	99
	I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so	Correlation Coefficient	.881**	.990**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	99	99	99

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

Question 18 in the survey followed on from the question previous and asked, “If you answered Yes to the above question Q17 please state what attracts you or attracted you abroad”. The main thematic answers identified from this question were; “Better pay”, “Better working conditions”, “More career progression” “Less work for more pay” and “Better staffing”. Some respondents also answered “better way of living”, “housing” and “safer working conditions”.

One of the themes identified which was popular in the free text answers given by nurses was “Better working conditions” and “Better staffing”. In question 6 the survey asked nurses did they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “There is sufficient resources and staff available to me”. 42.4% of respondents agreed with the statement closely followed by a third of respondent’s 33.3% disagreeing with the statement. 21.2% strongly disagreed with the statement while 3% strongly agreed with the statement meaning that a majority of respondents 54.5% disagreed with the statement.

4.2.6 Other Findings

Question 4 in the survey asked nurses did they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “My job is very challenging”, the response to this particular question was a landslide of agreement as seen in Table 14. More than half of the respondent’s 57.6% strongly agreed with the statement “My job is very challenging”. 39.4% agreed with the statement while only 3% of overall respondent’s disagreed. No respondent’s chose the option of strongly disagree. This is slightly contradicting with the following question, question 5 where nurses were asked if they “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” or “Strongly Disagree” with the statement “My workload is manageable”, overall more respondents agreed with the statement that disagreed.

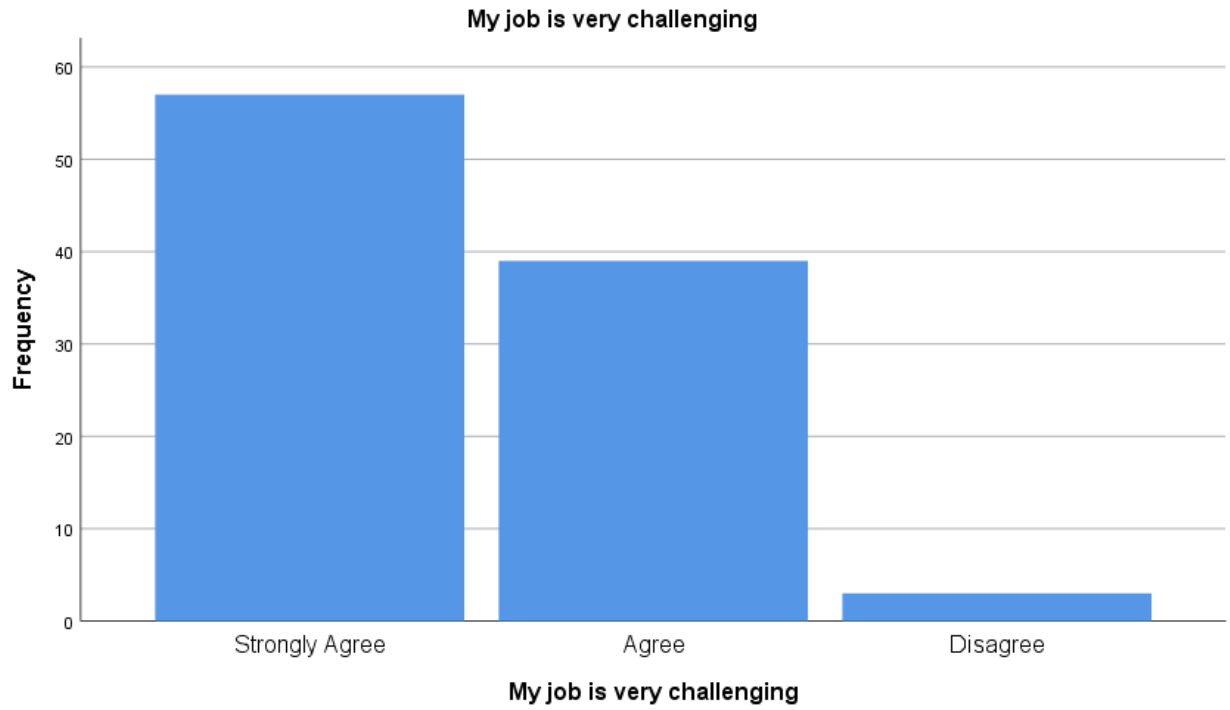


Figure 15: Question 4 “My Job is very challenging” frequency

Chapter 5 Discussion

This chapter will discuss in detail a variety of significant data which was discovered and outlined in the Findings section above. The chapter will evaluate the research's main objective and sub-objectives, in relation to the findings and the appropriate and discussed literature. This research's main objective was to answer the question "Is Pay Really a Driving Influence on the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Irish Health Services?". When reviewing the findings of the survey it reveals that pay is not the main or driving influence for nurses when considering moving to a new role or staying in a current role. It is clear that there are a variety of influences on nurses which affects a nurse's decision with regards to recruitment and retention. This supports Ongori's (2007) belief that there are a variety of reasons which contribute an employee leaving both an organisation or a profession.

The results of this survey presented that nurses felt that being listened to and appreciated by their managers is the most important factor when deciding to stay in a current role or moving to a new role. This supports Leurer et al., (2007) and his research, which identified in cases where nurses felt that they were not listened to this, had a direct negative impact on their job satisfaction and on led to an increase in turnover in general. Halter et al., (2017) was also in agreement with the above and stated that where employees felt appreciated by their managers this had a positive impact on both retention and intention to stay. The survey also asked nurses if they currently felt that they are listened to and valued by managers and the responses although more nurses were in agreement with the statement it wasn't by a large percentage. This is important to note and be aware of as many nurses have chosen this factor as the most important factor to them in deciding whether to stay in a role or move to a new role and yet just under half disagreed that they felt listened to and valued by managers in their current role.

Although the results discussed above shows less emphasis on the importance of pay to nurses this is contradicting to the results to the question which asks nurses if their pay was slightly higher would it influence them to stay in their current role. Only a very small number of nurses 6% disagreed with this statement showing that pay has a tremendous influence on the retention of Irish nurses. This contradicts Steinmetz et al., (2014) who states that although pay is an important contributor to job satisfaction, pay was not seen as a statistically significant indicator of intent to leave or as a turnover reason among nurses.

In the literature, Armstrong (2009) recommends that any organisations retention strategy should be based on an understanding of the factors that affect whether or not employees leave or stay in an organisation. From the findings and the results of this survey pay is a major factor on whether a nurse chooses to remain in an organisation, these results support Taylor (2002) who states that nurses are pay-focused professionals. Nevertheless, this research has found that being listened to and appreciated by managers to be a hugely important factor also. There was a strong trend noted between nurses who disagreed with the statement that if their pay was slightly higher that it would influence them to stay in their current role and nurses who worked higher hours per week. This is interesting because there was also a strong trend between nurses who worked higher hours and disagreed with the statement that if there were more options for flexible working arrangements it would influence them to stay in their current employment.

Halter et al., (2017) proposes in the literature that it is actually fairness and equality of pay which is essentially more important to nurses than the actual pay is and his theory is based on studies carried out in the USA and Australia. A question this research survey asked is if nurses felt that their pay was fair and adequate to their role. The findings showed that the majority of nurses did not feel that their pay was fair and adequate to their roles. This could be related to the fact that INMO state that nurses are the lowest paid public servants when compared with different jobs such as teachers, Garda and Occupational Therapist's. The results of this research support Steinmetz et al., (2014) who states that satisfaction with a wage is essential when retaining health workers. A strong positive correlation was noted between nurses who worked in the private sector disagreeing that they felt their pay was fair and the same strong correlation applied to nurses who worked 45-60 hours on average per week also.

Though the main objective of this thesis was related to pay the sub objective was to explore the other factors which were identified as major influences on recruitment and retention of nurses in the literature. CIPD (2019) maintain that job satisfaction is slightly higher among employees who have access to flexible working arrangements. The results of this research survey strongly support this theory as over 90% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that if there were options for flexible working arrangements it would influence them to stay in their current employment. The research results also strongly support various

academics such as Steinmetz et al., (2014) who states that working patterns such as irregular shift patterns, lack of stability and long overtime has been shown to be an important variable on the likelihood of turnover among nurses and also Halter et al., (2017) who states working patterns such as shift work directly affects nurse's intention to leave an organisation. Taylor (2002) also agrees that factors such as work-life balance is seen as a very effective aspect to decrease turn over and increase retention among employees.

Another factor which was explored in this research survey was training and development as an influence on the recruitment and retention of nurses. Momanyi et al., (2015) believed that inadequate training and development opportunities lead to inadequate promotional opportunities and career advancement, which as a result leads to intentions to leave by the employee. The results of this survey showed that the majority of nurses agreed and strongly agreed that there were training and development opportunities available to them in their current employment and also that that if there were more training and development opportunities available to them that it would influence them to stay in their current employment. These results support Momanyi et al., (2015) in the importance of training and development to nurses and also support Sahir et al., (2018) who identified one of the major factors of intention of leaving among health care workers to be the lack training and development opportunities available to them.

Armstrong (2009) strongly links training and development opportunities with career development opportunities. The survey asked nurses if they felt that there were opportunities for career advancement in their current employment. The overall majority felt that there were career advancement opportunities in their current employment and this is encouraging as Halter et al., (2017) states that a significant factor which has been shown to have a negative impact on nursing turnover is a lack of promotional opportunities and professional development available to an employee. In addition, in this research survey, over 90% of nurses agreed and strongly agreed with the statement "If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment". This shows a strong emphasis on the importance of career development opportunities to nurses. There was a strong negative correlation found between nurses who strongly agreed with the statement "There are training and development opportunities available to me in my employment" and nurses who strongly agreed with the statement "There are opportunities for

career advancement in my employment”. This again supports Halter et al., (2017) who maintains that the two factors are closely linked.

A strong correlation was also noted between younger nurses agreeing with the statement “If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment”. Furthermore, a strong trend was seen between older nurses, 45- 54-age bracket, disagreeing with the statement "If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment”. This tells us that training and development and career advancement seem to be of a higher importance to the younger nurses rather than older nurses. Yet we must also remember that we did not have any respondents in the age bracket of 55-65.

An issue cited by nurses in the Irish Public Service who chose to go on strike in May 2019 was the lack of staff and resources available to them. A question in the survey asked nurses if they felt they had sufficient resources and staff available to them. Overall more nurses disagreed with the statement than agreed. This result contradicts the fact that the OECD maintain that Ireland has a higher average of nurses to patient’s ratio. Halter et al., (2017) believes that staff shortages and lack of resources has a significant impact on a nurse’s intention to leave. On reflection, this question should have been made clearer to respondents and just stated “staff” as opposed to “resources” as the word resources could have been taken in a wider context to mean perhaps various things such as equipment or premises.

This research survey also asked nurses if they felt their job was challenging and separately if their workload was manageable. 97% in total agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that their job was challenging. Yet, more nurses agreed with the statement that their workload was manageable and one third of nurses 33.3% believed that their workload was not manageable. These two results can potentially be seen as contradicting yet it’s important to note there is an unquestionable difference in a nurse’s role being challenging and unmanageable. If nurses feel that their current role is unmanageable it will affect their job satisfaction and as a result burnout and turnover. It would therefore appear that nurses overwhelmingly (97%) believe that the job is challenging while the majority (66.7%) agree that it is manageable with 33.3% believing their role was not manageable. This it would seem is a serious reflection on the pressure that some front-line nursing staff believe they are facing in their job.

The final point of discussion from the findings of the survey is the differences noted among public sector nurses and private sector nurses. Private sector nurses agreed with the statement that their job was very challenging more than public sector nurses. Public sector nurses seemed to strongly agree with the statements “If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment” and “If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment” than private sector nurses. Finally, private sector nurses tended to feel that their pay was fair and adequate to their role more than public sector nurses.

Chapter 6 Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

This study has shown that yes pay is a driving influence on the recruitment and retention of nurses in the Irish Health Services. The research has shown that an overwhelming percentage of nurses almost 94% stated that if their pay was slightly higher it would influence them to stay in their current employment. This undoubtedly supports Steinmetz et al., (2014) and his belief that employees with a higher wage or a high wage satisfaction are more likely to express an intention to stay.

Although the findings from the research show that pay is undoubtedly important to nurses when considering whether to stay in their current employment or leave to join a new employment, other factors and influences play a big role and nurses clearly place a huge importance on other factors and not only pay. The results of the survey showed more nurses chose “being listened to and appreciated by managers” as being the most important factor when deciding to stay in a current role or moving to a new role and this reason was chosen by a majority of participants above “pay” in one question in the survey which tells us this is of major importance to nurses when considering whether to stay in an employment. These results support Halter et al., (2017) who states that supervisor support has a positive influence on a nurse’s intention to stay. This survey found more nurses 57.6% believed that their managers listened to them. However, 42.4% felt that they were not and this is surprising and concerning knowing the importance, which has been placed by the majority of participants in this research survey.

Ongori (2007) states that even from the extensive literature available and vast amount of surveys carried out throughout the years there is no one standard reason why employees leave an organization or even a profession and that a decision like this can be any amount of professional or personal reasons. The results of this research would strongly support Ongori in his belief as this research has shown that its multiple elements, which influence nurses, decision making to stay or leave an employment. There is clearly a huge importance placed on flexible working arrangements and working hours by nurses however this research did show that no nurses were working over 60 hours which is positive but also no nurses were working under 30 hours a week which perhaps could be viewed that there are not many options available for part time contracts. The research also showed that a significant

importance was placed on training and development and career development and showed these two were closely linked. Both training and development did however seem less important to older nurses than younger, which is a significant to note.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on this study and the research which was undertaken it is recommended that the Irish Health Services actively listen to Irish nurses and their current grievances with regards to their pay. Based on the results from the respondents of this research pay is a major influence on the recruitment and retention of nurses and the majority of nurses feel that their pay is not fair and adequate to their role. The Irish Public Health Services are likely to lose many of their nurses to other employer's perhaps private organisations or employers abroad if their rate of pay continues to be perceived by their employee nurses as not reflecting the importance or responsibilities of the roles they perform.

The results of this research have shown us that an overwhelming majority of nurses believe their jobs to be challenging while nearly half of the respondents state their roles to be unmanageable. This would appear to provide support for the INMO in their statements that nurses are at breaking point. Based on the INMO's findings that nurses are paid the lowest of all public servants and given that the literature is of the view of that fairness and equality of pay is perhaps more, important than the actual pay then the statements made by the INMO appear to reflect the views of nurses and as such may indicate that overall morale is low and this is an important issue for the Irish Health Services.

Being appreciated and listened to by managers was chosen as the most important influence when choosing whether to stay or leave an employment among the nurses answering this survey. Based on this it is recommended that the Irish Health Services improve their managerial and staff communication. Nurses need to feel that their voices are being listened to by management and that changes will be implemented where needed. Ways in which this could perhaps be done on a national scale are online surveys or engaging with nurse unions with regards to the current issues.

Flexible working arrangements were shown to be important to the nurses answering the survey and this speaks volumes along with the vast amount of literature and studies done

which supports this. It is recommended that the Irish Health Services note the importance that flexible working arrangements opportunities have on the recruitment and retention of nurses and as much as possible try to provide and improve this flexibility with the nursing sector. It should be noted that the survey did not ask the question if nurses felt their employer provided adequate flexible working arrangement's and this would have been beneficial.

Finally based on this survey among nurses all four factors pay, flexible working arrangement's, being listened to and appreciated by managers and the size of the workload have been found to have an influence on the recruitment and retention of Irish nurses. Different nurses have different personal priorities.

As stated by CIPD organisations should cost employee turnover in order for it to be clear how much could potentially be saved by introducing ways of reducing staff turnover. The government have stated that they are using expensive agency staff to fill some of the vacancies and this along with various other costs should be studied in order to see the importance of investing in retention incentives.

It should be noted that after weeks of work stoppages held by nurses all around Ireland the Labour Court intervened. The recommendations of the Labour Court which were made are important in the context of this research from the point of understanding the outcome of the dispute and the impact of the claims made by the INMO in relation to the impact of low pay on staff recruitment and retention and the recommendations made by the Labour Court and accepted by both parties to the dispute in order to settle the dispute and resolve the nurses grievance's for improved pay and conditions. The changes which nurses which were recommended by the Labour Court and then accepted by nurses were as follows:

1. Delivery of Enhanced Practice in nursing and midwifery.
2. A new nursing contract focussed on the delivery of improved patient and service delivery outcomes.
3. An expert review of the nursing profession should be undertaken over the medium term and to be completed in the term of the Public Pay Commission (PSPC) and this is to serve as an input to any engagement between the parties and inform the discussion on any new pay agreement on the expiration of the current Public Service Stability Agreement which due to expire in 2020.

4. 4. A range of other measures to support nurse professional development and training and a regulatory framework in respect of nurse continuous professional development. The extension of the location qualification allowance to nursing and midwifery staff working in medical and surgical areas to support the recruitment and retention of sufficient skilled nursing staff to underpin the policy of safe staffing. It is important that the Labour Court recommendations are fully implemented as the implementation of these would appear to be designed to address some of the issues which this research has found are influential on nurse's decisions to stay in an employment.

6.3 Future Research Recommendation

An element which could be valuable to investigate in the future is nurses initial attraction to the role. The literature studied battles with if the theory of nursing being a vocation is true or not and if so, does this override the importance of other factors such as pay. This was an interesting area and would be beneficial to explore.

Also when reflecting on this study it is regrettable that nurses were not asked in the survey if they felt if their pay was fair and adequate in reference to other public servants, as so much of the literature surrounds the theory that the fairness and equality of pay is more important than actual pay and so this could be explored deeper.

Valuable research which could be also be carried out is among Irish nurses who have decided to emigrate and investigate their main influences on making this decision and what would potentially draw them back to Ireland.

6.4 Limitations

One of the most obvious limitations in this research was the difficulty in getting a larger number of respondents to partake. Also, it is noted that the older bracket of nurses 55-65 were not at all represented in this survey and this would of course limit the results in relation to the overall representation of the population. If a larger sample was gathered it may have given more interesting results. As stated above the results of the survey indicated some interesting factors which could have perhaps could be explored deeper.

6.5 Personal Learning Reflective

While completing this thesis I believe that I learnt a variety of different skills. Firstly, I learnt how to critically read articles and select and analyse only the necessary articles, after reading so many articles and a variety of information I learnt how to analytically read these and how to successfully find what I was looking for within the article this skill took some time however has and will benefit me greatly in the future.

The second skill I feel I learnt and improved was my academic writing style until completing this thesis I had not mastered the skill of integrating information and comparing I was simply stating other people's opinions one after another. I feel this is a difficult skill to master and feel I have really improved on this.

The most challenging part of this thesis for me was the use of the tool SPSS as the numerical analysis this was very out of my comfort zone but with the help of my supervisor I gained a great insight to this excellent tool and really learned a lot more from my results and was able to present interesting trends to discuss.

Self-motivation was absolutely another skill that I learnt while completing this thesis. It was very much up to me to put the work and the time in as there wasn't set classes to attend I felt I struggled with this at the beginning but then after setting out a realistic plan and timeline I ensured I adhered to this.

Overall, this has been an excellent experience for me one that I found very difficult and at times didn't feel that I was capable of however having completed this thesis while working full time has given me a great sense of achievement and belief in myself that I am more capable than I sometimes feel.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Sample Questionnaire

Q1

What is your age?

Multiple Choice

1. 18-24
2. 25-44
3. 45-54
4. 55-65

Q2

What sector in nursing are you currently working in?

Multiple Choice

1. The public sector
2. The private sector

Q3

How many hours do you approximately work every week?

Multiple Choice

1. Less than 30 hours per week
2. Between 30 - 40 hours per week
3. Between 45 - 60 hours per week
4. Over 60 hours per week

Q4

My job is very challenging

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q5

My workload is manageable

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q6

There is sufficient resources and staff available to me

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q7

I feel I am listened to and valued by my managers

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q8

There are opportunities for career advancement in my employment

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q9

There are training and development opportunities available to me in my employment

Multiple Choice#

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q10

My pay is fair and adequate to my role

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q11

If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree 0

Q12

If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q13

If there were options for flexible working arrangements, it would influence me to stay in my current employment

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q14

If my pay was slightly higher, It would influence me to stay in my current employment

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q15

If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment

Multiple Choice

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

Q16

What is the most important factor to you when deciding to stay in your current role or moving to a new role?

Multiple Choice

1. Pay is the most important factor
2. Flexible working arrangements being available are the most important factor
3. The size of the workload is the most important factor
4. Being listened to and appreciated by managers is the most important factor

Q17

I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so

Multiple Choice

1. Yes
2. No

Q18

If yes to the above question, please state what attracts or attracted you abroad?

Free Text

Appendix 2 Information Sheet

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part.

WHO I AM AND WHAT THIS STUDY IS ABOUT?

My name is Fiona Ryan I am currently completing a Masters in Human Resource Management in the National College of Ireland. I am doing a dissertation to try and answer the question “Is Pay Really a Driving Influence on the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Irish Health Services?”. The research’s aim is to thoroughly investigate this question and if necessary, identify and put forward any other key drivers, other than pay that are at play which influence nurses in their decision making with regard to their commencement and continuation of employment of nurses in Ireland.

WHAT WILL TAKING PART INVOLVE?

By consenting to take part you will answer a short survey regarding your employment and motivators which you state are most important to you and least important.

WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

You have been selected to take part in this research as you are a registered and working nurse in the Irish healthcare system.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART?

Participation in this research is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse participation, refuse any question and withdraw at any time without any consequence whatsoever.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?

The benefit of this dissertation is to answer the question do nurses feel that pay is the most important factor affecting recruitment and retention of nurses in Ireland and if it is not pay what other factors would improve nurse recruitment and retention.

WILL TAKING PART BE CONFIDENTIAL?

The survey has been set up to be completely confidential and no participant's details will be revealed to even the researcher. Findings of the surveys will be kept in a safe and secure place.

HOW WILL INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE BE RECORDED, STORED AND PROTECTED?

Findings of the surveys will be kept in a safe and secure place located in the researcher's home with only the researcher having access to it.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

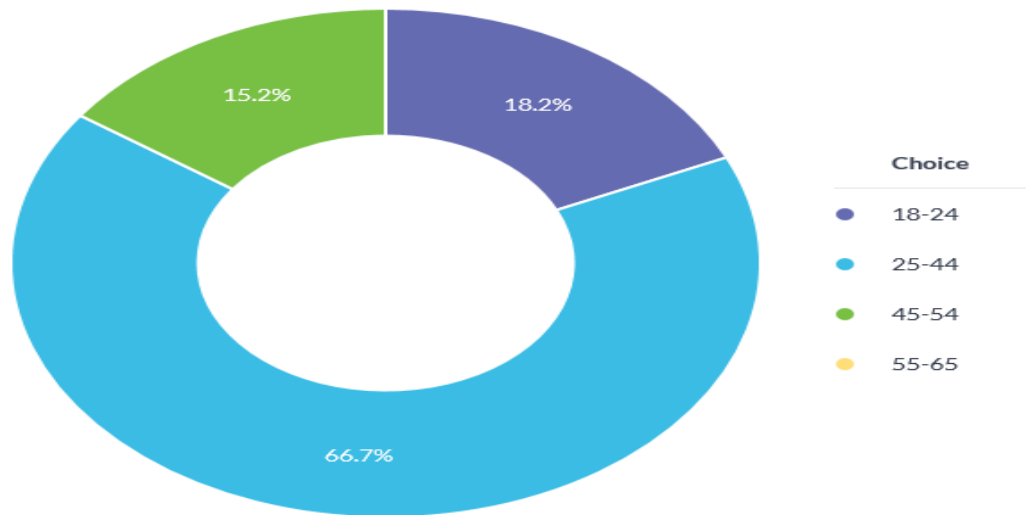
The results of this study will be used for the purpose of gaining my master's degree and will also be shared with the Head of Nursing Human Resources in my current employment however no names of participants will be given just the final thesis.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

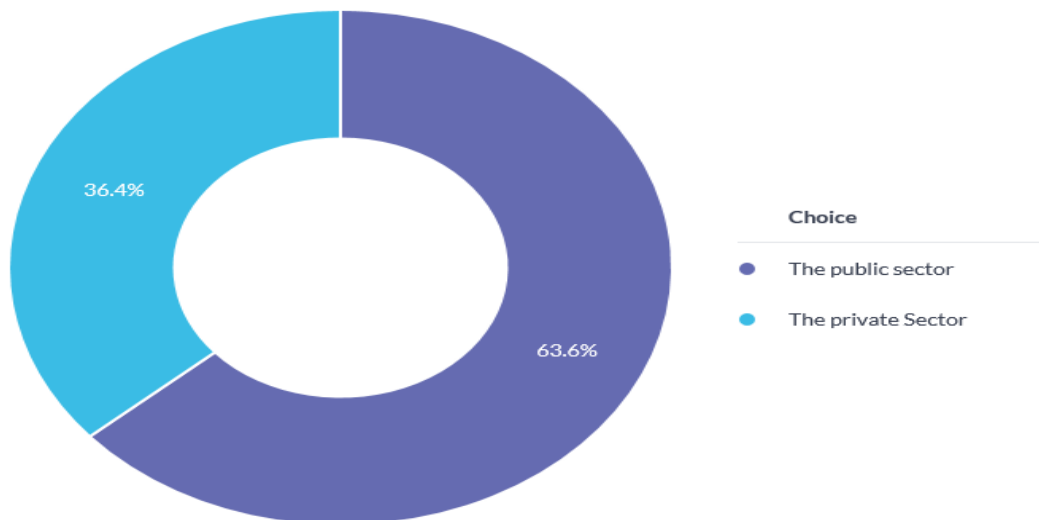
Fiona Ryan – frfionaxx@gmail.com – Researcher

Appendix 3: Survey Answers in Pie Charts

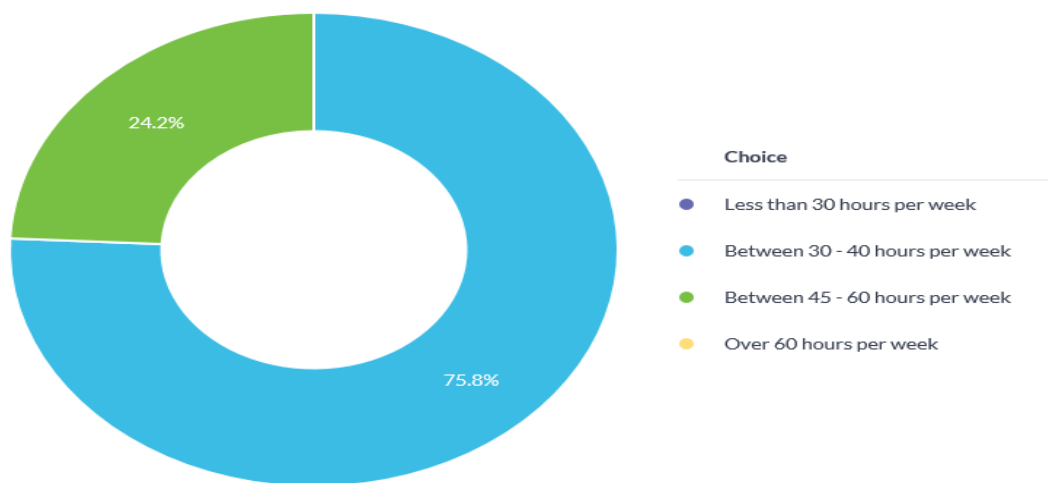
Q1 What is your age?
Multiple Choice



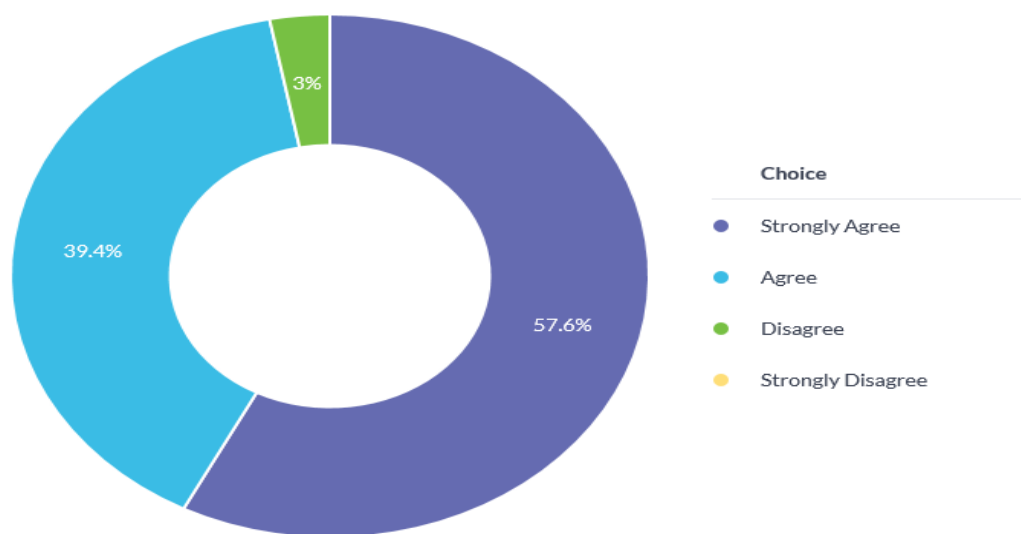
Q2 What sector in nursing are you currently working in?
Multiple Choice



Q3 How many hours do you approximately work every week?
Multiple Choice

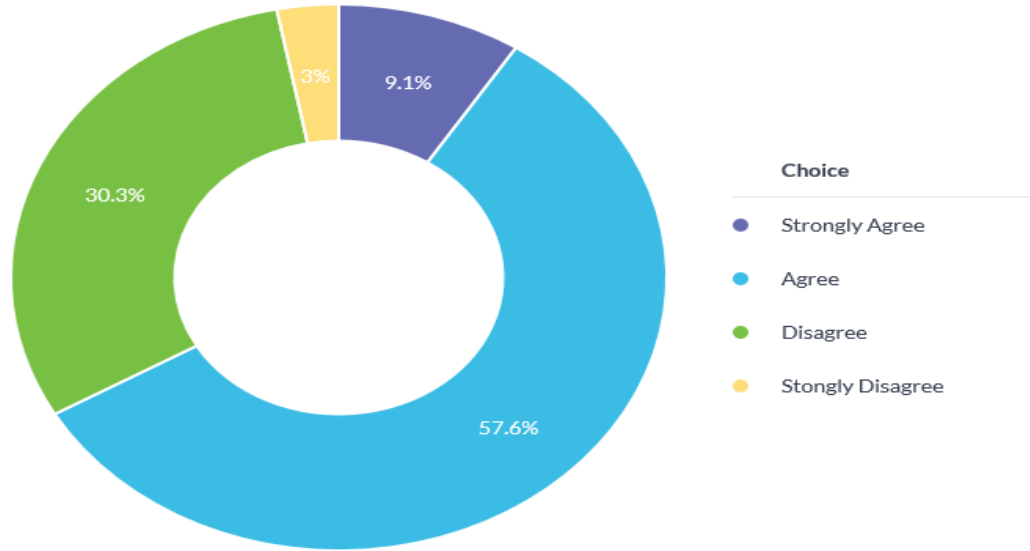


Q4 My job is very challenging
Multiple Choice



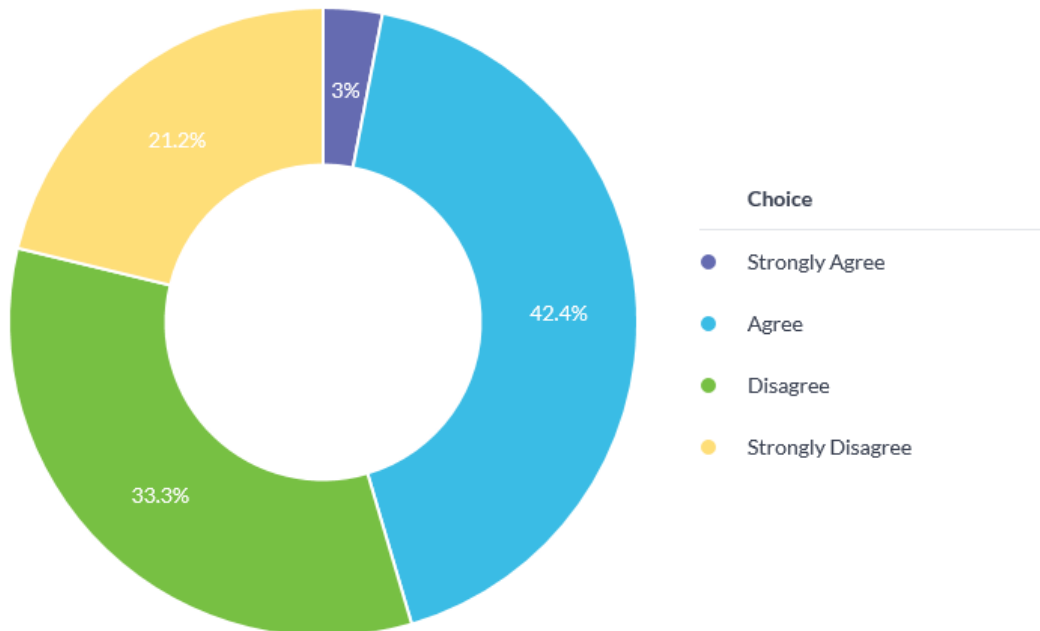
Q5

My workload is manageable
Multiple Choice



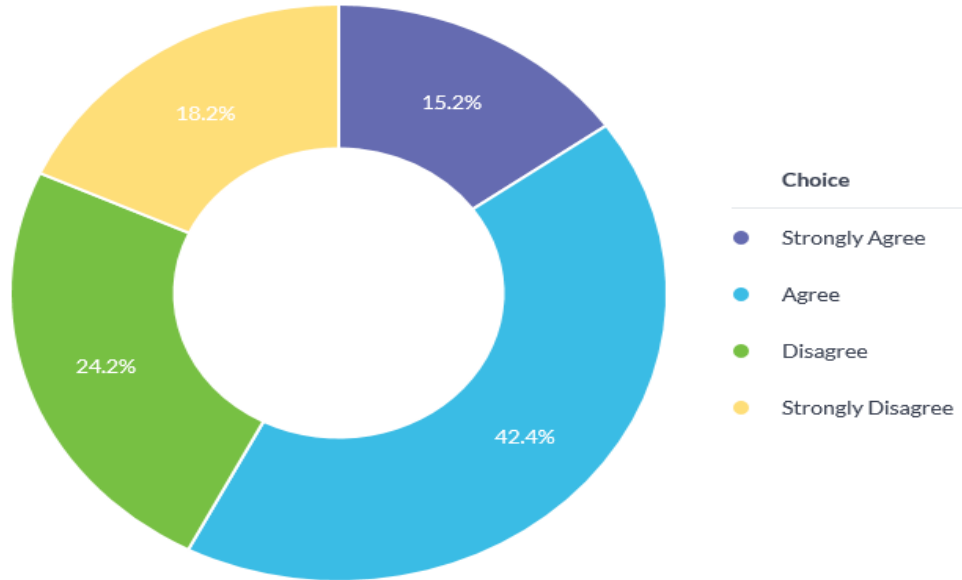
Q6

There is sufficient resources and staff available to me
Multiple Choice



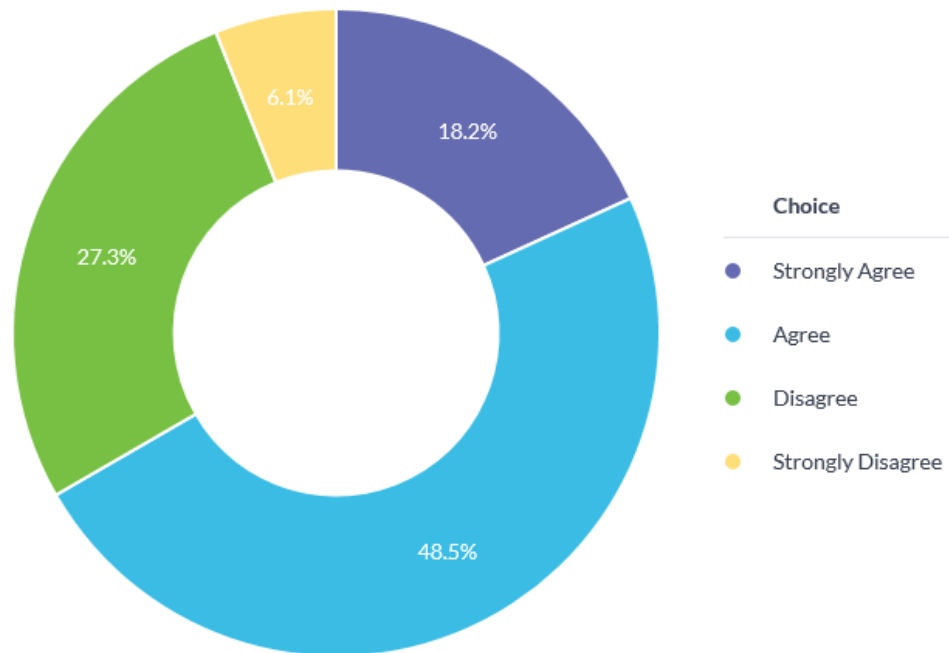
Q7

I feel I am listened to and valued by my managers
Multiple Choice



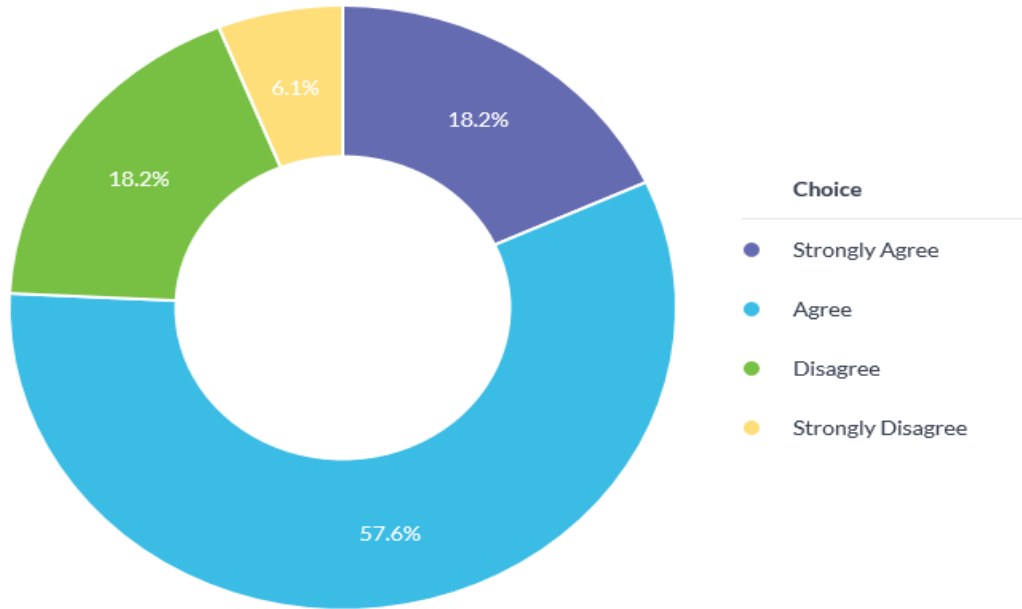
Q8

There are opportunities for career advancement in my employment
Multiple Choice



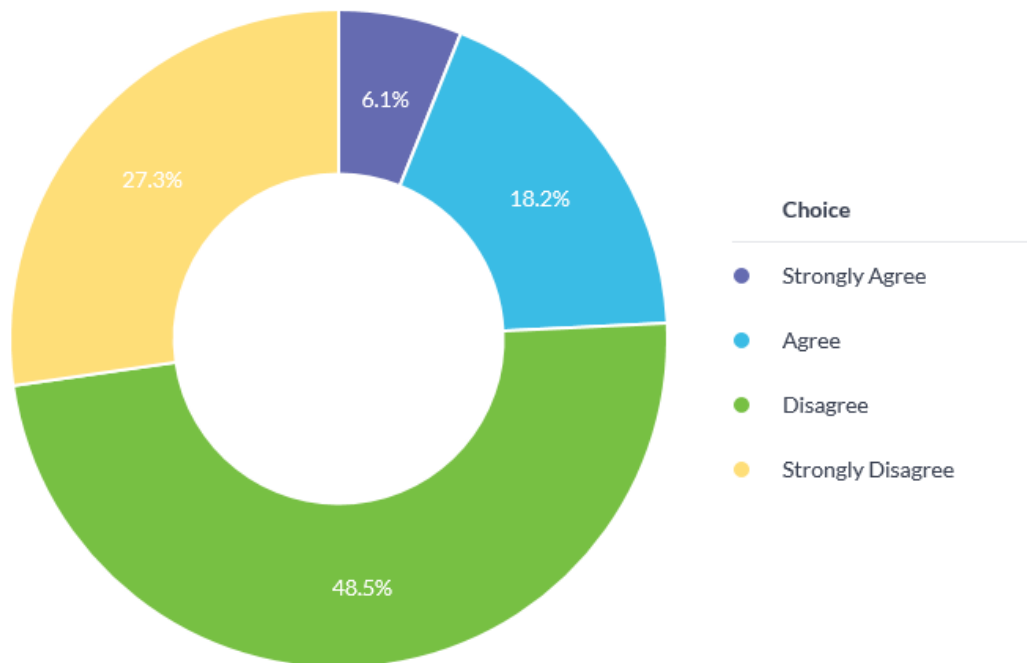
Q9

There are training and development opportunities available to me in my employment
Multiple Choice

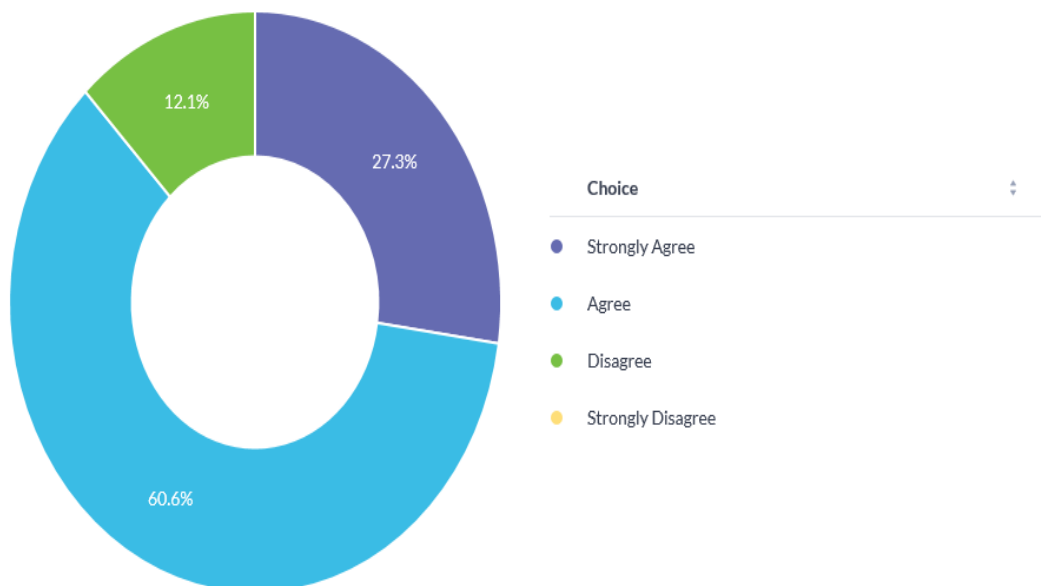


Q10

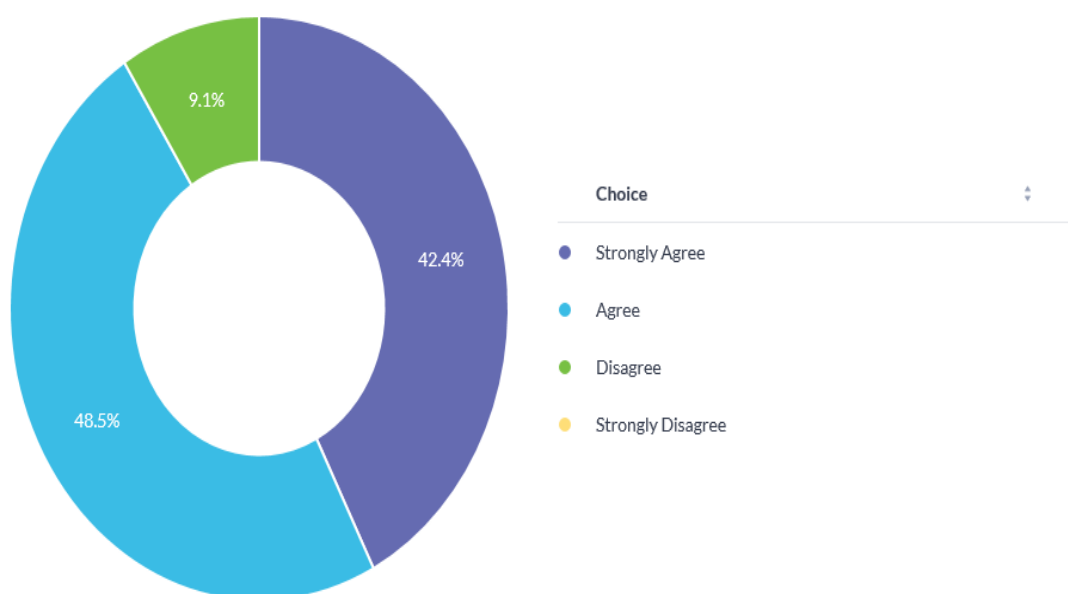
My pay is fair and adequate to my role
Multiple Choice



Q11 If there were more training and development opportunities available to me It would influence me to stay in my employment
Multiple Choice



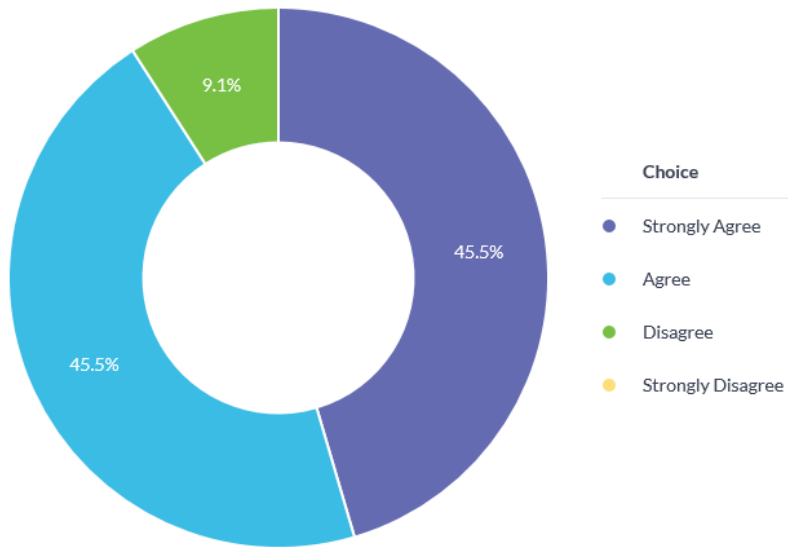
Q12 If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment
Multiple Choice



Q13

If there were options for flexible working arrangements it would influence me to stay in my current employment

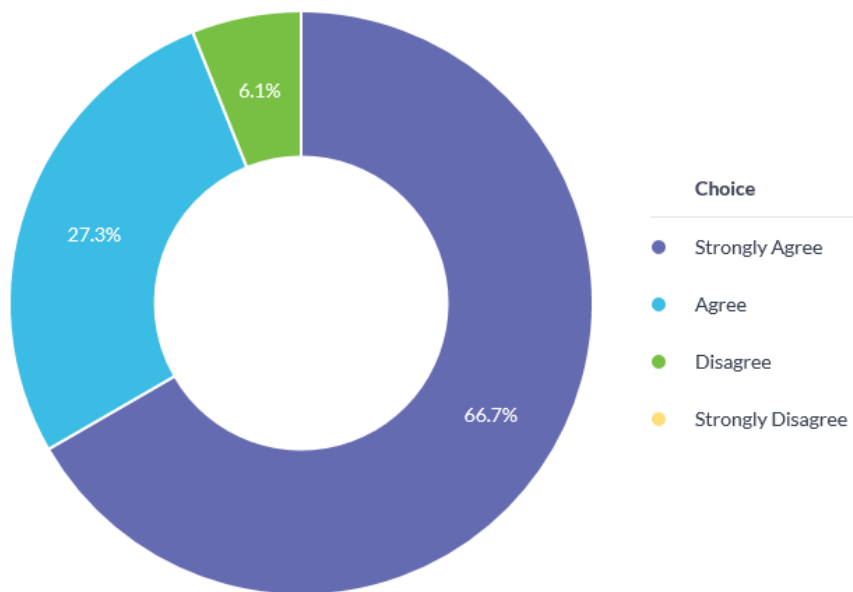
Multiple Choice



Q14

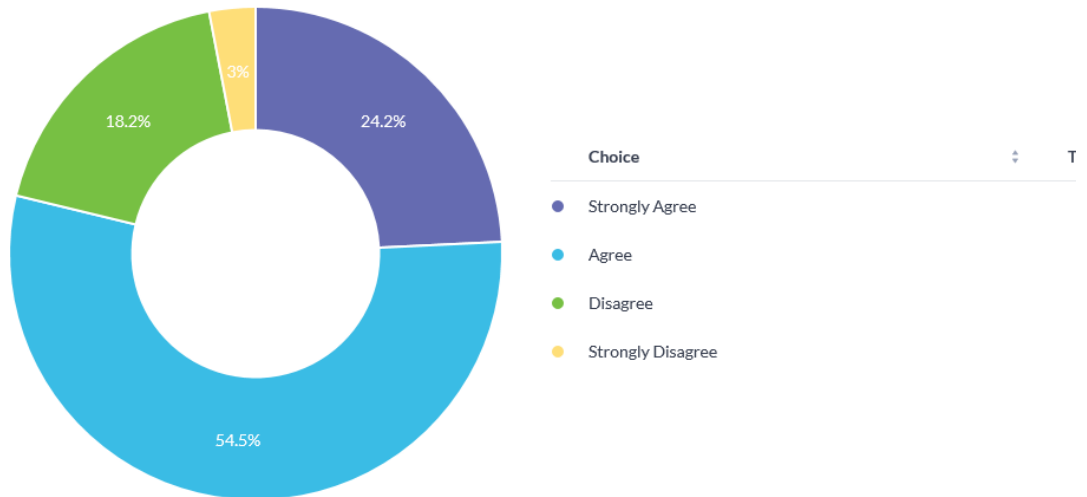
If my pay was slightly higher It would influence me to stay in my current employment

Multiple Choice



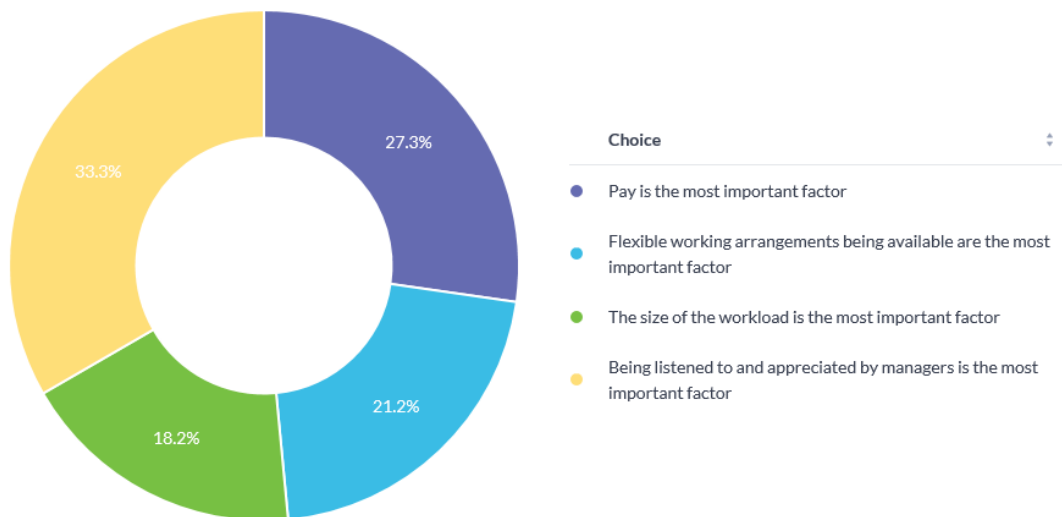
Q15

If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment
Multiple Choice



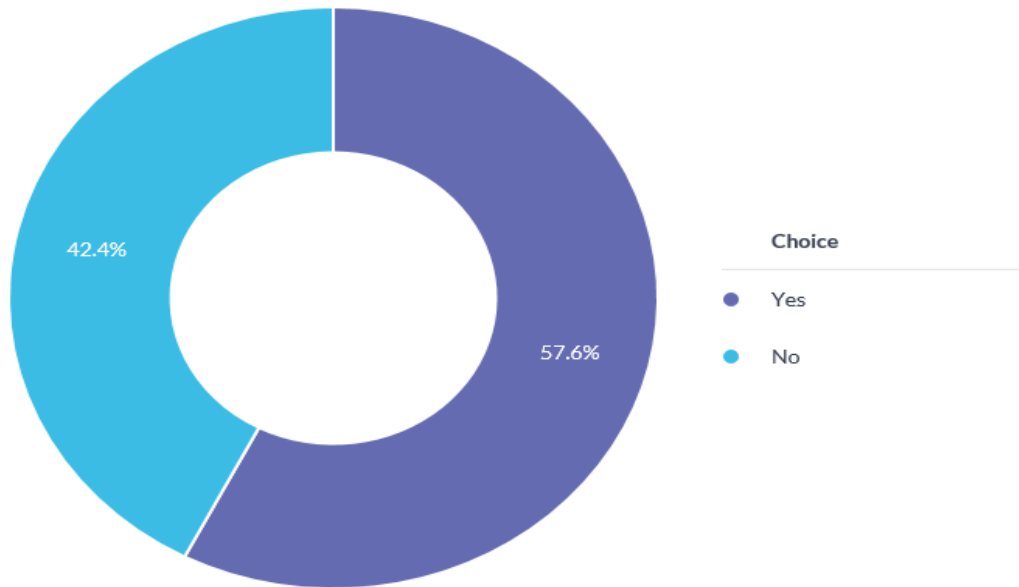
Q16

What is the most important factor to you when deciding to stay in your current role or moving to a new role?
Multiple Choice



Q17

I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so
Multiple Choice



Appendix 4: Consent Form

Consent Form - National College of Ireland

Research Project Title: Is Pay Really a Driving Influence on the Recruitment and Retention of Nurses in the Irish Health Services?

Researcher: Fiona Ryan

Research Participant name: _____

By digitally signing this form I agree that

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this research I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the survey at any time;
2. I have read the Information sheet;
3. I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have now or in the future.
4. I am fully satisfied to partake in the survey

Signed: _____

Appendix 5: Correlations for all questions

Q1 - What is your age

Q2 - What sector in nursing are you currently working in

Q3 - How many hours do you approximately work every week?

Q4 - My job is very challenging

Q5 - My workload is manageable

Q6 - There is sufficient resources and staff available to me

Q7 - I feel I am listened to and valued by my managers

Q8 - There are opportunities for career advancement in my employment

Q9 - There are training and development opportunities available to me in my employment

Q10 - My pay is fair and adequate to my role

Q11 - If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment

Q12 - If there were more career development opportunities available to me it would influence me to stay in my current employment

Q13 - If there were options for flexible working arrangements it would influence me to stay in my current employment

Q14 – If my pay was slightly higher It would influence me to stay in my current employment

Q15 - If I had more autonomy and was listened to more in my current role It would influence me to stay in my current employment

Q16 - What is the most important factor to you when deciding to stay in your current role or moving to a new role?

Q17 - I would consider emigrating abroad to work as a nurse or have previously done so

Table 14: Correlations for all questions in the survey

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17
Q1	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.583**	.637**	.554**	-.523**	.421**	.206*	.417**	-.379**	.816**	-.780**	.692**	.683**	.266**	-.861**	.490**	.575**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.041	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q2	Correlation Coefficient	.583**	1.000	.748**	.826**	-.359**	.402**	-.376**	-.214*	0.136	.760**	-.765**	.695**	.716**	.588**	-.717**	.556**	.881**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.033	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q3	Correlation Coefficient	.637**	.748**	1.000	.618**	-.269**	.254*	-.282**	-.0160	-.541**	.769**	-.820**	.598**	.611**	.718**	-.821**	.285**	.659**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.007	0.011	0.005	0.113	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q4	Correlation Coefficient	.554**	.826**	.618**	1.000	-.404**	.585**	-.423**	-.241*	0.135	.702**	-.671**	.741**	.766**	.449**	-.661**	.692**	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.016	0.184	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q5	Correlation Coefficient	-.523**	.359**	.269**	.404**	1.000	-.453**	0.008	-.230*	0.037	.594**	.446**	-.527**	.508**	0.054	.558**	-.617**	-.408**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.007	0.000		0.000	0.940	0.022	0.714	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.599	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q6	Correlation Coefficient	.421**	.402**	.254*	.585**	-.453**	1.000	-.0150	0.099	0.196	.487**	-.382**	.753**	.814**	0.087	-.457**	.829**	.570**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.011	0.000	0.000		0.139	0.329	0.052	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.393	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q7	Correlation Coefficient	.206*	-.376**	-.282**	-.423**	0.008	-.0150	1.000	.798**	-.0039	-.0026	-.0034	-.229*	.253*	.518**	0.038	-.0108	-.427**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.041	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.940	0.139		0.000	0.701	0.795	0.736	0.022	0.012	0.000	0.711	0.288	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99

Q 8	Correlation Coefficient	.417**	-.214*	-.0160	-.241*	-.230*	0.099	-.798**	1.000	-.0022	0.146	-.0133	-.0089	-.0127	-.399**	-.228*	-.0001	-.243*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.033	0.113	0.016	0.022	0.329	0.000		0.827	0.148	0.188	0.383	0.209	0.000	0.023	0.993	0.015
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 9	Correlation Coefficient	-.379**	-.0136	-.541**	0.135	-.0037	0.196	-.0039	-.0022	1.000	-.243*	.319**	-.0100	-.0091	-.387**	.325**	.345**	0.091
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.180	0.000	0.184	0.714	0.052	0.701	0.827		0.015	0.001	0.326	0.368	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.069
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 10	Correlation Coefficient	.816**	.760**	.769**	.702**	-.594**	.487**	-.0026	0.146	-.243*	1.000	-.918**	.756**	.752**	.446**	-.942**	.655**	.732**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.795	0.148	0.015		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 11	Correlation Coefficient	-.780**	-.765**	-.820**	-.671**	.446**	-.382**	-.0034	-.0133	.319**	-.918**	1.000	-.678**	-.683**	-.495**	.886**	-.508**	-.707**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.736	0.188	0.001	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 12	Correlation Coefficient	.692**	.695**	.598**	.741**	-.527**	.753**	-.229*	-.0089	-.0100	.756**	-.678**	1.000	.970**	.364**	-.728**	.768**	.755**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.022	0.383	0.326	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 13	Correlation Coefficient	.683**	.716**	.611**	.766**	-.508**	.814**	-.253*	0.127	0.091	.752**	-.683**	.970**	1.000	.384**	-.724**	.781**	.780**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.012	0.209	0.368	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 14	Correlation Coefficient	.266**	.588**	.718**	.449**	-.0054	0.087	-.518**	-.399**	.387**	.446**	-.495**	.364**	.384**	1.000	-.422**	0.101	.487**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.008	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.599	0.393	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.321	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 15	Correlation Coefficient	-.861**	-.717**	-.821**	-.661**	.558**	-.457**	-.0038	-.228*	.325**	-.942**	.886**	-.728**	-.724**	-.422**	1.000	-.587**	-.691**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.711	0.023	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99

Q 16	Correlation Coefficient	.490**	.556**	.285**	.692**	-.617**	.829**	-.108	-.001	.345**	.655**	-.508**	.768**	.781**	0.101	-.587**	1.000	.689**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.288	0.993	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.321	0.000		0.000
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
Q 17	Correlation Coefficient	.575**	.881**	.659**	.990**	-.408**	.570**	-.427**	-.243*	0.091	.732**	-.707**	.755**	.780**	.487**	-.691**	.689**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.015	0.369	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99