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To investigate whether international reasoning for absenteeism and staff turnover in call centres can be translated into an Irish call centre setting

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Abstract

This investigation is to see whether or not international reasoning for absenteeism and staff turnover can be translated in an Irish setting. There is plenty of research that provides nine common variables for staff turnover and absenteeism. These variables were tested with a survey instrument in an Irish call centre setting. 106 frontline employees responded to the survey. SPSS was used to decipher the information these surveys created. It was found that there was no statistical difference on how males and females answered the survey. It was found that there was a difference in how each age group answered. It was recommended that the company in question set up a Team Leader in training programme to encourage those who want to make a career out of the call centre industry. It was also recommended that team building exercises should be arrange to help build commitment and trust for the employees who do not feel committed to their role or company.

Declaration

Submission of Thesis and Dissertation

National College of Ireland

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(Thesis/Author Declaration Form)

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Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge all those who helped make this study possible, without your help and support it would not have been possible. I would like to especially thank Jonathan Lambert who is the Mathematics Development and Support Officer for the National College of Ireland for all his help.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Appendix

Survey.

Q1. What is your Gender? Male or Female

Q2. What is your age? 18- 24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64

The following questions are asked with a 5 point Likert Scale, Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree and Strongly agree.

Q3. Jobs have to be an enriching experience?

Q4. Your current job is an enriching experience?

Q5. Pay and Incentives are important for you?

Q6. Pay and incentives are the reason for the high attrition rates in call centres?

Q7. Money is the ultimate motivator?

Q8. You are satisfied with the pay and incentives offered by your company?

Q9. You are highly committed to your work?

Q10. The call centre job is a physically draining one?

Q11. You have heard cases of friends quitting the job on the grounds of health?

Q12. The call centre job has affected your health in some way?

Q13. You are satisfied in the way the management takes care of your health?

Q14. Customers over the phone can get unreasonable and irritating?

Q15. Irritating and abusive customers often get on your nerves?

Q16. You have seen that handling tough customers often breaks the toughest of agents?

Q17. Your managers and team leaders help you and the other agents to handle these tough customers?

Q18. Late shifts are not that big a problem for you?

Q19. You are using this job to gain experience and bridge your academic career?

Q20. You regard the competition in your call centre as a healthy one?

Q21. Does the "race to be the best" and the competition involved make you uncomfortable?

Q22. If you found the call centre job boring and monotonous you would quit?

Q23. The appraisal system in your organisation is an inclusive one rather than a downward system?

Q24. You are happy with the performance appraisal system in your organisation?

Q25. You are content with the career planning and development prospects within your organisation?

Q26. You find your job satisfactory and enjoyable?

Q27. You would be keen to make a career out of a call centre job?

Q28. Are uneasy colleagues responsible for making you feel uneasy?

Q29. You feel that the call centre job cannot get any better?

Q30. Free tea, coffee, soft drinks, sweets, television and parties are enough for you to stay effective?

Chapter 1 Introduction

Call centres have cropped up around the world rapidly over the past couple of decades. Some countries are synonymous with call centre work. The most obvious one that would spring to mind would be that of India. India is well renowned for its call centre work. For the past couple of decades companies have been setting up call centres in India due to the cheaper labour costs and costs in general. It was found that "for every 1000 jobs outsourced from the U.K to India can help save up to £10 million annually for respective organisations", (Budhivar, Varma, Malhotra and Mukherjee, 2009, p.351). Once this was established that companies could save this much money it did not take companies long to switch from the U.K, U.S.A and Europe to India.

In the Literature Review it is shown that there has been worldwide research into what issues face this sector. It brings to light studies from India, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. It is shown that there are different issues that face each call centre but there is a spine of issues that seem to affect every country. These are the issues that will be investigated in an Irish setting. With all the research that has been done, there has been a distinct lack of research done in Ireland. In Ireland over the past two decade there has been both a boom and bust economy. Ireland has situated itself in the Financial Services sector and soft services sector in general. Call centres and European Headquarters have been set up in Ireland for some of the major U.S banks as well as the likes of online giants Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. These companies see Ireland as an English speaking country with very high levels of education. It is a clever ploy from the Irish government to still be offering a low corporation tax rate of 12.5% in Ireland. This makes Ireland very attractive for these companies to set up shop here. This is why this study is worthy of further research into this relatively recent topic.

This has led to an increase in the number of call centres within Ireland. In this study, one call centre is being examined to see if there are any similarities with the International studies which have already been carried out.

It will be shown in the Literature review that absenteeism and high staff turnover is an ever present issue. It is shown that there are nine common reasons for this around the globe; these are Working Conditions, Pay and Incentives, Customers, Job Enrichment, Health, Relationship with Colleagues, Commitment, Appraisal and Career Development. It will be shown how these issues break down into gender and age which are the two sub objectives for this study.

With the sheer monotony of call centre work, absenteeism and high staff turnover is inevitably going to be an issue. In the Literature Review it explains that this is an issue around the world. The high call volumes and repetitive nature of the work can lead to employees losing motivation for their work which increases the likelihood of the employee calling in sick with the slightest ailment, were if they were motivated for the job than they would come in as the ailment was not too severe.

The investigation into this field showed up that there is no real difference of opinion on the nine variables when it comes to gender. However age does come into it. This is all presented throughout the rest of the study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

During the research into the topic I have come across many different possible causes for absenteeism and staff turnover in an Irish call centre. There have been several constant themes across the literature which will be shown in the literature review.

The first major theme is that of a lack of training and development. With a lack of training and development, many call centre workers have been unable to perform their job to a relevant standard. In an article by Vijaashree and Mund (2011), it was found that in India there are several reasons why stress levels of workers can rise. They found that as organisations become more complex, the potential for stress increases. This increasing complexity of the job leads to job ambiguity and confusion about what the agents' main job is. This wide variety of roles is not a good thing as there is a lack of training to help employees with their continually rising level of work. This was found to leave the workers with a level of personal inadequacy. The authors found also that on the other hand in India, many workers suffer from a sense of role stagnation, where they feel there is a serious lack of opportunity to move up the ladder within the company. It was also seen in an article by Budhivar et al (2009), where they discovered similar findings. There is a distinct lack of career development in some call centres in India which leads to a stressful work environment, monotonous work and adverse working conditions (Budhivar et al, 2009). These conditions do not lend themselves for a growing or learning organisation which encourages personal development and growth for the employees of the call centre. The authors went on to say that staff turnover is very costly to a firm in India. When a role becomes available within a call centre, the HR department would generally receive hundreds of applicants which is also very time consuming to sift through the all the applications looking for the correct candidates. The authors also went on to say that the lack of training and development comes down to the

lack of funding available in most cases. The poor standard of training is also likely to continue as there is generally no post training evaluation in place (Budhivar et al, 2009). The authors draw similar comparisons to the idea of the "electronic sweatshop image."(Frenkel, Korczynski, Shire and Tam, 1998). They suggest that this sweatshop image is the reason for many to leave their positions. The authors go on to say that the three main motivators for the employees were, money, career development and working conditions. There is an issue in India that if another call centre is offering better conditions employees are having no issue in switching companies to better their own situations (Budhivar et al, 2009). The authors also found that companies are very slow to react to this turnover which is very costly for the company. In an article by Crone, Carey and Dowling (2003), it is shown that there is a positive correlation between the high amount of calls taken and the level of absenteeism in call centres. The more calls taken the more effect it has on the employee which makes the absenteeism level rise. In India with the high levels of employee poaching, this can be a huge concern as the employment market for qualified call centre employees if highly stacked in favour of the qualified employee (Budhivar et al, 2009). New companies can offer the employee better pay with less calls and as has been proven already the employee is only too happy to switch companies.

There were some similar themes in European call centres also. A lack of training leads to frustration and stress for the employee, as they are unable to do their job effectively (Garavan, Wilson, Cross and Carberry, 2008). In this article there is an insight given into how scripts can lead to stress for the agent. This is due to the fact that the agent loses their identity and dumbs down the job (Garavan el al, 2008). This shows that an overly structured training regime can have the opposite effect to an agent's behaviour instead of the desired positive affect. In this article they also went on to describe that

stress and exhaustion are frequently given reactions to call centre work. An emphasis on training and development could help bridge the gap (Garavan et al, 2008).

In an article by Weinkopf (2009), it is shown that in German call centres there is a wide variety of pay on offer. It is shown that the hourly wage can range from €6 to €40 for the frontline call centre worker. The author goes on to state that the hourly pay is dependent on what sector they are working in. This ties in with other literature that shows that frontline employees, especially in India, are interested in improving their financial situation. This wide variety of wage gives the employee the power to switch to the employer who is offering the most money. In India a big problem for call centres is the constant poaching of employees from one company to the next (Budhivar et al, 2009). The main reason for this in India is down to the fact that there is a small amount of properly qualified pool of candidates. This should not be the same issue in Germany where there is a higher standard of education. In an article by Sieben and de Grip (2004), it is found that companies in the Netherlands who offer firm specific training are less likely to leave their current call centre employer for another. The author went on to say that sector specific training however had no impact on whether or not the agent stayed any longer than the usual two year period for a call centre agent (Sieben and de Grip, 2004). This may hint at the idea that training is not the answer to all of the turnover reasons within call centre sector.

Another theme that arose was that of involvement of employees in decision making within the call centre itself. Employees are far more likely to take more pride in their work if they feel involved in the whole process (Pierre and Tremblay, 2011). This can help the employee as they will feel slightly more in control of what is happening in the workplace. It was found that there are some positive knock on effects for the company as a whole also. They found that involvement can help lower absenteeism, which leads to avoiding a lack of staff and overall is positive for the company, as it helps with the

retention of staff which reduces costs of continually hiring new staff and training them in (Pierre and Tremblay, 2011). They did find however that involvement is only effective if the employ stress levels are low; otherwise the employees may only turn up to receive their salary (Pierre and Tremblay, 2011). Those who felt involved and up to date with all relevant information felt less stress (Annakis, Lobo and Pilay, no year).

The physical environment and working conditions can have a major role on stress levels and absenteeism also (McGuire and McLaren, 2009). They found that if the physical environment is not up to standard than this will have a negative impact on both the level of commitment and general well-being of the employee. They found that the main factors to help with employee well-being are that of control and social support for their employees (McGuire and McLaren, 2009). The negative occupational health of the call centre work can also be very demotivating (Hannif, Lamm and Vo, no date). This would involve the repetitive handling of telephone calls, restricted work space, calls automatically coming in with no control over what type of call you can take. The unpredictable work flows and not knowing how busy you will be from day to day can be very stressful (Hannif et al, no date). There was an article which went on to show one in four call centre workers suffer due to lack of voice training (Anonymous, 2012). This is not what call centre managers or employees want as it will also lead to stress if the employee can't work due to lack of a voice, which after all is the most important function for a call centre worker.

Employee well-being is a popular subject. Employee well-being is associated with appropriate job design (Holman, 2003). He goes on to offer steps on how managers can help improve this for employees, steps such as a non-intensive monitoring of performance which helps employees to progress and improve their job effectiveness. This needs to be helped by a supportive role from management and the human resources department (Holman, 2009). The author goes on to challenge the perception of call

centres being electronic sweatshops. If management offer their support and actively design stress out of the job description, then this will help lower stress levels within the centre and making the call centre a slightly more enjoyable place and cut down on absenteeism and ultimately staff turnover (Holman, 2009).

Call centres also work on a flexible time frame from Monday to Sunday in a lot of cases. This is a must as customers may need to call in with a problem at the weekend. While this is good for customers, it does nothing to help the stress levels of employees. These shift patters which are described as flexible, are in fact anything but. These shift patters have a negative effect on employee work life balance (Hannif, McDonnell, Connell and Burgess, 2010). This leads to an increase in stress for employees if they are unable to balance their work and private lives. Employees could also start to resent their job and the time they spend there.

Another big cause of stress and disillusionment within call centres is the perceived lack of opportunities for career progression within call centres (Goyup, Valverde and Ryan, 2008). The authors went on to discover that in a lot of call centres there is a very limited use of promotion from within and overall a general absence of consolidated internal labour markets. A lack of something to strive for can be a serious de motivator for employees. This of course will have a serious knock on effect with work productivity if the employee feels they are in a dead end job. The article goes on to say that performance appraisals are only a small part of assessing the quality of an employee and then eventual promotion within the ranks which is said to be very low indeed (Goyup et al, 2008).

Emotional pressure from customer can also lead to a lower level of job satisfaction (Annakis et al, no year). If employees are being constantly subjected to abuse from customers then this is likely to lead to a serious amount of anxiety. It was shown in a study that aggressive customers lead to a more stressful environment for the employee

to work within (Wegge, Van Dick and Von Bernstorf, 2010). This would lead to a less effective workforce as they would be unmotivated to attend work or to go the extra mile for the customer.

On the other side of the scale there has been some positive studies carried out in New Zealand. Hunt, Rasmussen and Lamm (No date), found that call centre workers in New Zealand are very content with life. They found that call centre work was enjoyable most of the time. There are several benefits also, career enhancements and many found new skills. This is in complete contrast to what we have seen in the rest of the articles. It was found that women in New Zealand call centres were also enjoying some success (Hunt and Rasmussen, 2010). They found that management were accommodating their different labour market needs and they found that women in New Zealand call centres generally enjoyed their work. In Ireland there was a study done to analyse the social impact of call centres in Ireland. It was found that there had been a serious displacement of female employees (Jobs, Burris and Butler, 2007). This obviously is the exact opposite to the situation in New Zealand. The authors go on to say that the lack of success women have in Irish call centres can be attributed to a historic problem in Ireland were women had less opportunities than men (Jobs et al, 2007). It will be interesting to see if this has changed in seven years.

Teams can play a helpful role in de stressing and give an employee a reason to come into work each day. The role of a team differs from call centre to call centre. Smaller call centres have been found to have a more informal team structure. This results in fewer controls and each team members having extra functions within their role (Hannif, McDonnell, Connell and Burgess, 2013). They go on to say that there is no rivalry between teams but rather the teams are used as a socialising device, which has less stress associated with it. In bigger call centres however, there is no emphasis on empowering employees and there is certainly no participation among team members

(Hannif et al, 2013). This lack of socialisation between teams will decrease motivation for employees, after all humans are social beings.

In conclusion to the literature review we can see that there are several common themes that run through the spine of it. We can sum these issues up into nine different variables that are factors for employees to stress over and increase the levels of absenteeism and staff turnover, which has been shown to be very costly to call centres especially in India. These nine variables include; working conditions, pay and incentives, job enrichment, customer relations, health, relationship with colleagues, commitment levels, career development and performance appraisal. It is shown in the literature review that the call centre employee is open to all of these factors within their job. The magnitude of importance can vary from call centre to call centre for each of the variables. In India it is shown that there is a different culture and working conditions in general. The sheer size of the country will always mean it is open to high costs which would be associated with recruitment due to the sheer volume of applicants. The issue of pay is universal it seems. Everyone wants to be earning more money than they are at the minute, which goes for all jobs not just those in the call centre sector. It was shown that in certain industries, call centre workers can earn up to €40 per hour. This is very rare however as the average wage is generally a lot lower. Motivation is an important factor for employees to be committed to their work. If the motivation is not there then it will affect most of these variables. It is essential that motivation is kept high as it will negatively affect all aspects of the call centre job.

Chapter 3 Research Question

In this section, the research question and topic will be put forward for this study.

The main research title for this study is,

> "To investigate whether international reasoning for absenteeism and staff turnover in call centres can be translated into an Irish call centre setting".

As is shown in the Literature Review there are many international studies done on this area. There is a lack on study done on the subject of call centres within Ireland. This study aims to bridge a gap.

The first research objective is,

"To investigate if the reasoning for absenteeism and staff turnover in an Irish call centre varies based on gender"

This is to see whether absenteeism and staff turnover is affected by gender. Do males differ from females in this regard? In the Literature Review it was shown that women progress well in New Zealand and Australia, does this have an impact on the absenteeism and staff turnover?

The second research objective is,

" To investigate if the reasoning for absenteeism and staff turnover in an Irish call centre varies based on age"

This research objective is to see whether absenteeism and staff turnover reasoning is affected by age.

Chapter 4 Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were considered for this piece of research. Both have been proven as useful techniques for gathering information in this field which was found in the researched articles in the literature review. In the literature review it was found that there were nine common threads or variables that affect the level of both absenteeism and staff turnover in call centres throughout the world. The lack of research on this issue in Ireland was a glaring omission. The empirical data uncovered in the majority of articles gives a good base of research to compare the situation in Ireland.

It was decided that the best method of investigation was to compile a survey and to send this to the desired sample. During the research it became apparent that this type of investigation would suit the body of work. In our literature review most of the articles researched had used this tool. Articles by Goryup et al, (2008), Crone et al, (2003), Holman, (2002) and Hannif et al, (2010), all used a questionnaire to build their body of research. This shows that it is an acceptable method for this particular area.

During the research a survey cropped up which was already used to gather information in a call centre in India. The article was by Budhivar et al, (2009). The questionnaire was twenty eight questions long and looked to see how front line workers felt about their roles within the company in India. This survey looked to get the opinion of the employees on how they saw the possible reasons for them to call in sick or leave the company. The authors had also broken the survey down into the nine sections. As this survey was previously used it seemed a good survey to use in an Irish setting. The survey can be found in **Appendix 1**. The reason this method was employed was to ensure it was possible to get to as many employees as possible to have input in the study.

During the research access was granted to a sales department of an Irish call centre. Within the department there are 120 frontline sales people. This convenience sample is an inbound sales department where potential customers and existing customers call in with their queries, so there is no outbound or cold calling taking place within the department. Access was granted to the department through a senior sales manager within the company. This manager was contacted via email to ensure there would be access to the sample for the study. This manager was given full disclosure of how the information that was extracted from the survey would be dealt with and used. It stated, that neither the manager's name nor the company's name would be used in the report. This was to ensure that no ethical issues would arise from the research within the company. This is how access was granted to the sales division.

Once permission and access was granted, an email was sent out to everybody on the sales floor, giving full disclosure and stating what the survey is about and what it is hoping to achieve. The email also pushed the fact that the survey is anonymous so nobody would be reported to management for any reason. The email also asked for employees to fill the survey out when they were on their break so as to not impact the business negatively. This was all done to ensure that no ethical issues would arise from the gathering of the data and that each participant was fully aware of how their answers would be used.

The survey was transformed into an online tool using the Survey Monkey website, www.surveymonkey.net. A profile was created and set up the survey with the questions from the questionnaire. The website allows you to make all questions mandatory so that all surveys will be fully completed and that no data would be missing. The website then creates a unique web address for it which makes it easy to distribute the survey accordingly. This link was entered in the email that was sent out to the sales manager and the sales floor so those who wanted to fill the survey out had immediate access. The

website gives you access to completed surveys as soon as they are finished. The link was left open for submissions for a seven day period. In this seven day period 106 fully completed surveys were collected. All the surveys are anonymous so nobody's identity would become apparent. This protects the privacy of each individual who takes the survey. The website allows you to close the link whenever you want. The website collects all the data as the responses come in. Once the questionnaire is closed off you can start to work with your data. The website allows you to export all the raw data into an Excel file. In this file you have each respondent's answers to each of the questions. This data was stored on to a laptop which was backed up onto Dropbox, which is a cloud based storage system.

From this Excel file the data was then inputted in to SPSS, which is a recognised statistical program. The data from each question is then coded and broken down into readable items for the SPSS package to generate statistics. As the questions of the survey were five point Likert Scale questions, the reliability of each of the variables needed to be tested. Further tests on the result were performed which will be disclosed in the proceeding questions.

There are limitations to the methodology used however. The convenience sampling method does have some drawbacks, according to Laerd, convenience sampling can suffer from a number of biases such as an under or over representation from a single demographic (Laerd Dissertation, 2012). This method of sampling can mean that too many of one gender or age group are over or under represented. With the sample in question here however, out of the 120 employees, 106 replied so when they go on to say that it is difficult to draw generalisations from a convenience sample, this does not look to be the case here.

Chapter 5 Findings

In the following section, the findings will be shown for each of the nine variables. Each of the variables was tested for **Normality**. After this test had taken place a further test was taken on each variable. When a variable was found to be normal an **Independent Samples t Test** was performed. When the variable was found to be non-normal a **Mann Whitney U Test** was performed.

Tests of normality were undertaken for factors grouped by gender. The results of these tests are depicted in **Table 1** below. For example, under the sub heading '**Shapiro-Wilk**' we observe for the factor Job Enrichment with regards to Males a test statistic of **0.974**, **64** degrees-of-freedom and significance of **0.187**, which will be reported as **(Shapiro-Wilk = 0.974, df = 64, p = 0.187)**.

For all of the proceeding assessments of normality the Shapiro-Wilk results are relied upon.

Tests of Normality

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Gender	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
WCond	Male	.136	64	.005	.961	64	.040
	Female	.122	42	.123	.967	42	.253
Pandl	Male	.144	64	.002	.959	64	.032
	Female	.191	42	.001	.947	42	.051
JobEn	Male	.134	64	.006	.974	64	.187
	Female	.176	42	.002	.922	42	.007
Customers	Male	.150	64	.001	.954	64	.017
	Female	.187	42	.001	.847	42	.000
Health	Male	.094	64	.200*	.979	64	.360
	Female	.158	42	.010	.966	42	.243
Relationship	Male	.143	64	.002	.942	64	.005
	Female	.190	42	.001	.924	42	.008
Committment	Male	.321	64	.000	.840	64	.000
	Female	.346	42	.000	.788	42	.000
Appraisal	Male	.167	64	.000	.924	64	.001
	Female	.175	42	.002	.939	42	.025
Development	Male	.161	64	.000	.943	64	.005
	Female	.155	42	.013	.956	42	.102

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 1: Tests of Normality

5.1 Working Conditions

In this section, Working Conditions are being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and females in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

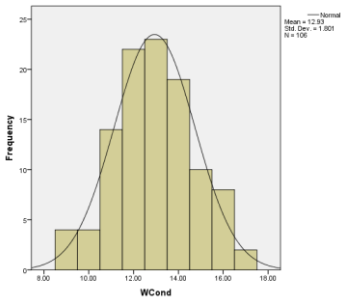

Figure 1: Working Condition Histogram

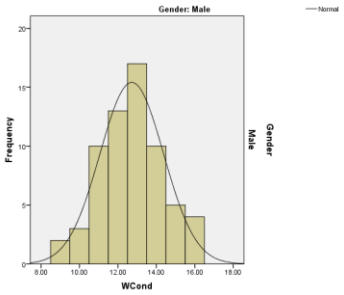

Figure 2: Male Working Conditions Histogram

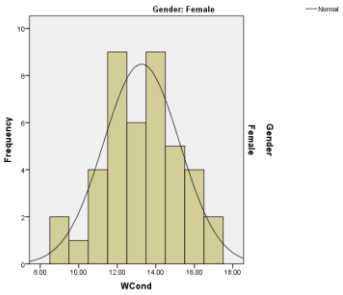

Figure 3: Female Working Conditions Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
WCond	Male	64	49.95	3196.50
	Female	42	58.92	2474.50
	Total	106		

Table 2: Working Conditions Ranks

Test Statistics[a]

	WCond
Mann-Whitney U	1116.500
Wilcoxon W	3196.500
Z	-1.491
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.136

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 3: Mann-Whitney U Test

In order to assess the differences of Working Condition perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.961, df = 64, p = 0.040**) deviates significantly from normality, although, in the Female distribution case (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.947, df = 42, p = 0.253**) normality was assured. As one of the sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the

non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 49.95, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 58.92, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1116.5, p = 0.136**). These results are detailed in **Tables 2** and **3** above.

5.2 Pay and Incentives

In this section, Pay and Incentives are being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and females in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

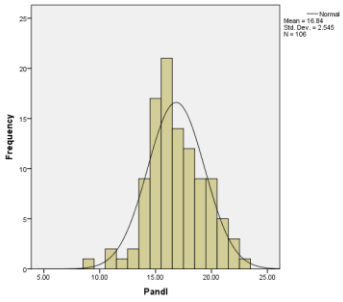

Figure 4: Pay and Incentives Histogram

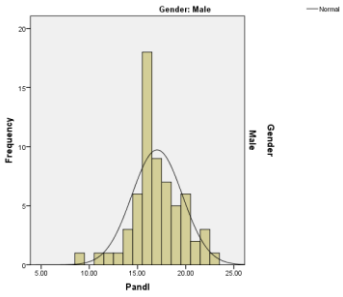

Figure 5: Male Pay and Incentives Histogram

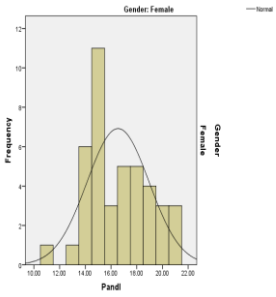

Figure 6: Female Pay and Incentives Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Pandl	Male	64	56.55	3619.00
	Female	42	48.86	2052.00
	Total	106		

Table 5: Pay and Incentives Rank

Test Statistics[a]

	Development
Mann-Whitney U	1339.500
Wilcoxon W	2242.500
Z	-.030
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.976

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 6: Pay and Incentives Mann-Whitney U Test

In order to assess the differences of Pay and Incentives perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.959, df = 64, p = 0.032**) deviates significantly from normality, as is the case with Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.967, df = 42, p = 0.051**) normality was not assured. As both of the sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 56.55, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 48.86, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1149.0, p = 0.204**). These results are detailed in **Tables 4** and **5** above.

5.3 Job Enrichment

In this section, Job Enrichment is being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and females in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

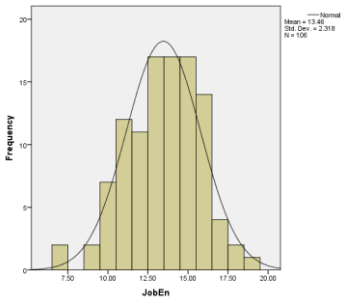

Figure 7: Job Enrichment Histogram

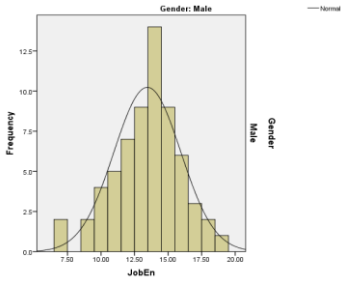

Figure 8: Male Job Enrichment Histogram

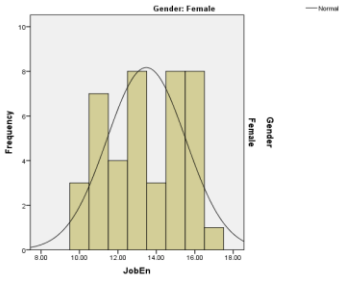

Figure 9:Female Job Enrichment Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
JobEn	Male	64	53.55	3427.00
	Female	42	53.43	2244.00
	Total	106		

Table 7: Job Enrichment Ranks

Test Statistics[a]

	JobEn
Mann-Whitney U	1341.000
Wilcoxon W	2244.000
Z	-.020
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.984

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 8: Job Enrichment Mann- Whitney U Test

In order to assess the differences of Job Enrichment perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.922, df = 42, p = 0.007**) deviates significantly from normality, although, in the Male distribution case (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.974, df = 64, p = 0.187**) normality was assured. As one of the sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 53.55, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 53.43, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1341, p = 0.984**). These results are detailed in **Tables 6** and **7** above.

5.4 Customers

In this section, Customers are being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and female in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

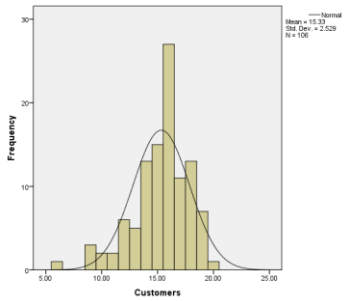

Figure 10: Customers Histogram

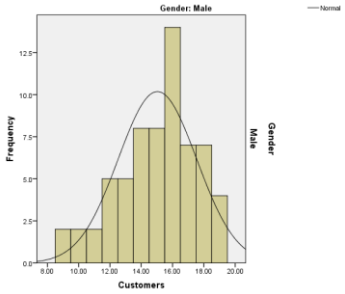

Figure 11: Male Customers Histogram

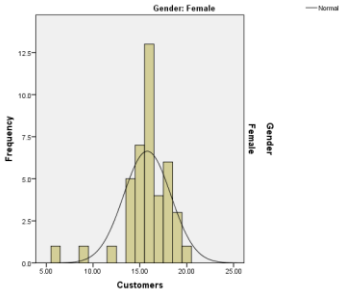

Figure 12: Female Customers Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Customers	Male	64	49.51	3168.50
	Female	42	59.58	2502.50
	Total	106		

Table 9: Customers Rank

Test Statistics[a]

	Customers
Mann-Whitney U	1088.500
Wilcoxon W	3168.500
Z	-1.671
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.095

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 10: Customers Mann-Whitney U Test

In order to assess the differences of Customers perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.954, df = 64, p = 0.017**) deviates significantly from normality, as is the case with Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.847, df = 42, p = 0.000**) normality was not assured. As both of the

sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 49.51, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 59.58, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1088.500, p = 0.095**). These results are detailed in **Tables 8** and **9** above.

5.5 Health

In this section, Health is being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and female in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

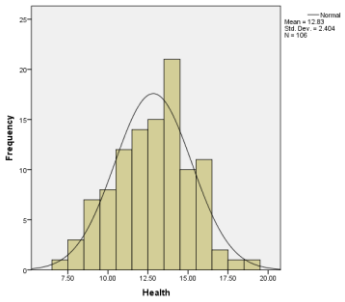

Figure 13: Health Histogram

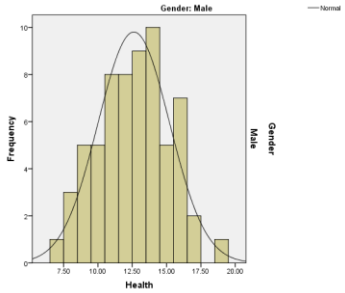

Figure 14: Male Health Histogram

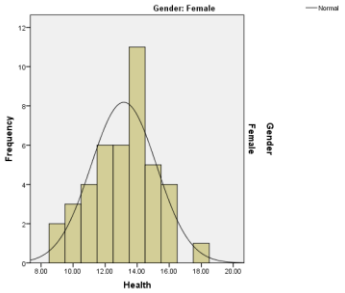

Figure 15: Female Health Histogram

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Health	Male	64	12.6094	2.60413	.32552
	Female	42	13.1667	2.04721	.31589

Table 11: Health Group Statistics

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Health	Equal variances assumed	3.271	.073	-1.169	104	.245	-.55729	.47661	-1.50242	.38784
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.229	100.532	.222	-.55729	.45359	-1.45715	.34257

Table 12: Health Independent Sample Test

In order to assess the differences of health perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. Both the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.979, df = 64, p = 0.360**) and Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.966, df = 42, p = 0.243**) were found to be reasonably normal. Based on this result a Student's t-Test was performed to estimate if statistical differences exist between genders. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception (**M = 12.6, SD = 2.60, n = 64**) and Female perception (**M = 13.2, SD = 2.05, n = 42**), (**t = -1.169, df = 104, p = 0.245**). These results are detailed in **Tables 10** and **11** above.

5.6 Relationship with Colleagues

In this section, Relationship with Colleagues is being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and females in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

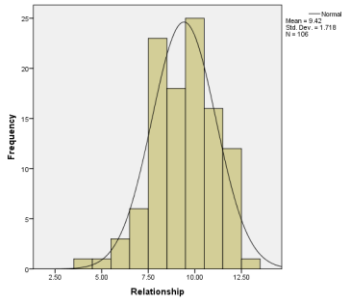

Figure 16: Relationship Histogram

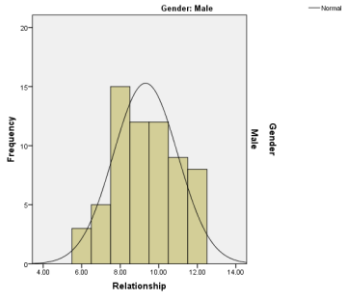

Figure 17: Male Relationship Histogram

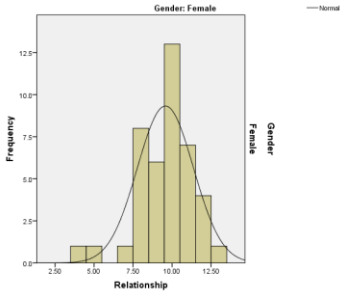

Figure 18: Female Relationship Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Relationship	Male	64	51.05	3267.00
	Female	42	57.24	2404.00
	Total	106		

Table 13: Relationship Ranks

Test Statistics[a]

	Relationship
Mann-Whitney U	1187.000
Wilcoxon W	3267.000
Z	-1.031
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.302

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 14: Relationship Mann-Whitney U Test

In order to assess the differences of Relationship with Colleagues perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.942, df = 64, p = 0.005**) deviates significantly from normality, as is the case with Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.924, df = 42, p = 0.008**) normality was not assured. As both of the sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 51.05, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 57.24, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1187.000, p = 0.302**). These results are detailed in **Tables 12** and **13** above.

5.7 Commitment

In this section, Commitment is being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and females in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

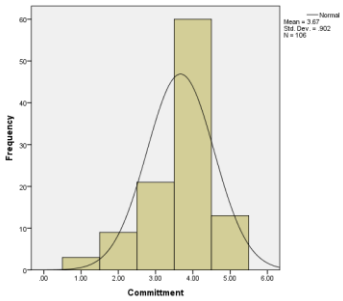

Figure 19: Commitment Histogram

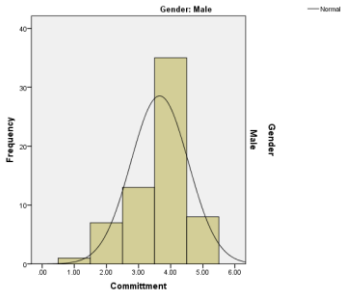

Figure 20: Male Commitment Histogram

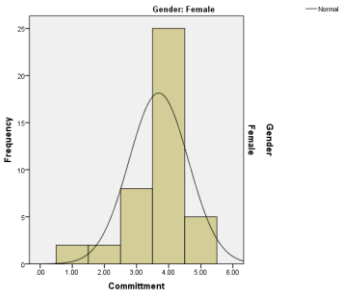

Figure 21: Female Commitment Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Committment	Male	64	52.80	3379.50
	Female	42	54.56	2291.50
	Total	106		

Table 15: Commitment Rank

Test Statistics[a]

	Committment
Mann-Whitney U	1299.500
Wilcoxon W	3379.500
Z	-.320
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.749

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 16: Commitment Mann-Whitney U Test

In order to assess the differences of Commitment perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.840, df = 64, p = 0.000**) deviates significantly from normality, as is the case with Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.788, df = 42, p = 0.000**) normality was not assured. As both of the sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 52.80, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 54.56, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1299.500, p = 0.302**). These results are detailed in **Tables 14** and **15** above.

5.8 Appraisal

In this section, Appraisal is being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and females in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

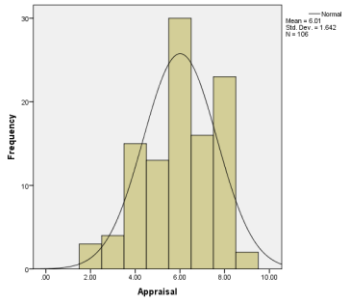

Figure 22: Appraisal Histogram

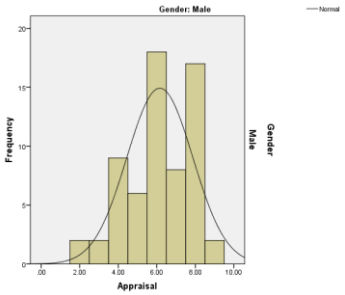

Figure 23: Male Appraisal Histogram

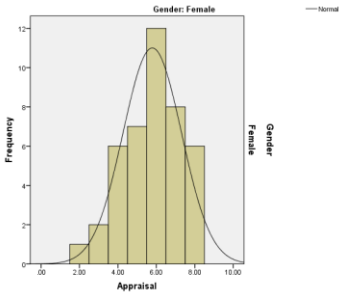

Figure 24: Female Appraisal Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Appraisal	Male	64	56.45	3613.00
	Female	42	49.00	2058.00
	Total	106		

Table 17: Appraisal Ranks

Test Statistics[a]

	Appraisal
Mann-Whitney U	1155.000
Wilcoxon W	2058.000
Z	-1.247
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.213

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 18: Appraisal Mann-Whitney U Test

In order to assess the differences of Appraisal perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.924, df = 64, p = 0.001**) deviates significantly from normality, as is the case with Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk =0. 939, df = 42, p = 0.025**) normality was not assured. As both of the sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results

indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 56.45, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 49.0, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1155, p = 0.213**). These results are detailed in **Tables 16** and **17** above.

5.9 Career Development

In this section, Career Development is being assessed as to whether there is a difference between males and females in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

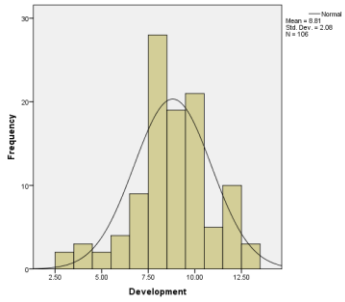

Figure 25: Development Histogram

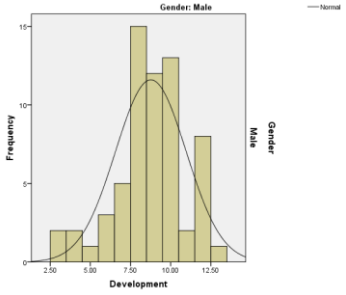

Figure 26: Male Histogram

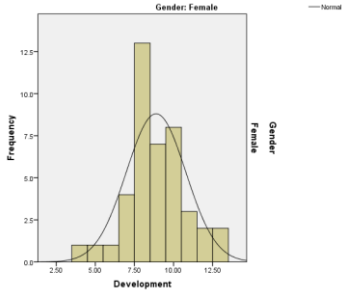

Figure 27: Female Development Histogram

Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Development	Male	64	53.57	3428.50
	Female	42	53.39	2242.50
	Total	106		

Table 19: Development Ranks

Test Statistics[a]

	Development
Mann-Whitney U	1339.500
Wilcoxon W	2242.500
Z	-.030
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.976

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 20: Development Whitney-Mann U Test

In order to assess the differences of Career Development perception based on gender an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of sample normality were tested through an application of the Shapiro-

Wilk statistic. There is evidence to suggest that the Male distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk = 0.943, df = 64, p = 0.005**) deviates significantly from normality, this is not the case with Female distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk =0. 956, df = 42, p = 0.102**) normality was assured. As both of the sample distributions deviates significantly from normality the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was undertaken to assess for differences based on gender. Our results indicate no statistical differences between Male perception rank (**M = 53.57, n = 64**) and Female perception rank (**M = 53.39.0, n = 42**), (**Mann-Whitney U = 1339.500, p = 0.976**). These results are detailed in **Tables 18** and **19** above.

5.10 Anova Testing

In the following section, the findings will be shown for each of the nine variables. Each of the variables was tested for Homogeneity. The significance value is greater than 0.05 in each case. This means that the Anova test can be ran. All the results for each of the variables can be found in the proceeding tables 21, 22, 23 and 24.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
WCond	1.347	4	101	.258
PandI	.065	4	101	.992
Customers	.788	4	101	.536
JobEn	.595	4	101	.667
Health	1.438	4	101	.227

Table 21: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
WCond	Between Groups	29.341	4	7.335	2.381	.057
	Within Groups	311.196	101	3.081		
	Total	340.538	105			
PandI	Between Groups	8.954	4	2.239	.337	.853
	Within Groups	671.320	101	6.647		
	Total	680.274	105			
Customers	Between Groups	21.174	4	5.294	.822	.514
	Within Groups	650.269	101	6.438		
	Total	671.443	105			
JobEn	Between Groups	56.603	4	14.151	2.815	.029
	Within Groups	507.746	101	5.027		
	Total	564.349	105			
Health	Between Groups	34.026	4	8.506	1.500	.208
	Within Groups	572.918	101	5.672		
	Total	606.943	105			

Table 22: Anova

5.11 Working Conditions

In this section, Working Conditions are being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Working Condition perception based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 1.347, df = 4, p = 0.258**) is homogeneous. As Working Conditions was seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = 2.381, p = 0.057**. These results are detailed in **Tables 21** and **22** above.

5.12 Pay and Incentives

In this section, Pay and Incentives are being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Pay and Incentives perception based on age, an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 0.65, df = 4, p = 0.992**) is homogeneous. As Pay and incentives were seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = .337, p = 0.853**. These results are detailed in **Tables 21** and **22** above.

5.13 Customers

In this section, the variable of Customers is being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of employees' perception on Customers based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 0.788, df = 4, p = 0.536**) is homogeneous. As Customers were seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = .822, p = 0.514**. These results are detailed in **Tables 21** and **22** above.

5.14 Job Enrichment

In this section, Job Enrichment is being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Job Enrichment perception based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age

distribution (**Homogeneity= 0.595, df = 4, p = 0.667**) is homogeneous. As Job Enrichment was seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = 2.815, p = 0.029**. These results are detailed in **Tables 21** and **22** above.

5.15 Health

In this section, Health is being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Health perception based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 1.438, df = 4, p = 0.227**) is homogeneous. As Health was seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = 1.500, p = 0.208**. These results are detailed in **Tables 21** and **22** above.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Relationship	.947	4	101	.440
Committment	1.921	4	101	.113
Appraisal	1.270	4	101	.287
Development	.207	4	101	.934

Table 23: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Relationship	Between Groups	6.438	4	1.610	.536	.710
	Within Groups	303.298	101	3.003		
	Total	309.736	105			
Committment	Between Groups	17.604	4	4.401	6.552	.000
	Within Groups	67.839	101	.672		
	Total	85.443	105			
Appraisal	Between Groups	18.489	4	4.622	1.765	.142
	Within Groups	264.501	101	2.619		
	Total	282.991	105			
Development	Between Groups	41.457	4	10.364	2.536	.045
	Within Groups	412.770	101	4.087		
	Total	454.226	105			

Table 24: Anova

5.16 Relationship with Colleagues

In this section, Relationship with Colleagues is being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Relationship with Colleagues based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 0.947, df = 4, p = 0.440**) is homogeneous. As Relationship with Colleagues was seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = 0.536, p = 0.710**. These results are detailed in **Tables 23** and **24** above.

5.17 Commitment

In this section, Commitment is being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Commitment based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 1.921, df = 4, p = 0.113**) is homogeneous. As Commitment was seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = 6.552, p = 0.000**. These results are detailed in **Tables 23** and **24** above.

5.18 Appraisal

In this section, Appraisal is being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Appraisal based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 1.270, df = 4, p = 0.287**) is homogeneous. As Appraisal was seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = 1.765, p = 0.142**. These results are detailed in **Tables 23** and **24** above.

5.19 Career Development

In this section, Career Development is being assessed as to whether there is a difference with age groups in regards to the significance of this particular variable as a reason for absenteeism and staff turnover.

In order to assess the differences of Career Development based on age an initial examination of the distributions characteristics were undertaken. The assumptions of Homogeneity of Variance were tested. There is evidence to suggest that the age distribution (**Homogeneity= 0.207, df = 4, p = 0.934**) is homogeneous. As Career Development was seen to be homogenous the parametric test of an Anova can be used. An analysis of variance shows that the effect of age was significant, ***F*(4,101) = 2.536, p = 0.045**. These results are detailed in **Tables 23** and **24** above.

5.20 Reliability

The following section shows the reliability of the survey in question when it is broken down into eight of the nine variables. The Cronbach's Alpha test was run to determine the reliability of the survey scale.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha[a]	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items[a]	N of Items
-.139	-.139	2

a. The value is negative due to a negative average covariance among items. This violates reliability model assumptions. You may want to check item codings.

Table 25: Working Conditions Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.297	.327	5

Table 26: Pay and Incentives Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.609	.606	4

Table 27: Customers Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.342	.317	4

Table 28: Job Enrichment Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.396	.354	4

Table 29: Health Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha[a]	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items[a]	N of Items
-.042	-.088	3

a. The value is negative due to a negative average covariance among items. This violates reliability model assumptions. You may want to check item codings.

Table 30: Relationship with Colleagues Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.565	.566	2

Table 31: Appraisal Reliability

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.225	.227	3

Table 32: Career Development Reliability

Some of variables were then re-analysed to see if the Cronbach's Alpha could be improved to increase the reliability of the scale of each variable. The following section has reanalysed six of the variables, the result are below.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.342	.370	4

Table 33: Pay and Incentives Reanalysed

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.743	.748	3

Table 34: Customers Reanalysed

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.440	.449	3

Table 35: Job Enrichment Reanalysed

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.644	.645	3

Table 36:Health Reanalysed

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.257	.257	2

Table 37: Relationship with Colleagues Reanalysed

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.363	.366	2

Table 38: Career Development Reanalysed

Chapter 6 Discussion

In this section the main findings from the previous chapter will be discussed. It will be shown how the findings impact on the research question at hand. The main findings of the research will be discussed and how the results compare with the call centre in India where the survey was originally used. The limitations of the research will be discussed as this is an important part of the analysis. The limitations help show where the findings lie within the topic area.

The first part of the discussion will revolve around the Reliability of the scale which was used in the survey instrument to conduct the research. The original reliability results of eight of the nine variables within the surveys can be found in **Tables 25** to **32** in the Findings section. The reliability of a variable is measured by using the Chronbach's Alpha test. The standard result for a reliable result is when the Chronbach's Alpha is **0.7** or higher. In the tests that were ran, the alpha value for each of the variables was well below this figure. This throws serious doubt over the original findings which were conducted in India by Budhivar et al (2009). What was a successful study into call centres in India has seriously failed to represent the situation in an Irish setting. Issues that were of importance in India are less so in Ireland. It must be stated that this survey was sent out to one Irish call centre, whereas the original study was performed on 11 call centres in India. This could have been the reason that the questionnaire did not travel well.

The only variable that came close to the **0.7** reliability statistic was that of Customers and how employees felt that customers impacted on their working life. The Customers variable was trying to see how the employees saw the customers and whether they would shift the mood of the employee. The Chronbach's Alpha for this variable came in

at **0.609** which can be found on **Table 27.** This result is not far off the required figure to make the scale reliable for this survey. This means that the result for the variable of customers will be the most reliable throughout the findings. The next most reliable variable would be that of Appraisal where the Chronbach's Alpha value was **0.565**, which is again close to the desired **0.7,** but not quite there.

An attempt to reanalyse the Chronbach's Alpha was made to see if the scales could be made more reliable. When this was performed, six of the variables' reliability increased with only the Customers' variable increasing to over the required **0.7** figure to a result of **0.743.** All the reanalysed Chronbach's Alpha reliability scores can be found on **Tables 33** to **38**. As was said at the start of this section, that all the following results, whilst they do show differences in certain areas, they are limited in scope due to the reliability results.

The first part of the findings deals with whether or not gender has a bearing on any of the variables in question. A test for normality needed to be undertaken to determine what type of test needed to be undertaken. This test would determine whether the variable was normal or non-normal. If both males and females were found to be normal with a score over **0.05,** this would be determined normal and in this case an **Independent Samples t Test** was performed. If either male or females were under the required **0.05**, the variable would be considered non normal and a **Mann Whitney U Test** would need to be performed. This test was performed on all but one of the variables. While all the tests showed whether or not the variables were either normal or non-normal, there was no statistical difference between males and females for any of the variables in question. This means that both males and females in the Irish call centre in question felt similarly to all nine of the variables in question. Since this is the case there is nothing to discuss about these findings only that it answers one of the sub objectives

in questions. As the research has shown, Gender has no bearing on absenteeism or staff turnover in an Irish call centre.

In the second half of the findings section, age was tested to see whether it had any bearing on any of the nine variables. A test for Homogeneity was first run, once all criteria were met an Anova was run on each of the variables. The results for each variable were mixed. In five of the variables the significance value was greater than **0.05**, this means that the result was not statistically significant.

However for four of the variables the significance value was less than the required **0.05** limit. This means that for these four variables, there is a statistically significant difference based on the different age groups which are being considered.

The first variable is Working Conditions which can be found in **Table 22,** had a significance value of **0.057**. This figure is close enough to the **0.05** figure for us to make assumptions. This shows us that when it comes to Working Conditions, the age of the employee does have a bearing on how they view the importance of working conditions and how it affects the level of absenteeism and staff turnover. Without using a post hoc analysis we can only assume that the older the employee the more important they would view the importance of working conditions. As it is shown in the literature review, working conditions is very important for call centre work. The better the working conditions the easier it seems to be for the employee to cope with the mundane and repetitive nature of the job (McGuire and McLaren, 2009). The younger the employee the more likely it is that they see the job as a way of earning money, rather than a place where they would come to feel at home in a pleasant environment. The youngest age group is the 18-24 year olds, some of those who were surveyed from this age group may have come straight from secondary school and this may be their first ever job. If this is the case than for this age group, than they might not know any different from the working conditions that they have met in their current employment. There could be

another reason for the difference of importance put on to this variable. In the call centre in question, they may have put an emphasis on appealing to the younger generations. This may lead to the older groups feeling a bit ostracised. This could be a potentially big reason for the older age groups to call in sick or ultimately leave the company in question.

The next variable which was statistically significant was that of Job Enrichment. **From Table 22,** it is clear that the figure is indeed significant with a value of **0.029**. this figure shows us that when it comes to job enrichment, age is an important factor. The significance value means that assumptions can be made based on the age groups in questions. Similar to the previous variable it can be assumed that the youngest age group in question would not place too much emphasis on the importance of Job Enrichment. The younger age group as was previously stated may have just come out of school and are just working for a pay check to live and really are not looking to be fulfilled by an enriching working experience. This would mean that Job Enrichment would have no influence on the younger employees to call in sick or eventually leave the company. The older employees are more likely to place emphasis on Job Enrichment. The older age groups need more from their job rather than just a pay check. The need to feel stimulated in the workplace is an important factor for the older age groups. This may come down to the fact that the call centre job is a monotonous one, which was discussed in the literature review. The repetition of the job could increase the likely of older staff members calling in sick or eventually leaving. They may feel that the job does nothing more than pay the bills. They may want to have their say on matters heard by management. They may want to be asked for their opinions on certain issues. If they are ignored in these types of instances then this may lead them to be less motivated to show up for work each day or eventually lead to them leaving altogether.

The third variable where there is a statistical difference between age groups is that of Commitment. The significance value is **0.000**, this can be found on **Table 24**. This is well below the requirement. Commitment is a very important issue in any walk of life. If there is no commitment from your team then you will not get far. That goes for anything in life. You could compare it to a rugby team, if one player is not fully committed and not willing to put their face in front of a boot for the team then you are at a disadvantage before you start. From a management point of view, you do not want to see difference in commitment based on age, you want everyone to be equally as committed, similar to the rugby analogy. This variable is more difficult to make a generalisation about without doing a post hoc analysis. A couple of assumptions can still be made however. With the older age groups, older the 25, some employees could be there a long time and their commitment is starting to wane towards the job at hand. They could be suffering from career exhaustion from being in the same role for too long. It was shown in the literature review that the average length of time a person will stay in a call centre agent role is eighteen months to two years. The closer the agent gets to the two year mark the more likely the commitment will begin to wane for the employee. The younger groups may feel a bit more committed to the job if they have just left school or college and know of nothing better when it comes to work.

The fourth variable where there was a difference between age groups was that of Career Development. In **Table 24** we can see the significance value is **0.045**, this again confirms the difference in opinion due to age. Career development was discussed in the literature review as an important issue (Goyup et al, 2008). Some agents need to feel that they are on a career path and not just working a dead end job with no opportunities in sight. Similar to the previous three variables we have discussed, it is safe to assume that the 18-24 age group don't consider this to be an important factor for them, whereas with the older groups, this would be seen as a much more important factor. This could

also be linked to the motivation and commitment levels in the previous variable. It is safe to assume that the older agents are at a stage where they are not happy at simply limiting their own personal horizons, but instead want to know that there is a possibility of moving up the ranks. The older agents may have families and other commitments to look after and would need to know there is a chance of increasing salary and responsibility so they would be able to support themselves and or their families. If there is no chance of career development then the older groupings would be more inclined to ring in sick or ultimately leave the company.

Out of all the other variables where there was no significant statistical difference between the age groups, the most significant figure was that of Pay and Incentives where the significance value was **0.853**, this can be found in **Table 22**. This shows that regardless of age, Pay and Incentives are very important to all employees. Employees are there to make money after all not just work for the company in question.

The main limitations of the findings are that the reliability of the scale used is very low. As is previously stated the questionnaire used may not have travelled well. So what was a reliable scale in an Indian context was not reliable in an Irish call centre.

Future research in this area should be encouraged. While there is plenty of international research already done on call centres, there is not much done in an Irish setting. More qualitative research should be carried out to help delve into deeper, more under lying issues. The quantitative survey approach is useful for getting the opinion of as many employees as possible but it does not dig deep enough into the issue.

Chapter 7 Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study it was shown that call centres around the world have a similar set of problems. In the literature review there are cases from India and Europe which all have the same issues and problems with regards absenteeism, stress and staff turnover the nine variables which have been discussed throughout, Working Conditions, Pay and Incentives, Customers, Job Enrichment, Health, Relationship with Colleagues, Commitment, Appraisal and Career Development, are a constant thread through all of the research.

In this particular piece of research, it was discovered that age had no bearing on how each variable was viewed by the respondents. Both males and females answered very similarly. The results have shown however that age is more of a factor when asked about these nine variables. Employees are at different stages of their lives and would rank importance in different ways. It was shown that younger people may not place as much relevance on the likes of Job Enrichment as they would Pay and Incentives, where all ages answered similarly.

In the Irish call centre which was investigated by means of the survey it may be possible to implement certain practical applications to try and improve absenteeism and decrease the general level of staff turnover within the company.

It was shown in the results that Career Development was more of an issue for the older age groups. An interesting way to try and tap into this for the company would be to introduce a Team Leader training programme. This way the training programme could keep more employees focused on internally developing their careers within the company. This would give more employees something to strive towards. Other employees who are not performing as well would also know that if they improve their statistics they may well be rewarded. The training programme would not cost the

company much money as the employees who have been successful in being entered into this programme would simply be shadowing the Team Leader for a couple of hours a day. The successful employees would also gain some extra responsibility such as call coaching for the poorer performing agents within the call centre. In theory this should only have a positive effect for the company. The employee will feel more empowered with responsibility and the Team Leader would be able to free up more of their time to do other things. Once a Team Leader role became available in the company then the best performing employees from the initiative should be allowed to apply for the job. If one of the employees is promoted into the role then

With the Commitment variable, an interesting way to try and increase the commitment level throughout the age groups would be through team bonding trips. This gives employees a chance to get to know people they may not normally speak to. This extra interaction and performing tasks together as a team should help promote this in the office. This will hopefully increase commitment levels towards their fellow employees which will hopefully translate into an increase of commitment shown towards the company. There could be a cost implication in organising these work team bonding events however. The once off cost of these events could be superseded by an increase in sales and team work on the call centre floor however.

The timescales for the implementation of these initiatives could be a couple of months. The Team Leader training initiative could take this time to get the employee trained up and to know their role and to be able to have a lasting effect on those around them.

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