Job Satisfaction and Stress of Teaching professionals in DEIS and Non DEIS Schools and between Primary and Post-Primary.

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Abstract
Recent research in Ireland has been developed in regards to identifying the cause of stress and job satisfaction in the teaching profession. Darmondy & Smyth (2010) a study on primary school teachers and Kerr et al.,(2011) a study on secondary school teachers both showed high levels of stress in teachers as a result of pupil behaviour, collegial relations and student/teacher relationship. Although it has been a noted limitation in international research (Klassen & Chiu, 2010) relevant research in Ireland has yet to be established determining teachers stress and job satisfaction relative to the socioeconomic designation of schools. Also as current research is specific to primary and post primary is was decided to analyse the differences in stress and job satisfaction in an attempt to investigate and compare the different teaching levels.

A quantitative questionnaire was used to collect data from one hundred and thirty nine participants (N=139). SPSS software to formulate a database enabling the investigation of differences of stress and job satisfaction in teachers of DEIS and Non DEIS schools and between primary and post primary.

Results revealed that there was differences in stress in DEIS and Non DEIS schools with highest stress levels being associated with teachers in Non DEIS schools. Findings showed that Non DEIS teacher believed their class sizes too big and workloads are too high. Teachers of DEIS schools had lower levels of stress but showed high levels of discipline and classroom management problems. There were significant findings in the differences of job satisfaction and stress between teaching levels. Post Primary had higher stress and lower levels of job satisfaction. This was again accounted to high workload and the difficulty of dealing with pupil’s rejection of authority. This research was an introduction to analysis of how socioeconomic factors are affecting Irish teachers. As evident from the high levels of stress and an insufficient satisfaction at work in DEIS and Non DEIS schools and across levels of primary and post primary, it is clear that further research could only benefit the teaching profession.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research has been done internationally in regards to teacher’s job satisfaction and stress but this is in limited capacity within the Irish context. A report from the ESRI on Irish Education (Darmondy & Smyth, 2010, p.2) developed from the data collected through the Growing Up in Ireland Study, found that the majority of primary school teachers were satisfied with their job but also portrayed a high level of stress differences across gender with female teachers being more likely to feel stressed than male teachers. It also showed that teachers’ stress can be related to pupil behaviour, relationships with colleagues and relationships with pupils. This research was based on a limited questionnaire which was not collected specifically for the same purpose of this research it also only included primary level teachers who taught nine year olds. This work intends to investigate deeper these findings.

Further research will provide a more directed form of questioning through teacher specific questionnaires on job satisfaction and stress and will also use post primary participants in order to extend research on the teaching profession in this area.

A key piece of Irish research based on secondary school teachers stresses and coping strategies conveyed similar and slightly more complex levels of stress associated with pupil behaviour which includes both managing difficult behaviour and dealing with students social or emotional problems. It also shows the importance of colleague support at second level which proves essential as teacher training does not seem to equip teachers for dealing with such intense emotional strain (Kerr, Breen, Delaney, Kelly & Miller, 2011). Kerr et al.,(2011) refers to this lack of efficient training in teaching education to prepare teachers for the social
and emotional aspects of teaching along with coping strategies and clear guidelines on boundaries which protect the teacher.

According to Klassen & Chiu (2010) a limitation of their research on teacher self efficacy and job satisfaction noted a need for the inclusion of socioeconomic dynamics in further studies which could have a significant impact on the stress and job satisfaction of teachers. Rubin & Barrow (1979) concluded that there was a correlation between low socioeconomic status and children’s academic achievement and this research was further developed by Rouse & Barrow (2006) stating that low educational outcomes of children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds continue to have a negative effect on them into adulthood. For the purpose of this research the socioeconomic status of schools is a key factor in the determining of stress and job satisfaction in teachers as it is imperative that in order to make changes teachers have to be efficient in their profession.

In 2005 The Irish Department of Education and Skills launched an action plan to address and prioritise the educational needs of children and young people from disadvantaged communities to improve numeracy and literacy. It was intended that this would be achieved through early intervention methods which included an early start education system, an increase of resource teaching support, the introduction of Home School Liaison Officers and the creation of School Completion Programmes. These aim to monitor and enhance student attendance and progression which could be influenced by social factors. The targeted schools are registered under the term of DEIS, which refers to Delivering of Education and Skills in Schools. At present there are 852 DEIS schools in Ireland that include both schools at primary and post primary level (Department of Education and Skills, 2010). Such implementations by government reflect its value on the education system but lack of research in the teaching profession neglects to evaluate the effects of teachers’ satisfaction who are
working in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage. Research completed by Viranen et al., (2007), conveyed the effects of how the socioeconomic status, based on neighbourhoods, impacted on school teachers showing high alcohol usage and high probability of mental health disorders. For the purpose of this research teachers will be questioned quantitatively, determined on the socioeconomic designation of their schools. The information will be placed into DEIS (disadvantaged) and Non-DEIS (non-disadvantaged) categories, in an attempt to formulate data that will help to evaluate how the development of socioeconomic dynamics in our schools can be a contributing factor in affecting stress and job satisfaction in the teaching profession.
Literature Review

1.1 Stress

There are many factors which have been examined internationally that contribute to teachers stress such as; workload, disruptive pupils and working conditions, which include both school facilities and poor work relationships with colleagues. These variables can be predictors of stress and have been linked with absenteeism, illness and teachers leaving the profession early (Kyriacou, 2001). According to the World Health Organisation work related stress is defined as the

“response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope.” (WHO, 2003)

Stress is now being recognised as a contributing negative factor to mental health. These concerns regarding mental health and its impact upon people and society in general are currently to the fore of international social policy. This awareness has filtered through to Ireland and the Irish Department of Education has implemented an Employee Assistance Service (EAS) which offers free counselling service for teaching staff and their families in need (Department of Education and Skills, 2013). These implementations portray the progress in changing attitudes towards mental health. This EAS scheme needs a more publicised campaign, in order to make it more accessible and less stigmatic. Advances in the area of teachers’ stress and mental health can only benefit from further in depth study.
International researchers, Zurlo, Pes & Cooper (2007) compared data from Italian school teachers and their British counterparts. The results clearly showed that Italian teachers’ job dissatisfaction stems mainly from their unsupportive relations with colleagues and pressure due to class oversizing. In contrast British teachers show positive relations with co-workers however they still showed higher levels of mental illness attributed to lack of support at government level. This clearly shows that stress has many predicting factors and is an international issue. Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley (1999) revealed that poor support between colleagues is a contributor to stress and that the development of close and supportive working relations at work is identified as a coping mechanism for many teachers. This is also evident from the Irish study previously discussed Kerr et al., (2011) who found that post primary teachers look first to other teachers for support when presented with stressful situations including; the complicated issue of boundaries that arise when dealing with students’ sensitive social and familial issues which can impact to pupils misbehaviour and their personal stress. Teachers are often overwhelmed by the students stress levels, which naturally impact on their own stress levels. In the teaching profession it is clear that positive collegial relations are vital as both a predictor of stress and to the stress coping mechanisms.

Existing Irish studies from Darmondy & Smyth, (2010) have shown links between impact of stress and gender types. Similarly other international research has confirmed that female teachers have higher levels of stress with regards to workload (Klassen, 2010) and student misbehaviour (Griffith, Steptoe, Cropley, 1999). These results of high stress among females could be derived from external factors such as females being the dominating gender in the teaching profession or as a result of the inequalities in the division of labour in the home. Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley (1999) had a 73% female sample and similarly Klassen & Chiu (2010) had a female sample of 69%, these figures would suggest that teaching is a predominantly female profession and therefore women are making up a significantly large
population of the sample sizes. This evidence is also supported by the European Commission (2011) in relation to education statistics which states that females dominate the primary teaching profession by 86% and 61% in post primary. Therefore if the population of the study has consistently higher levels of females then it can be assumed that females would show higher levels of stress across genders due to higher statistical probabilities. Drury (2008) argued that with high population of women in such occupations as teaching, the social status and earning potential in the teaching profession are effected, highlighting gender inequality within the professions. Other factors associated with higher levels of female stress in teaching profession could be influenced by family responsibilities as outlined Ransome (2010, p279) expresses that the dual earner scenario does suggest that with the participation of both men and women in the workforce inequalities are evident for females in regards to the lack of division of labour within the home increasing the workload for working women. The examination of male dissatisfaction in the teaching profession is evident from Darmondy & Smyth (2010) however this is not conclusive regarding the review of international literature on teaching job satisfaction. Russell & Ginty (2005) that men are twice as likely as women to get senior and middle management positions. This could prove to be significant, showing that the low levels of dissatisfaction in males in the teaching profession internationally could be related to their increased chance of professional progression to management being more likely. In regards to Irish males further research needs to be done in order to examine the factors affecting the job satisfaction of male teachers in Irish schools.

1.2 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to an individual who is satisfied in their work which is related to the values and interests associated with work, connection with colleagues and the organisation for which they are working (Cook, 1981). When employees are satisfied in their
employment they are more likely to work more efficiently and effectively and the workplace benefits from the retention of the employee as a result (Riketta, 2008). Studies have identified that teacher job satisfaction is a factor in the stability and continuity of the teaching force (Harris, Kazay & Leichenko, 1991 & Harris 1992) and it also impacts greatly upon teachers’ commitment (Shin & Reyes, 1991; Kushman, 1992). This suggests the importance of research in this area as a means of promoting a more satisfied and productive workforce increasing retention of employees and encouraging a more balanced work life. Burns (1978) began a piece of work on transformational leadership which acknowledged that effective leadership impacts positively upon the workforce. This research was further developed by Bass & Riggio (2006) who show that there was a strong correlation between these humanistic approaches to leadership through transformational and transactional leadership and job satisfaction. These leadership styles encourage all employees to have opinions. It promotes originality and encourages creative responses to problem solving which effectively advance feelings of self worth and appreciation. Results of these studies have found that these advancements in leadership skills have increased motivation and satisfaction of its followers which in the case of the current research is teachers. According to Eleanor Roosevelt “In all our contracts it is probably the sense of being really needed and wanted which gives us the greatest satisfaction”. Job satisfaction is significant in every workplace and is of particular importance in an educational environment and a schools positive environment is of crucial importance to maintaining job satisfaction. It would appear from the extensive research discussed that job satisfaction in schools is strongly related to the leadership qualities of principals. As discussed by Kerr et al., (2011) peer support appears to high among teacher in post primary schools the current study shall further analyse this evidence across primary and post primary levels of teaching but it also hopes to provide an insight into the working
relations between supervisors and teachers to observe the levels of support Irish teachers are receiving from their school leader.

Klassen and Chiu (2010) reported that stress has a direct effect on the teacher’s job satisfaction finding that stress in teaching enhances teaching efficacy and therefore promotes higher levels of job satisfaction. Darmondy & Smyth (2010) found that in Irish teachers stress was high and so was job satisfaction which would suggest that there is a positive relationship between the two. For the purpose of this research the differences between levels of job satisfaction between teachers of both primary and post primary schools will be examined. It will also aim to investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and stress.

In Ireland the average class sizes are 24 which are above the EU average at 20 and this has long been an issue causing stress and effecting the performance and satisfaction within the teaching working environments (Education at a Glance, 2010). A study conducted as part of an extensive three part phase of Project Star (Mosteller, 1995) was derived to look at the effects of smaller class sizes on student performance through cognitive testing. It showed strong evidence to suggest that smaller class sizes improve students’ performance. Student performance has previously been linked positively to teachers’ job satisfaction through teaching efficacy as outlined by Klassen & Chiu (2010). This is reiterated through Bain & Achilles whose study on class sizes has shown teachers to be more productive and efficient. Zurlo, Pes & Cooper (2007) found that overcrowding of classes was a pressure factor which affected job satisfaction on Italian teachers. Current Irish research has not yet any developed research suggesting that class sizes could be a potential issue even though growing class sizes already exceed European averages. It is an issue to be further investigated especially in consideration of the international findings which have established positive outcomes of smaller class sizes on students’ performance, teachers’ job satisfaction, and also
teaching efficacy. Although it would appear that Irish class sizes are larger the Irish Government DEIS plan (2005) implemented changes which would ensure that disadvantaged schools would have smaller class sizes the results of which shall be outlined in this study. The concern associated with class sizes is extended in the consideration of the teaching of multigrade classes which can sometimes be the result of lack of teachers and resources available. This can be clearly associated with disadvantaged areas of the world which use multigrade teaching as their only means of education (Little, 2005). Darmondy & Smyth (2010) shows that multigrade teaching is still used in an Irish schools mainly contained to rural areas and are associated with high level of stress in Irish primary school teachers. For the purpose of this research class sizes will be investigated overall with no specific reference to multigrade teaching. However it is still relevant to analyse previous research in regard to multigrade teaching in respects to its possibility to affect class sizes and as a potential factor of teachers stress.

Darling-Hammond & Post (2000) found evidence stating that teachers’ level of qualification has a significant impact on student achievement. This is particularly relative to schools of socioeconomic disadvantage where teachers often portray a greater expertise in dealing with class control and management of behavioural issues as opposed to providing for the high academic demands of the students. Student achievement and teacher efficiency of classroom control are factors of job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2012), therefore it could also be a consideration that teachers who teach in socially disadvantaged schools should be encouraged to progress to even further education as Darling-Hammond & Post (2000) proves this impacts greatly on students’ educational outcomes. According to Collie, Shapka & Perry (2012) a limitation of their research is the lack of knowledge regarding teachers’ perceptions of how they can influence student behaviour and also the importance of positive teaching. Teachers who are proactive in continuous
professional development have a greater awareness of their overall impact on each student and not are merely focused on the imparting of their own subject specifications to the students. The teaching profession has always had to advance on new techniques of managing behavioural problems in schools. In recent times Restorative practises which were introduced to promote a more effective and positive approach to schools behavioural management. This involves engagement with students in promotion of teacher and student relations to reflect on the wrong doing. The practise is aimed at building relationships and responding to challenging behaviour by engaging with student, understanding each other and finding a solution. Such practise could improve relations between student and teacher which have been researched as being an aspect relating to improved job satisfaction (Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley, 1999; Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2012).

1.3 Aims and Objectives

As Irish policy has had a limited progression of research involving the stress and job satisfaction within the teaching profession it is regarding this research that such factors shall be investigated in an attempt to further research in this area. As outlined by Ostroff (1992) teachers motivation and performance will ultimately affect the students learning. Ireland has undergone much societal change in recent years with high populations of ethnically diverse cultures and the mainstreaming of special needs children. As a result the modern demands on teachers have considerably changed due to higher workloads and pressure on teachers for student performance. Research is needed to analyse how these changes are affecting the mental health and satisfaction of teachers which has been proven in the international body of research on teachers to have a negative affect on teachers. It is a necessity in Irish research to add to international findings to ensure the integrity and wellbeing of those in the teaching profession.
The study will review the demographics of age, gender, class size and supervisory and co-worker support across primary and secondary level teachers. The variables will present as job satisfaction and stress in the form of questionnaire. It is suspected that socioeconomic backgrounds and school levels will affect levels of job satisfaction and stress of teaching professionals in DEIS and Non DEIS schools and between teaching levels of primary and post-primary.

**Hypothesis 1**

$H^1$ There will be a difference in levels of job satisfaction in teachers of DEIS and Non-DEIS schools.

**Hypothesis 2**

$H^1$ There will be a difference in levels of stress in teachers of DEIS and Non-DEIS schools.

**Hypothesis 3**

$H^1$ There will be a difference in levels of job satisfaction in teachers working in primary and post-primary levels.

**Hypothesis 4**

$H^1$ There will be a difference in levels of stress in teachers working in primary and post-primary levels.

The purpose of this research is to analyse the differences in levels of stress and job satisfaction in Irish teachers in relation to the socioeconomic factors of schools and teaching levels in an attempt to add to international research and further develop work in an Irish context.
Chapter 2: Method Section

2.1 Materials

Questionnaires complied into a booklet along with an explanatory letter attached to front of the booklet and given to each participant in an envelope.

2.2 Fimian Teacher Stress Inventory (FTSI)

The FTSI was developed by Fimian (1982) to measure teachers’ perception of stress in relation to their occupation. This was based on forty nine stress related questions which was divided into two sub categories, Stress factors and Manifestations of stress. The FTSI was adapted for this research to focus on stress factors only under the sub headings Time management (time and work balance), work related stress (such as preparation of work, workload and class size), professional distress (including aspects of promotion, salary and recognition of work), discipline and motivation (focus on teacher-student relationship and teaching authority stresses) and Personal investment (regarding personal involvement of teachers in their profession. Participating teachers were requested to read the statement and indicate to what level they agree or disagree on a five point Likert scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree.

2.3 Job satisfaction survey

Job satisfaction was measured using the Wellness Councils of America (2004) provides relating to important factors in regards to assessing an employees job satisfaction. Participants answer dichotomous questions that ask for a yes or no response. Each positive answer receives 1 points and each negative answer receives 0 points. Scores are added to
reflect levels of job satisfaction being greater with higher scores. High job satisfaction is conveyed by scores of 40+, scores of between 30- 39 reflect moderate satisfaction and low job satisfaction is anything from 29 and under.

2.4 Demographics

Questions on demographics include; gender, age, length of service, teaching level (i.e primary or post-primary), identification of schools socioeconomic status as DEIS and Non-DEIS. There are also two individual questions which examine the level of support from 1.Peers and 2.Supervisors. These were indicated by ticking most relevant answer from a choice of Often, Sometimes or Never.

2.5 Participants

One hundred and thirty nine participants (N= 139) completed questionnaires. A total of three hundred questionnaires were delivered to six schools in Leinster area which reflects a 49% response rate. There were three questionnaires not fully completed and were not included in the analysis. The schools were all under the management of the Department of Education and Science and three of the schools were categorised as disadvantaged under the DEIS (Delivering of Education and Skills in Schools) band. The sample was selected specifically based on participant’s profession, that being teaching, school level, both primary and post primary level and the social economic status of schools outlined as disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged. The study consisted of eighty six (N=86) females (62%) and fifty three (N= 53) males (38%) with ages ranging from 20-60 yrs.
2.6 Design

This study is a quasi experimental quantitative design, the independent variable being schools and the dependent variables being stress and job satisfaction. Univariate statistics are used to analyse descriptive statistics and bivariate statistics in the form of t-tests are used to analyse the hypotheses. Pearson’s correlation coefficient was also used to analyse the relationship between stress and job satisfaction.

2.7 Procedure

After proposal for this research was approved by the Department of Humanities & Social Science ethics committee a letter of access was sent to various schools in North Leinster to receive permission from principals allowing distribution of questionnaires to teachers (see Appendix 1). This letter was provided by a research supervisor who outlined the nature of the research and included contact details of research supervisor. Teachers were debriefed during allocated planning time during which they were asked to participate. Participants were made aware that participation was completely optional and without reward. It was also explained to participants that no identifiable marks were to be left on questionnaires to ensure total confidentiality. The questionnaires were distributed at the meeting in unsealed envelopes and participants were given instruction to fill in data during working day, seal envelope and return to designated box in the staff room. Fimians teachers stress inventory, (1984) outlined that filling out the questionnaire when in work situation proved most effective for research proposes in regards to his TSI.
2.8 Ethical Considerations

The proposal for this research project was ethically approved by the Social Science Department of Dublin Business School Ethics Committee. Two hundred questionnaires (N=200) were distributed to six schools with attached cover letter which explained the purpose of the study. All participants’ participation was on a voluntary basis and ensured that results would be anonymous. Participants were asked to refrain from leaving any identifiable markings on questionnaire to ensure confidentiality and it was also explained that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time. All participants were given email addresses of the researcher and research supervisor encouraging them to make contact regarding any questions or results of the study. At the end of each questionnaire was included the contact details for the Samaritans and Careline services to help anyone affected by any of the issues raised in the questionnaire.
Chapter 3: Results

The results presented in this study analyse the differences in levels of job satisfaction and stress between DEIS and Non DEIS schools and between teaching levels of primary and post-primary with the use of descriptive statistics and inferential statistics in the form of t-tests. Results also analysed the relationship between the variables of job satisfaction and stress in an attempt to show that stress is a contributing factor of job satisfaction.

3.1 Descriptive statistics

The number of participants in the current study was one hundred and thirty nine (N=139). Eighty one females (N=81) and fifty eight males (N=58). The average age of the sample was 33.5 (SD=8.81), with a mode of 27 and median of 30. Of the one hundred and thirty nine participants, descriptive statistics showed that five participants (N= 5) did not disclose their age. The average length of service in the teaching profession was 10.2 (SD=7.96), with a mode of 5 and median of 7. Out of the total number of participants (N=139), seventy three (N=73) of these were from DEIS schools and sixty six (N= 66) were from Non-DEIS schools. The most common response was DEIS (M=1). There were participants from different teaching levels which included primary and post-primary level. The highest response was from teachers in post primary schools with ninety three (N=93) participants and forty six (N=46) participants from primary schools.

Descriptive statistics for overall job satisfaction in this survey showed an average score of 35.2(SD=5.78) with a mode of 32 and a median of 34. Results showed no significant differences between genders with females scoring with an average of 35.6(SD=6.36), a mode
of 32 and a median of 34 and males average was 34.5(SD=4.86), with a mode of 33 and a median of 33.

The average class size for teachers was a mean of 26.4 (SD= 3.09), with a mode of 30 and a median of 27. The descriptive statistics showed that class sizes of DEIS schools had an average class size of 25.3 (SD= 3.07), with a mode of 25 and a median of 25 and in contrast Non-DEIS schools had a higher average score of 27.6 (SD= 2.65), with a mode of 30 and a median of 28. Statistics revealed that a total of 36(54.6%) teachers in Non DEIS schools agreed and strongly agreed that classroom sizes were too big compared to 28(38.3%) teachers in DEIS schools.

The results showed that levels of support from peers was high across teaching levels with 73.9% of primary teachers of a population of forty six (N=46) and 78.5% of secondary teachers of a population of ninety three (N=93), feeling that they receive a high level of peer support (see graph A). The study revealed statistics to show that 81.5% of females and 86.2% of males believe that they have good friends at work and respect for peers was calculated as 90.1% for females and 91.4% for males. It also showed that support levels between supervisors and teachers are much lower across teaching levels with frequencies of 54.3% participants of primary and 57% participants of post primary teachers feeling that supervisors and teachers support each other often.

Results showed that issues with discipline were more apparent in DEIS schools with 34(46.6%) of DEIS teachers agreeing and strongly agreeing that they were frustrated teaching students with discipline problems and only 17(25.9%) Non-DEIS teachers reported this to be the case in Non DEIS schools. Descriptive statistics also showed that high levels of teachers were frustrated by pupils rejecting authority commonly among 45(61.6%) DEIS teachers and 34(51.5%) Non DEIS teachers agreed and strongly agreed. Both primary and post-primary
displayed high results of frustration due to attempting to teach students who are poorly motivated with 31(67.4%) of primary school teachers agreeing and strongly agreeing and similarly 49(63.5%) of post-primary teachers agreeing and strongly agreeing. However results showed that 55(59.1%) of post primary teachers agreed and strongly agreed that it is frustrating when their authority was rejected by pupils which was higher than primary teacher where 24(41.4%) agreed and strongly agreed. In relation to differences between genders and classroom discipline problems results showed that 30 (37%) female participants agreed and strongly agreed that there was a problem with discipline and among males, 22(36.2%) participants agreed and strongly agreed the same. Also results showed that frequencies of 46 (56.8%) female participants agreed and strongly agreed that they felt frustrated by rejected authority of students towards teacher which is indifferent to that of males which showed 33(56.9%) participants agreeing and strongly agreeing that rejection of authority is an issue. Descriptive statistics shows that 47% females and 46% males agree that it is more difficult to teach students who are poorly motivated.

Results found that 42(63.6%) Non-DEIS teachers agreed and strongly agreed that personal priorities are being short changed due to time demands at work which was higher than DEIS teachers who showed 32(43.8%) participants agreed and strongly agreed. Also evident from results between DEIS and Non DEIS schools it showed that 53(80.3%) Non-DEIS teachers agreed and strongly agreed that there is too much work compared to 40(54.8%) DEIS teachers agreed and strongly agreed. It was shown across teaching levels that 56(60.3%) teachers in post-primary agree and strongly agree that personal priorities are being short changed due to time demands this is higher than those in primary level schools where 18(39.1%) teachers agreed and strongly agreed.
Statistics showed a difference in females and males approach to workload. Results showed that 43 (53.1%) females agree and strongly agree that there is little time to prepare for lessons compared to 21 (36.2%) males who agree and strongly agree. Also shown in the results, 60 (74.3%) females agree and strongly agree that there is too much work to do compared to the male population where 33 (56.9%) agree and strongly agree. Results showed that 43 (53.1%) females agreed and strongly agreed that personal priorities are being short changed due to time demands at work which was similar to males where 31 (53.5%) agreed and strongly agreed. Statistics of 33 (40.7%) females among which agreed and strongly agreed that they needed more respect and status in their profession and 23 (39.7%) of males agreed and strongly agreed. Also results found that 53 (65.5%) of females agreed and strongly agreed and 29 (50%) males agreed and strongly agreed.

3.2 Inferential Statistics

T-Tests

T-tests were conducted to further investigate the differences in stress and job satisfaction of teaching professionals in DEIS and Non-DEIS schools and between teaching levels of primary and post-primary.

The average score on job satisfaction of teachers in DEIS schools was 35.2 (SD= 5.78) and the average number of teachers of non-DEIS schools is 35.0 (SD= 5.75). In analysis of the difference in job satisfaction between teachers of DEIS and Non-DEIS schools independent t-tests indicated that there was no significant difference t(131.3) = .194, p>.05. The average score on stress of teachers in DEIS schools was 22.5 (SD= 4.75) which was lower than the average number of teachers in non-DEIS schools which was 25.5 (SD= 4.15). The differences in stress in teachers of DEIS and Non-DEIS schools were analysed using independent t-tests showing that the difference was significant t(137) = -4.024, p<.000.
The average score on job satisfaction of teachers in primary schools was 33 (SD= 6.16) which was lower than the average number of teachers at post-primary level which was 36.2 (SD= 5.33). In analysis of the differences in job satisfaction of teachers between levels of primary and post-primary schools independent t-test indicated that the difference was significant \( t(133) = -3.201, p<.002 \). The average score on stress of teachers in primary schools was 79.3 (SD= 14.0) which was lower than the average number of teachers at post-primary level which was 84.2 (SD=12.3). Independent t-tests indicated that there was a significant difference in stress of teachers between levels of primary and post-primary schools \( t(135) = -2.093, p<.038 \).

Correlations

An aim in this study was to access the relationship between relationship between teacher’s job satisfaction and stress. This was investigated using a Pearson’s correlation coefficient. Results indicated that there was a significant positive moderate correlation between stress and job satisfaction in this study \( (r=.450, N=135, p<.01) \) suggesting that participants stress levels significantly affect their job satisfaction.
Chapter 4: Discussion

The aim of this study was to further the research on areas of the teaching profession in Ireland. The research analysed how stress and job satisfaction affects teachers depending on the socioeconomic dynamics of the schools and to examine differing levels of stress and job satisfaction between employment in primary and secondary levels.

4.1 Differences in job satisfaction and stress in DEIS and Non DEIS schools

Results of t-tests indicated that the differences in job satisfaction between DEIS and Non-DEIS schools were not significant and showed that the null hypothesis was supported. This suggests that there is no difference in satisfaction of working in schools determinant on their socioeconomic designation. Overall job satisfaction for teachers According to the Wellness Council of America (2004) scored moderate levels of satisfaction with job.

T-tests carried out to determine the differences in stress between schools of DEIS and Non DEIS status indicated that there is a significant difference in levels of stress between schools of socioeconomic designation. Results showed that teachers from DEIS schools had significantly lower levels of stress than Non-DEIS schools which rejected the null hypothesis. This result is surprising when it is reflected in the descriptive statistics that 46% of teachers in DEIS schools agreed and strongly agreed that they had more discipline problems in the classroom compared to only 25.9% of teachers in Non-DEIS. This also suggests that the main stress from DEIS schools is related to discipline within the classroom and further explains the moderate scoring of overall job satisfaction which Klassen & Chiu (2010) associated with classroom management. Rubin & Barlow’s (1979) results showed a correlation with socioeconomic status and low test scores which could also be attributed to time spent on
managing discipline issues in the classroom. This could be significant in the analysis of teachers in DEIS schools as a result of increased discipline problems preventing teaching efficacy and therefore job satisfaction. Results from Non DEIS teachers showed that 79.3% agree and strongly agreed that there is too much work to do in their jobs and 63.6% agreed and strongly agreed that their personal priorities are negatively affected by their work life. This evidence resulting in high stress and moderate job satisfaction could be a result of higher expectations in Non DEIS schools for student achievement which Klassen & Chiu (2010) concluded led to high teaching efficacy resulting in high job satisfaction which was not apparent from this study. It must also be noted that lower levels of discipline problems do suggest that Non DEIS teachers have higher levels of classroom management and yet still have no positive effect on job satisfaction. It is evident from the above information that high stress and average job satisfaction could be an area for concern in teachers of Non DEIS schools who are showing that high workloads are affecting their personal lives and as Kyriacou (2001) showed this can have a negative effect on absenteeism and teachers leaving the profession. Also It needs to be addressed that discipline in DEIS schools in appearing as a significant problem which needs to be dealt with in order to prevent lowering levels of job satisfaction in teachers and as outlined in Darling, Hammond and Post the advancement of teaching qualifications of teachers in schools of socioeconomic disadvantage could be of benefit to teachers in DEIS schools.

4.2 Differences in job satisfaction and stress in teaching primary and post primary

Results from t-tests measuring the differences in job satisfaction between primary and post-primary teaching levels indicated significant differences and showed that the null
hypothesis was rejected. The differences showed that primary level teachers had higher job satisfaction than those teaching in post primary levels. These results could be influenced by factors relating to discipline which has been conveyed in past research as indicator of job satisfaction through student achievement and teaching efficacy (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2012). Descriptive statistics in this study found that high levels of primary and post-primary levels experienced frustration at trying to teach children who were poorly motivated. This frustration could attribute to the teacher’s efficacy and potentially students performance which would coincide with research from Klassen & Chiu (2010) reiterating that these factors are strongly associated with job satisfaction. Differences in teaching levels showed that high levels of rejection of authority exist for teachers of post primary levels. It would appear that post-primary teacher’s differing levels in job satisfaction could be as a result of high levels of rejection of authority by pupils in post primary level schools and such issues need to be addressed in prevention of lowering job satisfaction. Also it should be considered that alternative discipline methods like those previously discussed in relation to restorative practises could enhance working relationships between teachers and students which Darmondy & Smyth (2010) and Kerr et al., (2011) both believed are influencing factors of job satisfaction and stress in the teaching profession.

T-tests indicated that there was a significant difference in levels of stress between primary and post-primary teaching. Teachers of post-primary schools showed higher levels of stress then those teachers of primary level therefore rejecting the null hypothesis. Classroom management are also issues relating to stress between primary and post primary teaching levels as were discussed in relation to job satisfaction showing post primary teachers had more difficulties with challenges to their authority. This stress could be associated with a number of factors such as the workload which in 60.3% of post primary teachers stating that they agreed and strongly agreed that workload affected their personal lives compared to
39.1% of primary teachers. Unfortunately findings relative to this research have found that the high stress and lower levels of job satisfaction in post primary teaching are shown along with problems with classroom management and high workload issues which all effect teaching ability and student achievement.

Results in this study showed that there are high levels of support among Irish teachers in both post primary (78.5%) and primary (73.9%) teachers with high percentages of males and females showing that they have good friends at work and respect for their peers. This evidence concurs with Kerr’s (2011) qualitative study which showed that support was high among post primary schools and an extension of the current research included primary level teachers in order to show the importance of teacher support between peers between teaching levels which was also proved significant. Kerr et al., (2011) outlined that high support among teaching professionals is often associated with aiding teachers with difficult situations such as managing difficult behaviour and classroom management which they were not prepared for in teacher training and the findings in the present research suggest the same. The high support levels among teachers could be due to either a lack of sufficient teacher training but this support is obviously needed to enable teachers to cope better with issues that arise such as discipline and classroom management. Statistics showed that support between supervisor and teachers were much lower with 54% of primary teacher and 57% of post primary teachers feeling supported by supervisors. As this research has previously established humanistic leadership skills are imperative to ensuring the satisfaction of teachers in their working environment (Bass & Riggio, 2006) which appears not to be having an impact in Irish schools. This could related to teaching professionals not feeling valued or supported by management in their school environment or lack of promotion of original thought and the freedom of creative problem solving. Is it also evident from this analysis that this low level of support could be of significant relevance to low job satisfaction displayed in post primary
schools? Further investigation would be needed establishing a more comprehensive study designed specifically to investigate the reasons of lower support between supervisors and teachers.

4.3 Classroom Sizes

In this study the differences in stress between DEIS and Non DEIS and between teaching of primary and post primary were examined finding that there are similar problems relating to discipline and classroom management which could be associated with the issue of classroom sizes in Ireland. Project Star (Mosteller, 1995) found that student performance is linked with smaller class room sizes. This study found that 54% of Non-DEIS schools agreed and strongly agreed that class sizes were too big with the average class size shown as 26 which according to Education at a glance (2010) is well above the European average of 20. It would appear that further research surrounding factors of class room sizes would prove beneficial as a higher population of Non-DEIS schools feel that class room sizes are too big which could be affecting student performance and ultimately job satisfaction.

4.4 Gender

Differences between genders in the teaching profession were researched previously (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley, 1999) and found workload and discipline as high stressors for females. Results showed that in this study classroom discipline was a problem for 37% of females and 36.2% of males. Similarly results state that rejection of authority is indifferent towards males and females. Therefore it could be assumed that although it is apparent throughout this research that discipline problems are a significant problem in Irish schools it is clear that it has no relevance between genders.

This study also showed that 53% of females had little time for preparing lessons and a significantly high percentage of 74.3% agreed and strongly agreed that there was too much work to do. This revelation adds to research in this area showing that workload appears to be
a predictor for stress in females which could be causal effect of the unequal distribution of work within the home. Although it was also discovered that when females (53.1%) and males (53.5%) were asked about how work demands impact on their personal priorities results were similar. It was clear from this research that there is a definite relationship between workload and stress in females which needs to be further examined to analyse the impact of this stress on women affecting professional advancement and mental health.

Drury (2008) argued that highly female populated professions effects the status and salary of such professions In this study participants were asked if there was a need for more status and respect in their job. Results showed no significant difference between males and females to suggest that status or respect was devalued on the grounds of gender. Although the differences in gender were significant relating to wages as 65.5% of females believed that they did not receive adequate pay for the work they do compared to 50% of males. **

Finally a Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient was used to test the relationship if any between job satisfaction and stress which showed a significant positive relationship between the two. This correlation has already been established in international research on the teaching profession (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Griffith, Steptoe & Cropley, 1999; Collie, Shapka & Perry, 2012) and the results found in this study are therefore proven to be consistent with that of previous studies. Fullan (2003) states that ‘the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of it’s teachers’ this study developed further investigations into aspects of the teaching profession that could prove to be relevant in future policy making.
**Conclusion**

This study set out to examine the differences in job satisfaction and stress in teachers of DEIS and Non DEIS schools and between primary and post primary levels. It looked at the relationships between stress and job satisfaction and also investigated aspects of class sizes and gender differences as a priority of further research in Ireland.

The main findings showed that stress differences existed among teachers among DEIS and Non DEIS schools and there was an indifference to job satisfaction among schools. These findings conveyed significantly higher levels of stress in Non DEIS teachers and found they believed their class sizes too big which is reflected in the results which showed that high workloads are affecting the personal lives of teachers in Non DEIS schools. Teachers of DEIS schools had lower levels of stress but showed high levels of discipline and classroom management problems. It was apparent from overall moderate scoring on job satisfaction that both teachers from DEIS and NON DEIS schools showed some level of dissatisfaction in the workplace.

There were significant findings in the differences of job satisfaction and stress between teaching levels. This confirmed that Post Primary had higher stress and lower levels of job satisfaction to their primary level counterpart. This was again due to high workload and the difficulty of dealing with pupil’s rejection of authority. It was revealed that among levels of primary and post primary peer support is considerably high but teachers across teaching levels feel considerably less support from their supervisors which could be an aspect relating to high levels of stress and lower levels of job satisfaction apparent in this study.

This study was revealed that contrary to Darmondy & Smyth (2010), there was no differences between genders and there ability to manage a classroom or deal with enforce discipline but it
did show that a substantial level of females found that the workload in teaching profession was too much and that they were not paid adequately for the work they do.

Finally, apart from the body of evidence presented in this study, a positive correlation was found between job satisfaction and stress using Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient. This only enforces what has already been established in international research for the purpose of this study. This research expects that it will add to previous work in an attempt to enhance and protect the integrity of the teaching profession.
Limitations and Further Research Considerations

Due to limitation of time and resources this study had a small sample size relative to Darmondy & Smyth (2010) who used statistics from the growing up in Ireland study. A more comprehensive study including a large sample size of teachers could prove to investigate more thoroughly the aspects of differences between DEIS and Non DEIS. As results revealed teachers in Non DEIS schools had high levels of stress and workload which evidently proved to have negative effect on job satisfaction. Similarly research showed that discipline issues that are significantly high in DEIS schools. This suggests that the evidence displayed in the current research only serves as a foundation of research that needs to be further development on a national scale with larger sample sizes and the inclusion of schools population in both urban and rural areas. Also it should be taken into account that although the issue of class sizes did prove significant in the current study to affecting teachers stress and job satisfaction it needs to be explored further in regards to its possible correlation with issues of workload and discipline affecting teachers working in DEIS and Non DEIS schools.

The current research did not examine the demographic of teacher’s level of qualifications which could be a relative factor in differences in teaching in an environment of socioeconomic disadvantage (Darling-Hammond & Post, 2000). This research neglected to include teacher’s qualification level on the questionnaire which therefore resulted in a limitation of the current research being the lack of information on teacher qualification for analysis in respects to the differences in stress and job satisfaction in DEIS and Non DEIS schools. The evidence in the current study suggests that the jobs of teachers across primary and secondary levels are very different professions. A limitation of this study was the uneven
sample size between teaching levels which could have influenced data showing showed great
differences in post primary schools which highlighted higher levels of stress and lower levels
of job satisfaction. Further research should consider comparing differences of stress and job
satisfaction between more equal populations of participants from primary and post primary
levels.
References


Appendix 1

23rd October 2013.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Re: Permission to conduct a research study with members of your organisation.

Laura Conlon is enrolled as a final year social science student at Dublin Business School. DBS social science students are required to complete an independent research project during their final year of study. Laura’s final year research project aims to examine job satisfaction and stress among teachers.

All research conducted by final year students is done for the purpose of meeting course requirements. All results obtained are strictly confidential, and to be used for assessment of the researching student’s qualifications for receipt of a BA in Social Science. Laura is requesting written permission, as soon as possible, to collect research data.

Please feel free to address any questions regarding this research to Dr. Bernadette Quinn, Research Coordinator, Social Science Programme, Dublin Business School. Laura (Email: lauraconlon44@gmail.com) can also provide further details about how she will conduct her research study. Thank you for your time.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Bernadette Quinn
Tel: 01 4178737
Email: Bernadette.quinn@dbs.ie
Appendix 2
Cover Letter

Dear Participant,

My name is Laura Conlon and I am a Social Science student at Dublin Business School. As part of my Final Year Research Project I am requesting your participation in a short questionnaire which is based on aspects of the Teaching profession.

Attached to this letter is a questionnaire which contains a variety of questions. I am asking you to read the Questionnaire and, if you choose to do so, complete it, and return via email to lauraconlon44@gmail.com.

Anonymity is guaranteed and your responses will not be identified with you personally. This Questionnaire involves a simple √, circling or highlighting the answer. Please DO NOT provide your name on the Questionnaire.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing this questionnaire, or about participating in this study, you may contact me at lauraconlon44@gmail.com. Alternatively, you may also contact my research advisor Vanessa Long at 01-4177507. This project has been approved by the DBS Review Board.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this Questionnaire, your participation is greatly appreciated. Please place the completed Questionnaire in the envelope provided, seal it and return to designated box in staff room.

Sincerely,

Laura Conlon
Appendix 3

Questionnaire

Please ‘tick’ appropriate

1. Are you male or female?  Male...... Female......
2. Age......
3. How many years service?..............years
4. Average class size............
5. Is your school identified as DEIS?  Yes....... No......
6. What level of students do you teach?
   Primary....... Post-Primary......
7. Do you and your peers support one another when needed?
   Often...... Sometimes.... Never.....
8. Do you and your supervisors support one another when needed?
   Often...... Sometimes.... Never....

Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. Indicate how strongly you feel by circling the appropriate number on the 5-point scale. If you feel that any statement is inappropriate for your position or something that you have not experienced, circle number 1 (strongly disagree).

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td></td>
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1. I easily over commit myself
2. I become impatient if others do things too slowly
3. I have to try doing more than one thing at a time
4. I have little time to relax/enjoy the time of day
5. I think about unrelated matters during conversations
6. I feel uncomfortable wasting time
7. There isn’t enough time to get things done
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>I rush in my speech</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>There is little to prepare for my lessons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>There is too much work to do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>The pace of the school day is too fast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>My class is too big</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>My personal priorities are being short changed due to time demands</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>There is too much administration paper work in my job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>I lack promotion and/or advanced opportunities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>I am not progressing in my job as rapidly as I would like</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>I need more status and respect in my job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>I receive an inadequate salary for the work I do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>I lack recognition for the extra work and/or good teaching I do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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I feel frustrated.....

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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Because of discipline problems in the classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Having to monitor pupil behaviour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Because some students are poorly motivated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Attempting to teach students who are poorly motivated</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Because of inadequate/poorly defined discipline problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>When my authority is rejected by pupils</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>
When answering the following statements please Circle your response

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I look forward to going to work on Monday morning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I feel positive and up most of the time I am working.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I have energy at the end of each work day to attend to the people I care about.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I have energy at the end of each working day to attend to the people I care about.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>I have the time and energy in my life to read books that interest me.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Most interaction at work is positive.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>I have good friends at work.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>I feel valued and affirmed at work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I feel recognised and appreciated at work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Work is a real plus in my life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I’m engaged in meaningful work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I feel free to be who I am at work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I feel free to do things the way I like at work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>My values fit with the organisational values.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I am aligned with the organisational mission.</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>I trust our leadership team.</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>I respect the work of my peers.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>I have the opportunity to learn what I want to learn.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>I feel involved in decisions that affect our organisational community.</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Creativity and innovation are supported.</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>I feel informed about what’s going on.</td>
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<td>22.</td>
<td>I know what is expected of me at work.</td>
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<td>23.</td>
<td>I have the materials and equipment that I need in order to do work correctly.</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>I have the opportunity to do what I do best at work.</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td>I have someone at work that encourages my development.</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>My co-workers are committed to doing quality work.</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>My boss reviews my progress.</td>
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