

What are the motivational factors of foreign line level employees in the hospitality industry in  
Ireland

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## Abstract

### **What are the motivational factors of foreign line level employees in the hospitality industry in Ireland**

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This study aspires to identify the motivational factors of foreign employees in the Irish hospitality sector. Specifically, the study examines employees with different nationalities and investigates what motivates them to work in the hospitality area.

In order to reach the aims of this study, a qualitative method was used shaped in semi-structured interviews conducted with 8 foreign employees which are employed by different hotels and restaurants in Ireland.

This author of this research conducted this study believing that it might be appealing to HR managers from hospitality industry as well as to organisations' manager working in the same industry.

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## Table of contents

Abstract	i
Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Chapter 1 “Introduction”	- 1 -
Chapter 2 “Literature review”	- 2 -
2.1. Hospitality	- 2 -
2.2 Immigration	- 3 -
2.3 Multiculturalism in the hospitality	- 5 -
2.4 Motivation in the hospitality industry	- 6 -
2.4.1 The motivation’s factors and processes	- 8 -
2.4.2 Employee engagement and job satisfaction	- 10 -
2.4.3 Innovation in the workplace	- 11 -
2.5 Diversity in hospitality	- 12 -
2.6 Findings from Literature Review	- 13 -
Chapter 3 “Research question”	- 14 -
Chapter 4 “Methodology”	- 15 -
4.1 Research philosophy	- 16 -
4.1.1. Ontology	- 16 -
4.1.2. Epistemology	- 17 -
4.2 Research Strategy	- 18 -
4.2.1. Deduction vs. Induction vs. Abduction	- 18 -
4.2.2. Quantitative vs. qualitative	- 19 -
4.3. Research design	- 20 -
4.4. Sample	- 20 -
4.5. Interviews	- 21 -
4.6. Data Analysis	- 21 -
4.7. Limitations	- 22 -
4.8. Ethical considerations	- 22 -
Chapter 5 “Analysis and Findings”	- 23 -
5.1 Objective 1	- 23 -
5.2 Objective 2	- 25 -
5.3 Objective 3	- 26 -
5.4 Objective 4	- 27 -
Chapter 6 “Discussion on findings”	- 28 -
Chapter 7 “Conclusion”	- 31 -
7.1 Recommendations	- 31 -
Personal learning statement	- 33 -
Bibliography	- 34 -

Appendices	- 38 -
Appendix A – Interview Questions	- 38 -
Appendix B – Letter to participants	- 39 -

## Chapter 1 “Introduction”

Within the service industry, hospitality is a wide group of areas that includes planning events, theme parks, lodging, cruise line, transportation and extra additional sphere of tourism industry.

The topic selected for this research is related to the motivational factors that line level foreign employees are encounter in the Irish hospitality industry. The author found in this topic an area that has personal interest in; however, the author also believes that it is an area that has not been widely explored by the Irish employers in the hospitality sector, sector which is very large employing large number of employees every year.

For many employees this industry represents a transient sector as is characterised by unsocial working hours, little work-life balance and low pay. This industry is also distinguished by the fact that it is often dealing with unsatisfied quests, which will leave the employees emotionally fatigued and feeling isolated, as it was found by Deery Leo Jago (2015). Therefore, the employees from this industry may seek employment in different industries where their work might be better appreciated. Attracting and retaining employees in hospitality industry has always been hard for the hospitality organisations as found by Barron (2008).

Motivating and engaging employees in hospitality it is an emerging positive way of keeping the employees’ turnover rate low. In this research the author will encounter what are the motivational factors that keep the employees committed with their organisations. The author will also try to find out if the organisations who are applying total reward policies are seeing a positive improvement in keeping their employees engaged.

Furthermore, the research will examine if foreign employees working in hospitality industry are being motivated by the extrinsic or intrinsic motivational factors. The literature review will examine in depth what hospitality is, how migration increased the number of foreign employees working in hospitality industry in Ireland, what keeps the employees motivated and how multiculturalism and diversity has improved the overview aspect of organisations in the hospitality industry.

The author of this research will look at what are the motivational factors and processes that will diminished the risk of human capital to leave the organisations. The author will focus its research on an industry where having a large turnover rate has a bad impact on the employees, which will make them seek for a different job. This aspect will make the employees to be less engaged which will definitely not bring a big return on investment.



As hospitality is an industry that grows continually, the demand of trained, experienced and engaged human capital is very high. There is already high competition for hospitality skills and when new job opportunities will be created, the existing organisations will have to compete between themselves and try their best to retain their talent.

Even though a lot of research was done on what motivation means for employees, the hospitality sector was left on the side, as finding the right employee for the right job with certain level of motivation is not easy to find and retain. The aim of this research is to examine what are the motivational factors of foreign employees working in hospitality industry. The author will try to find out what keeps the foreign employees motivated in order to see themselves having a good career path within their organisations, as well as be enough motivated by their employer in order to become engaged with it.

## Chapter 2 “Literature review”

### 2.1. Hospitality

There are different definitions that the hospitality industry got over the years. However, Bottorff (2013) defined the term hospitality as the set of businesses and organisations that provide different services such as: food, lodging and travel to people who travel. Therefore, the hospitality field has been separated into different sectors such as: food and beverage industry, lodging industry, meeting and events industry, theme park industry and travel and tourism industry.

Hospitality industry takes an important place in the economy of Ireland. This was highlighted by Chung & Parker (2010) when they agreed that indeed hospitality is an industry of major economic, social and environmental impact.

The hospitality industry is recognised as the sector with poor pay, unsociable working hours, poor work experiences and poor ability from the industry side to reach the employee’s needs. Contrarily, there are different studies that can provide evidence that there are different generations, like Generation Y, who choose to work in hospitality and keep their job for long periods. The intrinsic and extrinsic factors are to be taken into consideration when separating the contradictions above.

According to World Tourism Organisation (2016), the hospitality industry is an important part of tourism, which is the largest and fastest growing economic industry in the world, strongly dependent on human capital. This implies taking into consideration the demographic aspect as well as the industry image and the constant changes in the workforce.

All these aspects make the Human Resources department struggle with attracting and retaining employees in the hospitality sector and work on identifying various factors that influence the employees' career decision to enter, stay and leave the industry.

The travel and tourism industry are actually a gathered organisations that are closely working together, which include areas as travel, tourism, airlines, cruise lines, travel agencies and tour operators.

However, for the purpose of this study, the researcher will focus on the hotel and restaurants as the main areas of exploration regarding the motivating factors of foreign employees.

In 2016, Price Waterhouse Coopers conducted a report on European hospitality trends which placed Dublin at the top of the list when it comes to growth forecast for 2017. Therefore, in order for any hospitality organisation to be as profitable as possible and have a competitive fringe in this world of expansion, their employees need to be motivated in order to complete their tasks efficiently.

Within any organisation, particularly in hospitality industry, the employees have to work together to attain the organisation's aims and missions. From 2004, when the European Union expanded, the number of foreigners has increased, and Ireland has received different nationalities from all over the world who wanted to settle in this country, therefore to work. Supporting this, Kenny's Census (2012) which was published in Irish Times Home News was stating that there was a 143% increase in the number of non-national individuals living in the Republic of Ireland. Even more, the Central Statistics Office got to the same conclusion of the increase in the number of foreign people despite the economy's decline.

## 2.2 Immigration

In contemporary societies, a large number of individuals move across national borders and as Castle (2013) stated, the migration has become multidirectional and complex with different trajectories than the one from the 1900s.

According to Tharmaseelan (2010), migration is a phenomenon ignited by wars or natural disasters, however voluntary migration can be seen all over the globe as a result of the individuals' need and desire of economic improvement, as can be recognised in the developed countries where the number of migrant individuals is high and constantly growing. Moreover, Zikic (2010) stated that foreign employees embraced in their personality the self-motivation idea which led them to success. Foreign employees take advantage of any opportunity they find and manage it in a way that they become self-driven, a

characteristic that individuals that are not crossing boundaries do not have. According to Forde & MacKenzie (2009), more and more organisations are seeking to hire foreign employees who are strongly motivated, more committed, adaptable, less expensive with powerful work behavioural in comparison with local employees.

Dench (2006) confirms the idea that migrant employees are more committed to any organisation as they need to learn English, integrate themselves into the new adopting country and be able to earn as much as possible in order to help their family back home.

Following the same idea, Devine (2007) suggested that foreign employees are more reliable and also innovative as their level of self-motivation is already high compared to local employees; therefore, the migrant employees are willing to work longer hours and the amount of time the migrant employees will call sick is less comparing it with the local ones.

The role that the webs of families and friends have in creating and sustaining migration flows is stated in the migration literature. Throughout research this improves the understanding of how the transfer of information about the employment opportunities works.

Kelman and Naess (2013) explained that the migration and dislodgement have been experienced with recurrence around the world as a consequence of various factors such as: colonisation, conflicts, sovereignty claims or development projects. Both Castles (2013) and Benson and O'Reilly (2004) agreed when stated that migration mainly applies to the geographical movement of individuals in order for them to improve their life quality. On the same idea, Cernea (2005) presented displacement as an involuntary and forced phenomena that occurs due to physical, economic and social barriers.

Different factors contribute to the lack of power and strong vulnerability within the migrant labourers. This aspect can vary from skilled to unskilled workforce, as described by Castles, de Haas and Miller (2014), Curtain (2016).

According to FitzGerald (2014) the gap between the social, cultural and economic views of immigrant minority and native majority had diminished due to the adaptation of the immigrants to the receiving countries. The adaptation of the migrants was easily introduced due to the ties the individuals have with their friends, siblings and other financial and emotional resources. The immigration process occurred based on the individuals autonomously need to explore, identify, initiate and sustain a process of change.

Sumption (2009) explored the path that the migrant workforce followed when it entered the Irish labour market with lack of knowledge regarding the local labour market, language barriers and failure of employers to recognise their skills and qualifications. Some disputes arise when Rainer and Siedler (2009) linked the social networks with positive employment and outcome wages for migrants, even though Chua (2011) objected and stated

that social networks are primarily used for effective job search methods for the less qualified workers. This statement was also sustained by Ponzio and Scope (2010) who connected recruitment through social network with low paid jobs and low qualified opportunities, and also related the negative impact on wages to the use of social network. In an era of expanded global connection, capital ideas people and commodities are passing limits in a very speedy pace. Global markets for people and labour have their limitations when impacting the cross-border movement, contrary to what impact it has on the integration of the work and help provided as well as the capital invested across countries.

The mobility of labor across international borders facilitates employers' access to new, flexible and available employees which are managed by a migration scheme which will lay a path towards citizenship and the advantages implied. The need for immigrants is constantly growing as they are identified as the supporting side that will put in practice all of the strategic and critical views they gain in their own country; they will provide and transfer their knowledge, skills and expertise to the Irish employment.

### 2.3 Multiculturalism in the hospitality

The Irish hospitality industry needs to be guided by Deresky's statement (2003) which stated that the key to success is to employ the right individuals who have the proper skills for the right opportunity.

Limited attention among researchers has been pointed to the hospitality industry in Europe, contrary to the amount of documentation gathered regarding how significant the migration of human capital it is to the workforce in the same sector. Due to the shortage of labour generated by the demographic, globalisation and economic factors, the hospitality sector hires new employees from less developed and traditional economic countries from all over the world. Multiculturalism in the hospitality sector is well recognised in Ireland and implies important range of actions in order for both employers and employees to feel supported, according to Fáilte Ireland (2005).

In Ireland, foreign employees represent a diverse part of the population, some of them working in well paid sectors while others concentrated in low paid service industries like food, retail, health-related services as found by LPC (2016) and MRCI (2015).

The pace of migrant labour flows is very unprecedented and as both Anon (2005) and Fáilte Ireland (2005) agreed, a big percent of the entire workforce in the Irish hospitality industry is made up by migrant employees. Therefore, the hospitality industry in Ireland has cultural diversity in the workplace, which grows essentially when migrants are contracted in

order to fill in the employment shortages and where motivation of the individuals involved is mostly related to the economic migration. Even though high skills can be easily identified among immigrants, which are hunted by employers from a wide range of industries, the hospitality sector is where the predisposition of immigrants can be noted.

The migration process caused an increase in the multi-cultural environment as well as in the cross-cultural workforce which directly implies the growing culturally diverse working environment in Ireland. Ireland's workforce, especially the one found in the hospitality industry where great part of employees have foreign nationalities, encountered new challenges which are demanding for newly structured planning in order to sustain each organisation's competitive advantages. However, when the cultural diversity environment expanded in the Irish hospitality sector, it arose the need of equality policies to be in place in order to protect the dignity of each employee by recognising their individual needs and expectations. Moreover, the hospitality managers are faced with the situation of how to maximise the use of immigrant's skills and qualifications, as well as how to cope with the language barriers and cultural differences.

The documentation supporting that the hospitality industry suffering from various problems related to image, skills, recruitment and retention is vast. The lack of interest of doing certain types of jobs as well as the absence of employability skills makes the hospitality recruitment be very challenging for employers. An important key point to keep in mind is that the international workers might face acclimatising challenges when adapting to their host country.

The hospitality industry has a cultural diversity that expands all the time; subsequently the cultural diversity grows in the industry's workforce as well creating a mix of international views, theories and factors with ones specifically relevant to the country where the organisation works

## 2.4 Motivation in the hospitality industry

In order for the research to identify the motivating factor of foreign employees working in hospitality, the researcher should define motivation. Kozlowski (2010) defines work motivation as the psychological processes and mechanisms used by individuals in order to commit to the organisations' goals, formulate plans for goal achievement, allocate personal resources, and manage thoughts behaviours and affect for the intention of attaining the organisations' aims. Motivation is not only about the cognitive process but also the biological processes involved, sensations, affect and unconscious insights.

In order for employees, including foreign employees, to retain their job in any industry, including the hospitality industry, their attitude and job satisfaction needs to be the organisation's cornerstone. According to Kinicky (2002), job satisfaction is evaluated as a very high variable of organisational studies. Various researchers, such as Nadiri and Tanova (2010), Kurruzum (2008), Matzler and Renzl (2007) and Hang and George (2012), have found that within the organisational behaviour, job satisfaction is a very normal theme in the hospitality industry, which is directly related to the employees' decision to stay or leave their organisations and the effect that this has on how well the employees perform, according to Deery (2008). Furthermore, according to Gallardo (2010) and Gu and Siu (2009), job satisfaction has a straight reflection on both customer satisfaction and the quality of the service provided.

If we are considering foreign employees or not, their level of motivation needs to be very high as human capital can find motivation in various ways and for vast amount of reasons. As found by Origo & Pagani (2008) the more motivated the employees are, the better the productivity that can be seen in the workplace and motivated employees are having a more positive impact on the organisation when producing profits and reaching aims. Same idea was expressed by Clark (1998) which suggested that when employees find motivation in their workplace, the organisations' turnover levels are very low.

The literature recognises a few types of the traditional motivational practices such as: promotion, holidays, pay-for-performance, personal achievements, all of which are directly connected with the reward system. Contrarily, the developments in the work place, work organisation and job description are the innovative motivational practices that can be recognised in the literature as well. The innovative practices were introduced due to their strong relation with employee productivity as well as the employee satisfaction. Without motivation, the hospitality employees are inefficient and expensive. Thus, Human Resources managers in hospitality must look for appropriate tools that motivate their human capital and make them fit into the current organization" culture.

One of the main attributes of success for the hospitality industry is the way human capital is managed and engaged in an area where labour is very intensive and the employees need to be service orientated, according to Law, Leung & Cheung (2012). Creating an environment that creates an efficient and coherent workplace is a challenge for the Human Resource Manager in hospitality especially when there is cultural diversity. In the same idea, Donnison (2007) in Leask (2013) stated that major research needs to be considered regarding the understanding of demographic and social change of employees in hospitality. However,

Park & Gursoy (2012) argued and explained that not much research has been conducted and explored from the human resources perspective.

A key source for any organisation is to utilise human capital as a way of gaining performance advantages in the market place. According to Isac & Rusu (2016), Human Resource Management refers to attracting the human capital, as well as hiring, training, motivating and maintaining the same human capital. Following the same idea, Miller (2015) sustained that the value of human resource capital can be enhanced through appropriate training and human resource policies. However, in order for the hospitality employees to feel engaged and motivated, a work-life balance needs to exist after research is done on what work-life balance means for the workers in the hospitality industry.

Froese and Peltokorpi (2011) defined job satisfaction as the pleasant or positive emotion-state evaluation from jobs' experiments. On the other hand, job satisfaction defined by Robbins (1996) is the general attitude towards employees' job. However, Abdulla (2011, p.127) considered job satisfaction the degree to which employees like their jobs. Change (2009) viewed motivation factors as the main point of job satisfaction and categorises the factors in two: intrinsic and extrinsic, a classification supported as well by Petrescu and Simmons (2008).

#### 2.4.1 The motivation's factors and processes

Different types of motivation factors are being suggested by Origo & Pagani (2008). Among the intrinsic factors we can identify personal development, scope for creativity, contribution to society and functional flexibility. The extrinsic factors are mainly made by wages, job security, working hours and career prospects.

The intrinsic factors such as challenging work, engagement, involvement, enjoyment are separated from the extrinsic factors like pay and benefits, flexible policy, person-job fit, culture, coworkers, core values, work environment. One of the main reasons for employees to leave the hospitality industry is related to the fact that there is no engagement involved, the employees are not committed to the company's aims. Human capital is not feeling dependent and does not have sensitivity when comes to the organisation' success.

In order to be more explicit about the extrinsic and intrinsic factor that have a big impact on the hospitality employees' motivation, Frey (2012) found that in certain situations, extrinsic motivation, like monetary rewards, can have a big impact on one's intrinsic motivation, a phenomenon known as the crowding theory.

In order to get a proper view of what the study of work motivation is, the researcher needs to integrate and explore the theory and research on the personal and situational factors that affect the motivation processes and the trails by which they do so. The researcher needs to comprehend what the internal and the external forces are that help employees' behaviour to be smooth or obstruct.

There are a few points that should be taken into considerations. The first is the fact that motivation must be deduced and cannot be directly assessed. Therefore, motivation needs to be associated with changes in behaviour, learning or job performance. Even though sometimes motivation is related to performance, the use of key performance indices does not necessarily show the real level of motivation as performance is also related to skills, knowledge, availability of external sources needed to get to a great performance. The need of using key performance ratings in order to present motivation relies on the fact that the levels of motivation has a direct impact in the performance' levels.

The second thing to be considered is that the motivation's results incorporate changes in the initiation, direction, intensity, modulation, or persistence of action. Depending of the question of interest, different types of qualifications are used in order to evaluate motivation.

The third aspect is that motivation occurs as a result of the employee action in work context; it cannot be referred to employee motivation without placing the employee in a work environment and taking into consideration all the external forces that influence that behaviour. Also, employees can positively react to one's internal or external forces as well as they can have a negative reaction to different internal or external factors. The purpose of the action, as well as the circumstances, need to be also taken into consideration.

Another important factor to be considered is that motivation is always in flux - the state of motivation constantly changes. According to Lord (2010) the connecting changes in motivation with the changes in employee beliefs, behaviours and affect take place over different time cycles. These changes are also estimated in different timescales as stated by Kanfer (2008) and they are directly dependent on the question of interest.

Speed and quality of production can be considered key points when motivation is measured; however, the changing nature of work gives more awareness to the connection made among motivation and nontechnical or contextual features of the job performance, such as the employees relation with their co-workers, organisational citizenship behaviours, constant change in job expectations, changes in the organisation's structure or the external marketplace.

Employees' motivation is frequently used in organisational psychology to enclose al the procedures used by employees in order to achieve the organisation's aims.



## 2.4.2 Employee engagement and job satisfaction

Khan (2010) expressed his finding regarding the fears of insecurity that foreign employees have, which makes them more reliable and committed to the organisation they are working in. According to Forde & MacKenzie (2009) migrant employees have in mind a good plan when leaving their native country and their main focus is to achieve the plan, which makes them more motivated to work.

Motivation is a state of feelings that can have different impact on each employee. As everyone is different, the likes and dislikes are also optional and can differ based on passions, interests, desires and dislikes. Motivation in the hospitality industry has a unique character too as this sector is available for public 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The hospitality management need to have the ability to motivate employees, so their performance improves as well. The challenge the employers from hospitality have is to find and retain the right employee for the right type of job, and by trying to do that sometimes, Human Resource managers need to have a deep understanding of the reward and recognition packages. Sometimes Human Resource managers even have to redesign them and adapt them to the local culture. Each organisation in the hospitality sector need to build its own motivational system which should be directly related to the organisation's and employee's goals.

According to Condtiu, Gabor & Oltean (2012), each organisation's culture has a significant role when it comes to recognising the right motivational factors and make them work in a way that best suits everybody. The organisations' culture also helps facilitate the relations between employees and the general welfare of the company.

The organisation behavioural studies highlighted that some aspects such as: turnover, productivity, job satisfaction and absenteeism are mainly depending on the organisations' cultura. According to Nadiri and Tanova (2010), the measurement of satisfaction with regards to relationship between job satisfaction and other behavioural variables, because of the high turnover rate found in the hospitality business, is considered crucial by the researchers. On the other side, Alas (2005), stated that regardless of the vast amount of literature that examined job satisfaction, there is still lack of agreement on what are the most successful and authentic methodological approaches to job satisfaction measurement.

Human Resource managers are struggling to increase the employees' commitment to the organisation, and they start on doing so by identifying and analysing personal motivation. According to Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2002), a key benefit for hospitality

employers is the introduction of flow in workers where they will perform at full capacity, where the productivity will be augmented and where there is desiring to accomplish extraordinary things. Ceja and Navarro (2012) supported the same idea and stated that when the employees are mastering a task, their own skills improve as well, and the competition spirit rises along with efficiency. The idea was supported as well by Jackson (2001) who stated that employees will grow their own skills and abilities when looking for bigger challenges, which will be very beneficial for the organisations who seek to develop their staff.

### 2.4.3 Innovation in the workplace

According to Helou & Viitala (2007), to introduce innovative changes to an organisation can be risky as human capital might be afraid of new things and, therefore, new motivational practices might not be something employees agree to. On the other hand, the alternative practices and their impact might not be well known by Human Resource managers and a lack of understanding of those might lead to a wrong way of putting them in practice. Also, the current culture of each organisation might not support the use of the innovative practices. Therefore, even if innovative practices have had great success, they work only when used with traditional motivational practices, even though the traditional ones used alone were found inappropriate.

Chiang and Jang (2008) suggested as well that the employees from hospitality need to be motivated through role autonomy and responsibility. Continuing in the same idea, Chow (2005) stated that the hospitality employees need to be able to take decisions related to workplace actions. The idea was sustained as well by Keeley and Lee (2010) who stated that same employees need to develop problem solving skills and be able to resolve tasks without their manager's direct involvement. Contrarily, Hyvonen (2009) suggested that using the above practices, employees might feel exploited and hospitality management can fail to look after their responsibilities.

However, Sobrabi (2011) stated that those practices will allow the hospitality employees to become more engaged, which will contribute to their own development.

According to Chiang and Jang (2008), hospitality employees need to be motivated by accomplishment, satisfaction and autonomy at the workplace, statement sustained as well by Deci and Ryan (2000) who explained that the employees in hospitality can find in their personal motivation a flow that will make their tasks achievable and challenging and their goals attainable. Providing more details, Bakker (2008) stated that the fact that the hospitality

employees feel more secure, have a career progression, have loyal and social involvement, ends up in seeing more employees motivated which implies happier employees resulting in a low turnover rate.

Employees and their performance are the main key elements and the most important factors that every organisation has, with a direct impact on the success or failure of that organisation. The hospitality industry is running short of good and engaged employees. The high levels of turnover along with the employees' morale fall back on the socialisation and all the non-monetary incentives, such as training programs to help employees think about the work and any other strategies the management need to use in order to get the worker included in the organisation's culture.

## 2.5 Diversity in hospitality

According to The Irish Hospitality Institute (2008), diversity in the workplace is defined as a mix of individuals who bring along to the organisation's advantage a diverse range of backgrounds, styles, attitudes, perspectives, values and beliefs. All this diversity will give a different perspective and idea to the organisation's perception of the industry. Therefore, recruiting and retaining employees from different demographic backgrounds is part of the workplace diversity management, which is described as the systematic and planned liability the organisation explores.

The hospitality labour market in Ireland has been the place where immigrants go to when looking for a job; however, a low level of implication was noticed from the employer side when it comes to foreign employees' progress within the organisation, as there was not a clear strategy of how to manage the diverse talent in the hospitality industry along with the lack of development of cultural diversity management training.

Hospitality managers are aware of the fact that without employees, from different demographic backgrounds or not, the operations and business development area will not be able to survive.

According to Cornell & Burgess (2009), the cultural diverse workplace is not easy to be handled, therefore managers need to find a way of effectively working with a diverse human capital as well as developing strategies of how to deal with constant demographic changes. In the same idea, Reynar & Smith (2009) suggested that managers must be flexible when using their practices and also make available for their employees the work-life balance concept as a way of retaining the employees. Defining work-life balance, Kirkman (1984)

sustained that this can be defined as the quality of working life while in the workplace, which implies that family and leisure are incorporated as well in the employee's working life.

Pilbeam & Corbridge (2006) stated that giving value to each and every individual employee is defined as diversity management. When this type of management is put in place, employees feel more valued and integrated in the organisation, therefore the retention issues are diminished as the employees remain loyal and committed to the organisation.

For the purpose of this research, one of the main key aspects is cultural diversity. A positive cultural diversity in the workplace implies awareness of the employees' culture and differences, which results in a better understanding of the inclusion of the foreign employees in the workplace and society, according to the report issued by Failte Ireland (2013). Continuing with the same idea, all the tolerance, respect for cultural differences, similarities and struggles for inclusiveness, are all consequences of the diverse workplace. The same report explains how and why organisations look at diversity as a way of improving the organisation innovation's perspectives. This aspect is based on the opinion that the difference will create new ideas and ways of resolving problems and improve the creativity and innovation employees' perspective in workplace. Exploring diversity within the organisation is not only a social must but also a key point in the achievement of the organisation's competitiveness. However, hospitality managers need to give value not only to the cultural diversity but also be able to organize and lead it in a proper way where foreign employees are seen, heard, valued and respected in the same way as local employees are. Managing cultural diversity needs to be approached as the long-term strategy that will make the organisation get economic benefits and advantage competitiveness.

## 2.6 Findings from Literature Review

Based on what was found and stated in the literature review, total reward and recognition programmes need to be customised in a way that best fits the organisation's aims. It does not really matter if we are taking into consideration a small or big organisation, its Human Resources strategies to retain its line level employees in hospitality must line up with both the business and employee's needs. Following these strategies, the organisations can be sure that its employees, foreigners or not, will be happy to work with them and open to new opportunities to learn and progress in their career within the organisation. This way the retention and turnover rate will be low which will directly influence a high rate of productivity among employees. As Hafiza (2011) found that, the more the employees feel

they are motivated and engaged within an organisation, the easier it is to attract the best talent to fit into the organisation's goals.

When reward and recognition management is in place within an organisation, management must constantly monitor and evaluate how they are put in place and what impact they have on each employee's efficiency in the workplace.

The literature review suggests that the importance of a total reward model is vital in most of the hospitality organisations in Ireland. This way both the intrinsic and extrinsic needs the employees have will be satisfied by implementing best practice recommendations.

In this chapter of the research the author identified a gap made by the lack of research done related to the foreign line level employees in the Irish hospitality sector. However, the author benefits from this gap and considers it relevant to conduct research in this area.

### Chapter 3 “Research question”

The overall aim of this research is to identify the motivating factors of foreign employees in the Irish hospitality industry.

After the author of this paper reviewed the literature, the research identified motivation as a process that has many interpretations of how it is put into practice. In the same literature we can identify motivation as a very controversy factor, the lack or presence of which can determine employees to leave an organisation or to become motivated and engaged with the company.

In order for the turnover rates to be low in hospitality sector in Ireland along with keeping the work expectations and motivations at high levels in order to retain human capital, companies must include extrinsic and intrinsic incentives in their culture.

There are a few factors that will determine the employees to change their job. These factors should be deeply considered by organisations in the hospitality industry in Ireland. For example, the lack of satisfaction in workplace along with the lack of appreciation, flawless growth opportunities, absence of support and trust or missing any compensation scheme will dictate the presence of the employee in the company or not.

There are a few objectives that author of this research will follow:

1. Identify the motivating factors that retain the foreign employees in the hospitality sector in Ireland
2. How does the hospitality industry define motivation among its employees
3. To what extent are motivation practices utilised in hospitality in Ireland in order to attract and retain the talent that would help organisations achieve their aims?

4. What consequences can be identified in the Irish hospitality sector that uses motivation practices? Is there a point of applying those practices, or the employees will leave the organisations anyway?

In order to reach these objectives, the research will try to identify the factors that will help understand where the motivating factors can retain foreign employees, such as: how does the employee view the commitment and what is their attitude towards it, what job specialties would help the organisation retain them, what are the reasons why the employees leave an organisation, how strong is the positive appeal other organisations have in attracting new employees.

## Chapter 4 “Methodology”

The methodology chapter will put forward the research question and how the author has gathered and analysed the data for this research. The author will analyse the various methods available and present the reasons why that specific methodology was chosen and how the method will be applied in order for the research questions to be answered.

In order for the researcher to gain knowledge and discover what the motivation factors of foreign employee in hospitality industry are, a research will be systematically conducted.

According to Saunders (2009), research is a term that is used daily which describes the process of collecting and investigating if the information is right or wrong; it describes the study or examination from a different point of view of one situation. Continuing with the same idea, Quinlan (2011) describes the research methodology as the way the researcher informs the readers how the research was conducted describing the philosophical suppositions that underpin the research. On the other side, Walliman (2005) argues that even though research is used on a daily basis, its true meaning is only fact and not an analysis.

The author of this research used a qualitative analysis and a basic way of getting answers from employees regarding their current situation as a foreign staff employed by hospitality sector in Ireland.

According to Sauders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) there is a subjectivist approach that can be described as a process whose main concern is not necessarily based on a positivism context but on social factors which involve various influences like geography, culture and history.

However, the researcher used an inductive theory of research. It is not hard to see that a lot of researches and hypotheses were made regarding the topic of these thesis; however, the researcher collected its own data and drawn its own interpretations and hypotheses.

To the extent of answering the main question of this research, which is what the motivating factors of foreign line level staff in the Irish hospitality industry are, there were interviews conducted with both closed and open-ended questions, allowing the employees to take advantage of the semi-structured interviews and speak without restrictions about the topic. After the semi-structured interviews were conducted, the conclusions were easy to be identified as the researcher was able to understand what motivates the foreign employees to work in the hospitality sector in Ireland.

After the interviews were tape recorded, the researcher manually chose the answers that are more common for all the interviewers and drew a general conclusion about the topic.

The researcher contacted employees from hotels and restaurants in Ireland and picked eight of those who are foreigners and were willing to take their time to respond to the interview questions.

As highlighted by Warren and Karner (2010), every researcher 'main concern must be to avoid a bias attitude towards the study. The researcher of this study tried to be as balanced and unbiased as possible in trying to find the truth about the motivational characteristics of the foreign employees. However, as stated by Greener (2008), bias is a trend that can be identified in every research as people are involved and most of the things in this case are based on the values and beliefs of the researcher. In order for everyone to see how the research was conducted, the researcher must present its beliefs and principles by outlining the research philosophical and methodological view of the work.

## 4.1 Research philosophy

According to Quinlan (2011), every research project has a research philosophy framework which reflects the world view of where the research is situated. Therefore, every step of the research should follow the philosophical framework by choosing the most adequate research objectives helped by the research questions.

A great value to a good research is the question of paradigm (epistemology and ontology).

### 4.1.1. Ontology

As defined by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016), ontology is the philosophy of the nature of reality. They have also stated that the view is the one in which the reality is constructed, and it is about how we see the world. Contrarily, Bryman (2016) talked about

ontology as the view of social entities such as organisations or cultures and how these are formed. According to Bryman, there are differences between Objectivism and Constructionism when they are related to ontology. The objectivist approach sees the organisation as one entity and external to the other that it belongs to. Therefore, the organisation to them is an item that can do things and learn new ones. Viewing the world from this side, the organisations and cultures are places where the values and customs are well stored and where employee socialise in a way that can improve their functionality as good citizens. This can be related to the fact that a unitarist view of an organisation can be seen as a place where each employee works towards the organisation's goals.

On the other hand, the philosophy of constructionism talks about the organisation as the manifestation of the small interactions of all its parts. Therefore, as each part has a direct effect upon the structure of the organisation, giving it the ability to be constructed and re-shaped depending on the communication that all the actors should be engaged in. The constructionist view of the world is related with the pluralist principle where every part of the organisation is focused on its own aims and the negotiation and agreement between the parts who make up the organisation.

As illustrated in the literature review in Chapter 2, motivation is one of the main factors that keep employees engaged with the company. Each organisation's culture in the hospitality industry in Ireland needs to focus on its talent and try to keep it as motivated and engaged as possible in order for the organisation to reach its aims and maintain its competitive advantage.

#### 4.1.2. Epistemology

Greener (2008) describes epistemology as a way of understanding to what extent we know something is true. Epistemology is a phenomenon that helps finding out what data is valid and how much of it reveals the truth.

According to Bryman (2016) there are two main and very contrasting approaches of what valid data means, which is the positivism and interpretivism. Both of these approaches benefit the researcher by offering a huge amount of data collection methods.

Positivism drew attention on the philosophy of objectivism where the scientific and empirical way of collecting the data is made by gathering a wide sample. Generalisation is a characteristic often encountered where this kind of philosophy is applied as a positivist focus on uncovering facts is the best way of observing reality where facts are observable and measurable, according to Saunders et al., (2016).



On the other hand, according to Bryman's findings, (2016), the interpretivism is critical of the positivist approach to research in the social sciences. The argument related to interpretivists is about the fact the humans create their own reality where social research cannot make extensive generalisations on human experience. Same Bryman (2016) stated that the interpretivism theory is to develop a way where human actions are better understood than the forces that are supposed to act on it.

In this research, the author will follow the interpretivist philosophy. Motivation in the hospitality sector is measured among foreign line level employees. The author will look to uncover what motivated them and what the process of developing and becoming engaged employees means to them.

## 4.2 Research Strategy

When conducting a research, it is very important to choose the research strategy that works best so the research aims, and objectives can be reached. The research strategy deals with a complex mix of issues of human behaviour and human interpretations.

As Quinlan (2011) found, the qualitative data can be described as the non-numerical data that takes into consideration feelings, thoughts and understandings. However, interviews can serve as an instrument that leads to data for both qualitative and quantitative research.

The research strategy has a significant role in designing research accompanied by the research philosophy. As Saunders et al. (2016) found, there are three research strategies, each one designed to focus on the developing theory. However, they have different approaches to the strategy. Deduction, induction and abduction are the three research strategies that were identified by Saunders et al. (2016).

### 4.2.1. Deduction vs. Induction vs. Abduction

As found by Greener (2008), the deductive research strategy is mainly about knowing the available theory and working on expanding the hypotheses. When the hypotheses are created and gathered, a strict testing system comes along in order to make sure the hypotheses are correct or not. Contrary, the induction research strategy is collecting and sorting all the data and only after this step is prepared, the researcher will initiate and draw theories. When this step of the process is finished, the researcher will also explain the theory created and relate it with the available literature on the market.

Abduction research strategy is a combination of the both deduction and induction strategies. The researcher using this strategy will detect a “surprising fact” which will determine him to develop theories that are not similar to the original ones, according to Saunders at al. (2016, p148).

However, in order for the research to reach its aims, a combination of research strategies can be used. In this research, the author used a combination of strategies, starting with deduction, and continued to look and identify in the literature secondary sources of data. A sequence of questions was created in order to find what the motivating factor of foreign employees in hospitality sector in Ireland are. The author of this research used a mix of inductive and deductive research strategies.

Research strategy is also influenced by what data collection strategy was adopted during the research. There are three types of data collection: quantitative, qualitative and a mix of both.

#### 4.2.2. Quantitative vs. qualitative

When quantitative is compared with qualitative, a few characteristics can be identified, according with Greener (2008). First, the quantitative data is related to the deductive approach and is about numbers and statistics. Second, when the quantitative data is collected, the researcher use surveys or other types of methods that will facilitate them to gathered huge amounts of data for their analyses. Third, according the qualitative data is related to interviews and the subjective aspect of collecting the data that has to be expounded with the construct knowledge.

The author of this research used a qualitative strategy in order to identify the motivational factors of foreign employees in the Irish hospitality. The researcher analysed what the different factors are that will keep foreigners motivated to keep their jobs in hospitality despite the long working hours and unfavorable working shifts can be seen in hospitality.

The literature drew attention to what motivation is and the variety of motivating factors in the workplace; however, the motivation in hospitality has to be looked into deeply in order to recognise its factors. A qualitative approach of the research strategy was applied as the author considered it was the most appropriate in order to understand the process of motivation in hospitality.

### 4.3. Research design

There are three different methods of how the data can be collected according to Warren and Karner (2010). The research can use field research, interviews and analysing textual or visual records of the time period or subjects that are to be observed and studied.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher chose to use interviews as they were found by Saunders et al. (2016) as the path that will lead to valid and reliable data which was gathered and selected directly relating to the research's questions and objectives of this research.

Interviews can be structured or unstructured, the distinction between them being that structured interviews are following a sample set of questions that are all submitted to all the participants in the same order. These types of interviews contribute to the cross out of any bias situations as well as to quantify the data gathered throughout the interviews.

On the other hand, the semi structured or instructed interviews give the author of the research a lot of flexibility when looking for the data to collect. These types of interviews are not as informal as the structured interviews are, they are a lot more causal. The author of this research will use this type of interviews as a way of digging deeper for information of what motivates the foreigner in the hospitality sector. The researcher considered this method as the most approachable one as the interviewees were allowed to be open to different perspectives of the subject that the researcher might not have congregated in the interviews' questions.

### 4.4. Sample

The subjects of this research interviews were foreign employees of hospitality hotels and the restaurant sector in Dublin. The data was collected using semi structured interviews which took place over of period of two weeks and eight interviews were conducted. In order for the interviews to take place, the researcher contacted eight foreign employees which were known by the author from previous interaction with them as friends, co-workers or colleagues.

The author of this research contacted line level employees which were working in the hospitality sector in Ireland for more than one year. The main aim of this research was to identify motivation in these types of employees and look for how the motivation is implemented and recognised in hospitality.

The interviews were conducted after they scheduled with three foreign employees working as a front of house receptionists, two housekeeping employees, one bartender

working in the restaurant and one working as a food and beverage waitress, all working in the hospitality sector in Dublin, Ireland. As the author selected them, the interviewees were all directly related to motivation and hospitality.

#### 4.5. Interviews

As Anderson (2011) stated, the semi structured interviews are being used as a method of collecting the data and it is beneficial as this way can be shown how the interviewer can get a lot of good information that can be gathered into a rich quality of information. build on the answers

As stated before, the author of this research preferred to use semi structured interviews, so the participants did not feel any restrictions when it came to open up and explore what their level of motivation is and what are the factors that influence them in deciding to continue working in the hospitality sector in Ireland. The author chose this method, so the participants would feel only guided by the questions, but no limitations were imposed as the questions were open ended with a huge free space free to talk about the subject. It is important that these types of interviews use questions that are making sure the responses given are in depth.

The author audio recorded the interviews and were made after the participants were well informed that data collected from the interviews will be protected and strictly confidential as well as anonymous. The audio recorded interviews were transcribed as the researcher needed the data to be well understood and knowledgeable.

#### 4.6. Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews was subdued to a thematic analysis As Saunders et al., (2016) stated, the thematic analysis encouraged the author of this research to look for patterns and link them in a way that the subject of this research could be understood. This type of analysis gave the researcher the opportunity to be flexible in analysing qualitative data by giving him the open path to glue all the subtle hints that the participants shared during the interviews. The objectives of this study helped the author set up the major themes and categorised them accordingly.

As Saunders et al., (2016) founded, there are two approaches of how the data gathered from the interviews should be analysed. Either a deductive or an inductive approach can be applied. The deductive method is very controversial compared with the inductive one, as the researcher can be set apart from what the data collected from the interviews is presenting.

The inductive method is related to the theories and the way they were connected only after the data was collected, developed and understood.

The author of this research used the inductive approach taking into consideration that the data collected from the interviews might be different from the theories about motivation found in hospitality in the line level employees.

#### 4.7. Limitations

As this research used semi-structured interviews as a method of getting the data, the limitations associated with this research should also be mentioned.

As it is well known, the crazy working hours that employees in the hospitality sector are exposed to, made this research interviews to be hard to schedule and reschedule. Even though the researcher made itself available at any time, the short notice long shifts made the interviews hard to be complete. In order for the research to be more complex, a large number of participants should have been ideally contacted. However, hospitality is a sector where work-life balance is not very common, and the line level employees are hard to have spare time to interact with friends or old co-workers to conduct interviews.

The author tried to conduct this research with the best intentions to eliminate personal bias as much as possible taking into consideration the fact that the author was part of the hospitality sector in Ireland and was exposed to motivational factors within the industry. The author tried to keep her personal values and biases on a side when it comes to analysing the data collected from the interviews, so the result of the research would not be influenced in any way. The researcher also tried to avoid an under representative sampling or not to exclude any important questions related to the research topic.

Another limitation of the study is related to the fact that it is hard to verify if the answers given by the participants are true. Given that the main reason of why this research was conducted is to find out what the hospitality employee's perception regarding motivation is and what the motivation factors are that keep them engaged with their company, the questions that were asked could be seen as intruding.

#### 4.8. Ethical considerations

As it is highlighted in any research projects, the author of this study addressed, at it appeared, any ethical concerns as well. As stated by Saunders (2009), it is vital that the author of any research will inform the participants about their rights to participate in the

study as well as about the confidentiality when it comes to conduct interviews. The author of this research conducted interviews with line level staff from the hospitality sector in Ireland. All the participants of this research gave their informed consent to be included in the research. The objectives of the research were fully explained to each one of the participants.

The researcher also made the participants aware that, if necessary, they are able to withdraw themselves from the research with no repercussions from any sides. The author of the research also informed the participant that their confidentiality will be protected, and their names and employment details will not be disclosed at any stage of the research.

## Chapter 5 “Analysis and Findings”

This part of the research will present the findings that were encountered after the interviews with eight foreign line level employees from hospitality sector in Ireland were conducted. All those findings will be detailed and organised in this chapter taking into consideration the main objectives of the study. Those findings will reveal how motivation is viewed and perceived by foreign employees who migrated to Ireland.

### 5.1 Objective 1

Identify the motivational factors which retain the foreign employees in the hospitality sector in Ireland.

One of the objectives of this research is to obtain as much understanding as possible of what motivation is, seen through a foreign employee perspective, as well as what are the associated rewards that will grow the retention levels in the hospitality industry in Ireland. Most of this was clarified within the Literature review in Chapter 1; however, the semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher helped gain a better understanding of the situation.

What was found after the interviews were conducted is that employees are motivated equally by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Motivation expressed through extrinsic factors comes from the work environment, external to the person and his or her work. Among the extrinsic factors the researcher would like to mention: good salary, periodic benefits, enabling policies and various forms of supervisions.

Two out of eight participants to the research stated that job security is a big factor that keeps them engaged with an organisation. However, the other six participants were more open to say that incomes and bonuses are factors that motivates them better. It is well known that human capital is migrating to different countries in search for a better life. The participants suggested that knowing there is a safe job situation is not as relevant for them as it is knowing there is a monthly income. Furthermore, all the participants to the study expressed their interest in having a career path that they can follow in hospitality, most of them knowing that talent in hospitality is rare to find and when that happens it is recognized at a high level.

However, the intrinsic factors are motivating the foreign employees as well, as it was expressed by all the participants during the interviews. The intrinsic factors derive from within the person and are about the relationship that an employee has with its tasks and it is normally self-applied. Among the intrinsic factors that the researcher was able to uncover during the interviews with the participants are: achievement, accomplishment, challenges and competence. All of those factors originate from how well the employees are performing on their jobs.

One of the benefits of conducting semi-structured interviews was the fact that all the participants were able to freely express their views of how their next years of employment in hospitality would look like. The researcher was able to uncover the factors that would make the participants be loyal with their current employer, keeping in mind the fact that hospitality sector implies unsocial working hours shifts, working weekends and low pay.

The researcher asked all the participants to describe what keeps them motivated in their jobs. “*Good salary, nice colleagues, possible promotion*” was the common answer that the researcher got for the participants. All of them were excited when talking about a long career in hospitality, and they were all taking into consideration the fact that a high performance from their side would lead to a talent recognition from their employer, which will lead to better incomes and stronger job security.

Hospitality in Ireland is well recognised as a sector where foreign human capital represents the main category of employees. Foreign employees are feeling comfortable knowing their colleagues are as motivated as themselves are, and they are all doing their best to achieve their goals and reach the organisations’ aims. What was revealed to the researcher during the interviews is that all of the participants are considering a must to set more and more difficult goals for themselves. For example, Participant 3 stated that “*setting a higher goal at a more difficult level will usually lead to increase my commitment to the company, and from previous experience, I know my talent and engagement will be recognised*”

## 5.2 Objective 2

How does the hospitality industry define motivation among its employees?

In any organisation Human Resources department is trying to develop processes that will help the company maintain its competitiveness. However, from all those processes, motivation represents the process through which the employees are directed to work, so the organisations' needs can be reach and the goals achieved. Motivating employees is very challenging most of the times and most of the managers are struggling to present. Hospitality sector is the most affected by this struggle as it is labor intensive and most of the employees have direct contact with customers, therefore the high performance need to be active at any time.

Employers need to know their employees very well, to provide them any kind of incentives they require so the organisations' value is presented with excellence in front of the customers. Employees' performance is reflected in the business' success. The organisations need to find forces and factors that will energize their human capital to do their jobs at high standards.

When the researcher asked the participants during the interviews how do they feel about the way their organisation defines and recognise motivation, six out of eight employees stated that they are always being offered a salary increase when their performance review takes place and their goals are reached. The foreign employees are motivated to know that after they provide hard work and long commitment, their company will reward them accordingly.

The researcher of the study also found out that four out of eight employees were promoted in the last six months due to a great recognition by their employer for all the hard work they did in order to reach their targets. Three of the participants interviewed were offered a promotion as a team leader within their department. Another participant internally changed departments in order to get a position as assistant manager.

All of the participants to the research expressed their free opinion regarding diversity and equal opportunities within the organisations they are working in. Participant 4 stated that *"in the majority of the time my employer is offering a fair chance to all employees. If my employer made a difference in the past was only made based on the lack of the employee's willingness to do its job as best as it could be done"*



Other participant stated that *“Rewards were always based on the performance and for sure had a high motivational impact as they increase the performance of the employee and also help the company reach its goals”*”

### 5.3 Objective 3

To what extent are motivation practices utilised in hospitality in Ireland in order to attract and retain the talent that would help organisations achieve their aims?

As mentioned before, Human Resources department is always struggling to put in practice the best policies and procedures that will help the organisations maintain their competitive advantages.

In hospitality industry reaching those levels is even harder as the relationship the employees have with the customers should be very professional with strong customer service orientation. As stated in the literature review, motivation in hospitality was and keeps being one of the most challenging tasks. Increasing motivation among employees is extremely hard to reach as most of them are used to intrinsic motivation. This makes it even harder for the employer to accomplish as motivation come from within the individuals and therefore cannot be observed directly. It is vitally important that the employer knows its employees' needs and takes them into consideration by using practices which will attract and retain them.

The employer needs to design a work environment that is sensitive to employees' needs and desires. There are different situations why the foreign human capital took the decision to migrate and look for a job in Ireland. As long as the hospitality employers try to accommodate them through proper motivation practices, the employees will remain loyal to the organisations and will do their best to achieve the goals their employer established for them.

As Participant 2 stated during the interviews with the researcher *“Foreign employees are more easily to accept hard work conditions with long hour shifts and working during weekends”*

Therefore, if the employer gets to know well the foreign employees' demands and keeps him/her engaged through correct practices, the foreign employee will get engaged with the organisation and will pass all the disadvantages that working in the hospitality sector involves. Participant 1 stated that *“My foreign colleagues are more motivated than local employees are due to all special situations they have, like dependents home who they need to offer financial support to for example.”* Participant 7 stated that *“I am on a visa permit;*

*this job makes me able to stay and work in this country and consequently makes me able to sustain myself and be proud of what I did so far”.*

Participant 3 stated that *“changing jobs is harder for me and every foreign employee I have interacted with in this organisation as we do have to overcome the language barrier as well as the mentality barrier”*

Participant 6 stated that *“I am studying hospitality industry and this job keeps me active and gives me the financial support to finish my studies. I definitely want to work in the same organisation when finishing my studies as I know there are great opportunities that this employer can offer me”*

Participant 7 mentioned that *“most of my foreign colleagues are going beyond the call of duty. They are all working at an exceptional level of customer services and try to go the extra mile if needed when a customer asks.*

#### 5.4 Objective 4

What consequences can be identified in the Irish hospitality sector that use motivation practices? Is there a point of applying those practices, or the employees will leave the organisations anyway?

Employee turnover represents the number of employees who leave a company and are replaced by new employees. Employee turnover in hospitality tends to have high levels, however, as stated in the literature review, foreign employees are more and more motivated and willing to become loyal to their organisations.

In the Irish hospitality sector, the motivational practices are in place and Human Resources department are getting employees aware of them throughout periodical trainings and meetings. Performance review meeting would be the most common one in any organization, especially in the organisations within hospitality. Recognising when an employee is working in accordance with the organisation’s objectives would make the employer more open to have committed employees. If the organisations who are applying those practices are more likely to keep its employee turnover level rates low or the employees will leave the company anyway is something that the researcher tried to find out throughout the semi-structured interviews.

Participant 1 mentioned that *“in a hotel, customer service is an essential characteristic all the employees must have. Someone who is getting pure customer service good feedbacks from the customers should always be recognised and rewarded by the company”*

Participant 2 stated that *“the organisation that I am working with has put in practice a policy where one employee gets a chance to become employee of the month if and only the quality of the work is at high levels and in accordance with the company’s goals.”* Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 7 and Participant 8 also mentioned the same idea of rewards their company is applying.

Participant 3 stated that *“foreign employees who chose to work in this hard industry have evident passion for their work and they try their best every day to get better and better. This shows that they want to continue in the industry and my employer definitely recognise that. I felt that as well when I got the opportunity to become team leader four months ago”* Participant 6 confirm the same idea.

The researcher also found out during the interviews that *“foreign employees are people that work hard for different reasons and therefore must have the opportunity to develop within their organisations”* (Participant 5)

If the employees from hospitality will still leave their organisations even if the motivation practices are in place is nothing that can be controlled. This is relevant for every industry and mostly is related with the employees’ need and the labor market. However, as the interviews revealed, the foreign employees in hospitality tend to keep their jobs for long periods of time, as long as they find themselves motivated and their work is acknowledged.

## Chapter 6 “Discussion on findings”

This chapter was created by the researcher to illustrate the implications of the findings of this research and possible future research ideas in order to address any limitations this research encountered. The researcher’s findings are generally related with the knowledge found in the literature review.

Based on the data collected during the interviews and the analysis made, the author of this research drawn some conclusions. One of them is the fact that the majority of the foreign employees interviewed felt motivated by their current employer activating in hospitality sector in Ireland. Another conclusion made related to the reward system is that employees feel motivated when they are rewarded, which provides a recognition of the employees’ contribution to reach the organisations’ competitive advantages. As another conclusion drawn from the interviews, the author mentioned that foreign employees are most likely to feel engaged with their company therefore more productive.

The research's primary question is what the motivational factors of foreign line level employees in hospitality industry in Ireland are. The first objective was to identify the motivational factors that retain the foreign employees.

As found by Aon Hewitt (2012), between employee motivation and the reward management should exist an impressive and positive relationship. According to Aon Hewitt's 2012 Total Rewards Survey, employees need reward recognition and the organisations are totally acknowledging this.

This research found that there were no notable differences between the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of motivation among the eight foreign employees interviewed, a result disputed by the literature review in Chapter 1.

The research also found that poor work-life balance is clearly a negative point of hospitality industry, however the foreign employee showed quite a large interest in working in this industry despite this fact, as long as their hard work is acknowledged. The employers need to make sure their employees are kept motivated and engaged throughout different kind of extrinsic and intrinsic incentives, because the reality of working in his industry is something to be appreciated.

There are however some factors that should be considered by the employers in order to increase retention which will turn into big savings for the organisations. After analysing the data collected from the interviews, the researcher got to the conclusion that if more employers within the Irish hospitality industry will use a total reward approach, as a way of getting their employees engaged and motivated, their employee turnover will be maintained at low levels. Most of participants interviewed mentioned that the hours they have to work as employees of the hospitality industry will not be a reason for them to quit their jobs, as their motivation level is already high and they see a great future for them in this industry.

Performance review and recognition in hospitality industry is an area which many organisations within the hospitality industry are very interested in. Most of the participants interviewed mentioned that their managers and supervisors do recognize and acknowledge their hard work and goals achievements.

The fact that there is an open opportunity for further development and career opportunities is something that the researcher identified in all the answers from the participants. Organisations need to see that if their employees are looking for new opportunities within their company means that the employees are looking to improve themselves and to bring more assets to the company. The limitation impose here is that it is hard to give every employee the opportunity to grow and develop, however most the foreign employees interviewed got this opportunity from their employer, basically because of their

hard work, commitment and willingness to do everything needed in accordance with the organisation's aims.

Retention is a factor that needs to be taken into consideration by the Irish hospitality industry employers and has a direct relation with the motivation and the factors that keep the employees engaged with their organisations. The employees' work should be made easier and more fun. The management needs to consider employees feedback and action any requirements that are in accordance with the organisations' policy.

The researcher found that foreign employees look for motivation within themselves and take advantage of any opportunity to grow and develop within their organisations, as stated as well by Zikic (2010) in this research's literature review.

Through the interviews, the author also found and confirmed that, what Dench (2006) and Devine (2007) stated, is right. The foreign employees are more committed to their organisations than local employees are, as foreign employees need to integrate themselves into the new adopting country and they will not ignore any opportunity arise and explore it as much as they can. They become reliable and committed.

The author also confirmed what was stated in the literature review regarding the percent of the entire workforce in the hospitality industry. Through the research's questions, the author was able to confirm that cultural diversity is in place in the hospitality industry and foreign employees are the workforce majority of this sector.

The literature review also mentioned about the organisations' culture and its role in creating a good relationship between the employees and the general welfare or the organisations. The author confirmed that employees feel their job security is taken into consideration and they are valued as employees when they work in an organization with good organisational culture. The participants to this research expressed their engagement with those organisations who acknowledge their work and help them improve and develop.

Throughout the interviews, the researcher was able to uncover that cultural diversity is well recognised in the hospitality industry, as confirmed by all the participants to the research and mentioned in the literature review as well. The participants explained how their culture and differences are well understood by their employers. They also confirmed that their employers consider innovation all the employees' background differences. The employers see the differences as a way of creating new ideas, solving problems and improving creativity among its employees.

## Chapter 7 “Conclusion”

This research looked at motivation in general and particularly at the motivational factors that foreign employees identify in the hospitality industry in Ireland. Hospitality industry is characterised by high turnover levels and currently with a great skills shortage. However, this research tried to determine what keeps the foreign employees motivated and engaged with their organisations.

This research project was conducted to complete several objectives and the researcher believes that this has been achieved. The hospitality industry was explored in depth as well as the pro and cons of working in this industry, especially when considering foreign employees. An academic viewpoint was presented in the literature review part of this research, as well as a pure research part when the interviews were conducted, and data was collected and analysed.

In order for the author to reach the research’s objectives, the interviewees were asked a few questions regarding their current situation as foreign employees in the hospitality industry in Ireland. In addressing these questions, the researcher was able to establish that hotels and restaurants are actively trying to motivate and engage their employees through total reward programs. The organisations of this industry are using periodical trainings and meetings in order to help their employees develop their skills so they can be more productive and engaged with the organisation.

The researcher found out that this industry is not seen as a first choice when looking for a job by the local human capital. However, foreign employees are taking the opportunity and try to make a way of enjoying working in this industry.

From the researcher’s point of view, it was very encouraging to receive answers from the majority of the foreign interviewees saying that they enjoy working in this industry and they feel engaged with their organisations. This was viewed as a consequence of the fact that organisations are using the total reward system and taking into consideration the work-life balance of their employees. The researcher has also seen this as a changing step that the nowadays hospitality industry did, compare with the same industry few decades ago.

### 7.1 Recommendations

From what was suggested during this research, the hospitality industry has as a main problem the fact that employees are leaving their jobs due to working conditions and relatively low pay. Other industries are seen as facing less problems because of their more attractive working conditions and higher pay rates. However, it is difficult to consider an

increase of wages in the hospitality industry at the moment as the costs of employee turnover are high and the turnover rate might not be diminished only by offering employees better wages. For the organisations in this industry will be a great problem to consider this as it is not clear yet if the wages increase will have a desired effect.

Through the interviews the researcher was able to identify eight foreign employees who are enjoying working in this industry and who see their career grow here. The author recommends that the organisations pay great attention in creating a good organisation' culture and a great work environment for this kind of employees. Having a good organisational culture includes a set of goals, roles, process, values, communications, practices and attitudes. The author believes the costs involved cannot have a real estimation; however, the costs will not over pass the costs involved in turnover. However, the author believes that having a good organisational culture is one of the most difficult leadership challenges. The author also believes that employees want their company to care about them and their lives. If the employees do not see this happening, they tend to leave their organisation and in this case the costs of turnover will be high.

Identifying the kind of employees who see a great career path in their current organisation is also a recommendation that the author is making, as the organisations should have talent acquisition consultants able to recognise talent. Depending on how big or small the organisation is, having a talent acquisition consultant on site might or might not be relevant cost-wise; however, the author recommends that every employee should be considered talent and the organisations should invest in attracting and retain their talent.

In the same idea, talent development programs need to be in place, which will help the organisations focus their attention on those employees who are most likely able to represent the company and the industry. The author believes that there will be high costs involved as training and development are time consuming as well as money consuming.

As a solution for the long working hours and working over weekends, the author of this study suggests that full time employees need to get the opportunity to be able to choose one weekend off per month. This will be seen by the employees as a way of getting their work-life balance organised and encourage them to stay in the hospitality sector. The cost involving this suggestion will not be high as the employees will work in shifts and the work will be cover all the time. However, depending on the size of the organisation, part-time staff may be hired to cover weekends or odd shifts and the costs involving these arrangements need to be taken into consideration.

Another point of recommendation would be that the organisations should concentrate in getting more graduates to enter in this industry. This industry has a lot of great

opportunities to offer, therefore graduates people should be given the opportunity to enter and develop in this industry considering that this will imply very low costs from the organisations' point of view.

## Personal learning statement

The author of this research found this work very challenging but extremely rewarding in the same time. Even though the author was part of the hospitality industry, there were a lot of new things that the author learned from this research about this industry, especially about motivation and engagement, which are key points of this sector.

The author conducted interviews with foreign employees from different countries and continents. Each one of them had their own opinion but was interesting to see that they were all united by the same industry, even though they were from different regions, with different religion or cultural background. Throughout these interviews, the author was able to get a better understanding of the hospitality overview in Ireland.

The researcher found it interesting to see how each of the participants perceived their role, which was a bit different of what the literature review described this industry as the one with no work-life balance and low pay salaries. For the author it was interesting to see that each participant enjoyed what it is called long working hours, as they are enjoying their work and do not see it as a burden. The author also found, from those who were interviewed, that the hospitality industry offers more than it is known on the market that jobs in hospitality are not very appealing. The author was surprised to see that this industry actually invests in its talent and in those who see themselves growing a career in the industry.

The author of this research also enjoyed working on this research and getting the chance to conduct interviews. It was challenging to be able to get the information that was needed as well as to be able to analyse the data once it was collected. Critical thinking skills, as well as faculty of filtering and sorting the information, was something that the author struggled to use, however the author enjoyed learning how this needs to be done using books, articles, online journals and long conversations with people who were already involved in these kinds of researches.

The author considers that making this research possible will definitely help her conduct other researches, if needed, and the skills gained will assist her in her day to day job opportunities and life challenges.



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# Appendices

## Appendix A – Interview Questions

1. What is your nationality?
2. How long have you been working with the company?
3. How many foreign employees are in your department?
4. How much do you think your organisation is opened to diversity?
5. What keeps you motivated in your workplace?
6. Can you describe how this organisation helps/allows you to reach your life goals and supports you in following your career path?
7. How committed do you think you are with the organization?
8. How committed do you think your co-workers are to the job?
9. How do you think foreign and local employees differ when it comes to working in unfavourable conditions in order to secure their job?
10. How do you think your foreign co-workers compare in motivation to local employees?
11. How much do you think your motivation level will grow when your company will use any kind of rewards?
12. How does your organisation recognise and motivate talent which help the organisation reach its aims?
13. What do you think about the level of equality your organisation uses in the workplace?

## Appendix B – Letter to participants

### **Interview Consent Form**

#### **Title of Research Project:**

What are the motivational factors of foreign line level employees in the hospitality industry in Ireland

#### **Name and Position of Researcher:** Melania I. Moldovan

Master of Arts in Human Resource Management

National College of Ireland

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and I have had the opportunity to ask questions
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason
- I give my permission to record my interview through audio recording measures
- I give my permission to the researcher to use direct and indirect quotes in their project
- I agree to take part in this interview for this research project and I understand that it is completely confidential and anonymous

#### **Participant**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Researcher**

Name: Melania I. Moldovan

Date: July 2018

Signature: Melania I. Moldovan