

“An Investigation on the Recruitment and Selection Practices within SMEs in
Healthcare Sector in Dublin, Ireland”

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Abstract

Purpose: The research has the purpose of undertaking a comparative study of the manual and electronic process of recruitment as well as selection process specifically in the context of the SMEs belongs to the healthcare industry of Dublin.

Methodological Approach: For collecting data to address the research purpose, the research utilised interview as the primary tool and literature sources to be the secondary approach. The sample for the interview has involved 7 healthcare workers and HR professionals from Dublin healthcare organisations. This sample was suitable for obtaining relevant data for undertaking the comparative analysis of manual and electronic recruitment process within the Dublin healthcare industry. Further, the inductive approach has been employed in the study for having broader prospects and performing in-depth investigation for attaining desired outcomes with the fulfilment of core research purpose of obtaining issues and effectiveness concerned with manual versus electronic recruitment process.

Findings: The data findings of this study suggests that manual process has been complicated and lengthy as well as complex for reaching global level candidates in the recruitment procedure. Electronic process is presently utilised in Dublin's healthcare industry and associated SMEs which is effective in reaching global candidates in the minimal amount of time but still, it has limitations such as expensiveness and failure in meeting the level of analysing right candidate as in the manual process. Thus, the mixed approach has obtained to be suitable for Dublin healthcare industry for recruitment and selection.

Research Limitations: The research has considerable limitations in terms of the limited sample size for conducting the interview that restricts the amount of data findings and somehow less responsive interviewees in the interview.

Practical Implications: In terms of practical implications, it can be said that the research is beneficial for healthcare organisations in understanding the value of the manual

process of recruitment and would enable them to enhance their recruitment process by providing the opinion regarding adoption of mix approach including both electronic and manual process.

Originality: Although there has been the remarkable share of previous studies, still a gap has been present regarding the constant comparative analysis of manual versus the electronic process of recruitment and selection which is addressed by the present study.

Keywords: Recruitment and Selection, Electronic Process, Healthcare Organisation, SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises)

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List of Abbreviations:

SMEs – Small and Medium Enterprises
HR- Human Resource
S&R- Selection and Recruitment
HSE- Health Service Executive
IVR- Interactive Voice Response
CV- Curriculum Vitae
ATS- Applicant/Advanced Tracking System
EU- European Union

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Introduction

Recruitment is an essential process carried out under the Human Resource management unit of an organisation. This process assists in determining the candidates who are the most fitting for the specific job opportunity. It also helps potential candidates to apply for a job opportunity. The recruitment process is focussed towards the attraction of maximum numbers of possible candidates to apply for a particular vacant work opportunity (Nikolaou and Oostrom, 2015). On the other hand, the selection process is a vital process that is carried out before the recruitment procedure in an organisation. This is a filtering process and helps to select a correct candidate from the group of candidates who have applied for the given job profile. These processes are executed in manual and electronic form as per the financial status of an organisation (O'Meara and Petzall, 2013).

High-level healthcare organisations have a low rate of recruiting and selecting the graduates. Bratton and Gold (2017) have supported the above statement by describing that about 70 % of graduates are hired in small scale organisations which is high in comparison to the large scale organisations, where 64 % of graduates are hired (Bratton and Gold, 2017). This provides an opportunity for small and medium organisations to choose new employees from the graduated masses. A large number of job opportunities exist within Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Therefore, the SMEs in the healthcare sector are capable of providing work opportunities to a large number of individuals (Florea and Badea, 2013). However, the state of recruitment and selection practices in the SMEs is identified as being low level in comparison to the large organisations. Most SMEs utilise manual techniques for recruiting and selecting appropriate employees unlike the advanced electronic recruitment followed by large organisations (Keasey, Pindado and Rodrigues, 2015). On the basis of this

context, this research is carried out to obtain a detailed investigation and analysis of the recruitment and selection process practices in the SMEs operating in the healthcare industry. In particular, this study is directed towards the small and medium healthcare sector organisations in Dublin, Ireland. The types and the level of recruitment and selection procedures incorporated under the small and medium healthcare industry of Dublin are also investigated under the research.

1.2 Research Background

There is a large requirement for healthcare services in Ireland for a significant period of time. The need for the healthcare is identified as increasing due to rising population rates and structure of the population. Over the last 5 years, the population of Ireland has increased to approximately 4.73 million from 4.6 million and is expected to rise to approximately 4.92 million by the year 2022 (Statista, 2018¹).

Dublin is the most densely populated region of Ireland comprising of 550,000 individuals. Furthermore, about 6136 patients were estimated to be in need of urgent healthcare in the year 2016 (Statista, 2018²; Statista, 2018³). Therefore, due to the growth in demand of the healthcare and increasing advancement in the healthcare industries, it is increasingly challenging for Human Resource Management (HRM) in the Irish healthcare sector to recruit skilful employees (ESRI, 2017).

Over the last decade, recruitment practices in the public service and healthcare sector is governed by a centrally managed competitive examination, which is of a low level. A Public Service Appointment Commission has been established for managing the number of appointments together with a procedure of recruiting and selecting in the public service and healthcare sector. Several initiatives are being incorporated under the manual recruitment. The implementation of the external recruitment is being enforced in Ireland (OECD, 2013).

However, the reduced unemployment ratios and the low availability of skilled workforce in the healthcare sector have resulted in the high competitiveness in recruitment and selection. Public Appointments Service (PAS) of Ireland also identified the need for transforming the recruitment, selection, and the assessment process in the year 2005. The need to make these necessary transformations arise from the changing employment levels in the Ireland. The changes are observed in the retirement age and restructuring of organisational hiring policies. Therefore, the country requires more innovative and advanced means to recruit and select potential candidates (OECD, 2012).

1.3 Research Problem

In order to fulfil the increasing demand of the health services, large and small scale healthcare organisations in Ireland are in a state of competition to acquire the most prominent and qualified healthcare professionals. Large scale healthcare firms are identified as incorporating effective and modern means to identify and select the best candidates and offering the best services to the customers. However, SMEs in the healthcare domain are not recognised as implementing modern and high-end recruitment techniques. SMEs generally rely on the government empowered recruitment and selection agencies like PAS for acquiring qualified employees (PAS, 2006). Consequentially the major problem with the recruitment and selection operation of the SMEs in the healthcare sphere is their high dependence on manual and governmental schemes. This can be supported by the fact that SMEs have scarce financial resources. They face high cash flow issues and they are also charged with high interest rates by banks. This high dependency is due to fewer amounts of financial resources (Information Resources Management Association, 2013). This research also addresses the issue of substantial organisational costs in recruiting and choosing the correct candidates.

As stated, SMEs are not identified as utilising advanced technological means for transforming their business operations in terms of selecting and recruiting (S&R) the skilled workforce. Technological advancements are being incorporated by organisations to modify their existing employee S&R activities and to enhance the efficiency of the quality of service being delivered (Tippins and Adler, 2011).

The research is directed to seek a solution to the challenges and problems associated with the utilisation of internet and advanced technology in employee recruitment and selection procedure such as e-recruitment in the SMEs within the healthcare industry of Ireland.

1.4 Research Question

The question for the undertaken research is framed as, “*Why SMEs are still involved in the manual recruiting process than electronic recruitment and selection practices?*” Several sub-questions are also framed for this research:

- *What are the associated reasons that prevent SMEs from shifting from manual recruitment process to the electronic recruitment and selection process?*
- *Does the incorporation of the electronic recruitment improve S&R in terms of offering better organisational outcomes to the SMEs?*

1.5 Research Aim and Objectives

The focus area of this research is to investigate the S&R practices in SMEs of the healthcare industry in Dublin, Ireland. In addition, the study is seeks to identify the differences between simple employee S&R processes implemented by most of the SMEs and advanced processes adopted by large-sized organisations. Based on these differences, the central aim of this study is to carry out an evaluation of the reasons associated with following the manual recruitment process by SMEs than electronic recruitment and selection process. In support of the aim, the following research objectives are presented:

- Examine SMEs' current practice of recruitment and selection followed in the healthcare sector in Dublin, Ireland
- Analyse, compare and contrast the organisational outcomes of the SME's that incorporate the manual S&R strategies in comparison to the organisational outcomes of organisations applying more technology-aided S&R procedures
- To determine issues faced by the SMEs in adopting electronic S&R practices from the manual recruiting practices
- To understand what benefits can SMEs gain through electronic S&R practices

1.6 Research Significance

The research is significant, as it helps develop an informative foundation for entrepreneurs and SMEs in examining organisational outcomes associated with incorporating electronic methods for S&R the appropriate candidates. Furthermore, the study assists in understanding if electronic recruitment processes helps employers identify suitable candidates.

In order to address competition in terms of acquiring the most skilled employee strength, organisations are competing in relation to implementation of electronic recruitment mechanism. An evidence for the above is given by Leung, Nkhoma and Blooma (2013), under which it is described that organisations are utilising advanced human resource systems like web portals for attracting large applicants (Leung, Nkhoma and Blooma, 2013). The other finds a lack of research studies examining the reasons behind the reported reliance on manual recruitment techniques by the SMEs of the healthcare sector of Dublin, Ireland.

This research addresses this dearth of research by offering a detailed analysis of the reasons, which prevent the healthcare SMEs of Ireland in using the electronic techniques for recruiting and choosing of the correct employees. The current research may support future studies on this subject. Finally this research may encourage future

scholars to investigate strategies to mitigate the issues that arise from manual recruitment procedures.

1.7 Research Structure

Research works require an appreciable amount of time for their completion in a proper manner. It involves a detailed analysis of the various concepts and ideologies, which is required to proceed in a systematic way.

Therefore, this study is executed by means of a sequenced arrangement of the chapters. The following structure is outlined for the planned research:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This is the prefatory chapter, and it introduces to the applicable concepts and theories that are in alignment with the research. It comprises details regarding the context, background, core purpose and objectives of the research. It also highlights the importance of the undertaken study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides an analysis of literary information by investigating a comprehensive range of arguments and theoretical constructs related to the research subject. Moreover, it serves to inform this study by through the provision of a repository of evidence-based sources of information.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Under this chapter, investigation is being carried out regarding the selection of appropriate paradigms and approaches for execution of the research study in alignment of the defined objectives and questions of the research. Suitable approaches that are employed by the researcher for the retrieval of required information are also described in this chapter. This chapter also puts light on the sampling, data collection and analysis methods by offering justification for the applied approaches.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

The fourth chapter of research is intended to highlight the chief explorations that are obtained in relation to the information gained by former sections. Moreover, this chapter also provides an interrogation of the data acquired by primary and secondary methods.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

The final chapter of the research represents the core explorations obtained by the research study along with the essential outcomes. In addition, this chapter offers suitable recommendations presented in accordance with the identified gaps and future applicability of the present research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

A literature review is said to be a logical and systematic evaluation of the collected data for conducting research (Ridley, 2012). It is also defined as a systematic creative part of the research that focuses on the assessment, evaluation, and clarification of the presented query and also examines various literatures to gain an in-depth analysis of the research aim. A literature review is a secondary source that also articulates theoretical, methodological, and substantive findings (Machi and McEvoy, 2016). In this context, the aim of this research is to focus and conduct an in-depth evaluation of the selection and recruitment practices in Dublin's small and medium enterprises. The SMEs discussed in the study employ between 150-200 employees and work according to the Health Service Executive (HSE) authority norms in Ireland (Machado, 2013). Individuals recruited through the HSE authority system serve patients of dementia and various disabilities at the nursing homes or they are placed to work on hourly service at homes and also provide blocks shift services. In this regard, the literature review majorly focuses on the analysis of recruitment and selection process followed in the healthcare sector of Small and Medium Enterprises in Dublin and also examines the impact of electronic and manual recruitment and selection process on the health care sector. In addition, the literature review examines issues faced in the adoption of electronic process and manual process in the hiring processes. The academic orient finding and literature have also demonstrated the advantages and disadvantages of the manual and electronic processes for the SMEs with considerable problems and solutions in their own way.

2.2 Evaluation of recruitment and selection process followed in the healthcare sector of Small and Medium Enterprises in Dublin

According to Moore and Manring (2009), small to medium enterprises are categorised on the basis of various components stated as annual sales, a number of total employees, assets and operation system of the organisation (Moore and Manring, 2009). In addition, the definition of small to medium enterprises varies from region to region. In regard to Ireland, the total number of employees in the small to medium enterprises is stated to be 150-250. Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are a point of convergence in moulding endeavour strategy in the European Union (EU). The European Commission thinks about SMEs and business enterprise as the way to guaranteeing financial development, advancement, work creation, and social mix in the EU. Further to that point, in official insights, SMEs can right now just be distinguished by business estimate as ventures with less than 250 people utilized overall. (Papadopoulos et al., 2018) In order to attain effective management and goals and predefined objectives, SMEs have to follow effective strategies that help them add value to their business operations. In the era of globalisation, intellectual capital is considered one of the vital components needed to sustain the market position of the organisation. It also helps the organisation to enhance their strategic functionality and other operations quality in order to attain higher market positions (Moore and Manring, 2009). In this context, recruitment and selection processes are considered as vital components that enhance the integration of innovation and advancement in the company's success. In order to attracting and motivating employees is articulated as one of the significant complications faced by the executive responsible for managing the operations of the organisation.

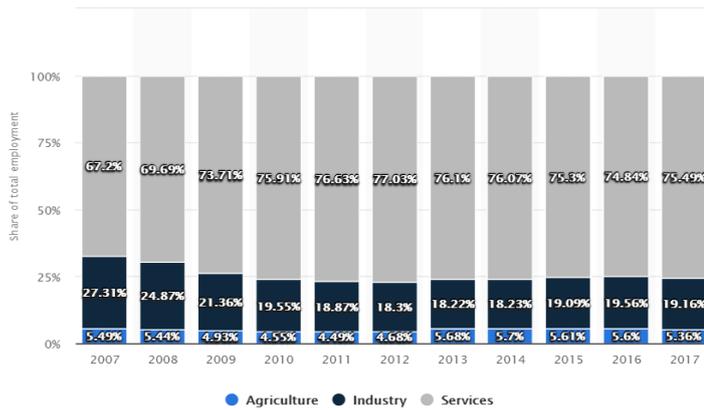


Figure 1: Ireland: Distribution of employment by economic sector from 2007 to 2017

Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/377005/employment-by-economic-sector-in-ireland/>

Abraham et al. (2015) claim, - recruitment and selection are essential components of an effective human resource management system. In regard to health care service, SMEs recruitment is considered one of the traditionally listed roles aligned to the human resource management teams in order to gain an in-depth strategic focus. In addition, Abraham et al. (2015) identified that focus and sophistication are the two most vital variables that are needed to design and effective recruitment selection process in the health and care service organisations, as they have a number of job opportunities for individuals and need to appropriately manage selection and recruitment processes to sustain market position and also add consumer value. In the same context, Aremu and Adeyemi (2011) stated that healthcare organisations consider hiring and recruitment an essential component, as recruitment design and system states the number and kind of individuals that would be able to apply for the job position and accept the vacancies provided by the small to large scale organisations (Aremu and Adeyemi, 2011). The process of employee recruitment incorporates the activities carried out by management of organisations to formulate strategies that provide a clear image of potential employees. An effective recruitment

process requires organisations to create policies that prove that value is added for attracting potential employees and group of applicants. In addition, Aremu and Adeyemi (2011) validated that recruitment processes focus on creating retention policies for organisations that contribute to effective organisational structures. Furthermore, selection is mentioned as the process, that identifies capable employees for filling the criteria of job and also identifies significant fit between the employer and job seekers particularly in small to medium enterprises in the healthcare care industry (Aremu and Adeyemi, 2011).

On the other hand, Sharma, Wickramasinghe and Gupta (2009), opined that the healthcare industry in Ireland has a significant amount of SMEs in the market, which requires policies that to help them to attract and retain quality staff for attaining success and enable them to alter their operations in the situation of complications. In order to employ advanced practitioners that would add value to the health system, the organisations need to improve their hiring processes. Filipe (2013) claim that organisations need to enhance the quality of job descriptions provided to the potential employees. In addition, the literature suggests that accurate job descriptions attract potential health care professionals, which can help the organisations to attain higher market positioning. The jobs description of employing health care professionals should include organisation goals, mission, vision approaches, rule, values, and social regulations, which would encourage individuals to opt for the organisation (Filipe, 2013). The job descriptions should also incorporate appealing aspects and policies for the employees, which would portray flexibility in the workplace culture, specifications about the skill required, and other dimensions of the environment. The healthcare SMEs in Ireland focuses on appreciating a referral from the existing employees because it actively encourages them to create a new job opening for establishing a connection with potential employees and also add value to the current employees.

The organisation should also focus on building a formal employee referral program to gain trusted employees for the organisation (Filipe, 2013). In addition, Wong and Laschinger (2013) pointed out some of the other ways that can be incorporated in the hiring process followed in Ireland, which can be stated as hiring from the existing employees for a higher position acquisition. Healthcare organisations should also focus on creating a good culture in the organisation by employing current employees for new positions. This can help the organisations to ensure loyalty and enhance the decision-making process of the organisations. It can also be stated as an effective method in regard to capital and time invested in the evaluation of the analysis of the external candidates (Wong and Laschinger, 2013). This process can be stated to be a cost-effective method for the employers and ensure effective results as the employees working in the organisation have already showcased their efficiency. Abdulah (2017) and Elder, Evans and Nizette (2011), SMEs in the healthcare sector tend to face a lot of issues in their recruitment process, which can be stated as scarcity of quality professional and employees. Scarcity of potential employees is articulated as one of the major issues that have been identified in the recruitment and selection process in Ireland and also in other parts of the globe.

The possible solution for this situation can be summarised by adopting a revamped approach by the SMEs in the healthcare industry in order to attain potential employees by rewarding and creating benefits for employees the organisation can attract the physicians and other employees like nurses (Abdulah, 2017). The benefits of the adequate environment and benefit packages in regard to salary and recognition system is one of the best motivators for individuals seeking jobs in the healthcare industry. In further support of the argument, Flint et al. (2016) stated some of the other issues that are identified in the process of selection and recruitment in regard to small and

medium enterprises of Ireland. The medical field experiences dilemma between the experience and education makes it difficult for employers to select the professionals with the required skill set. In some instances, individuals seeking job have good experience working in a healthcare organisation but have degrees from a low level institutions. In such cases, organisations face significant issues in selecting the potential employees for the betterment and enhancement of the organisation. In addition, there could be other problems faced by the healthcare organisations, such as inefficiency of recruitment software, which could help the hiring executives while providing them with an innovative approach to hire highly skilled healthcare professionals. Thus, in order to attain effective recruitment and selection process, the organisation needs to establish strategies that would increase candidate engagement with organisational experience (Flint et al., 2016).

2.3 Electronic and manual process in hiring procedures of the healthcare sector of Dublin

According to Poorangi, Razavi and Rahmani (2011), talent management requires effective management of various steps and operations to attain benefits for SMEs in the healthcare industry. The processes involved in employee hiring can be stated as deciding the position that needs to be filled by a potential employee, which is then followed by the recruitment of the candidates (Poorangi, Razavi and Rahmani, 2011). After the individuals' recruitment is processed effectively, the applicants' form is assessed and evaluated by utilising various methods and tools to attain organisational benefits. Further, this is followed by designing the offer for the applicant who is then trained to fulfil the organisational goals and objectives. This helps the organisation to enhance performance management of the healthcare facilities and services provided to the consumers, which proves to be value adding for the local and global consumers of the SMEs. These processes are then appreciated by granting appraisal of the

employees and acknowledging employee loyalty and efforts by providing rewards (Poorangi, Razavi and Rahmani, 2011). Rees and Smith (2017), traditional recruitment and selection are defined as the process of mediums which incorporates the use of conventional methods and tools for the individuals applying for the job. The significant that which are utilised in the traditional recruitment and selection procedures can be stated as conventional applications presented on paper and resumes. In addition to this, Rees and Smith (2017) also noted some of the traditional methods of recruiting and selecting employees, for instance, temp agencies, internal hiring, local paper advertisement, employment office posting, and referrals by existing employees.

TABLE 2.3: Importance of online recruitment strategy by sector (percentages)

	Private	Public sector
Very important	45	27
Quite important	15	47
Emerging importance	36	27
No importance	4	0
Base n=	55	30

Figure 2: Significance of online recruitment method

Source: https://www.publicjobs.ie/restapi/documents/e_Recruitment_report.pdf

As identified by Yoon Kin Tong (2009), electronic recruitment is defined as the online recruitment, which adds value to the recruitment process as it creates an attractive approach for the potential candidates. Electronic recruitment is considered as more innovative and advanced approach utilised to create an effectual passage for employers to select professional and competent employees (Yoon Kin Tong, 2009). As the small and medium enterprises (SME) do not require a vast range of employees to

manage their operating system, they can opt for using tools and techniques provided by the electronic recruitment. In addition, it has been stated in the current literature that the technology is the core component, which is incorporated in the development of the effective electronic recruitment process. The technological advancement provided by the electronic recruitment can be utilised to advertise vacancies on various websites and social media platforms, which would also add to the brand image of the healthcare organisation (Yoon Kin Tong, 2009). Holm (2012) conceptualised other major attributes that are involved in the electronic recruitment, such as it can help the healthcare organisations to utilise advancements in the internet technology by transforming from the conventional recruitment to electronic recruitment methods. Healthcare organisations in Dublin use electronic recruitment to deal with the applicants via email enquiries, online forms, and other email application form, which can add value to the recruitment and selection processes. Electronic recruitment also helps the healthcare organisations to gain an insight into the individuals seeking for the position offered by the company (Holm, 2012). Furthermore, it has been analysed that the healthcare organisations in Dublin, who were utilising conventional recruitment methods, have showcased a vast leap to electronic recruitment as it has helped them to enhance their brand value in the global market of healthcare services. Garcia Izquierdo, Aguinis and Ramos Villagrasa (2010) asserted that electronic recruitment incorporates various advantages that can be demonstrated as the lower cost operations as advertising through online medium requires low cost as compared to the traditional methods, such as newspaper and magazines. In addition to this, electronic recruitment involves no intermediaries, which enhance the chances of the organisation in attaining an effective employee who would help the organisation for achieving their long-term goals and vision (Garcia Izquierdo, Aguinis and Ramos Villagrasa, 2010). Electronic recruitment also helps in reduction of time consumed in

the recruitment process and also facilitates the selection of employees with the required skill set. In contrast to this, Kapse, Patil and Patil (2012) have mentioned that the electronic recruitment has some shortcomings which can be reported as, identification of the authenticity of the qualification and resume creates major complications for the recruitment executive for an SME as it is time-consuming and also requires advanced software, which can affect the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare organisation working and operation management. Faliagka et al. (2014) further support this argument by indicating that electronic recruitment has other disadvantages for SMEs in the healthcare industry, which can be noted as lack of dependency on electronic recruitment methods and tools. Healthcare organisations need to have mixed approach while carrying out their selection and recruitment process in Ireland as it can help them to generate cost-effective strategies and policies to attain the best quality of healthcare professionals (Faliagka *et al.*, 2014).

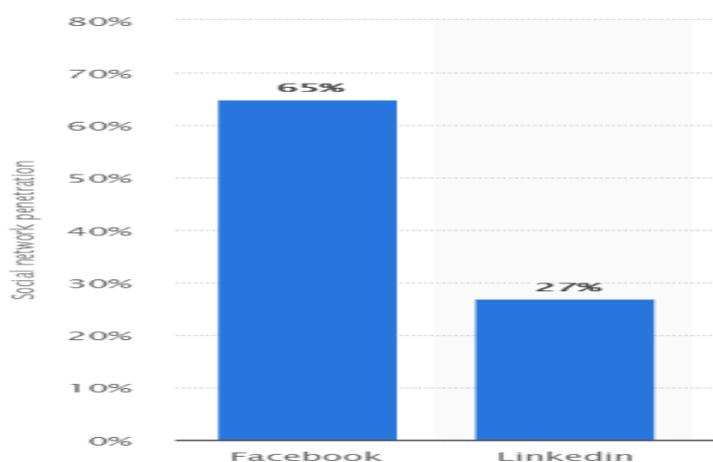


Figure 3: Usage of online recruitment portal “LinkedIn” in Ireland

Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/429977/social-network-penetration-in-ireland/>

Sin Tan et al. (2010) stated that SMEs in the healthcare industries tend to opt for electronic recruitment as it provided them with an advanced approach to increase their engagement with the applicant. In addition, it can be stated that the electronic recruitment requires some major steps that need to be followed by the applicants and

the organisation to attain best results at the end of the recruitment and selection processes (Sin Tan *et al.*, 2010). The e-recruitment steps followed by the SMEs of Ireland can be demonstrated as posting job advertisements on online job boards of the healthcare organisation. The creation of applicant tracking system is also considered as one of the most vital steps that have been taken by the companies to ensure organisational benefits. In addition to this, sourcing healthcare professionals through social media accounts and portfolio sites also add value to the electronic recruitment process. Healthcare SMEs need to administer pre-employment test of the candidate through online medium to ensure the efficiency of the skill set possessed by the applicant. Furthermore, electronic recruitment methods and tools allow SMEs in the healthcare industry to interview applicant via video interviewing software, which is stated as an innovative method of enhancing engagement with the candidates. In addition, the organisation can also engage in the construction of background check of the applicants to ensure the authenticity of their qualifications (Sin Tan *et al.*, 2010).

2.4 Issues in Recruitment and Selection Process Adopting Electronic Process and Manual Process

In the views of Turner (2017), recruitment is conducted in different ways; however, in Europe, the main issue is to attract right people with required qualifications. It has been observed that most of the health workers belong to the city area, whereas people who require care are found mostly in rural areas. In order to cope up with recruiting problems, organisations dealing in healthcare are focusing on using electronic methods of recruitment. Healthcare is one of the largest industries in the world, and it is continuously growing. As the industry is growing, the demand of the consumers is also shifting with enhancement of technologies and process. The shift in healthcare services has been influenced by several factors like globalisation, increasing demand and shortage in supply, and changes in organisation functionality in the hiring process.

It has been observed that healthcare is not only about the physical and mental well-being of a person, enhanced healthcare also influences economic development of a country (Turner, 2017).

In the context of the issues faced by the small and medium organisation in recruiting right workforce in the healthcare industry, Zibarras and Woods (2010) mentioned that in most SMES formalised selection or manual selection method is preferred. It has been observed that in the case of SMEs, the human resource management team conduct interviews, which have been structured previously. The methods of selection that are commonly used across the entire organisation are using CV (Curriculum Vita), traditional application form, referral, and generic interviews. Therefore, it is evident that SMEs faces issues while accessing technologies and they find the traditional techniques more relevant in finding appropriate talent pool (Zibarras and Woods, 2010).

Helfert (2009) concurs with Zibarras and Woods (2010) Stating that changes in the new business industry and advancement of clients need have led to the transformation of working procedure of the healthcare industry. Enhancement of technology has increased the demand for highly skilled and technically advanced healthcare workers. The healthcare workers should not only possess the ability to implement the healthcare practices in an ethical and safe manner but should also possess technical competency. Organisations cannot compromise on these requirements and operate successfully with the less skilled healthcare professionals. It is imperative for recruiters in the healthcare domain to hire skilled people and they cannot take the risk of hiring less skilled professionals. A person with less skills and knowledge may lead to the breaking of protocols, as well as it might also harm the patient. Furthermore, poor recruitment choices may also harm the image of the healthcare organisation and affect the services

provided by the organisation. These requirements have increased the challenges of recruiters of the SMEs in the healthcare domain (Helfert, 2009). In the viewpoints of Alves and Vazquez (2013), the biggest challenge that is faced by the recruiters in healthcare domain in Ireland is the shortage of talented people. The healthcare industry is continuously growing and the numbers of SMEs in this domain are continuously increasing, which has increased the requirement of the skilled healthcare workers. Furthermore, the healthcare domain is rapidly transforming, and it is moving towards digitalisation which was discussed in a conference by John Kennedy in St. James Hospital, Dublin. (Kennedy, 2013) This transformation has increased the demand for technically skilled healthcare workers. In addition, the shortage of healthcare workers has increased the salary demand of the healthcare professionals. The healthcare professionals demand higher salaries, and in most of the cases, it is not possible for the SMEs to provide the same to the professionals. The issue of shortage of workers in the healthcare is continuously increasing, which led to higher salary demand, and it has become a challenge for the recruiters in this domain (Alves and Vazquez, 2013).

Another challenge faced by recruiters is the hiring of experienced healthcare workers in the SMEs. The recruiters of SMEs in healthcare domain often face the challenge that they should hire a candidate with more experience or a person who holds a master's degree. According to Alves and Vazquez (2013), recently graduated candidates possess the theoretical knowledge, as well as knowledge of the modern technology used in the healthcare domain. However, they possess limited work experience. On the other hand, the experienced candidates have a good experience and practical knowledge of the healthcare services but may be less familiar with modern technology or new practices. (Alves and Vazquez, 2013).

In the viewpoint of Kabene and Stefane (2010), recruiters in the healthcare facilities located in the rural area face challenges in recruiting people. It is comparatively easy for the recruiters to attract people in the developed and large regions. However, it is difficult for the recruiters in the rural areas to attract the healthcare professionals. The reason for it is that there is lack of healthcare professionals who are willing to live in rural areas. The recruitment through the manual process makes it difficult for the recruiters to find people who are willing to locate in the rural areas. Furthermore, organisations located rural areas may not be able to pay higher wages; many physicians do not locate to healthcare organisations in rural areas. Therefore, it becomes difficult for recruiters in healthcare organisations in the rural areas to find people who are ready to locate in the rural facilities Helfert (2009).

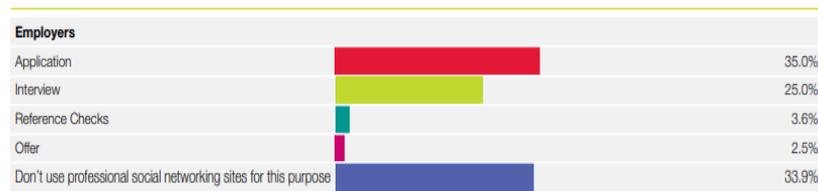
Vujic, Ohiri and Sparkes (2009) stated that the hiring process in the healthcare domain is slow and complicated and this tedious process has become a challenge for the recruiters. The manual hiring process is complicated, as well as lengthy, and it involves the steps like pre-qualification, competency testing, and long interviews. The hiring process is so lengthy that in many cases, it takes months to fill the vacant position of the healthcare workers. The lengthy procedure and in-depth research help in hiring talented people, but it also increases the time of filling the vacant positions in the healthcare organisations. This lengthy procedure leads to lack of healthcare workers in SMEs, and it affects the healthcare services and care received by the patients, which leads to degrading the reputation of the healthcare facility (Vujic, Ohiri and Sparkes, 2009).

2.5 Virtues and Shortcomings of Manual Hiring and Electronic Hiring

In the view of Bartram (2000), the increase in the use of internet across the world has a significant impact on recruitment and selection process in the healthcare sector. Using the recent technology, it has been easier for the healthcare sector to remove paper base hiring or manual base hiring, which is comparatively a lengthy to process. Using the internet and other technological tools, it has been easier to conduct computer-based assessments, which enhances the process of recruitment and selection by the elimination of several issues like confidentiality, security, authentication, equality of access, and control on practices. It has been observed in the case of healthcare sector that arguments have arisen stating new generation workers are taking over the older generation due to which the healthcare sector is facing issues, like inequality of skills and access to a job. Therefore, use of technology can help in eradicating such issues by providing equal access to every potential worker. Due to the use of manual techniques of conducting assessments, there is a possibility of manipulating the test, which can be overcome by introducing computer-based assessment conduction in many organisations working in the healthcare sector (Bartram, 2000).

Bar graph 7.0

If you view professional social networking profiles during the recruitment process, at what stage do you do so?



Bar graph 8.0

Which of the following sites would you use to research your interviewers prior to attending a job interview?



Figure 4: Usage of electronic recruitment portals

Source: <https://www.robertwalters.com/content/dam/robert-walters/corporate/news-and-pr/files/whitepapers/using-social-media-in-the-recruitment-process.pdf>

Bartram (2000) also mention that the growth of the internet has positively impacted the selection and recruiting process of small and medium sized organisation as they have the opportunity to attract a large pool of talent through online jobs. Similarly, technology savvy applicants prefer to find jobs and apply to those jobs which are available on the internet. Furthermore, spending on e-recruitment has been increased substantially during the past few years. Similarly, a significant increase in the volume of job applicants has also been observed. It has also been observed that large organisations tend to use the electronic medium of recruitment more than SMEs. The lower usage of electronic recruitment by SMEs means they are more likely to face issues in competing for talent (Bartram, 2000). Supporting the view of Bartram (2003), Chapman and Webster (2003) mentioned that technological advancement has impacted the functionality of the organisations in several aspects, like marketing, financial system, operation management, and selection and recruitment process as well. Therefore, a significant increase in information technology has been observed in the functionality of human resource specifically for recruitment and screening process. For example, in Nike, the human resource managers use Interactive Voice Response (IVR) services to conduct the basic screening of the applicants. They then conduct face-to-face round for those applicants who have cleared IVR screening round. Similarly, there are other organisations also that conduct the basic screening rounds using technologies like IVR, telephonic interviews, and computer-based assessments. It has been observed that there are several reasons for adopting electronic hiring process over manual process. Electronic recruitment helps in reducing the time of hiring. Time is one of the crucial factors for the human resource management as efficiency is calculated on the base of time taken by the human resource department to hire the right candidate. Therefore, use of technical tools is effective in order to increase the efficiency of human resource department as it can reduce the overall time

in selection and recruitment candidates. Similarly, using electronic tools of recruitment enhances the functionality by streamlining the process of receiving approval, enhancing the communication between departments. (Chapman and Webster, 2003).

Electronic recruitment also helps in reducing the recruitment cost by decreasing organisational expenditure on manual job posting and use of hiring agencies. Similarly, using technology in the recruitment process has the potential to enhance the cost efficiency of the organisation. It has been observed that when organisations conduct face-to-face interviews in college campuses, it includes several costs like meals, hotel accommodation of the interviewers, and transportation cost. These costs can be easily removed by conducting the interviews with the help of video conferencing (Chapman and Webster, 2003). Electronic recruitment also helps in hiring quality candidates.

The increase in technology use and globalisation of the labour force has made it necessary for the organisations to source talented employees irrespective of their location in order to maintain a competitive advantage in the global market. Due to a shortage in the workforce, specifically in the sectors like healthcare demand of hiring workforce internationally is increasing. However, hiring candidates from the international labour market associate huge costs. Therefore, small and medium sized enterprises are often discouraged from hiring workforce from the global market due to huge cost involvement. However, there are some organisations that are forced to hire workforce from the international labour market because of shortage in skilled workforce together with maintaining a competitive advantage in the market (Chapman and Webster, 2003).

In the view of Straus, Miles and Levesque (2001), the rapid growth in the business and shortage of a skilled workforce have resulted in hiring candidates from the national and international market level. However, it is has become necessary for the

organisations to maintain its cost-effectiveness in order to maintain sustainability in the global market. In order to enhance cost-effectiveness, organisations are applying strategies such as cost-cutting on travelling and hiring candidates from the global labour market. In this context, it would have been beneficial to use of video conferencing which helps the organisations in relation to several factors, such as access to diverse workforce and reducing time in hiring proper talent. Due to a shortage of workforce, it has become necessary for the organisations to hire talent from the international market. Similarly, it is also important to enhance cost-effectiveness to increase profitability by reducing travelling cost. In such cases, video conferencing is an effective tool that can be used to conduct distance interviews. Previously, remote interviews were conducted through the telephonic interview, nowadays; enhancement in technology has developed the process through video conferencing due to which the efficiency during the basic screening has been enhanced. The use of technology in order to reduce the cost of the organisation is known as the first-level effect. The first level effect is used in organisations to enhance the productivity and decrease the cost of the organisation through the use of technology. (Coyne, T. Coyne and J. Coyne, 2010) However, it is also necessary for the organisations to understand the consequences of technology before applying it. It has been observed that some technologies increase organisational cost rather than decreasing it.

In contrast, Kaur (2015) highlighted the disadvantages of electronic recruitment. The disadvantages are receiving a response in high volume, logistical issues, lack of interpersonal skills, inadequate information on the websites, and technological issues. It has been observed that the use of the internet is rapidly increasing. When an organisation posts job advertisement, it receives a high volume of responses that sometimes includes under-qualified candidates. Therefore, it requires time to sort

relevant candidate, which results in wastage of time of the human resource team and decrease their efficiency. Hence, it is necessary to specify the requirement regarding qualification and job description while posting jobs on online media (Kaur, 2015).

While job advertisement is posted using online media, attracts applications from the international workforce. In such cases, the organisation conducts basic screening with the help of telephonic round or using video conferencing. However, in order to judge the candidate in every aspect, a face-to-face interview is required. The face-to-face interviews are likely the most mainstream and most primary type of review data gathering. It has kept on being the best type of information accumulation when one needs to limit nonresponsive but to boost the nature of the information collected about the interviewer. (Lavrakas, 2008) It has been observed in the case of long distant candidates that they often show dilemma while relocating, which results in no-show of the candidates. In such cases, the time taken in screening candidates and the cost incurred during the process has been wasted. Moreover, technological issues have also been observed in the case of electronic hiring (Kaur, 2015). Electronic hiring requires candidates to fill the job applications online. Online job applications require providing personal information, and sometimes, candidates do not feel secure to provide online information due to which organisations often miss skilled candidates. (Entrepreneur, 2018) It has also been observed that candidates do not take time to fill all the necessary information and leave the application half filled. In such cases, the organisation might receive huge responses but find difficulties in sorting out the right candidates. In order to enhance the process of electronic recruitment, it is necessary to provide relevant information on the website so that the candidates are attracted towards the organisation. In some cases, it has been observed that due to lack of information on the website, the organisation is unable to build trust in the candidates, and as a result, unable to attract a proper pool of candidates. In addition to this,

electronic recruitment does not provide an opportunity to judge the interpersonal skills effectively. In such cases, the organisations have to arrange a face-to-face interview with the candidates in order to judge whether to hire the candidate or not (Kaur, 2015).

2.6 Summary

From the above review, the issues regarding hiring appropriate workforce in small and medium sized organisations working in the healthcare sector in Ireland has been highlighted. The main issue that these organisations are facing is hiring qualified and skilled workforce. It has been observed that due to a scarcity of required skills, these organisations often have to hire low skilled workforce or under qualified workforce, which impacts the quality of service the organisation provides to clients. It has been observed that SMEs mainly use a traditional approach to recruitment and selection, which includes steps like submitting curriculum vitae, screening of the candidate, face-to-face interview, and finally, selection of the candidate. It has also been observed that the skilled workforce in the healthcare sector in Ireland is decreasing. Hence, SMEs following the traditional method of recruiting may not be able to attract a proper pool of candidates. In order to enhance the recruitment and selection process and increase the organisational efficiency, it is necessary for the organisations to adopt a mixed approach to recruitment and selection, incorporating both electronic and manual processes. It has also been observed that SMEs are often discouraged from using the electronic process of recruitment and screening as an implication of electronic recruitment involve the cost of the organisation. However, considering the present situation of shortage in qualified and skilled workforce, it is useful for the small and medium sized organisations to use mixed method of recruiting and screening so that the organisation can enhance its efficiency in attracting right pool of candidate, as well as reduce unnecessary cost incurred during conducting manual approach of recruiting and screening process.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Methodology section assists in systematically accomplishing a research work by obtaining the accurate and correct information, which is capable of fulfilling the research objectives. In this relation, the methodology of the present research follows the Saunders's Onion framework, which involves the required phases that are necessary to gather the useful information in the context of the undertaken study (Li, 2015).

The framework assists in retrieving useful information for thoroughly investigating the recruitment and selection procedures employed by the SMEs in Irish healthcare sector. The methodology is directed as per the Saunders framework and it comprises discussion over the applied philosophy, approach, and the method for acquiring related data, sampling procedure, data analysis method, and alternative choices. It also helps to describe the ethical consideration and limitation of the applied methods.

3.2 Research Philosophy and Strategy: Quantitative and Qualitative

Philosophy describes the core beliefs, concepts, and ideologies that define the manner in which the information or data related to the study should be retrieved. Philosophies comprise of three main categories termed interpretivism, positivism and realism. Positivism philosophic synonymous with research works that involves quantitative data. Contrary to this, interpretivism is synonymous with qualitative studies for the purpose of interpretation and analysis of the varied prospects acquired through primary and secondary techniques of data collection (Helin *et al.*, 2014). Quantitative Research is utilized to evaluate the issue by method for creating numerical information or information that can be changed into usable insights. It is utilized to measure behaviours, assessments, practices, and other characterized factors – and sum up results from a bigger example populace. Quantitative Research utilizes

quantifiable information to figure actualities and reveal designs in exploring. Different programming applications are utilized from spreadsheets to further developed programming applications, for example, IBM, SPSS Statistics, SAS, Minitab, and more particular study in a quantitative research process via surveys in online accordingly as SNAP and Sphinx Survey (Saunders, et al., 2009). On the other hand, Qualitative Research is basically exploratory research. It is utilized to pick up a comprehension of hidden reasons, conclusions, and explanation in the research. It gives experiences into the issue or creates thoughts or speculations for potential quantitative research. While, the quantitative research aim towards positivism and realism approaches, the qualitative research has been taken from constructivist paradigm (Bryman and Bell, 2015). The qualitative data involves descriptive perceptions and findings that are obtained through natural setting. Therefore, this type of data is easily interpreted by interpretivism philosophy (Goertz and Mahoney, 2012). Furthermore, qualitative research always focuses on social methods generally than putting everything on value and numbers. (Feilzer, 2010)

In this study, interpretivism is applied for examining recruitment context along with the selection methods employed in the Irish health industry through qualitative analysis. The reason for selecting this philosophy is that it helps to acquire descriptive information regarding the research topic. Furthermore, this philosophy supports highly flexible research structures enabling exploration of multiple aspects of available information through retrieval of qualitative data. (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006) This philosophy duly supports the investigation over the causes for the adoption of the manual recruitment and selection process in place of an electronic process by the SMEs.

3.3 Research Approach

Approaches are categorised into two key approaches termed as inductive and deductive. Inductive approach traverses from specified to generalised data and it is employed for exploration of the new information in the domain of the research. On the other hand, under the deductive approach, development of a hypothesis is carried out, which is examined with the application of the scientific principles and quantitative methods (Maxwell, 2012). Concerning the present study, an inductive approach is used for examination of the previously undiscovered aspects in relation to the topic of the research. It also helps to obtain new information relative to recruitment and selection procedures utilized by the health sector in Ireland.

Inductive approach assists in the exploration of the reasons for the adoption of manual recruitment and selection practices over the electronic methods by Irish healthcare organisations. The approach assists in obtaining specific views regarding the inclination of the Irish health sector towards the manual recruitment and selection (Jonker and Pennink, 2010). The acquired specific information helps to identify and resolve the challenges and problems encountered in the electronic recruitment practice.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Selection of suitable methods for data collection data is required for extraction of required outcomes in the research context. Data collection is carried out for fetching primary as well as secondary data. Primary data involves acquiring new information, which assists in fulfilling the central purpose of the undertaken study. Secondary data is composed of presently available data sources such as books, journals, and peer published informative sources over the internet. In accordance with this study, the nature of the data, which is being retrieved from the information sources, is qualitative in nature (Gast and Ledford, 2009).

The author has chosen semi-structured as the primary method for gathering data. Interview method is face to face interaction with a respective individual to obtain information over a specific area. Interview method assists in retrieving comprehensive information on recruitment and selection process followed by the Irish healthcare sector. The Interview method is to investigate the perspectives, encounters, convictions and additionally inspire people to focus more on particular issues. Qualitative interview techniques are accepted to give a 'more profound' comprehension of social wonders that would be acquired from absolutely quantitative techniques, for example, surveys. (Silverman, 2000) A structured interview is also referred as panel interview. It is carried out in a formal and organised manner and it includes multiple interviewers (King and Horrocks, 2010). Different from this, a semi-structured interview integrates the previously defined set of certain open questions that allows the interviewer or researcher to explore specific themes. Therefore, semi-structured interview method is selected as this method increases the level of ease in gathering required information from the SMEs of the healthcare sector in accordance with the research question (King and Horrocks, 2010). This method is also selected as this method increases the level of ease in gathering required information from the SMEs of the healthcare sector in accordance with the research question. This method assists me to utilise my current work designation of '*HR Administration-intern*' where I am capable of interacting with a specific number of nurses and healthcare professionals. The acquired primary information is supported by evaluation of the literary sources.

3.5 Research Sampling Methods and Techniques

A sample is a collection of a specific number of individuals from an extensive population group that assist in retrieving the required information. The process of sampling involves obtaining the required and necessary samples of individuals from a

definite population group, which is significant in the selection of the required individuals from a finite population. The attributes of the sample population are helpful in the generation of required responses in association with the defined question of the study. Determination of a suitable sample size is crucial for carrying out research work (DePoy and Gitlin, 2015). The sample population for the current study is professionals or an administrative unit established in the two SMEs of the Irish healthcare industry. A sample size comprises specific observational constituents for retrieving necessary data.

Sampling methods named as probability and non-probability are significantly utilised in the research works. Purposive, quota, convenience, and snowball sampling are multiple types of non-probability sampling techniques (Lim and Ting, 2013). In concern to this research, purposive sampling is used for obtaining the sample size of 8 professionals from the two SMEs located in the health sector of Dublin, Ireland. The sample size comprises of 6 HR professionals and 2 healthcare professionals. The reason behind the selection of this sample size is that it assists in the evaluation of the perspectives regarding the ease in usage and access to the manual and electronic selection and recruitment system of Irish healthcare. It also assists in evaluating the point of view of both the employees and employers regarding the utilization of manual and electronic recruiting and selection practices. The purposive sampling method is also termed as judgmental sampling, subjective sampling or selective sampling. This type of sampling selects the sample populace based on the attributes of a population group and the outlined research objective. It is also helpful in the selection of the respondents in relation to the defined research question (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim, 2016).

3.6 Data Analysis

An effective, applicable and rigorous method of data analysis is required in order to validate research outcomes. Analysis helps to obtain substantive explorations through the data gathered through the application of appropriate tools. A research study involves two categories of data analysis that are termed as thematic and statistical data analysis techniques. These techniques assist in an appropriate filtration of the acquired data and meet the developed objectives. Under the undertaken study interview method for retrieving necessary information is applied (Jackson, 2008).

Therefore, thematic analysis, which comprises of the formulation of emergent themes in alliance with objectives and questions. The emergent themes are applied for describing the responses of the research participants. The participants are allocated codes for making their identity anonymous. The thematic technique of analysing the data is also suitable for interpreting the qualitative information regarding the views of research respondents about the type of recruitment and selection methods followed in SMEs of healthcare sector of Ireland, in association to the developed interview questions (Jackson, 2008). The most prominent way of doing thematic analysis is by using Constant Comparison Analysis. This specific method offers the methods whereby the analyst may get to and dissect verbalized prospective with the goal that they might be coordinated into a model that tries to clarify the social procedures under investigation. Practically, it divides data into discrete models along with labels and categorises each of the facts collected from that data into separate columns. (Glaser and Strauss 1967) or units (Strauss and Corbin 1990) and coding them into classifications. Classes emerging from this strategy by and large take two structures: those that are gotten from the participants' way of expressing, and those that the researchers recognize as critical to the undertaking's focal point of request. For this study, taking qualitative approach, the research analysis takes a turn where constant

comparison method was necessary to extract the data from the interviews to get an in-depth and clear analysis. It does not necessarily include all the phases of the method but a bit of inclusion for extracting the data has been shown in this research.

3.7 Choices

As an alternative method of retrieving useful data, the mix method can also be applied to accomplish this research. The mixed method technique involves usage of more than a single technique for retrieving useful information. This method involves arguments and discussions from the secondary information sources along with the perspectives of the participants in the light of the defined research question (Hesse-Biber, 2010). The recognised gap in the literary analysis can aid the formulation of a supportive platform that assists in carrying out interviews with the HR Heads of healthcare sector of Dublin, Ireland.

3.8 Data Instrument

The method that is being incorporated for gathering the useful information is semi-structured interview and constant comparative thematic analysis. This method involves two types of interviews like face to face together with the telephonic interviews. The willingness of the participants to participate in the interview is assured with the help of consent forms. The devices like the audio recording device and telecommunication devices like mobile phones or telephones are used to execute the interview process (Mackey and Gass, 2013).

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The ethical principles like willing participation, objectivity, confidentiality, equality, and rigour of the study are considered for prohibiting the unwanted activities in research. The current research is carried out by taking an informed consent of the respondents (Srivastava, 2007). The personal information of the research respondents

is kept anonymous by means of software encryption. Any sort of biasness is removed from the research study. The application of the constant comparative method of data analysis is carried out for ensuring that the themes genuinely emerge from the acquired data. Application of the other approaches that enforce the creation of priori themes can result in the generation of accusations such as the research bias (Kolb, 2012). Moreover, the study also provides information from reliable and assured information sources. It also forbids plagiarism by minimising illegal usage of the prevalent studies. Citations are provided for the literary information gained from the existing works of accredited academics (Creswell and Clark, 2007).

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

In the research, the interview method has been adopted collecting data from professionals from Dublin healthcare organisation. This chapter is aimed at evaluating the interviewees' professional experience, professional details and responses based on the interview questions asked of them. The sample involved 7 human resource professional and healthcare workers from Dublin healthcare industry. Prior to initiating the process of interview, the participants were informed regarding research objectives, the significance of their responses to the research work and rationale of conducting the research. It has also been explained that the participation of interviewees was voluntary and the data provided would be kept secured as well as utilised for research purpose only. In this chapter, the findings obtained from responses are analysed under different themes in direction of addressing problems associated with the research. In the interview, open-ended questions were asked for participants to provide details related to the research context for accomplishing research purpose.

4.2 Interviewees Description

In the research study to examine the recruitment and selection practices within SMEs of the Healthcare sector of Dublin, a semi-structured interview is conducted with 5 HR Professional and 2 Healthcare Professionals. The mode of the interview is mostly the face-to-face interview, and some are the telephonic interview. In the interview, all the questions pertaining to the aims, objectives and questions of the research study has been asked of the interviewees. The primary aim of conducting the interview with the selected interviewees is to gather information regarding recruitment and selection practices followed in their organisations for hiring healthcare assistance. The interviewees are selected on the basis of gender, profession, working experience

and the organisation's nature in which they are working. A detail description of the interviewees is presented in the following table:

Basis	Description	Number of Participants
Gender	Male	1
	Female	6
Profession	HR Managers/HR Administrator/ HR Business Partners/ HR Recruitment Consultants	5
	Healthcare Professionals - Nurses	2
Organisation's Nature	Small and Medium Organisation	7
	Large-Size Organisation	0

Table 4.2 Participants' Description

4.3 Employees background

In order to gather detailed information on the research topic selected for the master's level of the dissertation, the selection of pertinent skills sets of participants is a highly crucial phase. For this purpose, to set the research context, the interview is started with examining the participants' background, which is pivotal to gain the trust of the participants. It helped to make the participants comfortable with the interview processes. Interestingly, all the seven participants have claimed that they are using a comprehensive set of recruitment and selection processes to hire an expert set of people in their small size of organisations providing assistance to healthcare sector

organisations of Dublin. When the interviewees were providing information regarding their background, the researcher focused on studying their confidence level, body language and knowledge to analyse the engagement level of the participants with their jobs. In studying, it has been examined that all the participants are positively engaged in their job roles, and have sound knowledge of their organisation's recruitment and selection strategies.

4.4 Theme 1: Recruitment and Selection practices of SMEs, and need of shifting to more advance recruitment and selection strategies in Dublin healthcare sector

In regard to the research context, the researcher was eager to gain knowledge of the current recruitment and selection strategies followed in the healthcare sector of Dublin, Ireland, regarding which the researcher inquired the selected HR professionals and healthcare professionals. The key focus of the interview is made on inquiring people working in small and medium enterprises. The interviewees claimed that the role of HR managers has become more challenging with the increasing segment of elderly people in Ireland. For this purpose, significant emphasises examined in regard to following effective recruitment and selection processes. In this context, it has been examined that the current recruitment and selection strategies followed in the interviewees' organisations' followed a sequential process, integrating manual and electronic both the method of recruitment. Prior to asking it, the interviewer explained clearly the difference between manual and electronic recruitment to the interviewees who have ambiguity regarding the term.

On the stated theme, one of the interviewed healthcare assistants has opined that in their company, to recruit and select the assistants, a candidate goes through four different stages. The stages include telephonic interview, documentation, induction training and record checking. Using the method, the people who love to spend time in serving people, chat and the one who like to spend time with elderly people are

recruited in her organisation. Moreover, an interviewee opinion also highlights that in her SME, a formal process of recruitment and selection is used through which she is also selected. For selecting suitable candidates, the electronic process of recruitment is used currently by the small size organisation, wherein a candidate send his or her CV for the vacancy, after which the human resource manager calls the candidates for interview wherein the candidate is asked about the working experience, letter of reference, phone number and email ids. Majority of the communication is made through formal channels of communication, including email. However, this healthcare interviewee participant highlighted a need of moving towards a more electronically-empowered way of recruitment and selection. This has also been evident in interviewees' responses, wherein an HR manager has claimed that they have made use of the combination of the manual and electronic recruitment process. In the process, they advertise the jobs on distinct job websites and people start applying on seeing the websites. They also have a database, wherein they add information about the candidates, including job criteria, experience and qualification, and then people who are really good have called out for further screening. At the further level, the managers call them and schedule an interview, along with the settlement of salary, availability and location is made. Based on the final interview, an email regarding confirmation or rejection is sent. All the databases of appeared candidates are retained for 6 months in the company database. (See appendix 5 for detailed analysis)

In support of the claim, an interviewed human resource manager of SMEs of tech recruiters has claimed that in her organisation electronic recruitment process is followed currently because it involves less time and reduces administrative work. However, the respondent personally feels manual recruitment and selection mechanism is far more effective in comparison to the electronic recruiting system, as the human mind better than computer mind. Despite it, the current strategies of

recruitment and selection have integrated electronic recruitment mechanism as it has less number of employees or resources for whom the use of manual system becomes highly burdensome. Still, concern about using the more efficient electronic system for recruitment and selection is highlighted by the interviewee for the SME's working in Dublin Healthcare sector.

Another HR Administrator who had working experience of two and a half years, claimed that *"In my organisation, I personally do lots of practical things to recruit and select the candidates, such as I screened the candidate, I do the interviews, I checked out references, I do some compliance, such foreign returnee checked, external documentation, company policies and foreign returns. One of the main strategies that we are currently focusing is basically on students; they are given contracted hours based on the term to visa and Stamp 2 visa. A couple of other strategies would also be offered wherein we offer existence cares 30 hours, and ATS is also utilised for maintaining a record of booked interviews."* The interview with the HR manager also highlighted their outlook of shifting towards the completely electronic mechanism of recruitment and selection. On the overall basis, the interpretation and analysis of interviewees' responses have claimed that the current recruitment and selection practices of the SMEs emphasised on using a mix of the electronic and manual recruitment process to meet the needs of Dublin healthcare sector organisations' comprehensively. However, a need of shifting towards more advanced electronic platforms of recruitment is examined for recruitment and selection of the suitable set of candidates in Dublin healthcare sector.

4.5 Theme 2: Current Procedure of Recruitment and Selection of Skilled Healthcare Workers is Sufficient for Retention of the Skilled Healthcare Workers

After knowing about the current recruitment and selection strategies, the next question to the participants was about "what is the current demand of skilled

healthcare workers in the Dublin?” In response to this, one of the participants who are a HR Recruitment Consultant mentioned the high demand for care assistance in healthcare of Dublin. She said that there is lack of 20,000 care assistance in Dublin, while 2000 care assistants are working in the country. This huge gap in the current demand of skilled healthcare worker than that of the present number of the workers is the critical problem, which is due to visa processing and high process time. The process time in recruiting and selecting of care assistance outside Dublin imposes obstacle in bridging the gap in the supply and demand ratio. Some other respondents were stated that care workers and nurses are highly in demand in respect of skilled healthcare workers. Care workers and nurses jobs in the healthcare assists in the doctors’ work and assists patients in the better and early recovery.

HR Administrator, furthermore, in answer to the question replied that the demand for skilled healthcare workers increased in Dublin to meet the increased demand for healthcare services. He replied that *“demand for candidates in the industry is quite high and within the company, it is very much appreciated outside with improvisation in qualifications by the provision of training and stimulating awareness”*. In the healthcare, quality service delivery is crucially required skilled people for efficient job processes. Training and development initiative of the company has been contributing at the great level to meet the demand of the skilled healthcare workers. The current demand of the skilled healthcare staff is proportionally increased with population growth to ensure availability of healthcare services with good assurance to the quality of healthcare service delivery. Literature findings in support to the interview responses revealed that physicians and nurses are the current job demand of skilled healthcare workers that essential to be recruitment as the potential employees to meet job demands in the healthcare industry. It has been analysed from the evidence that meeting the current requirement of the skilled workforce in the

healthcare industry is the critical concern to deliver the quality of services to the patients. The knowledge enhancement and training can be an effective way to meet skilled workforce demand, but there would also require relaxation at the certain extent in the process of recruiting of healthcare workers outside the country in concern to the time.

In following to the above question, the next question to the HR managers in the interview process was related to the '*effectiveness of the present recruitment and selection procedure of the SMEs in the healthcare sector for retention of skilled healthcare worker*'. In response to this, one of the participants answered that retention of the skilled employees is important to maintain the efficiency of the work system. The timely appraisal, bonus and fringe benefits are used for the retention of the employees in the healthcare. Employees' seek to get new job for salary growth and hike, and monetary and non-monetary benefits; and thus, provision of the benefits for the employees' is important to retain over a long period.

However, one of other HR participants answered that "*she felt that retention is the difficult task along with managing of different criteria of the people selection*". It is because people look for the better job opportunities and full or part-time job as per the demands. The in-house training is used for retention of employees' to develop skills compatible with the job requirements as the part of the continuous learning. In-house training promotes learning and skills development to support performing assigned job in the proper way. Employees' are also provided play plans, insurance, paid leaves and holiday leaves along with interactive communication with them to build up the strong association. It has been analysed that retention of skilled employees is carried through work flexibility and benefits that lead to managing work and life balance. When the same question was asked to the participants who are the HR Admin, he answered that "*I believed in retention to the utmost extent. The strategies used for retention of skilled*

healthcare workers in the organisation are stable hours, probation, assistance programme (access of loan facility) and workplace safety.” It has been analysed that skilled healthcare workers retention in the healthcare industry is more critical in order to meet the current demand of skilled people or to meet the gap in the demand and supply of skilled workers. Training to the workers to quick response for the healthcare demands is relatively difficult and thus, engagement with employees’ and provision of the facilities for the retention is essential to be maintained. Retention of the employees’ are directly proportionally to the quality of work process; thereby, retention of skilled workers with suitable actions is important aspect for the sustainable growth and development.

4.6 Theme 3: Present investment level in recruitment and selection in SME in Dublin healthcare sector

The shift from manual to the electronic recruitment would surely incur costs. It is because investment is needed in the using electronic platforms for the recruitment process and electronic systems for processing of the human resource activities; such as keeping/recording of the employees’ data, and scheduling of interviews. The next question in the interview process to the respondents was about current investment level in the electronic recruitment of SMEs in the healthcare sector, after the question related to the need to the shift from the present recruitment and selection to the advanced/modern recruitment and selection. Majority of the respondents replied that change in the existing system is primarily needed for the stability that would require changes in the current system for which investment or finance is mainly required. In response to this question, respondents have just provided anticipated figures or gross amount, not exact information of the investment. One of the participants was answered that *“in one particular social media platform, 2-3 thousand Euros per month”* is required in the electronic recruitment system. However, one of the HR managers was

not sure about investment in the new system. She stated that the national federation supports the growth of SMEs from 100 to 1000 by meeting financial needs. In her answer, she mentioned that *“investing that much amount in the new system that leads to process system in an efficient way”*. The amount of investment mentioned by two participants for the new recruitment and selection operations of the SMEs in the healthcare sector is 3000-4000 Euros every month to pay off fees for the e-recruitment process to the recruiter; such as monster fees as per slots, advertisement cost and cost to update database. HR Admin answered that *“majority of the investment that is 6-8% to the company’s gross investment in the new recruitment and selection for purely adopted electronic recruitment in the future”*. The investment in the recruitment and selection process to the required level is important to process all activities in an efficient way.

4.7 Theme 4: Problems faced by Dublin's healthcare SMEs while shifting to electronic recruitment and selection practices

Moving on to the next question, the participants were asked to elaborate the key problems they encounter while shifting from conventional selection and recruitment practices; to electronic procedures. One of the participants who are an HR Business partner stated that *“our organisation is using both manual and electronic systems in the recruitment and selection processes, however being an SME in the healthcare domain, issues are encountered in arranging needful finance. This is because incorporating E-recruitment procedures requires time and cost investment which is hard to manage for SMEs.”* Furthermore, he also said that finance plays a major part in the adoption of electronic recruitment and selection practices and following E-recruitment effectively is a complicated task and for making most of this innovative approach it is important to make more investment so as to employ quality programs capable of fulfilling the requirement of skilled workers and thus attain competitive

advantage. Additionally, for new SMEs entering in the healthcare sector of Dublin, it is going to be major issues as they will attain growth with time so instead of directly attempting to adapt E-recruitment and selection processes, they should initially follow manual systems only and then after achieving consistent growth, they can think over electronic recruitment and selection methods.

Other participants also supported the fact that the shift from traditional or manual hiring processes followed by the small and medium-sized enterprises, towards more technologically inclined platforms for governing recruitment and selection function is associated with several issues. The SMEs are having limited funds which need to be optimally managed and this financial constraint creates a problem in accessing advanced technologies due to which they find the traditional techniques extensively supporting in creating an appropriate pool of skilled workers, essential for gaining competitive advantage through quality care.

In addition to this, majority of the participants also stated that frequent changes in the healthcare sector and growing demand of clients, customer and employees to stay updated about their area of concern, requires transformation in the prevalent working procedure which is pressuring SME's in healthcare sector of Ireland to adopt advanced HR technologies as well. It is also identified that the rigorous technological enhancement has evoked the demand for technically proficient and, skilled workers which are hard to attract via manual modes of recruitment and thus compelling recruiters in the sector to go for E-recruitment. One of the participants also mentioned that the traditional recruitment practices where the data of candidates was stored on spreadsheets are under risk of any virus attack which triggers chances of losing essential data related to candidates or current employees.

In regard to the same prospect, of the HR Recruitment Consultant stated that "finance is a major factor that needs to be considered by SMEs while looking to

employ advanced strategies and maintain this factor at requisite level is a challenging job with the healthcare sector of Dublin, Ireland." Such challenges have stimulated the necessity for small and medium healthcare enterprises to shift towards electronically advanced recruitment and selection systems, which is not easy for SMEs due to the requirement of high technologically efficacious workers and huge investment. Therefore, the changing scenario of the industry along with the demand for more skilled workers with limited resources available with SMEs, have increased the challenges for the recruiters working in SMEs of the healthcare domain. Apart from this, making exiting staff capable to work with electronic procedures is also a problem that needs to be tackled by the healthcare SMEs.

4.8 Theme 5: Financial strength of the healthcare industry in implementing electronic recruitment and selection procedure

In order to know whether the healthcare industry of Dublin, Ireland is financially strong to enforce electronic recruitment and selection procedure, one of the participants, replied that "*finance is a prominent challenge encountered by most of the SMEs; including where he is working due to limited availability of finance accomplishing demand of various departments. However, the organisation is continuously spending on E-recruitment strategies as it is imperative for staying in the market and enhancing competency by hiring and retaining skilled workers or caregivers to facilitate quality care.*" In order to expand business and earn more for meeting the growing need for funds for this purpose, he mentioned that "the organisation is trying to approach a maximum number of customers and clients."

One of the HR Managers also explained that "*although finance is a key issue witnessed by SMEs in the healthcare industry of Ireland, this problem is intensified with the conservative nature of people in the region who are not willing to spend more for adopting novel means of operations, want to continue with conventional*

approaches. Due to this cultural problem of the society, changes will take time; however, our organisation which is currently working with both manual and electronic procedures will be working wholly with E-systems in the next couple of months.”

It is also apparent from the response given by the participants that the system within which we are working today is little complicated and to get the best talent, it is important to make an additional investment for enhancing the potential to serve patients with quality care. The increased requirement of funds is again a matter of concern for SMEs and for boosting competency to survive in this era, organisational need to work with structured policies and programs which again requires more and more funds to accommodate latest technologies.

In the similar context, other participant said that money is a basic requirement for every organisational function, from brand promotion to website development to recruitment and others alike. In case of recruitment and selection, finance is required for advertising jobs over digital platforms or organising a job fair, and these money requirements cannot be escaped by an entity. However, for small and medium enterprises of Ireland, managing money for implementing advanced technologies, especially E-recruitment strategies is a leading issue which needs to be resolved by business growth and, expansion.

One of the HR Business Partner of the healthcare company, in this relation, explained that *"as SMEs are constantly growing and because of this after one or two years it will be growing at a higher altitude of the graph and with time the continual changes in the healthcare sector of Ireland, financial stability is crucial for attaining growth."* Furthermore, it is also assessed on the basis of the opinion of the majority of the participants that small and medium healthcare organisations need to have a mixed approach accompanying both manual processes, and electronic means, while engaged in the selection and recruitment process in Ireland. This is an appropriate choice as it

can help in generating cost-effective policies and strategies to develop a team of the best healthcare professionals.

4.9 Summary

On the basis of data findings and evaluation, it is discovered that E-recruitment procedures require huge time and cost investment which is raising a problem for the small and medium healthcare organisations of Dublin, Ireland. It is explored that finance plays a vital part in the incorporation of electronic recruitment and selection strategies and due to limited availability of finance, especially by new SMEs in the healthcare domain, organisations are encountering issues. Additionally, following E-recruitment in an efficient and effective manner is a complex job and for making most lucrative use of the electronically advanced procedures, it is important to employ quality programs which again demands substantial investment. Problem is also experienced by SMEs in making existing staff familiar with these novel systems and, hiring technically proficient employees to administer technology equipped systems. The conservative nature of the society in Ireland is hindering some of the SMEs from accepting modern recruitment and selection systems. Although, most of the SMEs in the sector are striving for business expansion and growth, to totally shift from manual selection processes to electronic procedures in the coming few months.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Results

On the basis of the secondary findings it can be discussed that the recruitment and selection criteria are articulated as an essential component that is incorporated in the effective management system of human resource of an organisation. In regard to health care service, SMEs recruitment is considered one of the traditionally listed roles aligned to the human resource management teams in order to gain an in-depth strategic focus. In addition to this, Abraham *et al.* (2015) also identified that focus and sophistication are the two most vital variables that are needed to design and effective recruitment selection process in the health and care service organisations, as they have a number of job opportunities for individuals and need to appropriately manage selection and recruitment processes to sustain market position and also add consumer value (Abraham *et al.*, 2015).

As per the explorations obtained through primary sources, it can be stated that the Human Resource (HR) professionals are focused on acquiring skilled and dedicated healthcare professionals. The major concern of HR professionals in Ireland is the hiring of skilled healthcare professionals in the minimum possible time because large amount of time is required to assess the candidates and identify their potential skill sets. The HR professionals have also reflected the problems that are encountered by them in relation to communicating with suitable candidates and estimating the feasibility in the hiring of the identified candidate. The Constant Comparison Analysis (Appendix 5) will show how the themes have been differentiated for the analysis of the result. I have mentioned two questions here for the Constant Comparison Thematic Analysis taking each from HR interview questionnaire and also Healthcare Professional interview questionnaire.

In addition to this, Wong and Laschinger (2013) discussed that some of the other ways that can be incorporated in the hiring process followed in Ireland, which can be

stated as hiring from the existing employees for a higher position acquisition. The healthcare organisations should also focus on creating a good culture in the organisation by employing current employees for new positions. This can help the organisations to ensure loyalty and enhance the decision-making process of the organisations. It can also be stated as an effective method in regard to capital and time invested in the evaluation of the analysis of the external candidates (Wong and Laschinger, 2013). This process can be stated to be a cost-effective method for the employers and ensure effective results as the employees working in the organisation have already showcased their efficiency.

In relevance to primary evaluations carried out in the study, a discussion is carried out over the types of recruitment and selection practices that are incorporated by the HR professionals in Ireland. The HR professionals revealed that they sought references from other potential employees and organisations for assessing the workability of candidates. E-mail and telecommunication tools, like the internet, help to communicate job postings and useful details to the candidates living in distant areas. The organisations utilise both types of hiring techniques, which are manual and electronic. Advanced Tracking Systems (ATS) are incorporated for the maintenance of candidates' records and confirming the schedule for the interviews. SMEs in the Irish healthcare sector are planning to shift to completely electronic modes of recruitment. Keywords for analysing the skills of candidates are not utilised. An online platform like Indeed is used for communicating and searching candidates. Liaisons are dedicated to offering details regarding job posts.

In support of the need of effective recruitment practices, the study of Aremu and Adeyemi (2011) discussed that healthcare organisations consider hiring and recruitment as an essential component, as recruitment design and system sates the number and kind of individuals that would be able to apply for the job position and

accept the vacancies provided by the small to large scale organisations (Aremu and Adeyemi, 2011). In addition to it, electronic recruitment also helps in reducing the recruitment cost by decreasing organisational expenditure on the manual job posting and hiring agencies, which provide candidates to the organisations. For example, in the case of Innovex Reports, the organisation is reducing the recruitment cost by using IVR system for the basic screening rounds. Similarly, using technology in the recruitment process has the potential to enhance the cost efficiency of the organisation. It has been observed that when organisations conduct face-to-face interviews in college campuses, it includes several costs like meals, hotel accommodation of the interviewers, and transportation cost. These costs can be easily removed by conducting the interviews with the help of video conferencing (Chapman and Webster, 2003).

Furthermore, it is discussed that with continuous advancements being carried out in recruitment and selection strategies, modification in the needs of customers is identified to exist. The procedure of shifting to a new form of health care service delivery is affected by several types of factors, such as the increasing demand for health care services and a shortage of healthcare service providers. The distribution of the healthcare services are being carried out in an inadequate manner. Moreover, modifications in the functional aspects of the recruitment process are also identified to affect the process of shifting to a more advanced recruitment system. Enhanced healthcare services not only contribute to physical, as well as the cognitive health of individuals, but it also plays a major role in improving the economic level of a country. It has been observed that healthcare is not only about the physical and mental well-being of a person, but enhanced healthcare also influences the economic development of a country (Turner, 2017).

In contrast to this, in the perceptions of Kapse, Patil and Patil (2012) it is discussed that electronic recruitment has some of the shortcoming which can be reported as, identification of the authenticity of the qualification and resume creates major complications for the recruitment executive for a small and medium enterprise as it is time-consuming and also requires an advanced software, which can affect the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare organisation working and operation management. The rural area in Ireland has low internet penetration and ineffective functioning of the internet networks, which has also affected the awareness dimensions of the internet; this can harm the recruitment and selection process for SMEs.

Garcia-Izquierdo, Aguinis and Ramos-Villagrasa (2010) also discuss that electronic recruitment incorporates various advantages that can be demonstrated as the lower cost operations as adverting through online medium requires low cost as compared to the traditional methods, such as newspaper and magazines. In addition to this, electronic recruitment involves no intermediaries, which enhance the chances of the organisation in attaining an effective employee who would help the organisation for achieving their long-term goals and vision (Garcia Izquierdo, Aguinis and Ramos Villagrasa, 2010). Electronic recruitment also helps in reduction of time utilised in the recruitment process and also facilitates the selection of employees with the required skill set.

In relation to the analysis carried out the primary techniques for gathering data, it can be further discussed that the Irish SMEs highly prefer the electronic mode of recruitment. It can be understood that the electronic recruitment techniques are far more efficient and beneficiary on financial terms. HR professionals of the Irish health care SMEs have revealed that manual recruitment techniques are time-consuming. E-recruitment helps in resolving the problem of excessive time consumption, and it also reduces administrative workload. On the other hand, it can be discussed that if the

human resources are available in sufficient amount, manual recruitment is better because the efficiency of human cognition is unmatched to computer machines. Manual recruitment requires adequate time and resources. A large number of human resources are not available in SMEs. Therefore, health care organisations in the SME sector of Ireland rely on easy to use electronic resources for executing the hiring process.

In support of the views of Bartram (2003), Chapman and Webster (2003) it can be discussed that the technological advancement had impacted the functionality of the organisations in several aspects, like marketing, financial system, operation management, and selection and recruitment process as well. Therefore, a significant increase in information technology has been observed in the functionality of human resource specifically for recruitment and screening process. For example, in Nike, the human resource managers use Interactive Voice Response (IVR) services to conduct the basic screening of the applicants. They then conduct face-to-face round for those applicants who have cleared IVR screening round. Similarly, there are other organisations also that conduct the basic screening rounds using technologies like IVR, telephonic interviews, and computer-based assessments. It has been observed that there are several reasons for adopting electronic hiring process over manual process. Electronic recruitment helps in reducing the time of hiring. Time is one of the crucial factors for the human resource management as efficiency is calculated on the base of time taken by the human resource department to hire the right candidate. Therefore, use of technical tools is effective in order to increase the efficiency of human resource department as it will reduce the overall time in selection and recruitment of right candidates. Similarly, using electronic tools of recruitment enhances the functionality by streamlining the process of receiving approval, enhancing the communication between departments. (Chapman and Webster, 2003).

Filipe (2013) also discussed organisations need to enhance the quality of job descriptions provided to the potential employees. In addition to this, the literature also validates that efficient job desperation seeks the attention of potential health care professionals, which can help the organisations to attain higher market positioning. The jobs description of employing health care professionals should include organisation goals, mission, vision approaches, rule, values, and social regulations, which would encourage individuals to opt for the organisation (Filipe, 2013). The job descriptions should also incorporate appealing aspects and policies for the employees, which would portray flexibility in the workplace culture, specifications about the skill required, and other dimensions of the environment. The healthcare SMEs in Ireland focuses on appreciating a referral from the existing employees because it actively encourages them to create a new job opening for establishing a connection with potential employees and also add value to the current employees. The organisation should also focus on building a formal employee referral program to gain trusted employees for the organisation (Filipe, 2013).

Moreover, it can be discussed that healthcare SMEs needs to administer the pre-employment test of the candidate through online medium to ensure the efficiency of the skill set possessed by the applicant. In addition to this, the electronic recruitment methods and tools allow the SMEs under the healthcare industry to interview applicant via video interviewing software, which is stated as an innovative method of enhancing engagement with the candidates. In addition to this, the organisation can also engage in the construction of background check of the applicants to ensure the authenticity of their qualifications (Sin Tan *et al.*, 2010).

In support of the study of Straus, Miles and Levesque (2001) it is discussed that the rapid growth in the business and shortage in the skilled workforce have resulted in hiring candidates from the national and international market level. However, it is has

become necessary for the organisations to maintain its cost-effectiveness in order to maintain sustainability in the global market. In order to enhance cost-effectiveness, organisations are applying strategies such as cost-cutting on travelling and hiring candidates from the global labour market. In this context, it has been observed that use of video conferencing helps the organisations in relation to several factors, such as access to diverse workforce and reducing time in hiring proper talent. Due to a shortage of workforce, it has become necessary for the organisations to hire talent from the international market. Similarly, it is also important to enhance cost-effectiveness to increase profitability by reducing travelling cost. In such cases, video conferencing is an effective tool that can be used to conduct distance interviews. Previously, the distance interviews were conducted through the telephonic interview, nowadays, enhancement in technology has developed the process through video conferencing due to which the efficiency during the basic screening has been enhanced.

Concerning the primary data, it can also be discussed that an advanced recruitment mechanism is followed in the Irish healthcare SMEs. The reason for the incorporation of an advanced electronic process for selecting and recruiting candidates is that the hiring process is dynamic, and it requires modifications with time. There is an urgent requirement of complying and shifting towards new and advanced recruitment strategies. However, manual recruitment strategy like the utilisation of human resources is regarded efficient in examining the candidates. E-recruitment is preferred only for the establishment of an advanced recruitment procedure.

Abdulah (2017) and Elder, Evans and Nizette (2011) have supported the discussions by stating that SMEs in the healthcare sector tend to face a lot of issues in their recruitment process, which can be stated as scarcity of quality professional and employees (Elder, Evans and Nizette, 2011). Unavailability of potential employees is

articulated as one of the major issues that have been identified in the recruitment and selection process in Ireland and also in other parts of the globe. The possible solution for this situation can be summarised by adopting a revamped approach by the SMEs in the healthcare industry in order to attain potential employees and by rewarding and creating benefits for employees the organisation can attract the physicians and other employees like nurses (Abdulah, 2017).

It is also discussed that another challenge that is faced by the recruiters is the hiring of experienced healthcare workers in the SMEs. The recruiters of SMEs in healthcare domain often face the challenge that they should hire a candidate with more experience or a person who holds a master's degree. According to Alves and Vazquez (2013), the recently graduated candidates possess the theoretical knowledge, as well as knowledge of the modern technology used in the healthcare domain. However, they possess limited work experience. On the other hand, the experienced candidates have a good experience and practical knowledge of the healthcare services (Alves and Vazquez, 2013).

It can also be discussed that the demand for healthcare assistants is high in the healthcare sector of Ireland. It is not easy to hire healthcare assistants emerging from distant locations as it is difficult to communicate with them. The problem associated with the processing time is identified in employee hiring procedures. Primary findings describe that there are about 20,000 care assistants available in Ireland. However, only 2000 health care assistants are hired due to a high amount of time involved in processing and assessing job-oriented details. In addition to it, approaching healthcare assistants is not easy.

Supportive to the analysis of Kabene and Stefane (2010), it is discussed that the recruiters in the healthcare facilities located in the rural area face challenges in recruiting people. It is comparatively easy for the recruiters to attract people in the

developed and large regions. However, it is difficult for the recruiters in the rural areas to attract the healthcare professionals. The reason for it is that there is lack of healthcare professionals who are willing to live in rural areas. The recruitment through the manual process makes it difficult for the recruiters to find people who are willing to locate in the rural areas. Furthermore, if the organisation that is located in a rural area cannot pay higher wages, many physicians do not locate to healthcare organisations in rural areas. Therefore, it becomes difficult for the recruiters of the healthcare organisations in the rural areas to find people who are ready to locate in the rural facilities Helfert (2009).

As per Alves and Vazquez (2013) it can be discussed that the biggest challenge that is faced by the recruiters in healthcare domain in Ireland is the shortage of talented people. The healthcare industry in Ireland is facing the issue of shortage of skilled people in this sector. The healthcare industry is continuously growing and the number of SMEs in this domain is continuously increasing, which has increased the requirement of the skilled healthcare workers. Furthermore, the healthcare domain is rapidly transforming, and it is moving towards digitisation. This transformation has increased the demand for technically skilled healthcare workers. In addition to this, the shortage of healthcare workers has increased the salary demand of the healthcare professionals. The healthcare professionals demand higher salaries, and in most of the cases, it is not possible for the SMEs to provide the same to the professionals. The issue of shortage of workers in the healthcare is continuously increasing, which led to higher salary demand, and it has become a challenge for the recruiters in this domain (Alves and Vazquez, 2013).

In support of above, the primary findings have revealed that the health care professionals who aspire to be selected for a given job profile, undergo through the electronic hiring process. The resumes and CVs are submitted by means of online

platforms. An interview is organised by evaluating resumes. Details regarding references are also asked through e-mail. The healthcare professionals have revealed that the electronic process of recruitment is fast and easy. Hired candidates encounter the problem of low wages. The healthcare professionals are provided with the facilities of electronic recruitment for distribution of messages, letters, and e-mails.

In alignment to above, it can be discussed that electronic hiring requires candidates to fill the job applications online. Online job applications require providing personal information, and sometimes, candidates do not feel secure to provide online information due to which organisations often miss skilled candidates. It has also been observed that candidates do not take time to fill all the necessary information and leave the application half filled. In such cases, the organisation might receive huge responses but find difficulties in sorting out the right candidates. In order to enhance the process of electronic recruitment, it is necessary to provide relevant information on the website so that the candidates are attracted towards the organisation. In some cases, it has been observed that due to lack of information on the website, the organisation is unable to build trust in the candidates, and as a result, unable to attract a proper pool of candidates. In addition to this, electronic recruitment does not provide an opportunity to judge the interpersonal skills effectively. In such cases, the organisations have to arrange a face-to-face interview with the candidates in order to judge whether to hire the candidate or not (Kaur, 2015).

It can also be discussed that electronic recruitment has some of the shortcoming which can be reported as, identification of the authenticity of the qualification and resume creates major complications for the recruitment executive for a small and medium enterprise as it is time-consuming and also requires an advanced software, which can affect the cost-effectiveness of the healthcare organisation working and operation management. The rural area in Ireland has low internet

penetration and ineffective functioning of the internet networks, which has also affected the awareness dimensions of the internet; this can harm the recruitment and selection process for SMEs.

This discussion is further supported by secondary sources which indicate that the electronic recruitment has other disadvantages for SMEs in the healthcare industry, which can be noted as lack of dependency on electronic recruitment methods and tools. Healthcare organisations need to have mixed approach while carrying out their selection and recruitment process in Ireland as it can help them to generate cost-effective strategies and policies to attain the best quality of healthcare professionals.

As supported by the Yoon Kin Tong (2009) it is discussed that electronic recruitment is defined as the online recruitment, which adds value to the recruitment process as it creates an attractive approach for the potential candidates. Electronic recruitment is validated as a more innovative and advanced approach, which is utilised to create an effectual passage for the employers to select professional and competent employees for their respective small and medium enterprises (Yoon Kin Tong, 2009). As the small and medium enterprises do not require a vast range of employees to manage their operating system, they can opt for using the tools and techniques provided by the electronic recruitment. In addition to this, it has been stated in the current literature that the technology is the core component, which is incorporated in the development of the effective electronic recruitment process. The technological advancement provided by the electronic recruitment can be utilised to advertise the vacancies granted by the organisation on various websites and social media platforms, which would also add to the brand image of the healthcare organisation (Yoon Kin Tong, 2009).

It is discussed as per the obtained primary findings that finance is a critical point of concern in the implementation of electronic recruitment and selection procedures

practised by SMEs. More and more clients are required to be approached for determining the availability of potential candidates and distribution of job postings in an effective manner. The HR professionals have also stated that Irish individuals are conservative, which is problematic for the incorporation of necessary modifications in the hiring process. Moreover, the electronic system of recruitment and selection is also not easy to be implemented as it requires offering useful knowledge and information to the healthcare professionals.

Moreover, it is discussed that the use of technology in order to reduce the cost of the organisation is known as the first-level effect which was already mentioned in the Literature Review. The first level effect is used in organisations to enhance the productivity and decrease the cost of the organisation through the use of technology. However, it is also necessary for the organisations to understand the consequences of technology before applying it. It has been observed that some technologies increase organisational cost rather than decreasing it. Electronic recruitment also helps in hiring quality candidates. The increase in technology use and globalisation of the labour force has made it necessary for the organisations to hire talented employees irrespective of their location in order to maintain a competitive advantage in the global market. Due to a shortage in the workforce, specifically in the sectors like healthcare demand of hiring workforce internationally is increasing. However, hiring candidates from the international labour market associate huge costs. Therefore, small and medium sized enterprises are often discouraged from hiring workforce from the global market due to huge cost involvement. However, there are some organisations that are forced to hire workforce from the international labour market because of shortage in skilled workforce together with maintaining a competitive advantage in the market (Chapman and Webster, 2003).

The chart (appendix 5) thus will show how each of the different themes like management, manual recruitment, electronic recruitment, costs and many other made the analysis diversified and equally challengeable to sought as to what is a better way of improving recruitment and selection procedures within healthcare sectors in SMEs.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The key objective, as well as aim associated with this study, is to investigate manual versus electronic practices of recruitment and selection specific to the context of Dublin healthcare industry. In this regard, the researcher has been eager to identify the shift from manual to the electronic procedure of selection as well as recruitment of healthcare workers in the organisation. In addition financial investment and associated problems with electronic processes have been examined. The study identified the current practices related to recruitment and selection in Dublin healthcare industry for addressing the first objective of the research. In this regard, Holm (2012) provided significant data concluding that Dublin healthcare organisations utilise electronic recruitment procedures that are effective in handling applicants' data through online forms, email enquiries as well as communicating them via online medium. Electronic practices of recruitment support the provision of in-depth insights into the specific skills of individuals and their suitability for job roles in healthcare organisations in Dublin.

The study also reveals based on secondary data with support from primary findings, that there is a shift in the current recruitment process from manual to electronic which has implications for healthcare SMEs in Dublin. While comparing the manual process with the electronic process of recruitment and selection, this study finds that electronic process used by Dublin's healthcare SMEs is highly significant and appropriate to managing of applicant databases and delivers efficiencies in recruitment of skilled healthcare workers. However, research participants agree that manual procedures are time-consuming due to being lengthy, and complicated. Vujic, Ohiri and Sparkes (2009) claim that manual procedure of recruitment require many steps such as pre-qualification, long interviews as well as competency testing. Thus, the unitization of electronic procedures is growing in the Dublin healthcare industry.

Furthermore, the findings provided insight into the difficulties and drawbacks of electronic recruitment processes. For example, the associated cost of implementing the electronic system and providing training to the recruiters regarding the use of the electronic process. This cost was not involved in the manual process of recruitment as well as selection in the healthcare industry of Dublin.

The findings also conclude that electronic procedures are time saving and facilitate approaching candidates in a global marketplace from healthcare organisations based in Dublin. Electronic recruitment is considered an innovative as well as advanced approach allowing employers to reach out to skilled candidates in a Global marketplace (Flint et al., 2016). Respondents were in broad agreement with these qualitative data findings obtained from the literature. However, all participants noted that the shift from manual to electronic procedures has limitations and on occasion such procedures are not satisfactory or effective in selecting right candidates. Decisions relating to final candidate selection cannot be taken based on automated data analysis on whether the candidate is suitable for the specific job role. In conclusion, the findings suggests that although electronic procedures are better for Dublin healthcare industry for approaching global level candidates by effective communication and in less time than manual process, limitations in terms of hiring right candidate and cost linked to implementation and training concerned with electronic process are drawbacks of electronic process for the industry. Furthermore, healthcare SMEs in Dublin required investment for implementing electronic system for recruitment and selection. However, their main concern was on finding skilled candidates in minimum time to improve their work and services in their organisations. For this purpose, despite some limitations, they have adopted the electronic process of hiring regardless of consideration of associated limitations as means of involved cost and suitability of the candidate for the required job role. As a whole, the mixed

approach involving both electronic and manual is found to be suitable for the Dublin healthcare industry for recruiting appropriate candidates promptly and cost-effectively.

6.1 Research Limitation

There are a few limitations associated with the research. Mainly, the selected sample size was of 7 people only and it would be more appropriate to have the large sample for attaining more valuable and remarkable outcomes. Secondly, participants' response rate and length of the interview were not sufficient. Some participants have taken pauses and a lot of time in responding to the questions. Furthermore, while approaching possible research participants, only some of them have accepted to get participated in the research.

As a researcher's point of view, there are limitations as well because a more skilled or experienced interviewer could have collected more appropriate data from the participants.

Lastly, suitable locations for the interviews were an important issue and the reluctance of some interviewees to discuss financial matters.

6.2 Future Research Implication

The subject of recruitment and selection, as well as advancement in related procedures, is evolving. In the present study, the shift to electronic from manual procedures of recruitment has been examined by giving the case example of Dublin healthcare organisation. There is significant scope for conducting research on practices of human resource for recruiting and selecting workers. The future researchers would might be interested in investigating currently utilised electronic systems for reaching global level candidates and hiring the suitable ones to analyse the advancement of hiring procedure with evidence of new technologies' applications. Secondly, other developed countries' healthcare organisations' criteria and base for decision making

regarding the hiring of candidates can be assessed for acknowledging current practices and their effectiveness in recruiting the workers for organisational service efficiency. Further, mixed methods can be adopted in future research for obtaining both quantitative as well as qualitative data for gaining more depth insight into the research problem and bring out information regarding the present scenario of advanced technologies' implications for the appropriate recruitment process.

6.3 Recommendation

In relation to the identified problems regarding the adoption of advanced electronic recruitment practices, recommendations are provided below:

- Proper training and awareness level regarding the usage of online recruitment portals could be enhanced among the health care professionals in the Irish healthcare SMEs. HR professionals should be aware of the efficient usage of online recruitment strategies. (Gomez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy, 2009).
- The development of good relationships with online recruitment agencies is suggested to SMEs in the Irish healthcare sector. Establishment of contact and relationship with these agencies may support healthcare SMEs in Ireland in implementing online hiring procedures and posting job advertisements through the assistance of online agencies. This could offer advancement to the existing hiring practices. (Luczak *et al.*, 2012).
- Irish SMEs encounter excessive R&S time consumption. In order to efficiently and quickly identify suitable candidates, SMEs must increase their usage of online advertising. The extensive visibility of job advertisements on online platforms and social media could reach large number of candidates. Moreover, online platforms are visited by candidates across the globe, which could also help in obtaining potential candidates from distant locations (Lacka-Badura, 2015).

- HR departments in Irish based healthcare SMEs should focus on enhancing their capabilities in identifying healthcare assistants. There is a shortage of healthcare assistants in Ireland. Recruitment programs should be more focused on hiring healthcare assistants for maintaining required levels of health care services. This can be achieved by implementation of screening techniques in the hiring process, which analyses the skill set of the candidates (Senthil Kumaran and Sankar, 2013).

6.4 CIPD Learning Experience Statement

The research work was very interesting and yet challenging as well. The need to look for the right candidates for research and gathering up information was very demanding as well. I get to learn in-depth about HR modules and how to practically implement my studies in the research work as well.

During the research work, I feel that I am way more confident in gaining the HR knowledge and also, my learning abilities have also improved.

Getting an exposure in the Irish Healthcare Sector was definitely exciting with an opportunity to meet and having the conversation which includes qualitative research was something I am obliged to get. This has improved my interpersonal skills and as well as helped me to communicate more easily with people now.

By doing a Masters Dissertation, a researcher gets the ability of Learning and development, analyzing data and critical thinking skills.

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Appendix 1: Interview Information Sheet

National College of Ireland Interview Information Sheet

Research project title: An Investigation on Recruitment and Selection Practices within SMEs in Healthcare Sector in Dublin, Ireland

Researcher: Deblina Bhaumik

The interview will take approximately 10-15 minutes. The participants will have the right to stop the interview anytime in the middle of it if they want to or withdraw themselves from the interview and research.

The interview will be recorded and a transcript will be attached at the end of the dissertation paper which will be under supervision of Garrett Ryan, my Supervisor in the research.

The Participants name will be strictly confidential and the data collected from the interview will be stored in a confidential manner. Only the college authorities will have access to it. It can be destroyed if the participants do not agree with the data protection conditions.

Information Provided by the Participants:

The information provided by you is strictly for the research purposes only. After the completion of the thesis, a digital copy will be uploaded in the College Institutional Repository TRAP (Thesis Reports and Projects) as an electronic data.

Further Information

If you have any further questions or concerns about this study, please contact:

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Appendix 2: Interview Consent Form

**National College of Ireland
Interview Consent Form**

Research project title: An Investigation on Recruitment and Selection Practices within SMEs in Healthcare Sector in Dublin, Ireland

Researcher: Deblina Bhaumik

Research Participant name:

By signing this form I **agree** that

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
2. The transcript will be attached with the thesis paper or will be in the use as mentioned in the information sheet.
3. I have read the Information sheet;
4. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.
5. I agree that the research will publish the paper which has quotations by me.
6. I have asked questions and make enquiries before participating in the interview.
7. I have been contacted prior and provided with the fullest details about the purpose of the interview.
8. I am fully satisfied to make a progression further in the interview.

_____ **Printed Name**

Participant's Signature

Date

Researchers Signature

Date

-

Appendix 3: Interview Questionnaires

HR

1. What are the current recruitment and selection strategies that are being incorporated in the healthcare sector in your organisation?
2. What is the current demand for access of skilled healthcare professionals in your organisation?
3. Do you feel the present recruitment and selection practices in your organization are sufficient for preserving skilled healthcare workers?
4. What are your views regarding any need to shift from the present recruitment and selection strategies to the advanced and modern strategies of recruitment and selection?
5. What is the approximate rough level of investment in the recruitment and selection operations of your organisation? (If manual how much approx or electronic how much approx.)
6. What are the problems that health care SMEs like your organisation may face from shifting to an electronic selection and recruitment practice? Sub questions – Do you feel Finance can be subjected as a view point to implement recruitment and selection process?

Healthcare Professionals

1. What is the current demand of access for skilled healthcare professionals in your organisation or let's say in the job market?
2. Do you feel the present recruitment and selection practices sufficient for preserving skilled healthcare workers and their skills and criteria for the job are being met properly?
3. Do you know about Manual or electronic recruitment practices?

4. Did you feel you were kept up to date on new developments and company policies?
5. Can you share your experience with your recruitment processes of your organization?
6. Benefits that you enjoy that keeps you motivated to stick to your organization?
7. What are your views regarding change or shift for recruitment and selection practices to ease out the whole hiring process?

Appendix 4: Interview Transcript

Participant's Transcript

Questions	Response
How long have you been in this role? What are the current recruitment and selection strategies that are being incorporated in the healthcare sector in your organisation?	In my organisation, I personally do lots of practical things to recruit and select the candidates, such as I screened the candidate, I do the interviews, I checked out references, I do some compliance, such foreign returnee checked, external documentation, company policies and foreign returns. One of the main strategies that we are currently focusing is basically on students, and they are given contracted hours based on the term to visa and Stamp 2 visa. They can refer their friends as well. We offer 20 fixed hours every week minimum. A couple of other strategies would also be offered wherein we offer existence cares 30 hours, so that the carers and the clients have stable hours.
What do you understand by manual recruitment and electronic recruitment? Does your company do both?	Our company do both. We have physical files for all the candidates. ATS is utilised for maintaining a record of booked interviews and maintaining them based on the clients. Manual aspects being keeping physical files of CVs, Garda Vetting. For screening candidates we use, indeed and other job websites.
What is the current demand for skilled healthcare workers in your organisation?	I have a positive outlook of shifting towards the completely electronic mechanism of recruitment and selection. The demand for candidates in the industry is quite high and within the company, if you have qualifications, you can start a lot sooner. It is very much appreciated outside with improvisation in qualifications by the provision of training and stimulating awareness.
Are the present recruitment and selection procedures of the SMEs in your organisation sufficient for recruiting skilled healthcare workers?	I believed in retention to the utmost extent. The strategies used for retention of skilled healthcare workers in the organisation are stable hours, probation, assistance programme (access of loan facility) and workplace safety.
Is there any need to shift from the present recruitment and selection strategies to the advanced and modern strategies of recruitment and selection?	Yes, there is a need to shift from manual recruitment strategies to electronic recruitment strategies. However, we are currently utilising both the types of recruitment and selection strategies. In future we are planning to use e-recruitment purely.

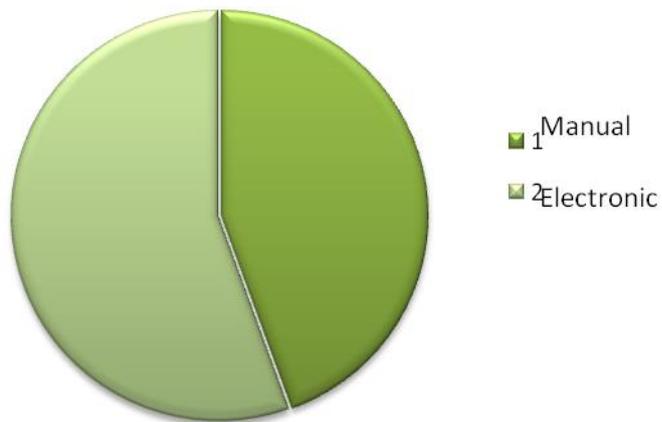
<p>What is the approximate rough level of investment in the recruitment and selection operations in your organisation?</p>	<p>Majority of the investment that is 6-8% to the company's gross investment in the new recruitment and selection for purely adopted electronic recruitment in the future.</p>
<p>What are the problems that healthcare SME in Dublin, Ireland may face from shifting to an electronic selection and recruitment practice?</p>	<p>Well, our organisation is using both manual and electronic systems in the recruitment and selection processes, however being an SME in the healthcare domain; issues are encountered in arranging needful finance. This is because incorporating E-recruitment procedures requires significant time and cost investment which is hard to manage for SMEs. Finance plays a major part in the adoption of electronic recruitment and selection practices and following E-recruitment effectively is a complicated task and for making most of this innovative approach it is important to make more investment so as to employ quality programs capable of fulfilling the requirement of skilled workers and thus attain competitive advantage. For new SMEs entering in the healthcare sector of Dublin, it is going to be a significant issue as they will attain growth with time so instead of directly attempting to adapt E-recruitment and selection processes, they should initially follow manual systems only and then after achieving consistent growth, they can think over electronic recruitment and selection methods.</p>
<p>Do you feel Finance can be subjected as a view point to implement recruitment and selection process?</p>	<p>Well, I believe that finance is a prominent challenge encountered by most of the SMEs; including where he is working due to limited availability of finance accomplishing demand of various departments. However, our organisation is continuously spending on E-recruitment strategies as it is imperative for staying in the market and enhancing competency by hiring and retaining skilled workers or caregivers to facilitate quality care. Our organisation is trying to approach a maximum number of customers and clients. Although finance is a crucial issue witnessed by SMEs in the healthcare industry of Ireland, this problem is intensified with the conservative nature of people in the region who are not willing to spend more for adopting novel means of operations, want to continue with conventional approaches. Due to this cultural issue of the society; changes will take time, however, our organisation which is currently working with both manual and electronic</p>

procedures will be working wholly with E-systems in the next couple of months.

Appendix 5: Constant Comparison Thematic Analysis

Constant Comparative Analysis							
Open Ended Result Details		MANUAL RECRUITMENT	ELECTRONIC RECRUITMENT	ADVANTAGES	PROBLEMS	FINANCE	RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES
	What are your views regarding any need to shift Recruitment and Selection Strategies that are being incorporated in the Healthcare Sector in your organisation?						
PARTICIPANT 1	In my organisation, I personally do lots of practical things to recruit and select the candidates, such as I screened the candidate, I do the interviews, I checked out references, I do some compliance, such foreign returnee checked, external documentation, company policies and foreign returns. One of the main strategies that we are currently focusing is basically on students; they are given contracted hours based on the term to visa and Stamp 2 visa. A couple of other strategies would also be offered wherein we offer existence cares 30 hours, and ATS is also utilised for maintaining a record of booked interviews.	1	1				
PARTICIPANT 2	Yes, there is definitely need a change as the SMEs are growing and it would be more beneficial if the whole organisation takes up the process of electronic recruitment.			1	1		
PARTICIPANT 3	Both Manual and Electronic recruitment are need as the SMEs will have its growth with time and they need to invest a lot more to get more candidates and so that they can retain more and more staffs and recruit in their organisation. But initially, finance can be a factor.	1	1	1	1	1	1
PARTICIPANT 4	Both of them should be incorporated but with necessary actions like investments factor and proper balance of taking further both manually and electronically.	1	1	1		1	
PARTICIPANT 5	Manual and electronic system should be there side by side. As both of them has their own pros and cons. I cannot completely trust electronic recruitment as in that way we are more dependant upon technology and less on human resource which is an important aspect as well. Keeping in mind to recruit best candidates, the recruitment process is not only starts with hiring a candidate but also the journey of each and every candidates that is gonna work with us. So, both of the ways, we can create great results and thus overall organisational development will happen over the years.	1	1	1	1		1
		4	5	4	2	2	2

Process of Recruitment



Other Factors for Need to Shift of Recruitment Processes

