

**Burnout: An exploration of burnout experiences by providers of
homeless services in Ireland**

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Abstract

Burnout has become one of the main issues experienced in the work development nowadays, which has gathered a large body of research in the last decade. The gross of the research carried out in this field in the Republic of Ireland focalises on three main groups: the healthcare sector, social work with a predominance of the child protection division and the educational field. Leaving the provision of homeless services understudied

Understanding Burnout in relation to the homeless service provision takes a principal stand in the Irish territory as the nation has been experiencing a homeless crisis for the past ten years. Positioning the providers of this type of human services under a large amount of pressure while working with a sector of the population characterised by their chaotic nature, resulting from the traumatic experiences suffered, such as alcoholism, drug addiction or sexual assault.

This research was developed due to the lack of research on burnout perceptions by providers of homeless services, and the aim to provide an understanding of burnout in this sector concerning the three dimensions of job burnout (emotional exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy), the stress suffered, and the job demands and resources impacting its incidence.

For this matter, and to provide a comprehensive understanding of the burnout experiences of homeless service providers, a qualitative approach to research was carried out. Twelve employees of the organisation framing this study, Focus Ireland, provided their accounts regarding the research object through semi-structured interviews.

The findings of this research elucidate that in the provision of homeless services, only two of the burnout's dimension are experienced, emotional exhaustion and cynicism, while there is no evidence of the presence of inefficacy within this sector. Furthermore, the study carried out also finds evidence that supports the conception of the homeless sector as a highly stressful field of employment; and the existence of job demands and resources attached to the development of their work that might be inciting the prevalence of burnout in this field.

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List of Acronyms

AI	Advice and Information
CM	Case Management
DRHE	Dublin Region Homeless Executive
FEANTSA	European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless
JDR	Job Demands-Resources
MBI	Maslach's Burnout Inventory
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of the Research

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the perceived job burnout level and its causes within providers of homeless services in the Republic of Ireland.

The provision of homeless services is a challenging field due to the particular vulnerability of this group. Homeless individuals present high levels of stress and generally present a lack of social skills, financial means and social support, which adds an extra degree of difficulty in working with this group that no other social field experience with such intensity (Kidd *et al*, 2007). Throughout their lives, homeless individuals are often exposed to a wide range of traumatic circumstances such as domestic violence, addiction, neglect, psychological and sexual abuse, among many others. The nature of these experiences creates sentiments of helplessness and fear that overwhelms the individual and diminish their capacity to cope with their reality (Waegemakers Schiff and Lane, 2019). The circumstances described thereto highlight this group need for intensive support to accomplish different ordinary tasks, which increments the amount of pressure on the professionals involved with this group, making them more susceptible to developing stress-related conditions such as burnout (Mette *et al*, 2020).

1.2 Dissertation Subject

The central concept object of this dissertation is the burnout syndrome or burnout.

Burnout, understood as a response to a chronic exposition to work-related stressors, is a topic that has been gaining international attention due to the implications that it holds for organisational and personal wellbeing (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). Burnout has been found to be a source of psychological and physical ailments for the individual and the cause for unfavourable work-related conditions such as absenteeism, low quality of work, and intention to leave, among many others (Suñer-Soler *et al*, 2014). The integral effects of burnout on an individual's life have made this phenomenon an essential subject of study in recent years. Since its first conceptualisation, burnout syndrome has been positively linked to professional development in human services due to the many challenges faced by those employed in this field, such as high caseloads, lack of role clarity, low remuneration, and limited prospects of upward promotions (Thomas, Kohli and Choi, 2014). Research carried out in the burnout field has highlighted the effects of such demanding environments on homeless service providers and have even estimated that in this field, the service providers' lifespan

is shorter than recognised highly stressed professionals, such as doctors, nurses or educators (Curtis, Moriarty and Netten, 2010).

Through this dissertation's development, an extensive examination and formulation of burnout will be carried out, formulating the different approaches to the concept developed through the years and the conditions that influence its manifestation and its consequences for both the organisation and the person. This dissertation will pay special attention to the experiences regarding burnout of the service providers in this sector.

1.3 The Irish Homeless Context

To completely understand the challenges experienced by homeless services providers and the particular characteristics that this group present, an analysis of the context they are immersed in is required. Therefore, an examination of the concept and state of the homelessness phenomenon in Ireland will be carried out.

1.3.1 Defining Homelessness

Homelessness is a broad concept that has been subjected to numerous designations and classifications throughout history without providing a universal description to identify and categorize this phenomenon. The definition of this subgroup of society continues to vary in characterization nowadays.

In the Republic of Ireland, the legal definition of homelessness is stated in the *Housing Act 1988*. For the purpose of the Act, a person is regarded as homeless if:

“(a) there is no accommodation available which, in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of,

or (b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a), and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.”

The legal definition of homeless, has been the classification accepted and adopted by the local authorities responsible of the provision of homeless services in Ireland such as the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (2021), henceforward DRHE.

According to research carried out by the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless, FEANTSA (2014), the Republic of Ireland does not recognise as homeless, individuals

institutionalised, people living in unconventional dwellings due to the lack of conventional housing, and people residing temporarily with family or friends. This exclusion provides for a data recording problem for local authorities as people and families residing in unconventional dwellings or with families and friends are also recipients of homeless support through prevention services and, thus are part of the homeless services' customer base. The lack of inclusion of these three subgroups of individuals described thereto illustrates that the national agencies' statistics in terms of individuals recognized as homeless might be higher than stated.

Correspondingly, FEANTSA, developed a European Typology of Homelessness and housing exclusion (ETHOS) to provide a common designation for homelessness for international interactions, such as debates, measurement and policy development. ETHOS provided for an in-depth characterisation of homelessness resulting of the different designations and experiences of this phenomenon through Europe. The definition of homeless elucidated within the ETHOS framework, developed by FEANTSA (2005), recognises as homeless:

- People sleeping rough
- People residing in temporary accommodation such as shelters or refuges
- People living in unstable dwellings, threatened by eviction or domestic violence.
- People living in inadequate accommodation such as overcrowding or mobile homes.

This broader and more inclusive definition of homelessness has been adopted by voluntary organisations providing homeless support in the national territory, such as Focus Ireland (2021) and Simon Communities of Ireland (2021).

1.3.2 Homeless Statistics

The homeless state in the Irish territory has been regarded by the Government of Ireland (2018) as an ever-increasing crisis, placing this social problem as one of the main priorities for the current government.

In recent research, the Government of Ireland (2021), through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, reported 5,987 adults accessing homeless emergency services in Ireland during January 2021. Furthermore, this report also provides a recount of the families accessing emergency services nationwide, with 966 families, 1,430 adults, and 2,326 dependants. Moreover, the DRHE (2019) has also documented through research the existence of at least 128 rough sleepers in the area of Dublin, which are not counted in the national statistics as they do not avail of homeless supports provided by local authorities. It is also noteworthy to mention that the official count of rough

sleepers only occurs in the Dublin area, leaving the counties with an undetermined number of rough sleepers.

As aforementioned, the numbers stated thereto comprehend exclusively the number of people accessing homeless accommodation services, with no national record of how many homeless people, or at risk of homelessness, access non-residential services, such as drop-in facilities or prevention services. Therefore, the number of homeless service users is expected to be higher than the numbers stated above, and thus the demand for homeless related services.

The existence of homelessness in every county of the Republic of Ireland offers a diverse scenario for the provision of homeless services. The dissemination of the homeless population offers the possibility to analyse the different circumstances providers of homeless services face in delivering their practice, and thus their experiences of burnout in different areas of the Irish territory. Therefore, the research carried out will not focalise in a concrete area of the national territory, allowing for the participation of homeless service's providers that operate nationwide

1.4 Organisational Context

The delivery of homeless services in the national territory is mainly provided by non-profit organisations and charities. These organisations offer different levels of interventions for people at risk or experiencing homelessness, such as residential facilities, drop-in services, food services, prevention and housing support, among many others. Often these organisations are provided with funding from local authorities, but in some instances, they operate with the sole fund of donations. Ireland counts with several non-profit organisations focused on the homeless issue, such as Crosscare, Peter McVerry Trust and Depaul Ireland, but the organisation chosen for this research is Focus Ireland.

Focus Ireland (2019) is one of Ireland's largest homeless organisations, which counts with about 400 employees across the territory and provides services in Carlow, Limerick, Clare, Monaghan, Cork, Sligo, Dublin, Tipperary, Kildare Waterford, Kilkenny and Wexford. The large scope of the organisation provides for a diverse scenario to explore the different experiences of burnout by employees under the same organisation across the Irish territory.

The organisation, Focus Ireland (2021), offers a diverse range of services for people at risk or experiencing homelessness, with prevention services, residential services, day services, advocacy and communication, and housing development services. The diverse landscape of services is one of the

critical components for choosing this organisation, as it will allow us to identify if the patterns of burnout presented in the organisation differ depending on the type of service.

Throughout 2019, Focus Ireland (2019) assisted a total of 14,200 individuals across the Irish territory, which exemplifies the organisation's enormous scope and the extensive work the employees carry out.

1.5 Purpose and Relevance of the Research

While there has been a limited amount of research in Ireland regarding burnout syndrome in the last decades. The studies that have been carried out predominantly relate to healthcare providers and social workers practising within the child and family agency (McFadden, 2020; McNicholas *et al*, 2020; McFadden, Mallet and Leiter, 2018; Sulaiman *et al*, 2017); Leaving other sectors, such as the homeless provision services, underexplored and in need of an in-depth analysis of the potential burnout being experienced. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to cover that gap and to provide a study of the homeless service provider's sentiments and experiences of burnout.

Similar research has been carried out in other countries to determine the existence of a link between the work carried out in homeless services and burnout. An example of this is the research carried out by Lemieux and Taylor in 2019. This study investigated the relationship between mental health strain and burnout on employees of third sector organisations, providing services for people at risk or experiencing homelessness in the United Kingdom. The findings of this research state the existence of a link between the level of stress experienced in this type of human services and the development of burnout (Lemieux and Taylor, 2019).

Considering the conclusions of this study, it could be of interest to analyse the context of the homeless services in Ireland, through the experiences of service providers to see if the same correlations regarding stress and burnout are reached.

1.6 Configuration of the Reminder Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation is structured as follows.

Chapter 2 contains the literature review that focuses on an in-depth conceptualisation of burnout. An exhaustive analysis of the sources and consequences of burnout and the specific conditions that homeless services present will be carried out. The literature review will also encompass the relevant

research carried out regarding burnout in recent years and provide a foundation for addressing the research question identified. Furthermore, this chapter also provides the formulation of the research questions chosen to guide this study and the sub-questions and objectives attached to it.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology used and the research designed applied to the study carried out. This chapter provides the reader with an understanding of the methods of research available and the study design and tools applied to the research carried out. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the ethical concerns attached to this study.

Chapter 4 is constituted by the research findings originating from the interviews carried out, which have been divided into themes and subthemes, providing quotes from the participants to exemplify the findings encountered. Moreover, this chapter provides a discussion of the limitations identified in the research conducted.

Chapter 5 encompasses the discussion of the findings provided. This chapter provides a critical analysis of the findings generated and their relation to the academia provided in the literature review.

Chapter 6 provides the primary outcomes of this research and offers suggestions for future studies in the field.

Chapter 7 provides the requirements established by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) for this dissertation.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2. Introduction

The literature review aims to provide an understanding and gain knowledge in the research carried out on this specific topic, the burnout syndrome. An exploration of the concept of burnout with its dimensions, antecedents and impact will be carried out, focusing, for the purpose of this research, in the work related factors that produce this phenomenon. Furthermore, an examination of the burnout syndrome in homeless services will be revised to provide a conceptualisation of this specific working environment through previous research developed in this field.

2.1 Conceptualisation of Burnout

Burnout has been generally defined as a syndrome resulting from a continuous exposition to work-related stress, which generally affects professions that work focuses on contact with other individuals. This syndrome was originally reported in care and human service professions whose aim is to provide for people in need and in which the interaction between professional and customer is paramount. This concept has become relevant for other professions outside of the social service providers throughout the years, and its research continues to grow globally. But to understand this concept in its totality, a review of its conceptualization will be carried out.

The concept of burnout first appeared, as referenced by Maslach *et al* (2001), in Graham Greene's novel "A burn-out case". In his novel, Greene (1961) narrates the story of an architect that has a psychological breakdown and decides to move to Congo, exemplifying through this fable how extreme fatigue can turn into irritation and spitefulness towards a person's job.

This concept will not find its course in scientific literature until the 1970s. Freudenberger (1974) first conceptualised this syndrome as the state of fatigue or frustration created by the work's demands, presented among professionals that experienced intense interaction with their clients (Freudenberger, 1974). Freudenberger's pioneering work opened the field for numerous studies on the subject in different fields in the subsequent years and established him as the concept's founding father.

This first conceptualisation was followed by numerous studies in the field that provided definitions of what burnout constitutes and the conditions involved in its manifestation. Maslach (1978) defined

burnout as a psychological syndrome developed as a response to chronic interpersonal stress, in which the service provider is unable to maintain the caring state brought initially to the job and loses all positive feelings for the clientele. Whereas Pines and Kafry (1978) defined burnout as a breaking point in which the work demands surpass one's endurance and capability to cope due to the overpowering work-related stress. Similarly, Edelwich and Brodsky (1980) asserted a definition of burnout as an evolving process in which a person acute a loss of idealism, energy and purpose, derived from their working conditions and the stress perceived. In which there are four identifiable stages: enthusiasm, stagnation, frustration and apathy. Correspondingly, Perlman and Hartman (1982) carried out a summary of the different theoretical constructions of burnout, creating a definition that included work-related feelings such as exhaustion or failure, loss of inspiration, disengagement from employment, detachment from clients and colleagues and the appearance of wrong attitudes towards customers and themselves.

Although the characterisation of burnout has been subjected to numerous definitions, like the ones aforementioned, one of the core theories in this field is the one carried out by Maslach and Jackson in 1981. This study developed a multifaceted theory of the burnout syndrome that recognised three different dimensions within the experience of burnout: emotional exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Furthermore, within this research, the Maslach Burnout Inventory was developed, which has become the most used burnout measurement instrument created to date, still prevalent in our time. This multidimensional theory of burnout allowed research to interconnect the three different scales with possible causes and consequences of its development. Due to the importance of this theory, an in-depth examination of each dimension will be carried out.

2.1.1 Emotional Exhaustion

Maslach and Leiter (2007) referred to this scale of burnout as the feelings of being overstretched and drained of the person's physical and emotional resources; employees experiencing this form of mental fatigue feel overused and unable to refill the mental energy disposed on their occupation development. This component of burnout identifies with the individual stress sphere of the syndrome. Emotional exhaustion has been regarded in burnout literature as a critical element of the concept of burnout and the dimension most studied and measured within the three that compose the experience of burnout (Alsharif, 2020). Moreover, emotional exhaustion has been strongly linked with work-place environments with high levels of stress and the service providers' over-involvement in their work (Lee *et al*, 2011).

2.1.2 Cynicism

The second dimension, also known as depersonalisation, corresponds to the relational component of burnout, which produces hostile feelings and extreme detachment towards a person's employment, leading to a loss of idealism and others' dehumanisation (Maslach and Leiter, 2016; Maslach *et al*, 2001). Cynicism is displayed as cold and distant attitudes towards customers and colleagues, limiting personal involvement, as a form of coping mechanism derived from the perceived low control over certain aspects of their work, such as job demands, role ambiguity and role conflict (Hollet-Haudebert, Mulki and Fournier, 2011; Schaufeli *et al*, 2002). Visible signs of cynicism encompass the use of pejorative language, the overuse of jargon, detachment from one's duties through longer breaks, and the over-rationalisation of situations; and these attitudes seem to stem from conflict in the workplace, the impossibility to partake in the decision-making process and the lack of fairness in the organisation (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2012). Furthermore, the development of cynicism in the workplace has been connected to unfavourable outcomes for the organisation, such as disengagement, low performance, and an increment of turnover intentions (Çına, Karcioğlu and Aslan, 2014)

2.1.3 Inefficacy

The last dimension of burnout, also referred to as reduced personal accomplishment, corresponds with the self-assessment component of burnout, in which the person develops a tendency to devalue himself and his capacities, generating feelings of inadequacy (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). Individuals experiencing this component of burnout feel that they are incapable of succeeding in developing their job, generating strong sentiments of incompetency. This dimension of burnout often originates from the previous dimensions, as feeling accomplished in one's employment is challenging when a person is depleted of energy and feels disconnected from work (Maslach and Leiter, 2008). The presence of feelings of inefficacy is often related to the absence of resources in the workplace to carry out the work properly, the lack of feedback, the level of autonomy in the position held, the level of clarity of the role carried out and the perceived support by one's peers (Valcour, 2016).

This multidimensional theoretical approach to burnout has not been homogeneously received by the scientific community in the research field, and there has been inevitable criticism about this model. An example of the detractors of Maslach's Burnout Inventory, henceforth MBI, is the Danish researchers Kristensen *et al* (2005). In their burnout study, these researchers elucidate that the MBI was created based on Maslach's elucidations of burnout and thus, this measurement system is not unbiased. Furthermore, these researchers believed that depersonalization is not a component of burnout but a coping strategy to deal with its effects. Moreover, the questions integrated into the MBI

were found by some participants in the study as difficult to understand or too restrictive. Finally, the MBI was developed with the prevalence that burnout only occurs in human-related services and professions, while the Danish investigators believed that burnout's ramifications could be extended to other professions. As a consequence of the reservations aforementioned, Kristensen *et al* (2005) developed a different burnout measurement instrument named Copenhagen Burnout Inventory, which positions the sentiments of fatigue and exhaustion at its core (Cox, Tisserand and Tariz, 2005). Similar to this inventory, other tools for the measurement of burnout have been developed since the conceptualization of this syndrome, such as the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory or the Single Item Burnout Measure, among others.

Nevertheless, the multidimensional model of burnout developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) opened the field of study for different multifaceted burnout theories to be explored and developed and is still to date a reference in the field. Nevertheless, the research existent has not focus on the provision of homeless services, and it is in this base that this research will try to address this gap, analysing the different components of burnout aforementioned in the homeless service's providers

2.2 Stress

Stress has been regarded by Jin *et al* (2020) as one of the main components of the working life producing burnout. The existence of stress in the workplace is more widespread nowadays than in the past thirty years, as reported by the World Health Organisation (2007), henceforth WHO, becoming this subject a popular matter of research due to its impact on employees and organisations. The prevalence of stress has been identified as a result of contemporary working environments in which there is a higher pressure on efficiency and quality of work, a constant need to update employee's skills, and a fast-paced working rhythm (Sharma and Singh, 2016).

The process of stress occurs when events disturb the process of homeostasis, a self-regulatory process that the body naturally produces to preserve stability while adjusting to environmental changes generating physical and psychological disorders in the person experiencing it (Satish and Pestonjee, 2013). The definition of stress in the workplace presents specific difficulties as there is not a universal definition of this phenomenon but different approaches by different pieces of literature. The WHO (2007) has defined work-related stress as "a pattern of physiological, emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions to some extremely taxing aspects of work content, work organization and work environment". Simultaneously, Robbins and Judge (2017) have defined occupational stress as a dynamic process in which a person is presented with an opportunity or request whose outcome is

regarded as ambiguous and important. Furthermore, work stress has been also defined as an emotional disorder that appears on an individual due to high environmental demands (Nisar and Rasheed, 2020).

Continuing with the elucidation of the phenomenon of work-related stress, research in this carried out by Robbins and Judge (2017) also suggest that there are two different sources of this type of stress, challenge stressors, such as workload and time constraints; and hindrance stressors, which are stressors that impede the person from reaching the completion of their tasks, such as lack of resources. Even though the research regarding these types of stressors is at early stages, there is evidence to support that challenge stressors are less harmful than hindrance stressors (Pearsall, Ellis and Stein, 2009; Podsakoff, LePine and LePine, 2007).

The consequences of occupational stress impact the individual and the organisational context in which they are carrying out their job. Work stress produces behaviours, such as absenteeism, low job satisfaction, decreased performance, health claims, accidents, and drug abuse (Granster and Rosen, 2013). Moreover, work stress also impacts the psyche of the person affected by this condition, with individuals displaying characteristics such as forgetfulness, hesitancy in decision making, and burnout (Ferdian *et al*, 2020). The consequences that the stress produce are of an integral nature, affecting different spheres of human life which has positioned this negative outcomes of demanding jobs as a main subject of discussion among researchers.

There is a high occurrence of occupational stress among human service providers, and this has been thoroughly documented through the research carried out in fields such as health provision services, social work practice and educational context (Farmer, 2020; Marc, Dimény, and Bacter, 2019; Singh, and Jain, 2017). Specific stressors apply uniquely to the provision of human services, such as emotional dissonance, known as the need of service providers to mask their own feelings, and stressors derived from the client and customer relationship; an example of the latter is unrealistic expectations placed on the service provider, or targeting verbal aggression towards the worker (O'Brien and Linehan, 2019; Dollard *et al*, 2003). Unique stressors that make the provision of human service a challenging field for work development.

The incidence of stress in homeless services is a subject that has been underexplored in the literature existent. Identifying this gap in current research it is the interest of this research to analyse the perception of stress of homeless services' providers.

2.3 Antecedents of Burnout

The incidence and appearance of burnout is not a linear process but a continuum involving several factors that erode the well-being of the person experiencing them (Green *et al*, 2014). The factors that influence the appearance of burnout have been shared into two different types, personal characteristics and organisational aspects (Yildirim and Sait Dinc, 2019). Due to this research's nature, primarily focused on the human resources process, a brief description of the personal factors influencing burnout will be carried out, followed by an in-depth description of the burnout phenomenon's work dynamics.

Personal characteristics are those intrinsic to the person and are not influenced by the organisational context's policies and procedures. These include age, relationship status, educational level, and professional experience; their influence in burnout among different professions has been documented in different research (Kim, Shin, and Umbreit, 2007). While personal characteristics of an individual have been regarded as less influential in the production of burnout than their organisation counterparts, these factors influence the perception of work environments; and, therefore, influence burnout outcomes (Dyrbye and Shanafelt, 2016; Maslach and Leiter, 2008).

Contrariwise, organisational factors are the principal predictor of burnout, and thus a detailed description of these aspects will follow, with the special incidence of the factors affecting the organisation chosen for this research. To elucidate the different work-related factors that affect the appearance of burnout, the theoretical model of job demands-resources will be used, and therefore, a further explanation of this concept will follow henceforth.

2.4 Job Demands-Resources Model

The Job Demands- Resources model, henceforth JDR, was first elucidated by Evangelia Demerouti in the twenty-first century and since its first conceptualisation, it has been widely accepted and applied in the research field (Jin *et al*, 2020). The JDR theory expounds that there are several factors present in the working relationship that impact the production of stress and, therefore, burnout; these can be classified into two categories: job demands and job resources (Hatch *et al*, 2019; Demerouti *et al*, 2001). This theory identifies chronic job demands as a predictor of mental strain, whereas job resources act as a motivator producing positive outcomes such as engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Furthermore, the JDR theory also analyses the interaction between the two forces, has also an impact on the production of burnout, finding that the presence of job resources can act as

a catalyser to reduce burnout and produce positive outcomes for organisations, such as engagement (Hu and Schaufeli, 2011).

Research carried out in this field by Bakker, Demerouti and Euwena (2005) in an educational institution with the aim to analyse the relationship between job resources and demand and the production of burnout; found that the existence of high demands and the provision of low resources had an impact in the generation of two components of burnout, emotional exhaustion and cynicism. However, no relation with the third component, inadequacy, was found.

As in any other theoretical framework, this model has not been exempt from criticism. The JDR model has been regarded as descriptive rather than explanatory and too inclusive to the point of lacking rigidity (Schaufeli and Taris, 2014). Furthermore, this model has also presented concerns regarding the delimitations of the concepts of job demand and resources and their perception as positive or negative by the employee (Borst, Kruijven and Lako, 2019).

Nonetheless, due to the extensive use of JDR in research regarding burnout, as aforementioned, and the links it has proven with its components, the JDR model has been applied to the research carried out, and a more comprehensive demarcation of the job resources and job demands will proceed henceforth. This theoretical framework will provide the conceptual base necessary to identify the organisational factors influencing burnout in the organisation chosen for the study carried out and their incidence in the burnout experienced.

2.4.1 Job Demands

Job demands are defined but Turek (2020, p.61) as “those physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of the job that require either sustained physical or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or both and are, therefore, associated with certain physiological, and perhaps, psychological costs”. Work demands can be objective or subjective, and the stress derived from them arises when there is a perceived imbalance between demands and the person’s capability to meet them (Kar, and Suar, 2014; Ramonienė and Gorbatenko, 2013). These organisational characteristics are of exceptional importance as it is understood that high levels of work demands are positively linked to an increase in the threat of burnout (Seljemo, Viksveen and Ree, 2020). The components of job demands are very diverse; nonetheless, the subjects that will be analysed comprehensively are workloads, role ambiguity, role conflict and emotional demand, due to its importance in the development of human services.

2.4.1.1 Workload

Workloads have been defined as the number of tasks a person in an organisational setting needs to complete in a specific timeframe. In environments with high workloads, employees cannot complete their tasks due to lack of capacity or time constrictions, generating discontent in their service providers and organisation and positively impacting the appearance of burnout (Maidasari, Absah and Siahaan, 2018). Previous research in a healthcare setting has identified that working with clients with high needs require a significant workload, which leads to increased job stress and possible burnout (Kim *et al*, 2019). Equally, high workloads and time constrictions have been regarded as recurrent issue in different researches carried out in service providers of homeless services (Mette *et al*, 2020; Robelski *et al*, 2020).

2.4.1.2 Role Ambiguity and Role conflict

Role ambiguity has been defined as the perception that individuals do not have all the information necessary to carry out their tasks or work. At the same time, role conflict has also been demarcated as the feeling of unable to fulfil incompatible job demands and expectations, incapable to satisfy all parts involved in the work development (Celik, 2013; Onyemah, 2008). Regarding these two components, the non-clearness of a person's role and the expectations attached to it, could precipitate burnout due to the extra emotional investments they need to make to clarify their role (Panari *et al*, 2019).

As the ones aforementioned, issues with role delimitation have been regarded as subjects that affect the job performance of its sufferers and lead to burnout (Tunc and Kutanis, 2019).

2.4.1.3 Emotional Demands

Emotional demands have been defined as the work requirements that involve a constant sensitive effort during communication with customers (Stelmokienė, 2019). Emotionally demanding environments have been the cause of cognitive stress, with symptoms such as difficulty focusing or making decisions, memory retention, and thinking correctly (Elfering *et al*, 2017). Furthermore, previous research proposes that burnout is a consequence of prolonged exposure to emotional demands in the workplace (Xanthopoulou *et al*, 2007). Working with the homeless has certain particularities regarding the demand on its employee's psyche, as this is a highly vulnerable societal subgroup who often have experienced traumatic circumstances (Kidd *et al*, 2007). Moreover, Providers of homeless services have been identified as likely to experience emotional distress due to the extended exposure to their client's trauma (Wirth *et al*, 2019).

2.4.1.4 Working Hours

Working hours are the hours in which the development of one's work takes place. In the literature available shift work is the source of well-being concerns as it has been linked to an overall decrease of the person's well-being in the form of physical ailments and mental health problems (Hulsegge *et al*, 2020; James *et al*, 2017). Furthermore, previous research has also found that there is a correlation between long working hours and burnout, especially in professionals under fifty years of age (Hu, Chen and Cheng, 2014).

There has not been significant research carried out in the field of the homeless services in the Republic of Ireland regarding the job demands stated above; Therefore, it would be of interest studying how the workload, job clarity and ambiguity, emotional demands and working hours, affect the work development of homeless services' providers and their feelings of burnout.

2.4.2 Job Resources

Job resources are defined by Demerouti *et al* (2001, p.501) as "the physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of the job that may do any of the following: be functional in achieving work goals; reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; stimulate personal growth and development". Job resources are organisational tools that promote motivation and wellbeing among employees and are a *sine qua non* condition to achieve organisational goals (Schaufeli, 2017; Van de Tooren and De Jong, 2014). Moreover, contrary to the findings related to burnout and job demands, previous research has observed that the presence of job resources is negatively related to the development of burnout. (Gonzalez-Mulé, Kim and Ryu, 2020; Van Veldhoven *et al*, 2020; Xu and Payne, 2020). A conceptualisation of specific job resources that affect the provision of human services will be carried out hereunder.

2.4.2.1 Peer Support

Peer support has been defined as the extent to which employees count on their colleagues to assist and support them during their work development (Tafvelin, 2019; Caringi *et al*, 2017). Positive relations among colleague's act as a sheltering system, protecting the employee from stress and improving their wellbeing and creating resilience. Conversely, the lack of social support in the workplace can lead to burnout, as employees do not benefit from healthy work environments where

to share their work experiences (Ho, 2016). Several studies in the social field have highlighted colleague support's beneficial factors on employees working in human services. Among its benefits are providing emotional control through informal conversations and acquiring new approaches to difficult working circumstances through team discussions (Cook *et al*, 2020; Mcfadden *et al*, 2019; Ruch, 2007).

2.4.2.2 Organisational Support

Organisational support relates to the individual's perception of how the organisation values their contributions and safeguard their welfare (Turek, 2020). When individuals recognise that their organisation supports them, they develop a positive attitude towards work, increasing their engagement and pursuing higher goals. Nonetheless, if individuals don't perceive support from their companies, they acquire passive work attitudes, reduce their productivity, and may exhibit burnout symptoms (Wang and Wang, 2020). The organisational support could be shown in different working scenarios, such as the perceived justice and fairness of the organisational processes, the support provided by managers, the presence of inducements, and the existence of good working conditions (Zeng *et al*, 2020). Furthermore, in the provision of human services, organisational support has been found to be the leading predictor of burnout and a critical source of job satisfaction (Anomneze *et al*, 2016).

2.4.2.3 Supervision

Supervision is the formal process of supporting, guiding, advising, and promoting growth in the employees; as well as a tool to encourage quality and wellbeing in the workplace (Marashi and Bani-Ardalani, 2017). As the supervision variety is quite wide in nature, the dissertation will focus on clinical supervision, as this is the type present in the service framing this study. Herbert and Caldwell (2015) elucidate that clinical supervision goes a step further than regular supervision as apart from addressing the performance of the employee the supervisor also acts as an advisor and counsellor.

Previous research in this field has found that supervision supports employees processing events that occurred in the development of their work, reducing the levels of stress and burnout, allowing the individual to be more effective, and help them develop tools to cope (Wallbank and Hatton, 2011; Wallbank and Robertson, 2008). Additionally, in the provision of human services, the establishment of supervision provides for a safe space to communicate complex characteristics of the work, which are inappropriate to share with other people, protecting the employee from stress, burnout and trauma (Wallbank and Hatton, 2011).

2.4.2.4 Pay

Remuneration is a powerful job resource that provides motivation in the workplace and diminishes the work's unfavourable characteristics and the influence of burnout; well-paid personnel are more likely to provide extra effort, have a better attitude towards their job, and support the development of valuable personal characteristics such as good self-esteem and more confidence in carrying out their duties (Salami and Ajitoni, 2016). Furthermore, employees that receive a remuneration for their work that they consider fair are more willing to accept adverse job demands such as high workloads (Hu, and Schaufeli, 2011).

The JDR theory has not being applied to the provision of homeless services in the Republic of Ireland, and thus it would be of interest how the different demands and resources present in the work relationship in this field affect the appearance of burnout.

2.5 Impact of Burnout

The Burnout syndrome holds great significance in the working relationship due to its detrimental effects on the organisation and the individual. When the stress suffered by the individual in the workplace continues over time, the person could develop burnout, impacting the employee's life, overall health, and the organisation in which they are employed (Salvagioni *et al*, 2017). For this subject's proposal, the description of burnout's consequences will be divided into two spheres: the impact that burnout has on the individual and its effect on the organisation. It is noteworthy to mention that due to the lack of research in the homeless services, other human provision services will be used for the analysis of the effects produced by burnout.

2.5.1 Individual Effects

The effects that burnout can produce in an individual are varied, affecting their physical and mental wellbeing due to continuous exposure to distressing situations. Previous research has found that burnout is linked with emotional disorders such as low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, guilt feelings, insomnia, reduced tolerance of frustration and overall psychological distress (Rudman *et al*, 2020; Yang and Hayes, 2020; Suñer-Soler *et al*, 2014). Furthermore, research in the healthcare field has established that burnout is linked to severe cases of depression, and in some instances, suicide (Williams, Rathert and Buttigieg, 2020). Moreover, international research has found that the experience of burnout in the workplace can have an impact on the overall health of the individual at

a physical level, in the form of different ailments such as addiction to drugs or alcohol, musculoskeletal pain, cardiovascular disease, obesity and fatigue (Salvagioni *et al*, 2017; Shirom, 2009). Nevertheless, burnout affects not only the health dimension of an individual but also its relations and their overall quality of life; research illustrates that adverse sentiments generated by a person's job can have a spillover effect in their personal life, creating negative behaviours at home and subsequently damaging personal relationships outside of the working sphere (Neff and Karney, 2007).

2.5.2 Organisational Effects

The effects of burnout are not exclusive to the individual experiencing it, as it also affects the organisation in which they carry out their occupation. At an organisational level, personnel experiencing burnout present job dissatisfaction sentiments, are less productive and innovative, are more likely to be absent or avail of sick leaves, have low morale, produce more mistakes and injuries at work, present a reduction of the quality of their job and are more likely to show intentions to terminate their employment. (Gabriel and Aguinis, 2021; Salvagioni *et al*, 2017). Moreover, employees experiencing burnout tend to be less supportive of their colleagues and present a disregard for their organisation and its aims (McCormack and Cotter, 2013). These conditions produce a double threat for organisations as if the burnout individual leaves, the organisations lose a valuable resource to achieve their performance and productivity goals. Conversely, if the burnout employee stays in the organisation, it can cause additional costs for the company due to increased absenteeism, low performance, and diminished quality (Kutz, 2017).

Considering the numerous adverse effects that the burnout syndrome causes and the losses it generates, not only financially but personally, it is clear the importance of this syndrome in the working relation nowadays (Mehrad, 2019).

2.6 Provision of human services

The concern regarding the wellbeing in the provision of human services has been recorded in literature for several decades. This professional group aims to improve their customer's quality of life through interventions tailored to their needs and to achieve this, working in close, continuous contact with their customers is needed; positioning these working individuals at a greater risk of burnout (Dice, Simmons and Wolfenden, 2018). The roles in the human service provision are varied, which different age groups and backgrounds; these can include children and families, the homeless, the elderly, people with addictions, people with mental health issues, immigrants and people with disabilities,

among many others (Moffat, 2011). It is noteworthy to express that burnout has the potential to affect any professions due to existence of stress in every professional field. Nevertheless, the existence of burnout in the provision of human services has been proven to be particularly high, as previous research illustrates (Sumner and Kinsella, 2021; Rasheed-Karim, 2020; Louison Vang *et al*, 2020; Chung and Choo, 2019; Li, Li and Castaño, 2019; Medina, and Beyebach, 2014).

2.6.1 Homeless Services

Copious amounts of research have been carried out in the provision of human services (Novyk and Mazur, 2021; Dall'Ora *et al*, 2020; Wu, 2020; Kheswa, 2019; Cooper *et al*, 2016; Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh, 2015); nevertheless, working with the homeless population presents its particularities that differ from other human services categories. Moreover, the working relationship with this subgroup of society and its impact on the service provider, such as burnout, has not been extensively researched. Nonetheless, the literature available provides a clear picture of what it entails to work with the homeless.

Homelessness is a complex phenomenon that can be prompted by individual factors, such as drug addiction and mental health; and structural factors as the lack of affordable housing or the lack of employment for low skilled individuals (Nagy-Borsy *et al*, 2021). Furthermore, a high percentage of the homeless population has been exposed to different forms of trauma, including sexual abuse, domestic violence, drug addiction, alcoholism, neglect and psychological abuse (Hopper, Bassuk and Olivet, 2010). Providing an extremely challenging scenario for homeless service providers to develop their practice.

The providers of homeless services are frontline workers caring for one of the most vulnerable groups of society, in high intensity and emotionally consuming environments, continuously exposed to traumatic experiences that could harm their emotional stability (Lemieux and Taylor, 2019). Through their work development homeless service providers have to confront several barriers that no other providing human service has to face, such as the special needs of this group caused by trauma or health conditions, managing multiple simultaneous needs and managing negative public attitudes (Mullen and Leginski, 2010).

In the development of their practice, building relationships with customers is paramount, but it can also produce adverse outcomes as some employees might find it difficult to set up and maintain boundaries with their customers (Wirth *et al*, 2019). Moreover, the work carried out with this chaotic group takes place at a plodding pace and is likely to be subjected to setbacks. Leaving service providers with feelings of lack of accomplishment and disillusionment (Kidd *et al*, 2007). Furthermore, Service

providers that join the homeless services workforce tend to be idealistic and have big goals and expectations, but the unique characteristics of this type of work, described thereto, and the continuous exposure to high levels of stress can lead to job dissatisfaction and burnout (Mullen and Leginski, 2010).

In addition, another factor affecting the work development of service providers are the organisations in which they are immersed. Often these employees, count on limited resources to carry out their work while attending a high workload, which adds an additional layer of stress to their practice (Lenzi et al, 2020).

There has not been any research related to the relation between homeless services and the burnout generated in the providers of these services in the Republic of Ireland. Nevertheless, similar research was conducted by researchers Waegemakers Schiff and Lane in 2019. In their investigation, Waegemakers Schiff and Lane (2019) study the different components affecting the work development of providers of homeless services across 23 different organisation in the Canadian territory. This study aimed to analyse if these professionals presented sentiments of burnout, vicarious traumatisation and post-traumatic stress disorder as a consequence of their employment; and the relationship between these three factors. The research, due to the large scope, applied a quantitative approach to the research, with the use of questionnaire that included two different scales; the Professional Quality of Life, which measures compassion fatigue and burnout, and the post-traumatic stress disorder check list. The findings of this research prove the existence of high levels of burnout within the group surveyed, and that the adverse impact of the work environment on homeless providers is greater than emergency responders. Furthermore, the researchers also noted in their conclusion that their study might not be generalizable, and thus, further research is needed (Waegemakers Schiff and Lane, 2019)

The research carried out in this field, as the one described thereto, highlights the harsh conditions under which service providers carry out their practice and the development of burnout as a consequence of them. Taking in consideration the factors described thereto and the lack of research in homeless services, the dissertation carried out aims to provide an insight into the conditions that homeless service providers experience in their practice.

2.7 Summary

The literature review carried out in this chapter indicates the complexity of the burnout syndrome, and its conceptualisation. Paying special attention to the demarcation of the concept elucidated by

Maslack and Jackson (1981), that identifies three components within the concept: emotional exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy.

There are several components that generate the apparition of burnout sentiments, but it is clearly identified that stress takes a principal stand in the generation of this syndrome. Furthermore, both personal and organisational factors have been found to participate in developing this syndrome; nevertheless, research in this field has focalised on the later.

The organisational factors described in the development of burnout have been divided into two subgroups according to the demands and resource theory, dividing these into job demand and job resources. Within these two groups, the concepts analysed included: workload; the existence of role conflict and role ambiguity; the influence of the emotional demands attached the profession; the impact of the hours worked in the person's wellbeing; the perceived organisational and peer support; the effectiveness of supervision; and the influence of the remuneration received.

Previous research has shown interested in the burnout phenomenon and the concepts attached to it, as shown in this literature review. Nevertheless, this compilation of literature has also revealed the lack of research related to this syndrome in the homeless services, with the particular incidence in the Irish context. This research aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the state and causes of burnout in homeless service providers in Ireland, in relation to their perception of burnout and its components, the identification of stress in the workplace and the job demands and resources existent that might support the apparition of this syndrome. Thus, supporting to cover the gap existent in current literature.

2.8 Research Aim and Questions

The literature review aforementioned has provided for the theoretical framework to develop and conduct this research. This dissertation has been developed with the aim to explore in-depth the experiences of burnout of the providers of homeless services and the organisational factors inciting this phenomenon. As exemplified in the literature review, there is a gap in the literature addressing this issue in homeless related services; therefore, this research would like to provide an insight regarding this syndrome in the Irish homeless services.

The research question that has guided this research is:

'The exploration of burnout in homeless services through the experiences of service providers'.

The resultant research sub questions are listed below:

1. How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?

This question aims to understand the different components of burnout, following the conception of this syndrome elucidated by Maslach and Jackson in (1981). Through this question the concepts of emotional exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy will be explored in relation of the experiences of providers of homeless services (Maslach and Jackson 1981).

2. How do employees perceiving their work in terms of stress and its impact?

This questions aims to analyse the level of stress that employees recognize in their work development and the consequences it produces in their employment and personal life. Jin *et al* (2020) recognized stress in their research as the main component producing burnout, while Nisar and Rasheed (2020) also identified stress as the main component of burnout resulting from highly demanding workplaces. Taking in consideration these theories and the challenging scenario that homeless services provide, this question will support the understanding of the level of stress perceived by homeless services' employees.

3. Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?

The aim of this question is to analyses the different components of the job demands and job resources in relation to the JDR theory and it incidence in the generation of burnout. Demerouti *et al* (2001) expounds in their research that there are several factors present in the working experience that impact the production of stress and, therefore, burnout, and these can be classified into two categories: job demands and job resources. Following this theory, the job demands: workload, role ambiguity/conflict, emotional demands and working hours; and the job resources: workload, role ambiguity/conflict, emotional demands and working hours; will be analysed to identify if they are supporting the incidence of burnout in the providers of homeless services.

No explicit hypotheses were made; the researched carried out has an exploratory nature, which looks to understand a subject in-depth; thus, the formulation of hypotheses could have affected the research's conduction, becoming this biased. No formulating hypothesis allowed this research to be open to the genuine feelings of burnout within the researched group and draw conclusions without any researcher's constraints.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3. Introduction

This chapter of the dissertation will provide an elucidation of the research aim and the objectives that the dissertation aims to achieve. Moreover, an exploration of the research methods and approaches available will be carried out, with particular incidence on the research methods and instruments chosen for this dissertation and the rationale for their selection. Furthermore, this chapter will also address the limitations of the research and the ethical concerns attached to it.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The first component object of analysis within the methodology implemented in this study is the research paradigm. Guba and Lincoln (1994, p.105) define the concept of research philosophy as “the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in the choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways”. In other words, it provides for a specific view of the world for its holder. Implementing a research philosophy is essential when conducting research based on human behaviours, as it determines the research design and supports the reliability and generalisability of the study. Furthermore, when questioning what philosophical approach would be best suited for a research, the research philosophy’s adoption will be determined by the nature of the reality to be explored and the researcher’s preference (Kankam, 2019). There are four research philosophies derived from the researcher’s views of the study process: positivism, critical realism, pragmatism and interpretivism (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Consequently, an analysis of each of these philosophies will be carried out.

- Positivism. This research philosophy seeks to provide a clear and accurate view of the world. It relates to the stance of natural scientists, which looks to observe realities to produce law-like generalisations. This philosophy is based on the use of scientific methods to produce pure data. (Saunders *et al*, 2019).

- Critical Realism. This philosophic approach strives to understand phenomena by studying its underlying structures, believing that reality cannot be assessed through our observations alone (Al-Sharif, 2020). Furthermore, due to the focus of its study, often critical realism takes the form of historical analysis (Saunders *et al*, 2019).

- Pragmatism. This action-oriented philosophical approach looks for information with the aim of solving an existent problematic. Moreover, the pragmatic approach believes that knowledge cannot be extracted from individual beliefs, experiences or habits (Maarouf, 2019).
- Interpretivism. This philosophical method aims to understand and interpret realities through individuals or groups' experiences, as it believes that reality is founded on social constructions. Moreover, the interpretivistic approach values subjectivity and inclusivity, as it seeks to validate multiple interpretations of the reality object of study (Nguyen and Tran, 2015; Goldkuhl, 2012). Furthermore, this approach values the collection of qualitative data to define the uniqueness of particular situations, promoting participation and creating an in-depth study of phenomena (Chowdhury, 2014).

The philosophical approach that aligns with the research questions and objectives identified is the interpretivistic philosophy. This research philosophy supports the fundamental concept of the research carried out, which is to understand burnout through the experiences and opinions of people suffering this syndrome. Furthermore, the interpretivistic stand allows this research to have multiple views of the issue studied, which is paramount for this dissertation, and values every contribution.

3.2 Research Approach

There are two different reasoning approaches that research can adopt to achieve its purpose, inductive and deductive. The deductive approach in research starts with the formulation of generalisations, also known as hypotheses, and seeks to prove if these generalisations apply to the specific context studied (Hyde, 2000). Conversely, the inductive approach to research looks to work exclusively with participants' experiences, being these the study drivers. Furthermore, this research approach generally starts with the formulation of aims and objectives and seeks to achieve these through the research process (Liu, 2016).

The research conducted has been approached from an inductive perspective, as no pre-conceptualisation of the findings was made, in the form of hypotheses, in this dissertation's conceptualisation. This research has been guided by its aim and subsequent objectives, allowing for conclusion drawing from the findings obtained. The rationale for selecting this approach is being guided by the interpretative quality of the inductive process, which aligns with this research's aim: 'the exploration of sentiments of burnout in the providers of homeless services in Ireland'.

Furthermore, the inductive research approach seeks to condense extensive pieces of information, establishing relations amongst them, creating a summary of findings, with the aim to develop a theory regarding the phenomenon studied (Thomas, 2006). This corresponds to the research carried, in which several pieces of information regarding burnout were gathered to find commonality amongst them, to provide a view of the burnout syndrome in homeless services through the findings of the research.

3.3 Research Design

In the design of a research, there are two distinct data collection methods to be considered, quantitative and qualitative. These information-gathering strategies act as the framework of studies and determine the tools to be applied.

Quantitative research refers to a data collection method in which the connection between variables is studied, applying numerical measures and subjected to statistical analysis (Edwards, 2020). This approach is generally linked to the positivist research philosophy due to the high structuration of the information gathered, and its development of analysis to prove theories is frequently related to a deductive approach to research (Saunders *et al*, 2019).

Conversely, qualitative research methods refer to a series of methods related to the acquisition, use, and interpretation of non-numerical data to develop theory within the topic of investigation (Quimby, 2012). This research category is defined by its holistic view of the world, where behaviour is bound to situational characteristics and their interpretation of the context, being its primary concern the understanding of people experiences (Gupta and Awasthy, 2015).

The researcher's choice of the data collection approach could follow two variants, a mono-method or a mixed-methods approach. A mixed-methods approach to data collection uses both quantitative and qualitative tools to analyse the phenomenon object of study. This method has been considered more comprehensive than using only one method of information collection and provides more robust research findings due to the neutralisation of their respective weaknesses among qualitative and quantitative processes (Bracio and Szarucki, 2020).

In contrast, a mono-method approach to the research design is the implementation of only one of the methods of research aforementioned. Guest *et al* (2013) elucidates that mono-methods research approaches can adequately answer research questions and expounds that sometimes designing complicated research structures with multiple methods are not reasonable.

Considering the different approaches to data collections, the nature of the phenomenon object of study, and the time constrictions of this research, a mono-method, qualitative research was chosen and carried out. The qualitative concern regarding human experiences and the environment they are immersed in aligns with the research's aim and objectives projected. Furthermore, the application of only one method allows the researcher to focus on carrying out an in-depth exploration of the participants' feelings and experiences regarding burnout, especially under the time constriction of this academic research.

3.4 Research Tool

Qualitative research, as the one carried out, provides a diverse selection of research tools for the investigation of phenomena. The most common research tools for qualitative studies include observation, focus groups and interviews. All these inquiry methods are designed to allow the participants to express their thoughts in their own accord, with some of them, such as focus groups and interviews, providing a greater degree of freedom of response (Walle, 2015). Considering the literature related to qualitative research methods, the instrument deemed more appropriate for this research and thus implemented was semi-structured interviews.

In semi-structured interviews, the researcher formulates a list of prearranged questions that will unfold in conversation with the person interviewed. This research method allows people to express their ideas and opinions about a specific topic in their own concurrence (Qu and Dumay, 2011). Furthermore, this method has been found to produce robust data regarding people's experiences, opinions and perceptions, providing a calming atmosphere in which people feel more comfortable responding to questions (Queríos, Faria and Almeida, 2010). These features of semi-structured interviews are paramount for the research carried as it was a condition sine qua non, to explore the concept of burnout through the participant's experiences in a space in which they felt comfortable to share their insight.

The semi-structured interview carried out was divided into three distinct segments, related to the three research sub questions elucidated thereto (see appendix A). The first part was composed of a series of simple questions to break the ice regarding the interviewees' demographics, as well as their job description, longevity in the company and the employment field, and their motivation to work in this sector. The second section of the interview was based on the concept of burnout and its three dynamics. In this segment of the interview, the participants were asked about their conception of burnout, followed by three sets of questions regarding emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment. Lastly, the last portion of the interview was structured around a series of

questions related to the job demand and the job resources present, or not, in the organisation. Furthermore, after the planned questions were asked, the participants were provided with the space to ask further questions or provide further inside of events not included by the prearranged questions. The complete list of questions asked during the interview can be seen in appendix A included at the end of this dissertation.

During the interviews, the participants were allowed to answer the questions at their own pace and in their own accord; and only little prompting was provided to generate clarification or examples of the circumstances described. Moreover, to safeguard the interviewees' comfort, the participants were reminded at the beginning of the process that they could refuse to answer questions they did not feel comfortable with and that they could withdraw from the process at any time given. Nevertheless, none of the participants made use of these specifications in the development of the interviews.

The interviews were conducted through video conference on Microsoft Teams and recorded through the same program. Subsequently, the interviews were transcribed, and the information provided was analysed to find common themes and patterns.

Previous research has been carried out regarding burnout in the provision of human services following the same research design as the one carried out, qualitative research through semi-structured interviews, such as the studies carried out by Butler *et al* (2018) and Hoffman, Palladino and Barnett (2007).

3.5 Sample

Sampling has been regarded as the process of selecting a portion of a large group for a determined research purpose. Moreover, sampling provides a cost-efficient process to obtain accurate, faster results; and it has been viewed as the best option when resources are limited, as this research is (Bhardwaj, 2019). There are two distinctive sampling processes, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, there is an equal chance for every member of the population to be selected. Conversely, in non-probability sampling, the probability of being selected does not apply to the whole population (Taherdoost, 2016). The research carried out seeks information from a particular group of individuals, the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout; therefore, a process based on non-probability sampling has been selected. The sampling approach implemented in this study is a mixture of 2 sampling processes convenience sampling and purposive sampling.

The first sampling technique applied was convenience sampling, which is defined as a sample in which the researcher interviews whoever is available and willing to participate (Walle, 2015). This form of selection is the most appropriate due to the personal nature of the circumstances to be discussed within the research interview and the expectation that not everybody would feel comfortable participating. Thus, a sampling process in which the person decides willingly to participate seems the most suitable for this research and, consequently, applied to the study carried out.

An email seeking participants was forwarded by the researcher to all employees in Focus Ireland who interacts with the homeless population in their working development; and this was facilitated by Focus Ireland's human resources team who share the employee address book with the researcher. The email counted with a personal presentation of the researcher, a statement of the research's aims and objectives and the expected involvement sought out. Additionally, the email also provided a participant information sheet in which more information regarding the research and the participation required was provided (documents available in appendix B and C).

The demand for participation gathered through convenience sampling was more extensive than estimated, with twenty-two employees stating their willingness to participate. Due to the great demand for participation, and considering the time restrictions for this research to be carried out, interviewing twenty-two employees was not feasible. Therefore, a second tier of sampling was applied, this time through purposive sampling. This sampling method has been defined as a method in which the participants are selected due to certain qualities they hold (Bhardwaj, 2019).

Within the twenty-two individuals willing to participate, a selection of twelve participants was made, considering the gender proportion in the organisation, and to include as many categories of services within the organisation as possible. It is noteworthy to mention that in the totally of services provided by Focus Ireland, the majority of these are focused on advice and information and case management with working hours within 9 to 5, therefore its proportion in the sample is higher. Equally, regardless of the presence of the organisation in different counties the biggest proportion of service is placed in Dublin, therefore the proportion of Dublin based interviewees is higher. A breakdown of the participants' profile can be seen in the table below.

Participant	Gender	Type of service	Location	Working hours	Length of employment
Interviewee 1	Female	Drop in service	Dublin	9-5	1 year
Interviewee 2	Female	AI/ CM	Dublin	9-5	3.5 years
Interviewee 3	Male	AI/ CM	Sligo	9-5	15 years
Interviewee 4	Male	CM	Limerick	9-5	1.5 years
Interviewee 5	Female	AI / CM	Dublin	9-5	3 years
Interviewee 6	Male	AI	Kilkenny	9-5	2 years
Interviewee 7	Female	Residential	Dublin	Shift work	3.5 years
Interviewee 8	Female	AI	Dublin	9-5	3 years
Interviewee 9	Male	Residential	Dublin	Shift work	1 year
Interviewee 10	Female	Drop in service	Dublin	Shift work	3 years
Interviewee 11	Female	Relief worker	Dublin	Shift work	9 months
Interviewee 12	Female	CM	Waterford	9-5	4.5 years

3.6 Pilot Study

Prior interviewing the participants identified, a pilot study was carried out. A pilot study is a process utilised to prove the study's viability and improve the research quality, and can be carried out in two different forms: feasibility studies and pre-tasting pilot studies. Feasibility pilots are smaller versions of the research to be carried out, while pre-testing pilot studies seek to examine a determined research instrument (Malmqvist *et al*, 2019). The pilot study carried out identifies with the pre-tenting kind and has been conducted to test the viability of the interview's question, the time for its completion and identify possible faults.

A person not included in the 14 participants of the research was selected from the pool of 22 individuals willing to participate identified. The pilot study's completion indicated that the questions were easily understandable and provided enough time for personal elucidation. The time frame intended was achieved, and no faults were identified. Nevertheless, the pilot study helped the

researcher build up the confidence to carry out the interview process and feel comfortable within the role carried out.

Additionally, due to the willingness to participate received by a few project leaders and team leaders, which harbours a managerial position within the organisation, a pilot was carried out with a team leader to assess the interview's feasibility with this subgroup. The pilot study demonstrated that the interview questions did not apply to the employees in managerial positions as they are not in close contact with service users and have higher control of the work demands and resources than regular employees. Therefore, the participation of team leaders and project leaders of the organisation has not been included in the research.

3.7 Analysis of Data

Twelve interviews were carried using Microsoft teams' platform and recorded with the consent of its participants. The qualitative data obtained from said interviews were transcribed and analysed using a thematic analysis. This type of information analysis examines several events under the same core concept to support the development and analysis of cause-effect theories that support the understanding of phenomena (Turan, 2020).

The 12 interviewees carry out their work development in various types of homeless support services and in different areas of the Irish geography. The connection amongst the participants in this research is the experience of burnout and their employment within the same organisation in the provision of homeless services; Thus a thematic analysis was deemed the best option to analyse the qualitative data obtain to identified common themes and develop a theory regarding burnout in the homeless services.

The thematic analysis of the qualitative information obtained follows the theoretical framework developed by Braun and Clark in 2006. Their research developed a guide on how to carry out a thematic analysis identifying patterns and creating interconnections and providing clear guidelines for its rigorous conduction (Braun and Clark, 2006). This approach to qualitative analysis has six phases that were applied to the research carried out, and that will be expounded henceforth:

1. Data familiarisation: This section of the analysis correlates with the multiple readings of the information gathered in an active manner, immersing the researcher in the material sourced to identify themes or ideas. In this regard, the interviews' transcriptions were read multiple times to identify the main ideas in each of them.

2. Generation of codes: Coding relates to the most basic idea within the themes identified. In this phase, the information analysis takes the form of the coding process of the initial ideas identified, providing an equal amount of attention to each part of the information gathered. Coding can take different forms; nevertheless, in the analysis carried out, the coding process utilised different coloured highlighters to code each of the interviews sourced to identify the ideas found visually. Furthermore, notes were also made in the transcriptions gathered to clarify the codes found.

3. Theme searching: This section of the analysis focuses on the analysis of the codes recognised, to developed interconnecting themes, which broader constructions of the concepts previously located. Furthermore, in the identification of these themes, a correlation between them is also made, identifying the main themes and the subthemes. In the research carried out, the identification of themes took the form of a map, in which a description of the codes and the subsequent themes and subthemes were elucidated.

4. Theme review: This phase of the data review involves reviewing all the themes identified to refine them. In this section, some themes will be disregarded as there is not enough data to support them, and others themes of broader implications can get divided into various smaller, more specific themes. Furthermore, at this stage, the whole data gathered must be reviewed to verify that the theme map correlates to the information obtained and to identify any valuable information missed. In the study conducted, the theme map was reviewed and reorganised in relation to the totality of the information obtained, and the transcription of the interviews was read an additional time to identify any critical information overlooked.

5. Defining and naming themes: This part of the analysis focuses on the themes identified, brooding its conceptualisation and refining its content. The themes are correlated to extracts of the data and organised coherently, providing a written analysis of each of them. Furthermore, after this phase is completed, the themes would be clearly defined. For this purpose, a list of the themes identified in the theme map aforementioned was carried out, providing specifications for each theme related to the information obtained.

6. Producing the report: The final section of the thematic analysis corresponds with the development of an in-depth analysis of the themes identified and creating a report. Here, the complex information is narrated compellingly, convincing the reader of the analysis's quality and legitimacy. Moreover, the analysis should follow an accurate, concise, rational, non-repetitive and appealing structure. The report of the findings provided by this research will be expounded in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

(Braun and Clark, 2006).

This qualitative data analysis model is a straightforward and flexible tool to examine research without technical knowledge. Nevertheless, like other approaches to the analysis of information, the thematic analysis of qualitative research has its downsides. This type of analysis could be easily biased by the researcher's own thoughts, damaging the legitimacy of the analysis. Moreover, this analysis is a summary of the data gathered and a process of rationalising it, and thus it should inform the reader of what the information means, not just summarising. Furthermore, the researcher has to consciously safeguard the congruence between analysis and theoretical framework to provide a good analysis (Javadi and Zarea, 2016).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics are a subdivision of applied ethics that provides guidelines for researchers to conduct studies, safeguarding the participants' wellbeing and the research's veracity (Akaranga and Makau, 2016). The protection of the subjects involved through the application of ethical principles has been recognised in all types of research. Nevertheless, in qualitative research, ethical considerations take a robust stance due to the deepness of the processes used, as distress can be caused by exploring one's emotions or recalling past events (Binti Mohd Arifin, 2018).

In designing the research carried out, the sensitivity of the study's topic has guided its conceptualisation. It can be extremely challenging for people to express their sentiments and opinions about such a personal subject as burnout in homeless services, and some people might also fear being judged. Furthermore, the setting of the burnout sentiments, in this case in the workplace, add an extra layer of discomfort due to the essential nature of an individual's employment to survive in modern

society. Therefore, the ethical concerns of this research have been considered through its whole development.

3.8.1 Pre- and During the interview

Before the conduction of this research, an outline of the ethical considerations and process to safeguard these was approved by the NCI's ethics committee. Equally, while conducting the research, several steps were followed to safeguard ethical compliance.

All employees in the organisation received an information sheet (appendix C), as aforementioned, providing an overview of the research, its rationale, and the expected participation to ensure informed participation. Furthermore, the information contained in this document emphasised that participation in this research is entirely voluntary and that the participants can withdraw from the study at any point.

The employees that decided to take part in the research carried out were provided with a consent form (appendix D), outlining the aim of the research, the participation required, the risks associated with the research, the benefits of participating, request of the agreement for the use of video conference recording, the confidentiality and data security of the process, and the researcher's personal information in case any question arise. The consent forms had to be completed and returned before the interviews' conduction to safeguard that all participants were aware of the research's expectations and requirements.

During the interviews, the participants were informed once again about the possibility of withdrawal from the study; and additional consent for recording the interview was sought.

3.8.2 Data and Storage

The data collected has been encrypted and anonymised, with all identifiable information regarding the participants been removed. Furthermore, regarding the data acquired, the processes followed the current legislation regarding data protection. The data produced has been sorted with identification codes and placed in a password protected folder in the researcher's personal computer, to which no other person has access. This data will be deleted a year after the completion of this research.

3.8.3 Partakers

The interviews carried out took place through video conference using the platform Microsoft Teams, and their duration was around 45 minutes to 1 hour each. During the interviews, the research maintained a welcoming and pleasant environment to allow interviewees to feel comfortable with the process and generate authentic personal answers to the questions researched. The researcher

maintained eye contact, address the participants by name, and nonverbal and verbal queues were produced to show that active listening was maintained.

The questions elucidated were designed using simple wording for the easy understanding of the participants in the study. Moreover, the partakers were provided with opportunities to ask questions or clarification from the researcher if needed, and the possibility to refuse answer to any questions they felt uncomfortable with.

Due to the emotional content disclosed through the research, the participants were encouraged to seek mental health professionals' support if the research or research subject was affecting their wellbeing.

Furthermore, the day after completing each interview, the research provided each participant with a follow-up email to safeguard their wellbeing and to open a communication channel for any further questions the employees might have.

Great care was placed in this research design to avoid situations that might produce harmful effects on its participants.

Chapter 4. Findings

4. Introduction

This chapter of the dissertation will focus on analysing and discussing the findings obtained from the interview process' data. The findings originating from the thematic analysis described thereto have been divided into seven themes and the consecutive subthemes to support answering the research question, 'the exploration of burnout in homeless services through the experiences of service providers'; and the three research sub-questions identified thereto within chapter two. Quotes from the participants will accompany the analysis of each theme to exemplify the key points revealed through the analysis of the data.

4.1 Theme 1. Identification of Burnout

The definition of burnout was explored with all the participants. The answers received provided a wide range of definitions that differed from each other, but with the common characteristic that all of them identified burnout as being composed of multiple factors such as lack of motivation, a decline in physical health, poor mental health, diminished sense of care for one's work and a reduced sense of accomplishment among many others. All these components are present in the literature review as constituents of the experience of burnout and exemplify a good understanding of the interviewees' concept.

One concept present in most of the demarcations of burnout was the association of burnout with stress. Nine interviewees associated burnout with the existence of stress in the workplace and recognized its impact on their wellbeing

“my understanding of burnout is that it's kind of an emotional and physical response to stress from job stressors, that kind of affect your mental and physical health, and that it can present similar things to like depression or anxiety”- Interviewee 9.

All participants were asked to identify if they felt burnout, to which eleven participants recognized that they are feeling burnout to some extent or that they are in the process of getting burnout. The reminder partaker indicated that at times they feel burnout, as the feeling fluctuates depending on the workload and the responsibilities attached to it.

4.2 Theme 2. Emotional Exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is one of the components of burnout analysed through the interview process, with the aim to answer the research sub-question 'how are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?'. All of the twelve participants recognised elements of this stage of burnout within their work practice, and an in-depth analysis of the emotional exhaustion's components will proceed in the following sub-themes identified.

4.2.1 Sub Theme. Physical and Psychological Fatigue

All interviewees disclosed that they often had experienced fatigue related to the work carried out; and that the presence of this fatigue was not necessarily attached to the business of their environment but the emotional content of their interactions.

"I come home from a regular shift not necessarily a longer one, just one that wasn't overly taxing, just a normal day, and I am absolutely exhausted for no reason" - Interviewee 9.

"there are days that the job just sucks the life out of you, and you don't really want to do anything after... I feel sometime we take on some many of the problems other people have that it feels like drowning mentally" - Interviewee 8.

4.2.2 Sub Theme. Energy Replenishment

Seven participants stated that the breaks provided did not feel enough to go back to work feeling replenished.

"I don't know if I feel rested, I don't feel renewed, I dread going back after the weekend I dread it, the weekend never feels long enough" - Interviewee 2.

Additionally, two respondents acknowledged that sometimes they feel the time off provided is not enough, depending on the circumstances experienced at work, such as managing crisis which are stressful in nature. It is also significant to mention that three of the participants identified that their capacity to recharge their energy levels had been affected by the social and physical restrictions instated due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

“I think with the pandemic, this tiredness has been heightened like honestly we don’t have anything really to do on the weekends and with the 5km restrictions and everything... you just can’t fully wipe your mind out because there is nothing to do to give you that spark. Like you can’t see your friends, you can’t go to the cinema, you can’t go on holidays, all those things that made our job easier are gone” - Interviewee 6.

4.3 Theme 3. Cynicism

The interview carried out contained several questions regarding this component, intending to answer the research sub-question, ‘how are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?’. All of the twelve participants provided accounts of circumstances that correspond with the experience of cynicism in the workplace, in the form of detachment from the organisation, treatment of customers in a distanced manner, or through the avail of additional breaks not provided by the organisation. All these components have been identified as subthemes.

4.3.1 Sub Theme. Detachment from Clients

When asked if they have ever treated clients in a depersonalized manner, without acknowledging the person’s background, ten participants recognized that they had treated customers in this manner, whether this is done consciously or unconsciously, due to the stress and the hectic nature of the work carried out.

“I think when you are a bit overwhelmed with everything and like there's a lot going on in work and you get different people ringing in, you got like a long list of people to be calling back with different like a real range of different issues like I think sometimes yes, like you can just sort of treat them a little bit like another number that's ringing” - Interviewee 1.

*“it is really hard because we are dealing with so many different stakeholders in our jobs, and we have to tick this box, and we have to record this and do that, and it is heavy, I suppose trying to be with a person wholeheartedly 100% it is diluted because of the heaviness, of the elements of the job”
- Interviewee 12.*

Four of the respondents that recognized the depersonalized treatment of their customers described this depersonalization as a coping mechanism or a learnt skill to deal with difficult situations in the

workplace to safeguard their personal wellbeing; not identifying this component as a negative impact of burnout but a skill necessary for their work development.

*“There’s times where I think it’s actually something you have to develop in our job. You have to develop a kind of not a callous approach, but you have to develop an approach where you can cut through a lot of the b*****” - Interviewee 6.*

4.3.2 Sub Theme. Organisational Engagement

Two of the interviewees expressed that they were engaged with the organisation, with one of them stating that he/she feels identified with the aim and values of the organisation. One participant stated that she felt partially engaged to the organisation through all employee emails and practices instated by the organisation, such as reflective practice or supervision. Nine participants expressed that they did not feel engaged with the organisation. Not a common reason was found in their disengagement expressions, which listed causes such as their job not being their end goal, having too much to do in their work development to feel engaged, and being physically detached from the primary organisational resources.

“I don’t feel very connected to Focus Ireland. I don’t feel overly, connected to the organisation as a whole” - Interviewee 2.

“In my service, in my team I would be, but in the organisation as a whole no. I think it is because it is a high pressure job that everyone is doing what they can to probably stay afloat” - Interviewee 11.

Two of the participants identified that even though they did not feel engaged with the organisation as a whole, they felt highly participative in the services where they carry out their job.

“I am really engaged with my fish ball area of the project I work and the immediate connecting projects, but that would be it”- Interviewee 9.

4.3.3 Sub Theme. Sick Days and Extra Breaks

The responses received were polarising with a division of six participants that have never requested a sick day for personal reasons and six other participants that have taken a sick day to provide a break from the extenuating circumstances at work. The reasons provided by respondents for the utilisation of sick days in this manner was related to a sense of being overwhelmed with work and the need for

space to recharge mentally. Four of the interviewees that have requested sick days for non-medical reasons stated that they consider their mental well-being as a valid reason to request a sick day, even if the organisation does not allow this in their sick policy; And that the organisation should explicitly recognise this.

“this is quite I suppose conflicting for me because I am very much of the view that mental health restoration I think it is really important, I would say that taking a day off for your mental health if you are not feeling 100% can be, could be ahm... you know regarded as a sick day” - Interviewee 12.

“it's one of those days when you can't get your head off the pillow you just think for today, I can't do this, but I wouldn't say that it's not a sick day. I would consider that as a sick day, and I think all employers have to recognize this, that if we don't do those things to protect ourselves, we won't function properly as a worker”- Interviewee 3.

Seven participants recognised that they often take longer breaks than those provided. The rationale provided for this behaviour was primarily a coping mechanism to deal with feelings of being overwhelmed with the work.

“I just think sometimes the thoughts of going back again are overwhelming, you're like oh Jesus, please don't let this lunch end haha, and you might just need a bit more time to just clear your head”- Interviewee 1.

Theme 4. Inefficacy

The exploration of this burnout component allows the research to answer one of the research sub-questions proposed ‘how are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?’. All interviewees had a positive perception of themselves in relation to their work. They all felt that they were carrying out their work correctly and identified themselves as good at their job.

“I think I am good at my job. I mean, I've always tried to give 100% and you know, we're not always able to give that, but I think I've done the best I could at all times” - Interviewee 2.

“I would think I am, yeah. This is awful, I am shining my halo. Like when I stand back and take the time to reflect, you know... I normally do that through supervision and reflective practice, I can recognize that I am good at my job” - Interviewee 12.

Eight participants recognized themselves as valuable for the services and teams where they develop their professional practice. The participants that recognized themselves as valuable found that they

have had good feedback from management or the peers working along with them, and some of them identified themselves as valuable assets due to the knowledge and skills acquired through their professional practice.

“For my team definitely, like you need to have technical knowledge to carry out my job and certain skills to understand legislation and policy. Also my manager is really good at giving feedback, so I feel that she recognises the work I do and that makes me feel valuable”- Interviewee 8.

“yeah I think I am valuable, ahm... I think I am a team player, if something motivates me to do my job is my team and not letting them down. mmm.. and I think I’ve learnt a lot doing this work that I do have skills and knowledge that is valuable because it could be tricky how to navigate all these different systems” - Interviewee 2.

4.4 Theme 5. Stress

Several questions regarding stress and its impact were examined during the interviews with the aim to answer the projected research sub-question ‘how do employees perceive their work in terms of stress and its impact?’. All participants identified their job as stressful. The rationale for this perception was very varied in nature, being the main grounds, the fact that the service users are experiencing crisis and dealing with complex circumstances, the emotional load of the work carried out, and the job’s unpredictability.

“I think the job that all people in Focus do is stressful because you know, as I say, you're dealing with really complex people with really complex lives” - Interviewee 3.

“It is stressful work, and that that's true. It's a blend of highly emotional work combined with a lot of responsibility” - Interviewee 4.

Eight of the participants recognized that the stress experienced during their work development affected how they carry their work. The working attitudes recognized developed by the participants included a diminished sense of care for the clients, the conscious avoidance of specific tasks, and the development of feelings of frustration towards other agencies or stakeholders.

“If there is a day that’s particularly stressful, I would potentially avoid doing certain tasks, and because of that, like, there might be a day when I’m having a particularly stressful day, I just don’t care as much, my head isn’t in it” – Interviewee 6.

Eleven participants identified that the work setting's stress affects their personal lives, even if this happens unconsciously. The impact of work stress in the personal life took the form such as irritation towards cohabitants, emotional and physical tiredness and absenteeism from personal life.

“Yes, like as I said before it can put me on a mood, or it can make me extremely tired, or even sometimes a bit snappy to my partner”- Interviewee 8.

“I’ve had people being like. You’re hardly ever here, you’re very stressed when you come home and or that you become a bit of a robot when things are particularly bad. I think it definitely affects my personal life” - Interviewee 4.

Theme 6. Job Demands

The interviews carried out contained several questions regarding the resources present, or not, in the organisation with the aim to support answering the research sub-question, ‘is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands or/and job resources?’. Within this framework, the participants identified several of the work demands assessed through the interview process as sources of detrimental effects on their wellbeing.

4.4.1 Sub Theme. Workload

All the answers given differed in nature as some services seemed to have a more hectic nature than others. Some components were present in most of the interviewee's accounts; most of the participants identified their workload as stressful, acknowledging that it fluctuates from day to day and that there is a high level of unpredictability attached to it.

“when you are sitting in a desk at an office where you have a good feel for what kind of workload is going to be there the next morning, for us that question mark is there from the moment you arrive until you go, you know... anything can change, so your workload changes and your stress as well” - Interview 9.

"I think I always work at a high level of stress and I think a lot of that comes from the workload" -

Interviewee 3.

Seven participants voiced that they are unable to complete all the tasks expected from them during the workday, having to prioritize and leave things uncompleted. From this group of respondents, 2 interviewees also identified that the presence of extra duties, such as meetings or group supervision, adds an extra layer of pressure to their workload.

"I think I am at the stage that I just accept you can have a to do list, but your to do list is never going to be completed, ever"- Interviewee 12.

4.4.2 Sub Theme. Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict

Nine participants stated that their role was ambiguous and unclear and that sometimes they have to carry out duties that they feel they are unprepared to deal with. The majority of the participants that felt their role was unclear disclosed that they had a vague induction, or no induction at all, and an overall lack of training.

"When you first start, nothing is really explained to you, your role is not really explained to you that well, there is not proper training or induction in this specific role"- Interviewee 2.

"No, I think in words in my contract, the outline of my responsibilities and duties ahm... when my manager tells me to be wary of my boundaries and my role and that kind of thing, yes 100%, it is. But realistically, in practice, it is absolutely not" – Interviewee 12.

The participant that holds a relief position across different services indicated that her role depends on the person on shift with her assigning her duties, rather than the position itself. This adds a level of uncertainty as the employee has completely different duties to carry out within the same role on different shifts.

Eleven participants identified that the customers often have unrealistic expectations regarding their roles. The respondents recognized that clients could be quite demanding in their requests, cannot see the boundaries of their power or the work necessary to achieve outcomes.

"sometimes it's just you know, like you're trying to do your best and they're like, well, you're not doing your job" – Interviewee 7.

4.4.3 Sub Theme. Emotional Demands

The participants were asked to express how would they define working with the homeless. The definitions present in most of the respondents included the following terms *emotionally taxing, exhausting, volatile, stressful and draining*. All the participants recognized that it takes an emotional effort for them to carry out their work.

“it does require an emotional effort from us, from me, like you don’t know what someone is going to disclose to you while you are talking to them, so something that looks like a quick phone call it end up being them telling you that they are experiencing domestic violence or that they have been sexually assaulted” - Interviewee 2.

“because the client group we work with you can have a young person, service user, client whatever, maybe spit in your face, assault you, something that can be very emotionally damaging and you have to continue being professional” Interviewee 9.

“We can’t be housing support workers and just deal with housing, we are dealing with the traumas that people has gone through and the emotional outpouring from them, and that I feel it is traumatizing for us” – Interviewee 12.

4.4.4 Sub Theme. Working Hours

There was a clear division between the employees working set ours on a nine to five basis and the employees carrying out shift work. The eight participants that work set hours found themselves content with their working hours. The four participants that work shift work, with three of them also working during the night, defined their working hours as *tough, challenging and difficult*. They all also recognized that their work-life balance, motivation, and perceived well-being had been compromised due to the unsocial hours carried out.

“you get up early in the morning but you come home late at night, so all you do all day is your job. Sometimes I feel that when I am at work I don’t have time to do anything else. The days that I am at work I have to write off doing anything else”- Interviewee 11.

“It’s just really hard cause you are tired all the time, really hard to I suppose being in a good mood, really hard to be able to motivate myself”- Interviewee 9.

Theme 7. Job Resources

The participants were asked to answer several questions regarding the resources present, or not, in the organisation with the aim to support answering the research sub-question 'is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands or/and job resources?'. All the participants identified resources within the organisation that were not achieving their goal of supporting their work practice and development, and this will be discussed in an in-depth manner in the following subthemes henceforth.

4.4.5 Sub Theme. Peer Support

All the individuals interviewed reflected that they have a good relationship with their peers and felt supported by them. The rationale behind these answers was that working with a trusted team with which there is a good relationship makes the work easier, acting as a catalyst of employee wellbeing, and allows to share the thoughts about the work carried out and certain circumstances attached to it with a group that fully understands what the person is going experiencing.

"I know that I have their support when it is needed and I can carry out the tasks with a clean mind, not stressed, knowing that everything is going to be alright Also because I know they have my back I know that I won't be put in some weird dangerous situation, because they are going to be there"-

Interviewee 11.

"if a client is wrecking my head, I can outright say that to my colleagues that I am sick of this person today. It just makes it a bit easier like, especially if you're working with people you get on well like... It makes the day go faster, like you know that they're going to be sharing the workload with you, so it just makes everything so much easier"- Interviewee 10.

4.4.6 Sub Theme. Organisational Support

Eleven participants recognised that they did not feel supported by the organisation. The answers provided regarding the perceived organisational support were varied in nature. Five interviewees identified a lack of communication regarding changes in the organisation and initiatives implemented and felt that the employees' feedback was inexistent or not taken into consideration. Two participants stated that the organisation doesn't provide enough stability regarding job security and the type of contract provided. Three employees allude this lack of support to the inexistence of career progression in the organisation and the insufficiency of the training provided. Additionally, three interviewees

provided additional grounds for the perceived lack of support, alluding this to the lack of breaks in some services, the exclusion of relief staff from the organisation's wellbeing program and the disregard for promotion policies.

"It is an illusion of involvement sometimes, for the sake of it. Sometimes I feel like what is the point of me saying anything because you are not going to do anything about it anyway"- Interviewee 2.

"even before covid, I just don't see see the scope for professional development within the company there just isn't really that opportunity there"- Interviewee 4.

"like they send out some emails like mindfulness whatever, I don't think this is taking care of your employees. You know? I don't think that is enough. Because everybody can be just like here is a link to go meditate or whatever, these are not actual actions, it is more like in my opinion like they want to have a clear conscious about it. Again I am not getting those emails because I am relief, so that is another thing" - Interviewee10.

"I have seen in a number of occasions, that ahm... that there has being vacancies that haven't been advertised ahm... that have been put aside for somebody onsite"- Interviewee 12.

When asked about the perceived support provided by the immediate manager, eleven participants identified their managers are good sources of support, and that they do as much as they can to achieve this. With only one person describing an unsupportive relationship with their line manager.

4.4.7 Sub Theme. Supervision

Ten of the participants disclosed that they have regular supervision, where they feel supported and heard, and rated their overall experience with scores varying from six to nine, out of ten.

"I feel safe to say whatever I want in supervision. For the most part, I don't feel like it's going to come back and bite me and so. with my manager, I kind of feel like I'm actually comfortable bringing up issues that I am uncomfortable with, telling her what I don't like about the organization" – Interviewee 6.

From this group, five participants stated that their supervisor being their direct manager has implications to the level of honesty that can be achieved in the supervisor. The respondents felt that managers also carrying out the role of supervisors created a conflict of interests, as the feelings expressed during supervision could affect how managers view them as employees.

“I think there is a weird element of supervision being with your manager, because how am I going to be discussing certain things? or like if you have an issue with your manager and maybe you are not ready to talk about it with them, you don’t have really anywhere to go with that” - Interviewee 2.

“I work so closely with my supervisor; it's it is a bit awkward to say things” - Interviewee 1

Two participants rated the supervision as zero. One of them stated that the line manager did not provide him with the supervision required, having less than one a year when it is intended for supervision to happen every eight weeks. While the remainder partaker that rated the supervision with a 0, stated that supervision is not provided for relief staff in general, and even though she has requested to have it as a personal choice, there has been no answer from human resources or management.

4.4.8 Sub Theme. Pay

Eight participants disclosed that the remuneration received for the work conducted is not reflective of the effort they put into their roles. There was an overall acknowledgement that they work for a non-profit organisation, but regardless of this characteristic, they felt that the job's stress did not match their salary.

*“I was thinking this is not worth it, I don't know why I'm doing this, and a lot of it was down to pay and I thought that if the pay was a little bit better, the job is still s*** sometimes but at least you'll be like, well, at least I'm getting well compensated” - Interviewee 6.*

“I feel for how hard the things we see are and the whole emotional effort we need to make daily, no... we don't get paid enough” – Interviewee 8.

Furthermore, one participant identified that segments of the organisation that are not in close contact with the homeless population, such as human resources or fundraising, are paid equally or higher than frontline workers, finding this unfair.

In addition, another respondent disclosed that the problems with remuneration in the provision of homeless services is more of a systemic problem, and that better conditions for homeless services providers or care worker should be demanded.

“I think we're giving statutory bodies far too good of a deal, and I think it would be very easy for social sector organizations to come together and demand better for their employees, not just the service users”- Interviewee 5.

4.5 Limitations of the Study

The limitations of a study are those characteristics of the research, or the methodology used that influence the analysis and interpretation of the findings (Price and Murnan, 2004). Regarding the research design, there are certain limitations attached to the use of qualitative methods of analysis. The research quality is over-dependent on the researcher's skills and could be easily influenced by the researcher's biases. Furthermore, the researcher's presence in the data collection process could influence the subjects' response (Anderson, 2010). Moreover, qualitative studies have been found to be not representative of the broader population as their quantitative counterpart due to higher levels of uncertainty held in this type of research design (Atieno, 2009)

Additionally, other drawbacks have been identified within the study carried out, such as time constrictions, which has affected the number of interviews carried out, and the inclusion of only one homeless provider in this study. The research carried out is based in only one organisation providing homeless services, and some of the issues discussed within this research and its findings might not be representative of other organisations in the country providing similar services.

Chapter 5. Discussion

In this chapter, the research findings will be presented, exploring their meaning comprehensively for the dissertation carried out, and the relation with the literature review previously presented.

5.1 Burnout Dimensions

The principal aim of this research was ‘the exploration of burnout in homeless services through the experiences of service providers’.

The definition of burnout, in the literature review, is characterised by the presence of chronic interpersonal stress as the underlying force propitiating the origination of this syndrome (Maslach, 1978). The presence of stress as the main component of burnout was identified by all participants in the research. Moreover, when analysing this concept through the interview process, the respondents provided numerous definitions of burnout with different characteristics such as lack of motivation, exhaustion, poor mental health, diminished sense of care for one’s work and a reduced sense of accomplishment, among many others. All the components aforementioned are mentioned in the different definitions of burnout presented in the literature review carried out, such as the perception of fatigue (Freuenberger, 1978), lack of energy (Edelwich and Brodsky, 1980) and the perceived disengagement from one’s job (Perlman and Hartman, 1982). The diversity in the answers provided in the definition of burnout could also be regarded as a reflection of the different variations in this syndrome’s conceptualisation, which lacks a worldwide accepted classification.

The demarcation of burnout elucidated by Maslach and Jackson (1981), was implemented as a guide to analyse the different components of burnout: emotional exhaustion, cynicism and inefficacy.

5.1.1 Emotional Exhaustion

The first dimension of burnout analysed was emotional exhaustion, which Maslach and Leiter (2007) identify as the sense of being depleted of the psychological and physical resources, unable to replenish these resources. Within this dimension, two different components have been analysed the sentiments of exhaustion and the sense of energy replenishment by the employees. All participants disclosed that they have felt fatigued from work carried out due to the emotional content perceived in their work. When enquired regarding the replenishment of energy through breaks such as annual leave and weekends, the majority of participants also identified that the time out of work did not appear enough to provide the energy replenishment needed; with a notable incidence on this component of the crisis experienced at work and the impact of Covid 19 in providing the outlets necessary to recharge their energy levels.

The high incidence in responses within the emotional exhaustion dimension of burnout confirms this component's presence in the experience of this syndrome by service providers of homeless support in the organisation researched.

5.1.2 Cynicism

Cynicism is the second dimension of burnout that identifies with the generation of adverse feelings and a sense of disengagement towards a person's employment, producing a loss of idealism and the dehumanisation of others in the process (Maslach and Leiter, 2016; Maslach *et al.*, 2001). Due to the constant contact with others in the development of their practice, the concept of depersonalisation was analysed, with almost all participants identifying depersonalising attitudes towards their clients, whether this was made consciously or unconsciously, due to the stressful situations experienced. Some participants identified this detachment from the clients as a coping mechanism, not a negative consequence of burnout. Finding that supports the research carried out by Kristensen *et al.* (2005), which identifies depersonalisation as a coping strategy to deal with burnout and not one of its components.

Within the dimension of cynicism, following Maslach and Leiter (2016), the employees' perceived engagement was also assessed, with the majority of the participants identifying themselves as not engaged with the organisation. This finding could be viewed as a component of cynicism or a consequence of the presence of this component of burnout; as previous research elucidates, the development of cynicism in the workplace can be associated with unfavourable outcomes for the organisation, such as disengagement, low performance, and an increment of turnover intentions (Çına, Karcioğlu and Aslan, 2014)

Half of the respondents had availed of sick days when they were not physically ill and that the majority of the participants make use of longer breaks not provided by the organisation to cope with the overwhelming nature of the job. These findings support previous research in the field that identified the use of longer breaks as a mechanism to detach oneself from the work duties as a visible sign of cynicism (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2012).

The high incidence in responses within the cynicism dimension of burnout and the attitudes developed in relation to this concept, explained thereto, confirm this component's presence in the experience of burnout by providers on homeless services in the organisation focus of research.

5.1.3 Inefficacy

This component relates to the appearance of feelings of diminished accomplishment and a devaluated perception of the capacity to carry out one's job successfully (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). This dimension of burnout usually appears as a consequence of the previous two, emotional exhaustion and cynicism, as it is difficult to feel accomplished when feeling exhausted and disconnected from their employment (Maslach and Leiter, 2008). Conversely to the findings in previous research stated thereto, all the respondents in the study had a positive perception of their work. They identified themselves as good at their job, with most participants recognizing themselves as valuable for their teams.

The research cannot support the existence of this burnout dimension within the provision of homeless services. This diversion from previous research could be explained by the close contact with their customers, as their work outcomes are easily recognizable through the interventions they achieved, such as supporting a client getting out of homelessness. It would be of interest to study this component of burnout more comprehensively in the provision of homeless services to study if the findings encountered regarding inefficacy are inherent to this type of services or not.

5.2 Stress

Stress has been regarded in the burnout literature as the main component producing this syndrome's appearance (Jin *et al*, 2020). And therefore, was of interest for this research to analyse the perceptions of work-related stress in homeless services providers, to answer the research sub-question 'how do employees perceive their work in terms of stress and its impact?'. All participants recognised their employment field as a highly stressful environment defined by the difficult circumstances they encounter in their daily practice, the emotional content attached to their work, and the job's unpredictability. This finding supports previous research that established that homeless services are high-intensity environments that can strain their providers' emotional stability due to continuous exposition to distressing circumstances (Lemieux and Taylor, 2019).

Due to the perceived stress experienced, most participants developed adverse attitudes towards their job, such as diminished care towards their clients, the avoidance of their tasks, and frustration towards other agencies they work in conjunction with. The attitudes developed from the stressed suffered aforementioned could be linked to visible signs of burnout as the development of a reduced sense of care towards clients and the avoidance of tasks or duties are signs of the presence of the second

component of burnout cynicism (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2012; Hollet-Haudebert *et al*, 2011; Schaufeli *et al*, 2002).

The overall presence of high levels of stress, like the one stated by the participants, and the over-involvement in one's person job, as the homeless services require, has been positively linked with the development of the first dimension of burnout, emotional exhaustion (Lee *et al*, 2011). It could be understood that the high level of stress present in the professional development of the homeless services providers participating in this research is impacting the apparition of experiences of burnout within the dimension of emotional exhaustion and cynicism.

5.3 Job Demands and Job Resources

JDR theory elucidates, the demands of a job and the resources it puts in place have an impact on the generation of stress and the subsequent productions of burnout (Hatch *et al*, 2019; Demerouti *et al*, 2001). Therefore, it was of interest for this dissertation to analyse the job demands and resources present in the work development of the homeless services providers, to answer the research sub-question 'is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?'

The discussion of the findings provided by this dissertation in relation to the literature review existent will be divide into the two components of the JDR theory job demands and job resources.

5.3.1 Job Demands

Job demands are the organisational factors, whether physical o or social, that required a physical or psychological effort and that are associated with emotional costs (Turek, 2020); and it has been proven by previous research that high work demands influence the generation of burnout (Seljemo, *et al*, 2020). Therefore, it was an aim of this study, as aforementioned, to analyse if the demands of the job were affecting the wellbeing of the employees, and thus the generation of burnout. The job demands studied through the research carried out were workload, role ambiguity and role clarity, emotional demands and working hours, and an in-depth discussion of each of them will follow henceforth.

5.3.1.1 Workload

The interviewees provided different accounts for their perception of their workload, which can be understood by the different nature of the services they develop their practice in. Nevertheless, the

majority of the participants disclosed that they perceived their workload as stressful due to the uncertainty and unpredictability attached to it. This unpredictability could be explained by the group they provide support for, which presents high demands due to the experience of crisis, such as evictions, sleeping rough, or drug addiction; working in a highly demanding environment, such as the one aforementioned, has been linked to an increment of the perceived stress by the employee and supports the generation of burnout (Kim *et al*, 2019).

Most of the participants disclosed that they rarely have time to complete all the tasks expected from them during their practice. This supports the findings in previous research that correlates the impossibility to complete all tasks assigned with highly demanding environments and the development of burnout. (Maidasari, 2018)

5.3.1.2 Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict

The overall perception of the majority of the participants in the study regarding the clarity of their role was that they felt it was not clearly demarcated, finding themselves carrying out duties that they felt they were not sufficiently trained for. Moreover, most of the respondents identified their induction process, which clarifies the job's general duties and procedures, as vague or inexistent. Thus, through these accounts, we could identify a high level of ambiguity in work carried out by homeless services providers.

On the other hand, regarding role conflict, almost all participants identified the customers as the primary source of the role conflict, as they sometimes expect more of their position or are incapable of seeing the extension and limitations of the work carried out by the employee.

The existence of situations where the role and the expectations attached to it are not clearly defined, like the one's described thereto, have been considered as generators of burnout; as the emotional effort a professional should put towards their job gets diverted to clarify the role carried out and its expectations (Panari *et al*, 2019). Thus the ambiguity and the unclear expectations of their roles could be influencing the sentiments of burnout existent.

5.3.1.3 Emotional Demands

The presence of these demands in the working relationship has been correlated to the generation of cognitive stress (Elfering *et al*, 2017), being the stress perceived the main initiator of burnout (Jin *et al*, 2020). All participants in this research identified working with the homeless as emotionally demanding, defining this type of work as emotionally taxing, traumatizing, stressful and draining. This

perception could be propitiated by the traumatic circumstances attached to this subgroup of society that has been often exposed to different types of trauma, such as drug abuse, domestic violence or sexual assault, among many others (Hopper *et al*, 2010).

Furthermore, the unanimous perception of this type of work as emotionally demanding supports previous research that states that prolonged exposure to emotionally demanding environments and traumatic events, such as the one's described thereto, produces the appearance of this syndrome (Xanthopoulou *et al*, 2007).

5.3.1.4 Working Hours

Concerning the participants' working hours, the most significant finding was identified in the group of employees carrying out long working hours through shift work, some of them even working during the night. The participants under unsocial hours recognized that their work-life balance had been compromised and perceiving low levels of motivation and well-being within themselves. These findings are consistent with the research existent in the field, which identifies shift work as the source of reducing employee's well-being (Hulsegge *et al*, 2020; James *et al*, 2017).

There are certain job demands present within the provision of homeless service in the organisation researched that are impacting the well-being of its employee, and thus, could affect the appearance of burnout. This supports the research previously elucidated in the literature review that positively correlates high levels of job demands with the generation of burnout (Seljemo *et al*, 2020).

5.3.2 Job Resources

Job resources are organisational factors that support goal achieving, decreases job demands, and reduces psychological and physiological costs while stimulating growth and development (Demerouti *et al*, 2001). The existence of job resource in the working relationship has been found to negatively impact the appearance of burnout, acting as a buffering system promoting wellbeing (Gonzalez-Mulé *et al*, 2020; Van Veldhoven *et al*, 2020; Xu and Payne, 2020); therefore, this research aimed to analyse if the job resources provided by the organisation were achieving their protective function.

The job resources that were examined were: peer support, organisational support, supervision, and pay, and an elucidation of the findings obtained about each one of these components will follow.

5.3.2.1 Peer Support

Regarding the support provided by their colleagues, all participants disclosed that they have a good relationship with their peers and feel supported. Additionally, the respondents expounded that relationship with their colleagues made the work more bearable, as they were able to share experiences with other individuals that understand the work carried out. This finding correlates to the theory that good working relationships promote well-being and resilience in the workplaces (Ho, 2016) and emotional support through team's discussions (Cook *et al*, 2020; Mcfadden *et al*, 2019; Ruch, 2007).

Conversely, burnout has been linked with unhealthy relationships among peers (Ho, 2016); this research cannot support this theory as the group interviewed did not present this situation.

5.3.2.2 Organisational Support

The organisational support was divided into two categories, the support perceived from direct managers and the support perceived by the organisation as a whole.

Regarding managerial support, almost all respondents identified that their direct managers were a good source of support and provided as much support as possible.

Conversely, when enquired regarding the perceived support from the organisation as a whole, the totality of the participants recognised that they feel unsupported by the organisation, due to a wide variety of reasons; which included lack of feedback, low job security, no possibilities for career progression, lack of standards of work, poor training, the exclusion of some employees from organisational practices, and the disregard for some policies and procedures. These statements support the existent theory in organisational support, which expounds that when employees perceive their employer as unsupportive, they acquire passive attitudes towards work and may display burnout signs (Wang and Wang, 2020).

Furthermore, like the aforementioned, feelings of unsupportiveness have been regarded in burnout literature as the main predictor of this syndrome (Anomneze *et al*, 2016).

5.3.2.3 Supervision

Almost the totality of the people interviewed for this research disclosed that they have regular supervision, in which they feel supported and listened to. This finding supports previous theory that found that supervision helps employees in processing situations related to their work practice,

allowing them to be more effective and create strategies to cope (Wallbank and Hatton, 2011; Wallbank and Robertson, 2008).

Conversely, two partakers have different views regarding supervision, as for one, the process of supervision is inexistent, and the remainder one receives supervision sporadically. This disclosure, and the fact that supervisors are direct managers, causing restrictions in the level of sincerity displayed during supervision, could be affecting the appearance of burnout. As the protective space that supervision is supposed to provide to safeguard the employee from stress and burnout (Wallbank and Hatton, 2011), it is not provided or perceived.

5.3.2.4 Pay

The information obtained through the interviews regarding the remuneration received by employees for their work identified that most participants recognised that the payment received was not reflective of the effort their job requires. Creating a mismatch between the stress created generated by their work and the salary received. Moreover, one of the participants perceived unfairness in the organisation's pay scheme as frontline workers received an equal remuneration as the organisation's office-bound segments do.

This discontent with the remuneration received could be affecting the perceived burnout that the employees interviewed have; as previous research states, fair remuneration motivates employees and decreasing the influence of burnout and supports them coping with adverse job demands (Salami and Ajitoni, 2016). Therefore, as the remuneration received is perceived as inadequate, the sheltering component against burnout that it should provide is inexistent.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

This dissertation aimed to explore burnout in homeless services through service providers' experiences, providing an analysis of the different components affecting the impact of this syndrome. The literature review highlighted the complexity of this syndrome and the different elements that take part in the generation of this phenomenon and provided the body of knowledge needed to implement this study. Regarding the research conducted, this follows a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews as the primary research instrument implemented. The interviews conducted were transcribed and examined using a thematic analysis of data.

The key findings obtained from the study will be expounded in reference to the three research sub-questions that guided the research carried out.

- How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?

The experiences of burnout mainly related to the dimensions of emotional exhaustion and cynicism, with all participants recognising behaviours or emotional outcomes related to these two dimensions. Regarding the third dimension of burnout, inefficacy, the research carried does not support the presence of this factor in the burnout developed by the providers of homeless services surveyed. Regardless of the challenging circumstances in which they carry out their work, all participants perceived themselves as good workers and valuable for their respective services.

- How do employees perceive their work in terms of stress and its impact?

This component was of extreme importance for exploring burnout, as stress has been regarded as the leading producer of the syndrome. The totality of interviewees identified their job as stressful due to their work's unpredictability, the crisis experienced by the service providers, and the emotional charge attached to their interactions with this subgroup of society. Confirming, therefore, the incidence of this component in the production of burnout. Furthermore, the research also showed that the stress experienced was correlated to the development of unfavourable working practices and impacted the participants' personal lives.

- Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?

Regarding these two components, the research found that job demands and resources influence detrimentally the work carried out in homeless services, consequently supporting the appearance of burnout.

Within the job demands present, most respondents identified their workload, role ambiguity and conflict, and emotional demands as sources of strain. Supporting the literature existent that expounds that this component's presence in the working relationship facilitates the generation of burnout. The last component analysed, working hours, was only deemed detrimental by the employees carrying work during unsocial hours. Supporting the literature existent that correlates shift work with a decline in well-being and the generation of burnout.

On the subject of job resources, the research analysed different resources present in their working development to identify if they were achieving their aim of supporting the development of well-being; therefore, impacting the stress levels suffered and the subsequent burnout. The majority of participants identified the organisational support and the remuneration received as the primary resources that were not achieving their goal of promoting welfare. Supervision was only perceived negatively by the participants who were not availing of it, or its provision was not applied appropriately, while the rest of the participants perceived it as a good source of support. Conversely, all participants' relationship with their peers was well perceived, identifying this as a promoter of well-being.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

The job resources and job demands analysed are related to only one organisation, as due to the time constrictions of this dissertation, as a more extensive scope in the research carried out was not possible. The findings in this research topic are bounded to the organisation chosen and their policies and procedure; therefore, the findings in this area might differ from one organisation to another. Therefore, it would be of interest for future studies to amplify the scope of research, including various organisations providing homeless services, to analyse if there is a commonality in the factors inciting the production of burnout.

The incidence of personal characteristics in the production of burnout was not analysed in the development on this research. This component in the production of burnout could be of importance for future research to assess its impact on burnout's overall production, apart from the organisational characteristics.

In the research conducted the representation of employees working shift work or night work was not very high as a small proportion of this type of workers requested participation. Therefore, it would benefit future research to try to achieve a more diverse group of participants, including more employees working unsocial hours.

This research has explored the concept of burnout through the experiences of homeless services providers, providing an insight into a field that has been systematically understudied through the years. The provision of these services present similarities with highly stressed environments such as the healthcare and social work field, with not as much recognition. This research adds to the limited body of literature existent referred to homeless services and wished to promote an interest in this sector and further research in the field.

Chapter 7. CIPD Requirements

7.1 Recommendations

The researcher has established a series of recommendations arising from the findings encountered in completing this research, and they will be expounded hereafter.

1. Working from home after Covid 19

It has been palpable through his research that one of the primary resources for employees to bear the emotional complexity of their work is to make use of their personal time to do activities that help them unwind. Currently, most employees not placed in residential or drop-in services are working from home, reducing the time needed to commute to work, thus allowing for a more significant amount of personal time. It would be of interest for the organisation framing this research to continue this practice once the Covid restrictions are lifted. Instating a half and half teleworking and office working timetable could allow employees to achieve a better work-life balance while continuing their close relationship with their peer and conduct the duties that need to be carried out face to face with clients.

This recommendation would be cost-free and could be implemented with no temporality restrictions as all the resources for teleworking have been put in place at the moment due to the pandemic experienced.

2. The implementation of the 4-day work week

In the same light as the previous recommendation, due to the importance of personal time and the ability to recharge mentally to carry out a job with such emotional strain, the institution of a 4-day workweek could benefit the organisation. This change in the working hours could improve the employees' well-being and the overall perception of the organisation in terms of support.

This recommendation would be cost-free, and the time for its implementation should not exceed three months.

3. The review of the supervision policies

Due to the importance of supervision in the creation and maintenance of employee well-being, the policies and resources used at the moment should be revised. The relief staff should be included in the provision of supervision with a mandatory nature. This could support this type of employee in

feeling engaged with the organisation and provide them with the space to discuss work-related circumstances and their professional development.

Furthermore, the human resource management team should revise their policies regarding the quality of supervision, ensuring all employees are consistently accessing this resource every eight weeks.

This recommendation would be cost-free, and its implementation should not exceed two months, as all the resources are already in place.

4. Improve organisational communication

Improving the communication in the organisation providing two-way feedback improves the morale of the employee's feeling engaged. The organisation could benefit from creating systems or groups of discussion in which the opinion of employees is seriously taken into consideration. Furthermore, the organisation could also benefit from communication originating from the bottom up to discuss issues or ideas that primarily affect employees, such as the organisation's well-being agenda. Highlighting the need for all types of employees to be included in this communication.

5. The development of an in-depth training program

The review of the current training program and creating a more comprehensive training package could benefit the organisation greatly in terms of performance, while supporting employee satisfaction and commitment. The organisation should also include specific training for the different areas in the organisation, such as mental health, mediation, or housing law, apart from all employees' generic training.

The review and implementation of a full training program is estimated to take up to a year, and the costs of this implementation could vary, as some of the training could be developed in house, or in partnership with other homeless related centres or organisations.

7.2 Statement of Personal Development

I decided to course the Master in Human Resource Management, coming from a Social Work and Meditation background. Throughout my professional development, I had recognised that the manner in which organisations treat their employees, and the policies and procedures implemented, have a significant impact on the overall satisfaction that a person holds regarding their job. I believe this awareness and the knowledge acquired through my studies regarding how people behave and

communicate and the need for a professional change gave me the foundation needed to further my education in this field.

The Masters' in Human Resource Management has been a great learning experience that has provided me with a whole world of knowledge that I did not have before and has expanded my horizons in terms of professional progression.

The dissertation carried out has been the most challenging and rewarding academic achievement I have accomplished to date, supporting me in improving my skills regarding time management and independent working and my overall knowledge of employee well-being and burnout.

One of the main difficulties faced during the completion of this dissertation was maintaining an equilibrium between my professional life, the completion of this dissertation and my personal life. This difficulty was easy to overcome after a set of strict deadlines were put in place, breaking down the work into small sections. In this regard, this dissertation has helped me develop my time management and independent working skills; skills, which will help my professional development move forward.

Apart from diving into a completely different sector, which was a challenge in itself, I had to face an additional challenge: my mother language. All my previous studies have been in my native language, and even though I was confident in my communication skills, I did not know if I would rise to the occasion. This dissertation has also helped me learn formal academic forms of communication, improving my overall confidence with my second language.

Furthermore, this dissertation has given me the possibility to research a subject that I am passionate about. Allowing me to enrich myself with the different views and notions regarding burnout and explore a current issue in homeless services that have been understudied and overlooked.

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Appendices

Appendix A- Interview Questions and Questions Rationale

Introduction

Hello, and thank you very much for participating in this interview. I really appreciate it. I am going to start this interview by reintroducing myself and explaining what to expect of this process. My name is Marta Franchy, and I am conducting this interview as part of my Master's in human resource management under the National College of Ireland. What I am trying to accomplish with this dissertation is to understand the feelings of burnout in the homeless services through the experiences of the employees, as this field hasn't really been explored. During this interview, I am going to ask you three sets of questions. The first part of the interview will be focused on your background; Then we will pass to the second part in which we will discuss how are you feeling emotionally towards your job, and for the third and final part, I will be asking you more specific questions about the work you carry out and your organisation. The interview will last for about 45 minutes to 1 hour. If at some point you decide you don't want to continue with the interview, please voice your concerns, and we will stop immediately. I wanted to highlight again, as mentioned before, that this interview is anonymous, and no personal information or recognisable characteristics will be shared in the research. Moreover, as part of the process, you will be provided with a complete transcription of this interview, and if you wish, I will make a copy of the final thesis available for you. Do you have any questions?

Ok, so let's start...

Demographics

- Age?
- Gender?
- Education?
- What is your job title, and what does your job entail?
- For how long have you been working in the organisation?
- Have you worked in any other homeless services? For how long?
- What are your motivations to work in this field?

Burnout's dimensions

- a. What do you understand for burnout?
- b. Emotional exhaustion
 - Do you feel burnout? How?
 - Do you feel exhausted after finishing your job for the day?
 - Are your breaks like annual leave, enough to feel energize to go back to work?
 - How is your work life balance? Do you bring your work problems home?
- c. Cynicism
 - Do you ever treat your customers in a depersonalized way, line numbers or cases?
 - Do you think you are engaged with the organisation?
 - Have you ever taken a sick day without being sick have a break?
 - Do you ever take longer breaks at work than you should?
- d. Inefficacy
 - Do you think you are good at your job?
 - Do you think you are valuable for your team/organisation?

Stress

- Do you feel stressed at work? Is your job stressful? Is this a normal quality of your job?
- How does the stress affect you in the work environment?
- How does the stress affect you in your personal life

Job demands

- a. Workload
 - How would you define your workload?
 - Do think you have enough time to complete all your tasks?
- b. Role conflict and role ambiguity
 - What do you think about your role? is it clearly defined?
 - Do you ever feel that you can't fulfil the expectation of clients/management?
Explain how.
 - Do you have all the information necessary to carry out your job?

- a. Emotional demands
 - How would you define working with the homeless?
 - Do you ever find difficult to focus at work?
 - Does your job require an emotional effort for you to carry it out?
- b. Working hours
 - What do you think about your working hours?
 - Do you get enough rest?
 - Do you think your working hours affect your personal life?
 - Do you think your working hours affect your wellbeing?

Job Resources

- a. Peer support
 - How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues?
 - Do you feel supported by them?
 - How does this affect your work and yourself?
- b. Organisational support
 - Do you feel your organisation supports you and looks after your wellbeing?
 - Do you think the processes in your organisation are fair?
 - Do you feel your manager supports you?
 - Do you think you have good working conditions?
- c. Supervision
 - How would you define your relationship with your supervisor?
 - Do you feel you can openly share your thoughts in supervision?
 - Can you rate your supervision from 0 to 10?
 - Would you change anything about your supervision?
- d. Pay
 - Do you feel that your work is fairly remunerated?
 - Do you think the paying scheme of your organisation is fair?

To finalize:

Thank you so much for giving us your time today, your participation is greatly appreciated. Before we finish the interview I would like to ask you if there is any question you would like to ask?

Additionally, is there anything else that you would like to talk about or to mention regarding your employment in homeless services that you think might be useful for this research?

Thank you very much for your time,

Questions Rationale

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 1: Burnout				
Q1-2	<p>What do you understand for burnout?</p> <p>Do you feel burnout? How?</p>	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	There is not a universal perception of what burnout is, as elucidated in the literature review, but multiple conceptualizations by a diversity of researcher, such as Freudenberger (1974), Maslach and Jackson (1981) or Perlman and Hartman (1982). Therefore it would be of interest to investigate what the concept of burnout means for each participant.	These questions supports the understanding of what burnout means for each one of the interviewees, and the effects it effect it produces within themselves
Theme 2: Emotional Exhaustion				
Q3	Do you feel exhausted after finishing your job for the day?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	Maslach and Leiter (2007) referred to emotional exhaustion as a dimension of burnout in which the person experience feelings of being overstretched and drained of the person's physical and emotional resources.	This question supports the identification of emotional exhaustion as one of the components of burnout being experienced by homeless services providers.
Q4	Are your breaks like annual leave, enough to feel energize to go back to work?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	Maslach and Leiter (2007) identified that the individuals experiencing emotional exhaustion are unable to refill the energy used for their work development	This questions supports the understanding of the concept of energy replenishment and its incidence in the emotional exhaustion of the employees.

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 1: Burnout				
Q1-2	<p>What do you understand for burnout?</p> <p>Do you feel burnout? How?</p>	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	There is not a universal perception of what burnout is, as elucidated in the literature review, but multiple conceptualizations by a diversity of researcher, such as Freudenberger (1974), Maslach and Jackson (1981) or Perlman and Hartman (1982). Therefore it would be of interest to investigate what the concept of burnout means for each participant.	These questions supports the understanding of what burnout means for each one of the interviewees, and the effects it effect it produces within themselves
Theme 2: Emotional Exhaustion				
Q3	Do you feel exhausted after finishing your job for the day?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	Maslach and Leiter (2007) referred to emotional exhaustion as a dimension of burnout in which the person experience feelings of being overstretched and drained of the person's physical and emotional resources.	This question supports the identification of emotional exhaustion as one of the components of burnout being experienced by homeless services providers.
Q4	Are your breaks like annual leave, enough to feel energize to go back to work?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	Maslach and Leiter (2007) identified that the individuals experiencing emotional exhaustion are unable to refill the energy used for their work development	This questions supports the understanding of the concept of energy replenishment and its incidence in the emotional exhaustion of the employees.

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 2: Emotional Exhaustion				
Q5	How is your work life balance? Do you bring your work problems home?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	Emotional exhaustion has been strongly linked with workplace environments with high levels of stress and the service providers' over-involvement in their work (Lee et al, 2011).	This question supports the understanding of the level of stress and involvement of the employees with their job; and the impact of these components in the capacity to replenish their energy in their time off work.
Theme 3: Cynicism				
Q6	Do you ever treat your customers in a depersonalized way, line numbers or cases?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	The second dimension of burnout, cynicism corresponds to the relational component of burnout, which produces hostile feelings and extreme detachment towards a person's employment, leading to a loss of idealism and others' dehumanisation (Maslach and Leiter, 2016; Maslach et al, 2001).	This question supports the identification of the dehumanisation component within the cynicism dimension

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 3: Cynicism				
Q7	Do you think you are engaged with the organization?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	The second dimension of burnout, cynicism corresponds to the relational component of burnout, which produces hostile feelings and extreme detachment towards a person's employment (Maslach and Leiter, 2016; Maslach et al, 2001).	This question supports the identification of the cynicism's component of organisational detachment
Q8-9	Have you ever taken a sick day without being sick have a break? Do you ever take longer breaks at work than you should?	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	Visible signs of cynicism encompass the use of pejorative language, the overuse of jargon, detachment from one's duties through longer breaks, and the over-rationalisation of situations. (Totawar and Nambudiri, 2012)	These questions supports the identification of availing of longer breaks as a component of cynicism within the group researched

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 3: Inefficacy				
Q10-11	<p>Do you think you are good at your job?</p> <p>Do you think you are valuable for your team/organisation?</p>	How are the providers of homeless services experiencing burnout?	The last dimension of burnout, also referred to as reduced personal accomplishment, corresponds with the self-assessment component of burnout, in which the person develops a tendency to de-value himself and his capacities, generating feelings of inadequacy (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). Individuals experiencing this component of burnout feel that they are incapable of succeeding in developing their job, generating strong sentiments of incompetency	These questions support the identification of the burnout's dimension of inefficacy
Theme 4: Stress				
Q12-14	<p>Do you feel stressed at work? Is your job stressful? Is this a normal quality of your job?</p> <p>How does the stress affect you in the work environment?</p> <p>How does the stress affect you in your personal life?</p>	How do employees perceiving their work in terms of stress and its impact?	Jin <i>et al</i> (2020) recognized stress in their research as the main component producing burnout, while Nisar and Rasheed (2020) also identified stress as the main component of burnout resulting from highly demanding workplaces. stress sphere of the syndrome. Additionally, stress has been identified as the main component producing the burnout component of Emotional Exhaustion (Alsharif, 2020).	These set of questions support the identification of stress level in the workplace. As well as its impact in their work development and their personal life.

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 5: Job Demands				
Q15-16	<p>How would you define your workload? Do think you have enough time to complete all your tasks?</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Previous research in a healthcare setting has identified that working with clients with high needs require a significant workload, which leads to increased job stress and possible burnout (Kim et al, 2019). Equally, high workloads and time constrictions have been regarded as recurrent issue in different researches carried out in service providers of homeless services (Mette et al, 2020; Robelski et al, 2020).	These questions support the understanding of workloads in homeless services and its impact in the generation of burnout.
Q17-19	<p>What do you think about your role? is it clearly defined?</p> <p>Do you have all the information necessary to carry out your job?</p> <p>Do you ever feel that you can't fulfil the expectation of clients/management? Explain how.</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Role ambiguity has been defined as the perception that individuals do not have all the information necessary to carry out their tasks or work. At the same time, role conflict has also been demarcated as the feeling of unable to fulfil incompatible job demands and expectations, incapable to satisfy all parts involved in the work development (Celik, 2013; Onyemah, 2008). The non-clearness of a person's role and the expectations attached to it, could propitiate burnout due to the extra emotional investments (Panari et al, 2019).	These questions support the understanding of the clarity and conflict present in the roles carried out in homeless services and their impact in the generation of burnout.

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 5: Job Demands				
Q20-21	<p>How would you define working with the homeless?</p> <p>Does your job require an emotional effort for you to carry out your work?</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Emotional demands have been defined as the work requirements that involve a constant sensitive effort during communication with customers (Stelmokienė, 2019). Emotionally demanding environments have been the cause of cognitive stress, with symptoms such as difficulty focusing or making decisions, memory retention, and thinking correctly (Elfering et al, 2017). Furthermore, previous research proposes that burnout is a consequence of prolonged exposure to emotional demands in the workplace (Xanthopoulou et al, 2007).	These questions support the understanding of the emotional effort that the providers of homeless services incur in their work development and its impact in the generation of burnout.
Q 22-25	<p>What do you think about your working hours?</p> <p>Do you get enough rest?</p> <p>Do you think your working hours affect your personal life?</p> <p>Do you think your working hours affect your wellbeing?</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Working hours are the hours in which the development of one's work takes place. In the literature available shift work is the source of well-being concerns as it has been linked to an overall decrease of the person's well-being in the form of physical ailments and mental health problems (Hulsegge et al, 2020; James et al, 2017). Furthermore, previous research has also found that there is a correlation between long working hours and burnout, especially in professionals under fifty years of age (Hu, Chen and Cheng, 2014).	Providers of homeless services in residential settings work hours are provided through rotas, in which some long and unsocial hours are included. These questions support the understanding of the effect that working hours have in the wellbeing of homeless service providers and its impact in the generation of burnout.

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 6: Job Resources				
Q26-28	<p>How would you describe your relationship with your colleagues?</p> <p>Do you feel supported by them?</p> <p>How does this affect your work and yourself?</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Peer support has been defined as the extent to which employees count on their colleagues to assist and support them during their work development (Tafvelin, 2019; Caringi et al, 2017). Positive relations among colleague's act as a sheltering system, protecting the employee from stress and improving their wellbeing and creating resilience. Conversely, the lack of social support in the workplace can lead to burnout, as employees do not benefit from healthy work environments where to share their work experiences (Ho, 2016).	These questions support the understanding of the effect that the support of peers have in the wellbeing of homeless service providers and its impact in the generation of burnout.
Q29-31	<p>Do you feel your organisation supports you and looks after your wellbeing?</p> <p>Do you think the processes in your organisation are fair?</p> <p>Do you feel your manager supports you?</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Organisational support relates to the individual's perception of how the organisation values their contributions and safeguard their welfare (Turek, 2020). If individuals don't perceive support from their companies, they acquire passive work attitudes, reduce their productivity, and may exhibit burnout symptoms (Wang and Wang, 2020). The organisational support could be shown in different working scenarios, such as the perceived justice and fairness of the organisational processes, the support provided by managers, the presence of inducements, and the existence of good working conditions (Zeng et al, 2020).	These questions support the understanding of the effect that organisational support has in the wellbeing of homeless service providers and its impact in the generation of burnout.

Ref	Question	Relates back to which Research Question?	Source of Question	Additional Comments
Theme 6: Job Resources				
Q32-35	<p>How would you define your relationship with your supervisor?</p> <p>Do you feel you can openly share your thoughts in supervision?</p> <p>Can you rate your supervision from 0 to 10?</p> <p>Would you change anything about your supervision?</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Supervision is the formal process of supporting, guiding, advising, and promoting growth in the employees; as well as a tool to encourage quality and wellbeing in the workplace (Marashi and Bani-Ardalani, 2017). In the provision of human services, the establishment of supervision provides for a safe space to communicate complex characteristics of the work, which are inappropriate to share with other people, protecting the employee from stress, burnout and trauma (Wallbank and Hatton, 2011).	These questions support the understanding of the effect that supervision has in the wellbeing of homeless service providers and its impact in the generation of burnout.
Q36-37	<p>Do you feel that your work is fairly remunerated?</p> <p>Do you think the paying scheme of your organisation is fair?</p>	Is the burnout experienced influenced by job demands and job resources?	Remuneration is a powerful job resource that provides motivation in the workplace and diminishes the work's unfavourable characteristics and the influence of burnout; well-paid personnel are more likely to provide extra effort, have a better attitude towards their job, and support the development of valuable personal characteristics such as good self-esteem and more confidence in carrying out their duties (Salami and Ajitoni, 2016).	These questions support the understanding of the effect that pay has in the morale of homeless service providers and its impact in the generation of burnout.

Appendix B - Participation Request Email

Date: 16/03/2021

Dear employees of Focus Ireland,

My name is Marta Franchy, and I am completing a dissertation for the fulfilment of a MA in Human Resource Management with the National College of Ireland.

The topic chosen for my dissertation is “burnout”, understood as emotional exhaustion caused by stress; and I would like to discuss the topic with employees of this organisation who may be experiencing this condition. The provision of homeless services is a challenging field to work in, and little research has been carried out within the subject chosen. Therefore, this research has been designed to know the actual opinions and experiences of providers of homeless services to hopefully bring changes to the field to improve its employees’ wellbeing.

I would like to carry out interviews to explore what are the experiences of individuals undergoing this condition and what are the causes of its incidence. Interviews should take around 45 minutes to an hour and be conducted on zoom only through audio. The interviews will be carried out individually, and to provide a comfortable environment for the interviewees the laptop’s camera is not required to be turned on. I would also request permission to record the interview’s audio to facilitate its transcription; nevertheless, it will be deleted afterwards.

All the information provided through the interviews will be anonymised, and no identifiable information will be recorded within the dissertation. Additionally, I would like to mention that even though Focus Ireland has facilitated me to carry out my research within the organisation, the research carried out is entirely independent.

I have attached to this email an information sheet regarding the dissertation in case you would like to have more information.

I would be delighted if you would agree to contribute to this research.

If you wish to participate, you can contact me by sending me an email to the following email address: x19126158@student.ncirl.ie, or you can contact me in the following phone number 0838425508.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Marta Franchy

Appendix C - Participant Information Sheet

Burnout: an exploration of burnout experiences by providers of homeless services in Ireland

I would like to invite you to take part in my research study. Before you decide if you want to participate, I will provide you with some information regarding myself, this research and what your involvement would entail.

WHO I AM AND WHAT THIS STUDY IS ABOUT

My name is Marta Franchy, and I am carrying out this dissertation for the fulfilment of a MA in Human Resource Management with the National College of Ireland. The research aims to analyse the concept of burnout and its antecedents through the experiences of providers of homeless services. This dissertation was created to gain insight into homeless services providers' wellbeing due to the complex working conditions they are exposed to in their daily practice

WHAT WILL TAKING PART INVOLVE?

Participating in this research is strictly voluntary. Your participation will include an interview of 45 minutes to an hour that will take place through zoom. You may decline to answer any question you don't wish to reply to. Additionally, if, at any point, you don't desire to continue with the research, you are welcome to withdraw. With your permission, the audio of the interview will be recorded to facilitate its transcription and a copy of this will be available to you.

WILL TAKING PART BE CONFIDENTIAL?

The information provided for this research will be confidential, and no personal or identifiable information will be recorded in the dissertation. The transcription of the interviews will be stored in my personal computer, unidentifiable and password protected. If during the interview process information is disclosed that is likely to cause serious harm to others, it will have to be disclosed to the pertinent authority.

WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

The homeless sector is a challenging field of employment due to the complex needs of the population it serves. Homeless individuals present complex needs related to experiences of marginalization, addiction, violence, among many others. Being chronically exposed to traumatic circumstances like the ones aforementioned can produce a high level of stress and exhaustion in the service provider, becoming burnout. The relation between homeless services and burnout has been critically underexplored, with no research carried out in Ireland to date, leaving a gap in the literature available. This lack of research added to the high influx of homeless people in Ireland provides the perfect scenario for our study. Through this research we would like to investigate the reason why providers of homeless services suffer burnout through the eyes of people that are suffering its effects.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW?

You can decide to withdraw from the study at any point prior to the transcripts being anonymised without any consequence. You can contact the researcher to request this.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

If you would like to receive any additional information or ask any other question related to this research, you can contact me on the following phone number 0868425508, or through email at x19126158@student.ncirl.ie

Looking forward to speaking with you,

Thank you very much for your time.

Marta Franchy

Appendix D - Consent Form

Consent to participate in the research

- I..... of my own accord agree to participate in this research.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to respond any question without any penalties.
- The purpose and nature of this research has been explained to me and the opportunity to ask questions has been given.
- I understand that my participation in this research requires to undertake an interview of 45 min to an hour.
- I consent to the recording of the interview
- I understand that all the information provided to this research will remain confidential
- I understand that my identity will remain anonymous, changing my name and concealing any identifiable information provided during the interview process that might reveal my identity.
- I understand that some extracts from my interview may be cited in the findings of the research carried out.
- I understand that any information provided to the researcher that could incur in the harm of myself or others must be reported to the pertinent authorities by the researcher.
- I understand that a copy of the interview recording, transcript and consent form will be kept in a password protected folder to which only the researcher has access.
- I understand that a copy of the interview recording, transcript and consent form will be stored until the result of the research have been published.
- I understand that all the information provided will be available for me to access it
- I understand that I can contact any of the parties involved in conducting this research for further clarification if needed

Marta Franchy Garcia (Researcher)

Tel. 0868425508, x19126158@student.ncirl.ie

Desmond Gibney (Supervisor)

desmond.gibney@ncirl.ie

Signature of research participant

