What is the impact on seasonality roles in America, for companies employing Irish students, on a Summer J-1 visa in today’s world?

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At Dublin Business School

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The following Declaration must be included:

Declaration: I, Kyle Bruce, declare that this research is my original work and that it has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of Degree or Diploma. In addition, I have referenced correctly all literature and sources used in this work and this work is fully compliant with the Dublin Business School’s academic honesty policy.

Signed: Kyle Bruce
Date: Aug 20/2015
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Abstract

This paper reviews recent reports of the removal of the Summer work and Travel (SWAT) programme, known as a J-1 visa. The importance of this, is be based on the impact this programme has on the Irish students partaking in the programme, as well as the companies in American that recruit and rely on seasonal workers each year.

The literature presented will provide the reader an understanding of the history of the J-1 SWAT, as well as a deeper insight to the reason Irish students leave home, and work in America. There has been much research done on the topic of seasonal workers, or temporary workers in various countries, and many forms of literature regarding Irish immigrating and the Celtic tiger. However, there is limited research regarding how important the programme is overall to the seasonal companies now at risk, as well as the importance to Irish students. Through the quantitative and qualitative methods using surveys and electronic interviews, a detailed look at the impact the programme has on the students and the US seasonal businesses is collected.

Based on the findings presented, an awareness will be shown on the importance of the programme to both parties and impact it may or may not have on each subject discussed.

Throughout this study, the research discusses the current events occurring with the announcement of reducing the programme, while presenting the background of each important theme to be discussed.

It is hoped that this study will inform employers and students the importance of the programme and bring a sense of awareness to those who wish to participate in the future.
1. Introduction

For years, companies have looked to invest in employing seasonal workers to support the companies during high summer peak times which are from May-September (Human Resource Specialists, 2013). With some countries relying high on the summer season, and a demand to reach sales, most will depend on high productivity and extra staff. This demand and reliance of seasonal staff will be focused on American employers and their recruitment of students, who are studying in Ireland, participating on a seasonal summer work visa, known as a J-1. According to the US department of state, a J-1 Visa is an “exchange visitor, non-immigrant, category for individuals approved to participate in work-and study-based exchange visitor programmes.” (US Department of State, 2017). For more than fifty years, the J-1, Summer Work and Travel (SWAT) provided international students to America to not only work and live, but to embrace the cultures and ideas of the American country (US Department of State, 2017). The drive behind J-1 programmes has been due to globalization of the world and culture acceptance to welcome diversity (WRC Social and Economic Consultants, 2009). It is through recognition of qualifications, English language and visa permissions that enabled students and programmes like this to create such migration. This is due to the initial low barriers globally and a concern for limited opportunities in Ireland due to the economic situation that occurred (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 71).

The drive and impact of a J-1 visa has been previously studied in research and theories on the growth in migration with Irish students to America, especially during the recession and the employment of those under 25 falling 50% in 2011 (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 74). Through assessment and findings in journal articles and data collected through secondary research, a look into what the SWAT programme is today and what it provides to Irish students is analysed. The study will look at previous research in related areas from employers who have worked with J-1 participants, as well as the economic impact of the programme. Through the form of seasonal, temporary work, there are many benefits associated to the J-1 SWAT on communities and the economy that will be looked at through this dissertation (US Department of State, 2017). According to research from Alliance for International Exchange Facts, all SWAT participants contribute $500 million to the US economy and 97% of employers report having more seasonal jobs available than full-time staff available to fill (Alliance for International Exchange, 2016).

These topics above have become more relevant as of 2016 when pre-elected American president Donald Trump made waves declaring if elected he would look at removing this cultural programme with Ireland. The Independent article points out that Donald Trump
believes he wants to limit foreign immigration and focus on employing more American youth (Molloy, 2016). This concern would eliminate these J-1 visas, which include summer work and travel programmes that bring in over 100,000 students to US each summer (Tillett, 2017).

With the increase in interest in travelling and working abroad becoming a rite of passage for Irish students, there has been a great deal of research on the impact of emigrating and work visas in the past that will be looked at. Previous studies and literature have demonstrated theories relating to organizations being impacted by the J-1 programme, or International visas over the years that is reviewed below. However, with the recent discussions in 2017 and the fear of it being removed, an interest to find out the impact on the companies, if the programme was removed from Ireland was developed. With the support of the research discussed above, and the literature that will be reviewed, a foundation of the importance of seasonal workers will be demonstrated. The applicability of the concepts of the J-1, culture aspects and the impact on American companies requires further research, from an Irish to American perspective. This provides a cultural difference between this research and the studies before it. This paper will look at primary and secondary research to illustrate experiences of the J-1 programme and the impact it has on the participants overall. The focus of Seasonal, Work and Travel participants are the main subject due to the association to be temporary and cultural, rather than labor driven, therefore showing a need for review and research. Through a review of the programme and understanding of the experiences that are had in terms of participants, employers and the impact of the programme on their businesses in terms of culture and economic, this will provide knowledge to the benefits on performance and cultural experience for American companies to invest in season J-1 students, specifically from Ireland.
1.1 Research Question

What is the impact on seasonality roles in America, for companies employing Irish students, on a Summer J-1 visa in today’s world?

With the information introduced previously, and the recent events that have been exposed with the new American president, there is a necessity to discuss the impact of seasonality J-1 workers on American companies, particularly over the summer months. This recent statement of removing the J-1 programme allows us to discuss the impact and more importantly the outcome of performance it has on seasonal summer companies, relying on the extra staff over the busy season. In this research, there will be problems examined from American employers with the announcement of the removal of the J-1 SWAT programme, as well as data collected from various sources showing the importance the programme has on the American economy and on participants on the programme.

This question can provide us with research to support why and how these programmes are important and provide information to those aware, but perhaps also provide details to future recruiters and American companies. The findings discovered, through historical information and primary/secondary research can be used to not only bring awareness of the programme to future American companies, wishing to recruit Irish students, it will also be used as academic evidence in how important it is to support cultural programmes such as this. Through the research, the information gathered can be used as a guideline for American sponsors, as well as Irish partners facilitating J-1 administration, in hopes to bring awareness to current and future students as well. Once reviewed and accessed, more current and updated information will be gathered through electronic interviews and surveys, to not only provide data, but also impact had on students and employers.
2. Literature Review

2.1 Literature Introduction

The topics researched for this paper through journal articles and online sources discuss previous work found on Work and Travel visas and the impact it has on the students and the companies’ experiences along with opinions on temporary visas. The topic of the recruitment of immigrant workers has been a well-researched subject, discussed through various articles from various countries. Moriarty, Wickhama, et al discuss through their studies, the general reason for recruiting immigrants is due to the employer’s perception of a shortage of both labour and skills through their company, demonstrating a need to supply staff, to meet the demand (Moriarty, et al., 2011, p. 1871). However, more recently it has been mentioned by William C Terry, 2015 that “very little study provide analysis on how these programmes impact specific seasonal industries and questions regarding such programmes having a broad impact in labour and skills shortages” (Terry, 2015, p. 113). It will be the theme of recruiting immigrants for specifically seasonal work and the impact, that is the main theme discussed. Other themes such as the decision of students leaving Ireland to work in America, and factors that cause this decision are investigated. Finally, a look into current events that lead to American companies expressing concern on the restriction of seasonal workers, expressing the impact on business. This is to provide knowledge and foundation to the recent need for the research that will be conducted, and the impact that may or may not be had.

2.2 Summer Work and Travel J-1 Programme (SWAT)

The aim of a Summer Work and travel programme is to give international students a first-hand experience of working in a seasonal or temporary job, while also living and experiencing the culture of America (US Department of State, 2017). Through this programme, the department of state authorizes American sponsors to work with administration offices to issue temporary work visas. The J-1 SWAT programme began in 1961, as a non-immigrant visa to create cultural awareness and understanding between nations (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 4). The J-1 programme has continued to be an attractive recruitment for temporary work due to protective regulations, authorizing, a high of 300,000 workers on average from various countries to the United States in 2013 (The International Labour Recruitment Working Group, 2013, p. 9). Students that choose to participate in the programme become working tourists, who come to work in America and hope to be able to
experience the culture of America in resorts, hotels, and restaurants in the country (Terry, 2015, p. 113).

The department of state deals with exchange visitors on a SWAT programme through various countries, with 2017 numbers for Ireland at over 4100 students (J1 US Department of State, 2018). American sponsors, like Interexchange and Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), are responsible for providing and processing approvals of participants and job roles, all meeting within the rules and regulations of the J-1 Work and Travel programme (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 4). Using the J-1 visa, it allows companies to bring in international workers, fresh ideas and prove to be an effective way to attract and retain returning workers, while also allowing participants to gain valuable experience, and cultural insight from their seasonal role (Chazottes, 2001, p. 13). These roles are usually categorized in a range of seasonal positions from hotels, restaurants, and amusement parks (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 4) defended by sponsor organizations as a cultural exchange initiative (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 8).

The introduction to the background of the J-1 visa and programme is done through research by Bowman/Bair and article by Sayoni Maitra. They provide us with a foundation of what the programme does and how it is important for all that are involved. Maitra, discusses the programme’s placement of providing a break to students between academic years, however for some countries, such as South America, this may be when it is winter in the USA. Though, different compared to Irish participating in a Summer Work and Travel, placements are still seasonal with support for ski resort type businesses (Maitra, 2013, p. 864). Similarly, Bowman/Bair provide an in-depth look into the growth of the programme, as well as negative aspects that have occurred through its history, providing a strong debate on how it provides perspective to those working in a new country. The topic is discussed due to the concerns brought up in 2013 by Senator Bernie Sanders, in regard to companies using a J-1 programme for cheap labour and taking away American Jobs (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 1). Through Bowman & Blairs assessment, an argument is made that the “reliance on non-immigrant labour has impacted the organization of work and that the SWAT programme reflects broader trends in managed migration and embodies the model of flexible migrant labour many employers now demand” (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 13) . A great deal of labour concerns and the role government officials have in justifying the status as a cultural exchange rather than temporary work to fill labour niches (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 18) are brought into light due to the history of recruiting immigration workers.

Through various incidents, such as in 2009, the mismanaging of migrant workers in America are looked at. Participants from Mexico, were left without work in America and led to illegal
work, over staying, and in some cases risk of human trafficking (Griffith, 2014). In 2011, a public incident within a Hershey packing plant in Pennsylvania, led to protested workers expressing terrible working conditions and low wage (The International Labour Recruitment Working Group, 2013, p. 18). It is through those incidents that international workers, recruited to work in America, have a history, of abuse, forced labour, and human trafficking (The International Labour Recruitment Working Group, 2013, p. 5).

In light of the Hershey 2011 event, where students attest to the State Department’s continuing failure to deter sponsors and employers from violating participants’ rights, necessary input and hands on approach was needed by the labour department (Maitra, 2013, p. 920). The incident would lead to a protest of nearly 200 student workers joining together against the corporation and a campaign to hold the sponsor and the employer accountable for exploiting the students (Maitra, 2013, p. 867). Due to the lack of labour control, and investigation done on the US sponsor at the time, known as Council for Educational Travel USA, or CETUSA, the sponsor was removed (Maitra, 2013, p. 865). Other implications, noted in Visa Inc, in the past include participants in 2010, where Eastern European participants were found working in companies, with packaging shampoo for hotels, on small wage and excessive costs for rent and transportation (Isukthankar, 2012, p. 47). While in Alaska, many participants were asked work over 16-hour days, with ultimately very little cultural experience. Due to this long period of labour hours, seafood processing industry was restricted from hiring J-1 participants, with many employers, and Alaska Senator, Lisa Murkowski, fearing they “could not recruit US workers in the numbers needed to fill a void, lost by the J-1 participants” (Costa, 2012)

Due to the above situations, many concerns with Work and Travel participants were expressed, as it can lead to hard labour roles, low wage and risk of undocumented workers. It has also become a topic of concern that a programme, used to embrace cultural interaction and awareness has also become “Americas largest guest worker programme” (Terry, 2015, p. 113). Due to these concerns, and to embrace the seasonality and cultural imprint that the programme associates with, a global policy was put into place for the 2016 season. This policy includes the rule of pre-placement jobs to be attained before work visas are to be issued. According to the US Embassy, this rule was issued by two major US sponsors, CIEE and Interexchange to ensure the participants secured a seasonal job before they travelled to the USA and to improve the culture of the programme (The U.S Embassy of Ireland, 2017). The restriction of roles in construction, manufacturing and good processing was put into place as well, to ensure previous situations are not repeated (Terry, 2015, p. 113).
The seasonality of the roles presents staging challenges to industries due to the demand required to provide extra workers to meet the large workload, while at the same time, being aware that the seasonal workers are not needed in the offseason. This forces employers to seek flexible workers with knowledge of having to release them once the season reaches its peak (Terry, 2015, p. 112). The use of students, participating on a programme such as a J-1, can be based on the specific group embracing flexibility and tend to take on various temporary style jobs. The recruitment of these temporary employments helps the students associate not only work experience, but experiences of freedom, motivation and opportunities for learning and acquiring experiences (Bosmans, et al., 2015, p. 7). Most do so, while completing their educational qualifications, which are deemed to be more of a commitment, than those who no longer attend education (Moriarty, et al., 2011, p. 1873).

The use of work and travel programmes have been researched for many various countries as according to the US department of state, Ireland is fifth highest contributor to the J-1 visa, following the likes of Germany and Brazil (McMahon, 2017). Although a different perspective, it is shown through Shanthi Robertson, that being a temporary worker in Australia provides opportunities into migration through “tourist” category, rather than “labour” (Robertson, 2014, p. 1933). According to the Irish Times, the increase of work and travel participants, from Ireland, to Australia has increased since 2006, peaking in 2012 with over 25,000 visas issued (Greene, 2017). Visa changes in relation to Irish workers being affected began when Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull wished to abolish the programme, to put Australians first. Similar concerns to the J-1 are discussed with employer’s exploitation the workers (Greene, 2017). The discussion however is based on an employer-sponsored visa called a 457-visa which allows foreign workers to live in Australia for several years. The changes due for 2018, would change the programme to be focused on temporary skilled workers, but also increasing the interest in those coming to travel and work on a temporary visa (like a J-1) hoping to improve the cultural interest. Changes to the programme, with larger restrictions, include limited time allowed working for same employer, could cause a decline in those going to just under 7000 Irish participating in the programme to Australia (Greene, 2017). This demonstrates although recruiting those from Ireland, the category provides opportunities for those to come experience the culture of the country and not to be used as long-term employment.

Despite working in seasonal jobs, the programme workers tend to still participate in contributing to the community and receive skills that improve their employment prospects, as shown through research found in Australia by Lisa Cornish (Cornish, 2018). Through workers surveyed in Australia, on average the satisfaction was a 8.6/10 with many intend to continue participating in programmes similar if not the same for future years. The analysis
provided a different outlook compared to Bowman and Bair, as it focuses more on blurred boundaries between the holiday and permanent worker and less on the government status. The article provides proof of evidence that although obtaining a J-1 visa, isn’t the only way to migrate to a new country, there are many rules and regulations that can restrict, and lead the subject years without a permanent status, despite cultural and economic participation (Robertson, 2014, p. 1928)

A realm of comparison in Work and Travel (WAT) programmes in other countries, not just summer based, is looked at by Howe and Owens, providing research that discusses the impact of WAT programmes on the labour market, giving us a direction to consider for our research on Ireland and America. This is based on their research that seasonal workers are there to cater to the employer, as well as the diversity impact it has on both parties (Howe & Owens, 2016, p. 63). Using seasonal workers, as temporary agents, provided not only replacements to those absent for a period, ie holiday, but also helped maintained organization flexibility between peak and non-peak times (Hippel, et al., 1997, p. 93).

It is the basis of this information that we examine through primary research and shine light on the more specific impact the J-1 SWAT has on the American companies as they hire Irish students, with similar language and background to North America.

2.3 Irish Students working in America

“Time spent traveling is not dead time that people always seek to minimize”, is a quote discussed in *Timespace and International Migration*, which provides insight in the reason why people may want to move internationally. Through theories and assessment, the chapter demonstrates an understanding that support the reason for a programme like the J-1 as it provides insight into migrating internationally for a sense of identity, experience and social belonging (Mavroudi, et al., 2017, p. 14). It is through the quote that when one chooses to take part in a programme and experience a SWAT, it can be built on the foundation of escapism and a certain frame structure. A look into the background of rising interest in students from Ireland leaving and migration away is discussed by Moriarty and company (2015), and work from Doyle in 2011. Their findings provide a perspective of Irish nationalities working in America. Through the articles, they examine that although an experience is what causes participants to begin the steps to start a programme, such as SWAT, but it is also used as a form of personal career development during economic decline and recession (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 71). This assessment and findings provide us with a review of why Irish students, or grad students wish to move away from Ireland and provides data collected by Irish students in categories of why they leave, for what jobs, and even how
long. The variety of Irish students leaving their home country is led through their motivations for something more, and concerns for the future. What motivates an Irish student to participate in a programme like this, was looked at in 2014, through a European-wide survey by European Commisions (or EC) where at least 80% of respondents reported that the main motivations include: Opportunity to live abroad, develop skills such as adaptability and proactivity, and opportunity to experience different culture (European Commions, 2014, p. 73)

According to Glynn and company, Ireland has recently seen a large level of emigration per capita, and as of 2014, UK and Australia were the two most popular destinations for work and travel Irish students (Glynn, et al., 2013). The interest to travel and move away to another country is an attitude that can be based on many factors, including the jobs available in Ireland and the historical recession. The Irish student’s attitudes towards future employment, and prospects to move to another country is discussed by Katie Doyle and analysed through research. The study, Home or Abroad: Irish Students Attitudes towards Employment Prospects looks at the views of students emigrating and reasons why through qualitative research of interviews with six undergraduate students from Ireland between ages of 20-25 years (Doyle, 2011, p. 24). The results were based on themes of importance including the economy, employment available at home vs away, forced emigration and the role of education in career development (Doyle, 2011, p. 26). The results showed an awareness of the economic decline in Ireland at the time, with little confidence in the government and opportunities for them once graduated, and little diversity (Doyle, 2011, p. 28). Through the interviews, there was also a great deal of awareness that emigration is not the only option, however if it is the direction to remain in chosen careers, then this caused intentions to migrate (Doyle, 2011, p. 37).

Though, many arguments fear that the embracing the migration of Irish students via a J-1 or Erasmus can hurt the individual culture of the student, many participants, when surveyed often aspire to travel to different places, without excluding the option of moving back to Ireland. It is addressed that the desire to move away is more so for travel and to break away from financial concerns caused by the economic decline of Ireland (Courtois, 2016, p. 37). The interest for Irish students to migrate from home and explore America can be due to the dominant English language, as English-speaking countries receive more Irish students each year (Courtois, 2016, p. 28). Through the research concluded by Dr Courtois, a similar phenomenon arising is the increase on Irish students studying in English-speaking countries as well. In her study she looked at 110 questionnaires from Irish students who have spent time outside the country and analysed their results and reasons for mobility. Through her survey, there was a tie for the destination of respondents, as 16% of participants from
Ireland migrated to Spain and France, in comparison to 6.3% of those who migrated to USA (Courtois, 2016, p. 32). When looking at the experiences by the students, 64% strongly recommend being very positive about the experience, and 59% stated they spent most of the time with international students (Courtois, 2016, pp. 34-35). This helps demonstrate that out of those interviewed and surveyed, making friends with international people was easy and became an important aspect of their experience. This would help embrace their independence and break away from their environment and embrace a new culture.

There has been recent research done, as recent as 2015, through articles by *Journal of Sociology* that takes a narrative approach at looking at the migration of Irish professionals and the shared experience had across the generation (Ryan, 2015). Through both discussions, surveys, and in-depth interviews, data was collected in relation to the Irish identity, society norms and the overall connection one has with life at home. Through the study, participants define their individual identities by opening themselves to new experiences and enjoy the cultural mix of diversity (Ryan, 2015, p. 19). The experience that occurs for each individual, includes diverse experience around the world (Ryan, 2015, p. 19). Through survey analysis in *Irish Journal of Sociology*, Elaine Moriarty and team, were able to examine Irish students and observe their interest in mobility to different countries, including America (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 71). The data collected was from over 1000 Irish graduates that were in overseas employment for three months in 2013. This showed advantages of student mobility beyond just academic credentials, including increase cultural attitudes (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 73). A similar survey was conducted for University College of Cork, *Irish Emigration in an Age of Austerity* published in 2013 that worked a mixed method approach of 1500 respondents completing a survey (Glynn, et al., 2013).

Through research, the breakdown of why Irish people decided to move to their location showed that a large percentage (male and female) believed it was a great opportunity to improve their skills and opportunities (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 79). This demonstrates the student perspective and importance of having a J-1 programme. Research showed that nearly 40% of those who left Ireland, did so to experience another culture, with 43.6% hoping to get a sense of job experience (Glynn, et al., 2013, p. 3). The survey provided some insight on historical numbers from 2013, showing that of the sample 27.5% of those who emigrated, did so with previous experience, with a J-1. This shows that participating on a J-1 SWAT can stimulate participants to travel more and continue their improvement of skills and opportunities (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 81).

With the above taken into consideration, time spent abroad to a different country, provided the Irish students with a sense of independence and self-development. Many of the
participants surveyed through the works of Dr Courtois mentioned that doing a programme such as a J-1, or an Erasmus was their “first opportunity to live independently”, while others mentioned “enjoying the sense of freedom and autonomy” (Courtois, 2016, p. 36). This previous research continues the theme of interest in travelling away as the main option as it provides more opportunities for the future. This is again shown through research and analysis by Doyle in which many respondents intend to build a career outside of Ireland (Doyle, 2011, p. 31)

Overall, the literature provided above show that the SWAT is an element of the Irish student’s development and growth, and in some ways has become a routine for generations. The improvement in the Irish economy recently, may lead to many students, leaving to experience culture, with hopes to return home now that greater prospects are occurring (Greene, 2017). Through the studies and research, it can be shown that programmes, such as a J-1 plays a part in the career development of our younger generations but also a strong diverse and cultural experience (Moriarty, et al., 2015, p. 84).

2.4 Impact of Restricted J-1 Seasonal workers in America

Integrating research from news articles in the wake of the announcement by President Trump has been looked at to provide a sense of support in the need and demand for American companies. Sourcing seasonal staff help demonstrate the impact on their performance. In the light of his presidency, Trump expressed interest in reducing the J-1 programme as part of “Buy American and Hire American” campaign and executive order (Miller, 2017). The main reason for the reduction of the programme is due to the limitation on international participants taking away American jobs, however through the research and articles, many state that the students are doing seasonal positions, hoping to embrace American culture (Miller, 2017) and without them there would be labour shortages.

When looking at the J-1 Visa, many companies, including small businesses, express in academic journal, The J-1 Visa, an Overlooked tool for International HR, the benefits found with participating in the programme, such as providing staff during busy seasons, and allowing businesses to grow (Chazottes, 2001, p. 18). Through research, journalists discovered that despite the critics’ opinions, and the Trump administrations threat, many students on J-1 programmes have been hired to work in hotels and resorts owned by Trump (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 2). Many employers are noted as showing support in the industry (Miller, 2017) of J-1 visas and the impact it has on the tourism industry and cultural exchange is critical. It is made known that these workers provide cost-effective results as well as extra staff for vacations and high customer demands (Glaser, 2017). Many
employers from various industries such as concessionaires, national parks, resorts and hotels, amusement parks and other seasonal destinations are mounting campaign to save the programme (Glaser, 2017). With all of this looked at, President Donald Trump, can be caught acknowledging benefits of this programme, as he stated “a businessman’s goal is to be more profitable than your competitors who will seek every advantage in labour costs, overhead and taxes” (Bowman & Bair, 2017, p. 2). Although this is not the purpose of a J-1 seasonal programme, it shows benefits for employers, during a busy season.

American companies provide information regarding need and reliance of J-1 students on SWAT visas for their summer season. This has always been important to employers and those relying on extra staff, such as small businesses, even back in 2001. In the spring of 2001 edition of Employment Relations Today it is discussed that benefits of a J-1 visa can “give young employees valuable benefits and opportunities to deal with different people, cultures, as well as expand their vision” (Chazottes, 2001, p. 15). Based on data collected in 2017 by LinkedIn’s database, a large turnover rate of near 11% has reached America with retail and consumer product industry being the second largest turnover rate (Booze, 2017). Based on the data collected, often seasonal roles show the largest turnover rate with restaurants and retail leading the large portion of the percentage with 17.2% and 16.2% respectively (Booze, 2017). In comparison, the industry including tourism and travel show a 13% turnover rate while, the hospitality industry, the employer turnover rate in America has continued to see an increase, with 2015 seeing a high 70% caused by seasonal staffing (National Restaurant Association, 2016). When looking at the reason for leaving, it is shown through the survey and database by LinkedIn that it is largely due to lack of opportunity for advancement, at 45% (Booze, 2017). This use of short term, local American temporary workers creates a large element of scheduled turnover, creating employer concerns in being able to maximize potential American seasonal workers (Wandera, 2011, p. 193).

The travel and tourism industry creates more than 400,000 jobs during a summer season (Booze, 2017) and many areas report work shortage due to the reduction of available young students on summer break (Terry, 2015, p. 112). Many employers in both tourism and hospitality have reported challenges in finding quality workers to fill the peak summer seasons. In America, they will need to fill an estimate 1.3 million new positions of all types by 2022 and the hotel housekeeping staff is expected to reach a demand of 8% (Terry, 2015, p. 112). These challenges may be due to the lack of motivators for temporary Americans, as it may lack career advancement and pay stability, along with workers only used in times of peak demand and easy termination (Håkansson & Isidorsson, 2015, p. 4). According to American Staffing Association Workforce Monitor, when looking at the type of work sought after in America, 75% is full time with part time second with 53%, finished last is seasonal
work at 31% (World Economic Confederation, 2017, p. 48). Many local Americans working in temporary or seasonal work seem to want to enter short term employment with hopes of obtaining employment in a permanence and skills advancement, which unfortunately may not be available due to the type of industry (Wandera, 2011, p. 191). This demonstrates the necessity for seasonal workers, who are not focused on the long-term reality.

In popular areas such as, Ocean City, employers in a Hotel and Spa, express that they wouldn’t survive or be able to function, and some expressing that they would have to shut down departments in the company (Miller, 2017). In Cedar Point, the largest Ohio participant, hired 1600 international workers in previous year, while other businesses state that finding seasonal help is difficult, as it may include relocation (Glaser, 2017). The use of temporary or seasonal workers is a growing part of business in America to help companies that have employees go on family leave, provide support to current workers so they are not overworked. The temporary employees, in return, get a sense of cultural change and overall provide extra staff during busy summer months (Fehr, 2017). These will be used as background in this report, as without SWAT employees, seasonal companies would suffer. Without the SWAT programme, 97% of employers mention that they wouldn’t have available workers to meet capacity, and like the hotel in Ocean City, 25% of employers think it would be very likely they would have to close (Alliance for International Exchange, 2016). Within the fishing and seafood industry, such as in Maryland, a delay or restriction on seasonal workers will cause a strong negative impact on the state’s economy that relies heavily on seasonal workers, explained in an economic report by Diana Orces. She concluded by stating, “Arguments that temporary foreign workers are taking jobs away from U.S. natives are simply not true. Rather, temporary workers have proved to be essential in keeping many industries alive” (American Immigration Council). It is noted in Solving seasonality in tourism? Labour shortages and guest worker programmes in the USA, that the younger demographic that used to form a strong presence in the industry is no longer there, as many American students choose positions related to future career interests (Terry, 2015, p. 112).

Looking at research analysis completed by William C Terry (2015), a study was conducted looking at two forms of guest workers, of which one was J-1. The study focuses on the North and South Carolina area in USA, of which both rely on tourism and seasonality companies. With focus on results from the J-1 perspective, 11,504 J-1 participants were working in these areas in 2014, and over 4600 were SWAT. Many of the workers, had previous J-1 experience and were returning J-1 SWAT participants, showing a consistency in the workers hired. The results would conclude that finding local workers was the most consistent topic of importance when assessing the data, found through interviews with manager. Another strong concern was that if locals were found, the turnover rate was so high, with many not
able to remain on for more than two weeks before wanting to leave, or take time off. The results showed that lack of interest in seasonal, low-end menial work, low pay and workers’ sense of entitlement contributed to the factors listed above (Terry, 2015, p. 115). With the factors of a turnover rate of American workers, discussions on the temporary workers, maintaining a “outsider” view of their role in a company may affect the perception and dedication to the roles (Bosmans, et al., 2015, p. 19).

The recruitment of local Americans, for temporary roles, can lead to some concerns, as the quality of work may suffer due to the stigmatism of being temporary, as well as the relationship between permanent and temporary employees (Bosmans, et al., 2015, p. 2). Based on a sample conducted from a study in Belgium, regarding temporary workers, through interviews it was shown that many temporary workers felt like they were outsiders, and not able to comply with the norms and habitats of the permanent employees (Bosmans, et al., 2015, p. 11). Many of the results, took on data of ten in-depth interviews of temporary workers, locals and members of the country. The interviews showed that many permanent workers, could have feared the managers would prefer temporary workers and felt threatened, while others felt it hard to get attached to the roles or make social ties, due to the temporary contracts (Bosmans, et al., 2015, p. 12). A similar study was done with locals from Kenya and hiring seasonal workers in the country to work short term. The study looked at 51 participants, employers, and the effects of them working with short term employees. The results showed that 72% of the respondents felt that short term workers affected productivity very greatly to greatly extent, as well as low level of commitment (Wandera, 2011, p. 198).

Common motivators for permanent employees are career advancement, pay, stability, work community and self-actualization (Bosmans, et al., 2015). Local nationality employees, who work on a temporary basis, lack most of these motivators, which raises the question of what motivates them to work (Håkansson & Isidorsson, 2015). This provides some insight on the lack of locals’ interest in temporary positions over the season.

Critics of the J-1 visa programme, agree with President Trump saying it provides an easy way for employers to choose inexpensive labour instead of hiring American workers whom they would have to pay higher wages (Itkowitz, 2017). Although some visas allow corporations to recruit and globalize more talent and can provide opportunities for companies to improve their international business, this isn't the case for a Summer Work and Travel visa, which as mentioned, has adapted their programme and is used to help the parties understand different cultures and provide experiences (Chazottes, 2001, p. 13). A J-1 visa letter expressing support for the SWAT programme was sent to the Secretary of State, Rex W. Tillerson in August 2017, expressing this experience of diversity from around the world, to “countries key to US national security interests, with no expense to the American
tax paper” (Soper, 2017). This letter would be signed by 17 US Senators and sent to Washington stating that “these J-1 workers not only work in our local businesses, but also shop in our stores, eat in our restaurants and rent local accommodations, all of which contribute to the state’s economic growth” (Soper, 2017).

The usage of the Summer J-1 visa can be seen as an overlooked programme that can offer invaluable experience, offering benefits for both company and employees. Through discussions and interviews with employers, a case is made, as businesses argue that jobs that get approved for the programme are vetted by US sponsors and must be deemed seasonal (Itkowitz, 2017). Other concerns reviewed is that some J-1 visa workers overstay the time allotted, whereas through reading statements from employers, each company is vetted, with calls from the State Department and American Sponsors, and subject to all kinds of oversight (Walsh, 2017). When reviewing the programme rules, J-1 visa applicants must prove they are enrolled in college and have proof of return home at the end of the season (Parr, 2017). The usage of not only a Summer J-1, but temporary work visas, in general, at the end of the visa date, the worker leaves the country to return home, without affecting job opportunities of US workers (The International Labour Recruitment Working Group, 2013, p. 8). This shows that organizations in seasonal and tourist industries tend to embrace seasonal workers to cover short-term spikes in business, as well as to cover workload of members of staff who are absent (Wandera, 2011, p. 189)

2.5 Literature Conclusion

Through these themes, discussing the J-1 seasonal visa, the impact on the students, employers and companies and the effects of hiring seasonal workers in America, shows the implications found to provide a foundation to our research question. These historical concerns during the announcement in 2017 will be used as a starting point to provide a support for methodology used, based on the current feedback that will be discussed.
3. Methodology

3.1 Methodology Introduction

In this chapter, the hope is to demonstrate the methods and philosophies that will be the backbone and foundation used for this study. Through design, philosophy, sampling and quantitative/qualitative research a better understanding of the goal will be provided. The collected information from themes: Irish students, J-1 Work and Travel programme, Seasonal work, and American companies will be the main forms of methodology. The methodology of this research is divided into two major sections, one that focuses on the quantitative and one that focuses on the qualitative (Rudestam & Newton, 2015, p. 93). The researcher decided to implement these methods to get a volume of responses, with also a sense of clarification and specification to provide a deeper understanding of the data collected.

This research will include a look at specific US companies as well as a look into Irish student’s experience working in US companies and the impact they bring to seasonal work. This will be conducted through, research, one on one questions with employers who have worked with J-1 students and surveys collected by both students and employers.

3.2 Research Design

This study was conducted based on the literature review of information presented in the past and was used as foundation for the current question being asked. The review was done to enable an understanding of seasonal workers from Ireland working on a J-1 SWAT in America. The secondary research presented were mostly from academic journal articles published in the past, along with recent reports of the impact of the restriction of the J-1 presented in the news. The above will serve as a guidance into the primary research provided below.

3.2.1 Research Philosophy

The understanding and development of the knowledge learned through the literature review, known as research philosophy, serves as a foundation into the methodology that will be carried out within the dissertation (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 127). Throughout the book by Saunders, we learn that our assumptions can shape our understanding of our research question, and also how we choose our methods and interpret the findings (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 128). There are two philosophies that are important when designing your research,
the first is Objectivism, with the second being Subjectivism. Under the philosophy of Objectivism, which focuses on reality and that all social entities exist, we will focus on the positivism aspect of it (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 131). Positivism involves collecting data about an observable reality, and the only phenomena observed to generate a strategy is from existing theory (Veal, 2006, p. 37). It is said, according to Roelien Goede that “the basic principle of positivism is to focus on the fact, or the given, and to ignore everything else” (Goede, 2004, p. 13). This will be based on historical information found on the J-1 visa, as well as the impact on seasonal workers in a different country. It will use the base of the historical research to focus on research gained on specifically Irish students, and the impact on America, while also looking at the facts provided by the data collected.

The second form of philosophy, Subjectivism, which is based on perception and the actions affected, we will investigate Interpretive aspects. As discussed by A.J Veal, this philosophy is based on emphasis on conducting research based on people, rather than objects (Veal, 2006, p. 37). This will be based on the interpretation of human and organizational behaviour through their thoughts and options based on their interpretation of the programme and historical context, the process known as Contextualisation (Goede, 2004, p. 25).

With the use of both, a better understanding of the J-1 programme and the impact overall can be seen, by not only looking at the history of the programme through research, but the changes and situations that occurred. The use of quantitative and qualitative data received from either Irish students, or American employers is looked at regarding their experience. The way in which the J-1 SWAT programme works will help shed light on the current situation developed and the interpretation of the impact to both employers and students.

3.2.2 Research Approach

The theories discussed earlier will be the bases of the design of the research project proposal. When the conclusion is derived logically from set premises, it can be deductive reasoning (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 143). According to Saunders, building on the information researched on the J-1 programme and the economic impact it has had over the past few years, it would show that there is evidence to support the importance of the programme.

Secondary research conducted through the literature review demonstrates three important themes: the understanding of the J-1 SWAT programme, the impact of Irish students leaving home and lastly, the importance of American companies recruiting seasonal work. The sources used in the secondary research are mostly from academic journals discussing the
themes mentioned through previous years, current situations and similar experiences from around the world.

Using this foundation, data was collected to determine how Irish students on the J-1 impacts American companies, and the impact it has on the student’s. This data will be used in support of the research question, based on existing information and planned data collection of today’s world. This will be discussed, using primary research, as it is necessary to collect new information relevant to the specific themes discussed previously, with the use of qualitative and quantitative research (Veal, 2006, p. 39)

3.2.3 Research Strategy

As mentioned, the research is focused on two groups: The Irish participants on a J-1 SWAT and the employers who work with students on the J-1 SWAT. The focus is on the perspectives of both employers and participants and the organizations that support the programme. Through the strategy of using both qualitative and quantitative methods, data will be collected, analysed and presented to support an answer to the research question (Veal, 2006, p. 40). The combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches is defined as using a “Mixed Method” approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, p. 2). The main example of mixed methods for this research will be the process of collecting data, using quantitative surveys, and followed up with one on one questions with individuals who completed the survey to help explain the results provided (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018, pp. 5-6). The use of electronic interview and surveys involve the gathering of information from individuals using a “formally designed schedule of questions called a questionnaire interview, or questionnaire survey” (Veal, 2006, p. 231).

Using quantitative research, such as surveys, the main objective is to provide a more in depth look at the impact through a larger volume of data. The use of surveys will be used, emailed out to participants and employers, covering several areas with the support of the data collection site, Survey Monkey. This data will also give more control and generate findings represented by a large volume of participants (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 178). The use of fully electronic e-surveys helps the respondents access the link to the survey easily, provides clear consent detail, as well as allows the participant to stop at any time. The consent information presented to each survey participant can be seen in Appendix A. The information presented will provide insight into location of employers in America, number of J-1 students recruited, and the perception of the importance of the programme to both students and employers. This information is quantitative, presented in numerical data and providing a larger amount of information to analyse (Veal, 2006, p. 40)
Using qualitative research, the process of data collection techniques, that will provide a more detailed perception of data (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 161). This involves small numbers of individuals being questioned, with electronic interview questions, to collect more detailed information based on the employer’s perceptions and experiences (Veal, 2006, p. 100). This will be done through presenting questions to employers, via email for detailed responses. These will be selected based on having experience of recruiting Irish workers through the programme, and that have been approved and vetted by the US sponsor. This will provide an inside perspective of the impact on the process of a J-1 visa and the impact it has on American companies. These selected employers would be contacted using email, to complete the surveys mentioned previously and asked to provide more insight. This will take a semi-structured approach, allowing the possibility to provide a select number of questions (Flick, et al., 2004, p. 253). A list of questions was sent out to employers to provide more insight on the information provided in their survey responses. This is to provide an understanding of the industries impacted, and the experiences of a few individuals to support research findings (Veal, 2006, p. 40).

3.3 Sampling - Selecting Respondents

A set of selected population, to obtain a consistent and unbiased estimate of data collected is known as a sample (Veal, 2006, p. 284). Majority of sample selecting for this research will be based on an element of subjective judgement, with Non-Probability (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 281). A sample size needs to be used to represent a larger population, and in this case self- selected in some instances as it needs to meet a certain criterion (Veal, 2006, p. 287). The participants for the study, were recruited for two different sample sizes, one was based on J-1 participants that have gone on a SWAT programme through a US sponsor. The other was employers vetted and approved by any US sponsor with experience working with J-1 students.

In this section, the goal is to explain and describe why and how the sample unit was selected. This will demonstrate methods of quota sampling, where the population is broken down into individuals that fit a specific quota criteria (Sapsford & Jupp, 2008, p. 36). The student participants selected, were recruited from internet users who are currently members of 15 J-1 Facebook groups, as well as reaching to US employers through the “multiple site entry technique” (Rudestam & Newton, 2015, p. 102). This involved making links to the survey available by reaching out to various websites and Facebook groups. This selected group of employers were known to have worked with J-1 SWAT participants. This demonstrated the use of specific criteria of J-1 students and employers working with J-1
students. This is broken down again to reach out only to Irish participants, and US companies that worked with Irish students.

The targeting of specific sponsor approved employers in America, involves drawing a sample of part of a population which is convenient, or known as convenience sampling (Kothari, 2004). This relationship between the J-1 SWAT programme and US Sponsor has been created through employment relations. This provides a more convenient way to obtain samples and collect data for research and analysis. With both electronic interviews and surveys, judgements were then made to select American employers that have experience and can provide insight on positive or negative impacts with Irish participants. As research and data has been collected historically, a specific look into Irish students and companies working on behalf of Ireland will serve a judgemental sample to serve the purpose of the research.

The information collected by both the surveys and electronic interviews will be able to reflect the subject that is being studied, making it valid for this research (Veal, 2006, p. 41). The industry of seasonal work and J-1 visas balance many different views, largely due to concerns with both companies and American values. It is through the data collected from both participants and employers that can provide a range of opinions, to ensure a better sense of validity. When we look at the reliability of the subjects, Veal discusses the extent in which the findings researched can be repeated, with both different subjects or different times of collection (Veal, 2006, p. 41). The importance of the data findings is based on individual experiences, from several different participants, which isn’t to say that it isn’t correct, but more so that the behaviour presented can be based on behaviour and perceptions of the individuals, and not entirely of the complete group. It is discussed that the information provides a “snap-shop” of a group of people which could change over time (Veal, 2006, p. 41). For the purpose of our research question, the statements based on the research findings are to reflect on the impact of both groups in today’s world, at the present time.

3.4 Data Collection

The data collection was based on the quantitative and qualitative methods mentioned earlier. The procedures to obtain the data began with emails being sent to employers with a brief introduction explaining the methodology, survey link and requesting feedback (seen in Appendix B). The data collection was spread out through two specifically designed surveys, one for a student who has participated in a J-1 programme, the other for employers who were known to have worked with J-1 students previously. These were designed with the help of the Survey Monkey website.
3.4.1 Quantitative: Surveys

Employers

Online survey to employers working with Irish J-1 participants to discover their experiences, recruitment, and impact on their business and satisfaction. This is the main data collected for our research (Available in Appendix C). The survey for employers, was obtained through emails, sent to various businesses known to have worked with J-1 students in the past, with nearly 600 companies contacted. Each email was provided a survey link attached for completion. Each survey consisted of 21 questions related to each employer’s personal experience. A total of 42 surveys were collected to be analysed.

Irish J-1 SWAT Participants

Detailed findings based on online surveys sent to Irish participants who have participated on the J-1 SWAT programme. The survey covered topics such as primary reasons for participating in the programme, the impact of the programme, and perspective impact on American life and culture (Available in Appendix D). The survey for students, were posted on various J-1 Facebook groups, with 15 groups being monitored, and reposted over a span of three weeks. Each survey consisted of 20 questions in relation to Irish students, completing the J-1 SWAT programme. A total of 75 surveys were completed and collected for analysis.

3.4.2 Qualitative: Electronic Interview

Feedback from Employers

Employers were asked to provide communication based on seasonality of business, impact of J-1 participants and reliance on seasonal programmes. Some employers, answer questions through email to provide a larger insight to the survey questions asked (Available in Appendix E). The email of questions was chosen as employers responded to the survey completion confirming if any other questions are needed, consent was given to reach out. Set up of skype interviews proved to be challenging, due to time challenges of large volume of time differences between countries of Ireland and America. The questionnaires had 5-7 questions asked to provide in-depth information. A total of 5 employers provided email interview responses to these questions, to be collected and analysed. These are somewhat structured, with the main objective, used to get an insight on the importance of seasonal workers, and the perspective of getting American workers. The employers were not from one specific area, but from US states: New York, Alaska, Massachusetts. The only criteria for the interviewees was previously employing Irish students on a J-1 programme and have a seasonal business in America. The point of this was to get a deeper insight in the reason
these companies, recruited J-1 participants and their experiences with the programme, as well as the impact of having these workers.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Quantitative

When the data has been collected from the surveys, the researcher used the survey website, Survey Monkey to export and simplify the large amount of data. The website is designed to provide “specialized solutions that make it easy to automatically collect the opinions of the people who matter to you and turn them into actionable insights” (Survey Monkey, 2018). The charts and tables were analysed through exports of the survey results through SPSS excel. The data for each question followed a variety of different criteria, such as Categorical, Interval and Ordinal (UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group, 2018). Each different question follows under one of these criteria, which is then outlined in the Findings chapter.

In certain questions the participants may be asked to answer an open or closed question to provide a bit more clarification or specification depending on the questions, (i.e. if the option is not available to choose). These criteria are labelled in the Finding chapter with a specific labelled criterion of A, B, C, D, or E. For questions where the participant is asked to rate on a scale of “Not Likely” to “Very Likely” (Criteria A), charts are shown with percentage results for each. The rating scale was calculated with “Not Likely to receive the lowest rating (1) to “Very Likely” to receive the larger rating (5). This shows a correlation of a negative experience receiving a lower rating, compared to a positive experience with a greater rating. This is an Ordinal approach, where score is assigned to show a clear order (UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group, 2018) noted both A and Criteria D with a number rated scale only.

When survey results are collected, and they must have a one choice selection, this follows a more categorical or interval approach. Examples of this would be seen in either multiple choice or Yes/No questions, under Criteria C. An example of categorical approach, with no intrinsic ordering (UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group, 2018) would be open answer questions to provide clear responses. This is seen under Criteria B for questions such as gender, age, and county (Students) or Location and state (Employers). In comparison, interval approach has the selection between interval values, such as percentage of revenue: 25-50%, 51-75%, 76-100% for example.
3.5.2 Qualitative

Electronic interviews were sent out, following survey completion to five random employers. Each of these were given a specific code to identify their responses to the questions. Each employer was given a code of E1, E2, E3, etc to distinguish between the different answers for individual employer. Based on the interviews the researcher decided to use open coding by reviewing the responses and break the discussion into categories (Rudestam & Newton, 2015, p. 218). Four main themes (T) discussed through the questions presented to each employer.

Theme 1 (T1)- Seasonality Need
Theme 2 (T2)- Recruitment Need
Theme 3 (T3)- Programme Need
Theme 4 (T4)- Cultural Need

Clarification and discussion provided by each employer was then implemented under each theme to provide a sense of cohesiveness.

3.6 Research Ethics

For the research to be completed, the quality of the research and necessity of the data and information requested will be obtained through an open form of communication, avoiding dishonesty and without misrepresentation of data. Before any methodology is presented, the rights of all included will be recognized with complete confidentiality. All those involved will be anonymous unless consent is provided (i.e. American companies). As mentioned in Saunders, the participants will have the right not to participate in the project and a consent form will be presented and clearly explained (Saunders, et al., 2012, p. 211). To make the data collection easy, many just completed the survey through online links to Survey Monkey website. These consent directions were presented in an opening email to employers, and again in the survey link distributed. By them continuing with the survey, they provided consent (see in Appendix A). The study conducted, met the guidelines and policies set up by the Dublin Business School ethics committee and was approved.

3.7 Limitations of Methodology

The study and research were made aware of initial limitations with below concerns:

1. The main limitation that is concern is the risk of little support from participants on the programme, and lack of subjects to provide enough data to be collected. This was due to the confidentiality many companies and administrators in Ireland were tied to, providing little support to discovering these participants. This limitation was challenged through the search
engine of Facebook groups, in relation to J-1 participants. Links to the student surveys were posted throughout the month of July, three times to make awareness key.

2. This same limitation can be discussed regarding companies in America and the risk that they refuse to share information or participate in the research. This provides a limitation on the information available to assess. This is seen with the low number of interviewees and survey responses, in relation to number of emails sent out. Due to this, it is proven to be difficult to have a large generalization of the seasonal companies in all of America.

3. Although technology is an innovated method, a limitation provided is the situation where data and research regarding American companies will be done in Ireland. Although skype is a positive aspect, limitation through time differences, seasonality and availability can cause a limitation, compared to research collected in same location. This was noticed as many employers would not get back within time frame, and questionnaires emailed to employers proved to be more convenient.

4. Limitation to methodology of quantitative and qualitative. When it comes to questionnaires only a proportion of the population is researched, showing a large limitation in the reliance of information provided from respondents. As discussed by Veal, the accuracy of data collected, depends on the “powers of recall” from those participating, as well as honesty (Veal, 2006, p. 231).

5. Limitation of accessing American research due to the recent data protection act that was introduced May of 2018. This new European Union-wide framework known as General Data Protection Regulation would, according to the Citizens Information website, “change the rules on data protection, providing unique interpretation and application of data protection standards across EU” (Citizens Information, 2018). This limited some information that was available to access.

These limitations may be a concern, however in preparation for proposal, communication has been made to the US sponsor regarding providing support, and connecting researcher with employers, regarding interview in future. American sponsor, CIEE, has communicated that support will be provided in use of secondary data, however lack of cooperation would be given in form of quote, or interview with the US sponsor themselves, or their recruited employers.
4. Findings

4.1 Introduction of Findings

This chapter presents the findings collected through the primary research discussed in the data analysis chapter (3.5). The data collected is through both subjects, American employers and Irish students, participating in J-1 SWAT programmes. The data is presented firstly based on the findings completed by American employers, from quantitative research (electronic surveys) followed by the qualitative research (electronic interviews). Finally, data collected from Irish students who have participated in a J-1 SWAT, was assessed and presented by quantitative research, in the form of online surveys. A discussion of the results, based on the findings and secondary research (i.e. Literature Review) is shown in the following chapter, Chapter 5.

4.2 Quantitative Findings- Employer Surveys

As discussed in the Data Analysis, the data collected from employer participants was done through the website Survey Monkey, a survey platform. This list of employers was found through open Facebook groups, and google search (Indeed) to reach out to as many “seasonal hiring” companies as possible. The online survey was submitted to over 600 employers from July 14th and closed August 12th. The survey was completed by 42 employers and included 21 questions (Appendix C) covering topics of the seasonal nature of their business, recruitment of workers and satisfaction of the programme. When analysing the results, the participants were asked questions on the specific criteria (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Criteria</th>
<th>Legend Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A rating scale of 1-Not likely to 5- Very Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Selection of Options. Answers are chosen relevant to situation <em>this may have multiple responses for one individual</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>One Choice Selection. (ie Multiple Choice or Yes/No) <em>May have option to clarify</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Rating Scale with 1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Open answer questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1- Survey criteria Legend (employers)*
4.2.1 Section 1- Employer Characteristics

American State Location

When assessing the results of the employers and characteristics that are provided through the responses, it was determined in Q21 that 31% of the employers who completed the survey were primely based in California, with a New York coming as a close 2nd at 26%. This was collected with criteria E responses and tallied in Table 2. With the table demonstrating the break down, it is made clear that 44% of the respondents are from the North East (NY, NJ, MA, RI) with West Coast and East Coast regions counting for 22% each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>US State</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Count of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California (CA)</td>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York (NY)</td>
<td>North East</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts (MA)</td>
<td>North East</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois (IL)</td>
<td>Mid West</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland (MD)</td>
<td>East Coast</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey (NJ)</td>
<td>North East</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska (AK)</td>
<td>West Coast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island (RI)</td>
<td>North East</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina (SC)</td>
<td>East Coast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4- Number of employers from US states*

Industry of Work

*Figure 1- Industry of Business*

*Retail, Construction, Bike Rental, Moving company, Pizza Shop, Deli, Grocery store*
When analysing the data for the prime industry that the employers classified their business, Q16, with “Restaurant” seeing the largest percentage (33.3%). This means that one third of the employers who completed the survey listed Restaurant to be the prime industry, with a “Other” option close with 31% of the results (Figure 1).

**Business Size**

Based on the data collected in Q7, the employers participating in the survey, believe that 48% of their businesses were medium size (Figure 2), with 38% being considered “Small” and the remaining 14% considered “Large.

4.2.2 Section 2- Seasonality

**Seasonality Nature of Business**
The employers were asked if the business is considered seasonal in Q1, based on Figure 3, 60% of the responses characterizing themselves as seasonal, compared to 40% believing they were not just seasonal in nature.

For the company to be deemed seasonal, the employers specified the positions were needed for a variety of reasons (Q3). This follows Criteria B and may have multiple answers for each employer, with the main seasonal nature being broken up into 5 options (Figure 4).

Out of the options available, the summer season tends to be a busy time of the year with it being the most selected option (61.9%) followed by 40.4% of the employers surveyed expressed that extra staff needed as the next popular selection. The company only open during certain seasons (i.e. Summer) was the next popular selection with 16.6%

With the companies relying on the summer months to bring in seasonal customers and tourists, the demand for more staff seems to be a necessity. Each employer provided (Q11) an average percentage of revenue the summer season contributes, shown in Figure 5.
Based on the survey responses, 36% of the employers felt that the seasonal months contribute to “26-50%” of the revenue, and 31% felt that “51%-75%” of the revenue contributed was from the summer. The lowest % of employers were 14% believing less than 25% of their revenue is based on the seasonal months.

4.2.3 Section 3- Recruitment

Recruitment of J-1 Students

With students being recruited to work and travel to America, we had the employers reflect their experience with recruitment. When looking at the direction the employers went to recruit their employees (Q18), it followed a Criteria B presented in Figure 6.

The survey results show a strong collection of responses for 50% of the employers recruited through email and/or skype, equally. Employers recruiting through “Face to Face” was 31% of the next popular way in which employers recruited.
With recruiting, the employers were asked if they had any assistance or help provided through external elements (Q19). The questions followed a Criteria B with multiple choices available to select. The employers provided the information, which was collected in Figure 7.
It was demonstrated that 55% of the employers used an Irish administration, such as SAYIT or USIT as an external recruitment way of working. It is shown in the results that 36% of the employers received help recruiting from previous workers, compared to agencies/online recruitment helped 29% of the employers. Out of the employers, surveyed, 88% of the US employers did it, without ever actually visiting Ireland.

Based on the information collected in Q17, comparing the recruitment level of Americans to Irish SWAT was questioned in the survey. The results are shown in Figure 8.

![](image)

Figure 8 - J1 recruitment vs US recruitment

Just about half of the employers surveyed, believe the process to recruit J-1’s easier with 50% of the results. In comparison, 29% believe there was no difference, hiring is hiring, and finally 21% believe it was harder to recruit via SWAT programme, then US recruit.

**Recruitment Specifications**

When hiring, the employers were asked in Q5 to specify any qualities or specifications that may be needed to work within their business. This follows Criteria B and may have multiple answers for each employer, shown in Figure 9

When looking at the results, 48% of the employers feel that “Experience in the industry” is a prime requirement when hiring students. This could be related in the restaurant and pub industry, which were earlier described to be prime industries. The second listed requirement would be in the realm of communication skills, customer service and hard workers, specified under “Other”. The age limit of 21 followed with 17% of the employers feeling this is important as well.
When employers were asked how many hours they usually provide to their employees over the busy months (Q4), 76% averaged about 32-40 hours a week to J-1 participants.

**Cultural Aspect**

The employers were asked what sort of cultural activities are implemented to the student participants on the J-1 in Q6. This follows Criteria B and may have multiple answers for each employer, with the main requirements being broken up into 4 options along with a “None of the above” and “Other” option (Figure 10).

The cultural activities selected, show that more than 1/2 of the employers provide a chance for J-1 students to “Meet Locals” with 57% of the employers choosing this. Participants on the programme have the chance to participate in US events (43%) and Group days out (38%)
Number of Hired

Recruiting many SWAT participants on a J-1 can be a cultural experience for both, and on average an insight into the number of students recruited is presented based on the findings in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of J1 Students</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 plus</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>42</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7- Number of J1 students recruited

The employers were asked to provide insight in the number of students they hire, on average (Q9), following criteria E. Based on the results, 60% of the employers surveyed suggested an estimate of 1-10 students a year to work for the summer season. A total of 81% of employers hire between 1-25 students on average a year, along with 14% hiring 100 plus students.
In comparison regarding specifically Irish students (Q10), shown in Table 4, over 78% of the employers hire 1-10 Irish students a year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Irish Students</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 to 10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10- Number of Irish students recruited

4.2.4 Section 4- Retrospect on Experience

J-1 SWAT Experience

Based on the results regarding the experiences that the programme may have or may not have provided in Q14, the survey was presented in Criteria A. The topics of “Creating a positive workspace”, “Provide cultural contribution”, “Attract customers” or “Bring fresh ideas to the businesses were rated in Figure 11.

![How likely did the program?](image)

When analysing the results, 76% of the employers believe that SWAT J-1 programme creates a very or somewhat very positive experience, compared to 12% believing it didn’t or somewhat didn’t create a positive workspace. Similarly, 86% gave a combined total (Very and Somewhat Very) of the programme strongly providing a cultural contribution. When it comes to attracting customers to their business, a combined 53% of the employers believed
the programme was Very or somewhat very, likely along with 35% of the employers choosing “neither”.

The idea of the J-1 programme bringing fresh ideas to the business was presented to the employers with a combined 56% of the survey respondents believing it was very likely to somewhat very likely, compared to 29% believing it was “neither”.

**Removal of the Programme**

With the data collected through the results of the survey, the impact of removing the J-1 on their individual business was questioned (Q12), to the employers, with the results provided in Figure 12.

![Figure 12: Level of impact of removal](image)

When the results were reviewed, 43% of the employers feel that the removal of the programme would have a great impact on their business. In comparison, 26% of the employers feel that the removal would have some impact, followed by 19% feeling that they would have no impact.
This result on how much of an impact would occur (Q13) following the criteria A is shown in Figure 13.

Clarification on the impact with the removal of seasonal J-1 workers show that over ½ of the employers believe they would still be able to remain in business, regarding all 5 options. When comparing the choices, only 32% of employers feel that the removal would reduce the number of hours to provide and equally the same amount mention that it was likely to close a business.

**Satisfaction and Recommendation**

The survey results were condensed into these main topics to look at the satisfaction of the SWAT programme, and the students on a J-1. The data collected from Q9 was presented through Criteria A in Figure 14. The results show 48% of the employers believed that a high rate of Satisfaction was received from the programme, with a combined total of 74% of the employers rating a Very satisfied or Somewhat Very satisfied rating. This is proved to be a positive outlook on the programme, compared to the 14% that viewed a Not Very or Somewhat not very high rate of satisfaction.
To conclude the results, the researcher asked the employers if they would recommend the SWAT programme, and the recruitment of seasonal J-1 workers (Q15) following an A criterion, presented in Figure 15.

The figure below, shows a dominant 84% of the results concluding that they were Very likely or Somewhat likely to recommend to other businesses, compared to 2% that suggested they were “Not likely”. Based on the results, 14% of the employers stated they were “Neither” for or against recommending it.
4.3 Qualitative Findings- Employer Electronic Interviews

Overall the employers have worked with seasonal J-1 students in the past to help keep their companies operative over the busy time of the year, summer season. These employers will be referred to in the figure below, to provide clarification (Table 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer Number</th>
<th>Industry of Work</th>
<th>Years in Business</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Estimate average of J-1 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E1</td>
<td>Summer Resort</td>
<td>23+</td>
<td>Alaska (AK)</td>
<td>30 J-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E2</td>
<td>Summer Resort</td>
<td>12+ years</td>
<td>Massachusetts (MA)</td>
<td>20-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E3</td>
<td>Café, Coffee shop</td>
<td>5 years in America</td>
<td>Many locations including New York (NY)</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E4</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>34+ years, 12 using J1</td>
<td>Fire Island, New York (NY)</td>
<td>20-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>Pizza Shop</td>
<td>30+ years</td>
<td>Ocean City, Maryland (MD)</td>
<td>10-20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 13- Employers Interviewed*

Based on the interviews the researcher reviewed the questions asked (Appendix E) and based on the responses, a major theme was noticed in the aspect of “Need”. This is assessed through aspects of need to have or a need to deliver that is broken into four main themes, presented in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1 (T1)</td>
<td>Seasonality Need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2 (T2)</td>
<td>Recruitment Need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 3 (T3)</td>
<td>J-1 Programme Need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 4 (T4)</td>
<td>Cultural Need</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 16- Themes*
4.3.1 Seasonality Strength and Weaknesses of the company

When discussing the importance of the companies, regarding seasonality, many employers feel that the need for temporary work becomes important due to the busy time. The employers questioned, demonstrate elements of both Theme 1 and 2 as they state that they are busiest during the seasonal times, such as summer, but this can lead to challenges to find full time workers. Three of the five asked, mention being open all year round. A recently introduced café to American market (E3) discussed:

“We have 30 locations across America, which means we offer a number of employment opportunities, however we cannot always predict when we will hit busy, peak times in the year so there are cases where stores are not busy, and can’t fill full time workers all year”

With only two of the five being 100% seasonal, due to their industry being “summer resorts”, the other three show how seasonal work is still available and extra staff is needed. This demonstrates needs occurring (T1 and T2) when it comes to performance of the company.

“The summer time tends to be the busiest time of the year for us, and extra staff is always needed to fulfil those positions, but when peak is over, there are sometimes too much staff and not enough work, which can cause recruitment concerns”. (E5)

Through the findings, employers provide work in roles deemed seasonal to gain staff for the busy times, to fill the need of both seasonal work and recruitment. The students are offered a position on agreement that it is temporary work and given to those who wish to work for three months. One employer, E4 states:

“The key word there is work- we offered students work for three months and then give them time within their visa to travel around the United States. We need staff to fill in positions, such as front of house (in hostess, servers and bartenders) and it benefits us to hire Irish students as they speak English great, better than most American students. These summer seasonal roles provide us with students who are diligent, hardworking, and willing to work a full-time schedule”

4.3.2 Participation in the J-1 SWAT

Through the results, a combination of themes (T1, T2, T3) are seen based on American companies, relying on working with either Irish administrators/US sponsors to find workers, as well as filling positions with J-1 SWAT participants. When looking at the reason for participating in hiring students, many, such as E3 mention that they could not offer the same
work all year round, during quieter periods and J-1 visas’ help fill the capacity needed for short time.

“The fact that we can hire them, while they are living in America during our busiest peak period is great, but by the end of the summer our stores are slowing down again, and this can lead to less work. Seasonal workers make this transition easier”

Some employers, like E1 mention the importance of hiring seasonal staff due to them being 100% seasonal and need extra staff to help with operating the resort and greeting the guests. This demonstrates T1 and T2, in which the need of recruitment is necessary due to seasonal nature of the business. Where others, like E2, have specific reasons for the extra staff needed:

“This will mark the 175th year for the company and a big community and staff celebration will be occurring, for this year, staff will be needed to provide support for alumni party.”

When reviewing the theme of recruitment (T2) with the employer’s response, many felt the administration services in Ireland was a good start. When collecting comments, E2 stating:

“Many referrals occur from previous workers or found through Irish administration services like USIT and SAY IT, but also students reply to our ads and come through sponsors like INTEREXCHANGE and CIEE”

While E3 and E4, also confirmed with working with Irish administrations such as USIT for the latter and US sponsor INTEREXCHANGE for the former. All of those interviewed, demonstrate a noticed theme of needing assistance with a programme (T3) to support their recruitment (T2). All employers stated that they were working with J-1 students, with only three of the five mentioning working with one of the administrations from Ireland, and/or US sponsors independently.

With the support of admin services and US sponsors in the programme, many employers implement working with seasonal workers, not only because of extra staff needed, but also, they feel that they are not able to find enough American locals who would be willing to work full time, over the summer months. This demonstrates themes regarding the need of the programme (T3), recruitment (T2) and seasonality (T1). One employer, E4, utilized the J-1 programme from 12 years and provided the below feedback:

“As part time work isn’t an option for our demand, the company offered living quarters for summer help. It became difficult to fill 25 full time positions for the restaurant with American students. In my opinion, students no longer felt like they had to work to pay
for college, perhaps due to their parents doing much better financially. Most students were willing to only work part time, and never on weekends (the busiest time)"

Similarly, another employer who runs a resort (E1) confirms these recruiting concerns, noticed in T2:

“This is not a career-type job, and is meant to be a fun summer role, which may not appeal to American students”

4.3.3 Recruiting Differences

When assessing the feedback from employers, Theme 2 regarding recruitment challenges, was a strong theme throughout the interview findings.

When asking the employers, based on their experience what the reason was for participating with J-1 students, some state that their seasonality of their business (T1) can lead to some recruitment challenges (T2). Two of the five employers mention that location or specific roles in the industry needed may not be the most exciting for Americans on break, which for some (E1) it can cause challenges with hiring enough staff.

“Our summer resort is located on a remote area and provides a challenge to hire enough staff that are locals”

With all employers expressing the challenge with hiring American students, it seems the theme of recruitment need is due to commitment of time or interest. E2 mentioned that American students often have shorter breaks then those moving over to work for the summer between May-September.

“Due to this availability, we find it sometimes harder to get Americans, but we try to hire local as often as we can. This provides a good balance for us to cover staff”:

Similarly, E3 also believes level of commitment creates the need of recruitment (T3), due to the seasonality need of their business (T1):

“Americans cause some concern as they may want full time, long term commitment, where it may not be possible. Seasonal workers provide a purpose and a supply that we can use for the busy time, without having to worry about letting them go past the season”

With this occurring, a theme (T2) appearing through the findings is that employers tend to feel that some students want to dictate when and where they would work. E4 states:
“The current problem now is most Americans will not take certain jobs and that includes summer jobs in resort areas. I live in Florida and in New York, and there were always Help Wanted signs in every restaurant, hardware store, dry cleaners, etc, so the argument that the programme takes jobs away is without merit.”

Both E4 and E5 mention that most American students want to work half the time, providing short staff situations, in comparison to Irish students, E5 states:

“Irish students are not worried as much, and want to have the experience, as they are there to have fun, travel and play and don’t use this as work advancement”.

Based on the feedback provided by the employers, the recurring themes of fulfilling a seasonal and recruitment need provides a close circle of repeaters, and consistency, as noted by E2:

“We are always eager to have people and we have many that return year after year, while they are in their studies and they always spread the word through their friend circle. We attract people who are eager for fun and new experiences and J-1 students are motivated and excited. We find Irish students are hardworking and dedicated”.

Although a positive experience, one employer (E5) expressed some concerns with working with students from Ireland, as they tend to show great interest, but things change, and either pull out of the work, or never make it on the visa. This demonstrates some concerns with the programme and visa needs (T3). When asking about their experience they state:

“We find it very difficult to get an exact response on who is coming from Ireland or not, as many may be disloyal for committing to us. We tend to try to hire many students early on, but later to discover the visa process is delayed, or they switch jobs.”

When reviewing the feedback, regarding their recruitment process, E5 stated those already living over in America work the best:

“When it comes to hiring, walk-ins are the best, and easiest, as they are already here, settled and ready to start work. I sit down with them, ask a few questions and it is done, face to face and easy!”
4.3.4 Impact of Removal of the Programme

Through the results of the interviews, the seasonal demand (T1) and need for extra staff (T2) led to the research addressing the impact if the programme (T3) was removed. Many discuss the removal can cause some questions to the business success, as well as the cultural impact on the companies (T4). As E1 resort manager from Alaska mentioned:

“We aim to hire 90 people each summer, and always hope to get Americans, however it doesn’t always happen. We can on average get maybe 60 Americans. The removal of the J-1 would limit the staff and limit us to make certain business decisions”

With some feeling it would be a concern, three of the five employers would like to think that the business would manager somehow. With E5 feeling that there will be no impact:

“No impact, as we will always work with other countries, like Romanians and Croatians. We work with many Bulgarians as well as we do not need great English to be a cook in our business.”

Another, (E2) expressed that they wouldn’t close, despite relying on the workers and E4 believe that it would be difficult but not impossible to run a successful business. Due to the restaurant being in an isolated location, the employer did have some concerns, as American hires, they rely on them having their own housing and transportation:

“Without J-1 students, I would have to hire upwards of 60 part time American students, and we can only house 20 employees for the summer at our location.”

Whether businesses continue to run or not, the experience and cultural impact is important, while also providing a demand to fill positions available. Regardless whether the business or employer would or would not close, they all highly depend on workers to help during the summer months, with E2, stating that:

“We highly depend on workers, regardless if we wouldn’t close, as we need help during the summer months, to offset the winter. Without programmes like the J-1, we may not be able to stay open all year round or be able to provide a positive customer service.”

The students and employers can fulfil a cultural need (T4) for the business, employees and customers through the atmosphere, and interaction. When discussing the cultural activities promoted by the employer and business many expressed a chance to have the participants embrace American culture. This is discussed with E1:
“4th of July celebrations, Parades, National parks, golfing and employee banquets are offered. We offer a cultural environment for students and employees alike to join the community. We all benefit from all over the world to have them come to live and work and travel like a local for a few months.

In comparison, others mention cultural environment in the work place through employee activities and banquets. This is embraced by E2

“The company prides itself in having a positive and multicultural environment, to ensure to be a desirable employer. Many staff events are included for all international workers, as well as birthday celebration and parties. We provide opportunities to work and interact with people from all over the country and others from various parts of the world. The work exposure is not just in one department but various roles on the resort, providing a cultural change in work skills as well”

While other employers mention the importance of staff parties and outings, as well as benefit of providing cultural diversity to the other staff (E4). E5 even mentions the opportunity for staff trips to places in NY and Washington. Overall, both parties benefit to come to America and live and work and travel like a local for a few months (E1).

4.4 Quantitative Survey- J-1 Student Participants

As discussed in the Data Analysis, the data collected from J-1 student participants was presented through the website, Survey Monkey. An Online survey was distributed to 15 J-1 participant Facebook groups, each with an explanation of the research and a link to the Survey Monkey survey. Surveys were initially posted July 13th, 2018, with follow-ups and reposting occurring on the 18th of July, and again on the 25th of July. These groups were selected through a Facebook Search engine for open J-1 groups. All selected groups were open to the public, making it random selection. The survey covered topics of why the students participated in the programme, what experience was gained and the impact of the J-1 SWAT.
A total of 75 Irish students completed the 20 questions (Appendix D) survey and results were analysed following criteria, mentioned Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Criteria</th>
<th>Legend Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A rating scale of 1-Not likely to 5-Very Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Selection of Options. Answers are chosen relevant to situation <em>this may have multiple responses for one individual</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>One Choice Selection. (ie Multiple Choice or Yes/No) <em>May have option to clarify</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Rating Scale with 1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Open answer questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19- Survey Criteria Legend

4.4.1 Section 1- Student Characteristics

As mentioned, open Facebook groups were reached out to, and presented with the survey link for students to contribute to the study. The groups associated with the survey are seen in Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facebook Group Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J1 2018 Accommodation/Advice/Jobs</td>
<td>J1 Huntington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1 New York 2018 &amp; J1 Accom. Com</td>
<td>J1 San Diego 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish people living in America</td>
<td>J1 New York 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1 Summer 2018 - San Francisco</td>
<td>J1 USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1 San Diego 2018 - 2019 - 2020</td>
<td>The Fudgery J-1 Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Monica J1 2018</td>
<td>Go-J1 Internships USA and J-1 Visa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Pastoral Centre Boston</td>
<td>J1’ers Sighting State Side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J1 Ireland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22- Facebook Group sample

The results were based on a final sample size, with participant providing the following characteristics:

**Characteristics of Students**

Based on the data collected in Q7 in Figure 16, 67% of the participants were currently students, with 29% stated that they were working full time.

When analysing the results from the survey, the demographics for the student participants are outlined in tables below.

When reviewing the results, regarding participants location in Ireland (Q17), it was reviewed that the largest number of participants were in Dublin (35%) followed by Cork with 15%.
It was determined through Criteria E in Q19 and Q20 specifics of the participants gender and age. The results in Table 9 show a good distribution between both Female and Male gender, as well as the age distribution of the students. The gender of Female provided 57% of the survey responses, followed closely by Male students at 43%. This was a successful distribution of the two genders to help provide a wider spectrum of results.

When looking at ages for Irish students on a J-1, the results in Q20, showed that 72% of the participants were between the age of 19-21 years when they participated in a J-1 SWAT, followed next by 22-24 years of age (25%).

*Other includes Recently Graduate and Currently on a J-1 internship

Figure 16- J1 SWAT participant currently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Count of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Count of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-21 years</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-24 years</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 25- Participants Age and Gender
4.4.2 Section 2- Participation on the J-1

Perspective Prior to going on the J-1

Based on Q1, that followed a Criteria A, the participants were questioned regarding their perspective prior to travelling on their J-1. This is demonstrated in Figure 17

When results are analysed, and presented, 68% of those who went on the J-1 were “Very Likely” or “somewhat very likely” have visited America before. This is in comparison to the remaining percentage of 32% who chose “Not Likely” or “Neither” options.

In comparison, out of the results of the survey, when asked if their previous J-1 they participated in was their first, 89% of those surveyed, expressed yes. This is shown in Figure 18 in Q10 with criteria C
In Q11, of those that were surveyed, 71% of the results showed that they participated in the J-1 with friends, with 29% going alone, in Figure 19.

![Figure 19- Participated in J1 alone or with friends](image)

**Going on the J-1 SWAT**

When the participants were questioned, in Q2 regarding their top reason to go on a J-1, the survey presented Criteria A, where the students have five options to rank from “Not Likely” to “Very Likely”. These are shown in Figure 20.

![Figure 20- Likely reason to go on a J1](image)
Based on this, the results showed that prior to landing in America, the largest percentage of participants chose the likely-hood to go for a Holiday with 93% of the participants expressing a combination of “Somewhat Likely” and “very Likely”. The second largest positive likely-hood of going is due to “Family or Friend suggestion” (72%) or “Work experience” (68%).

In comparison, the largest percentage (63%) of participants selected the least likely-hood of going on a J-1 is for education, followed by 55% combined not likely to go due to previous J-1.

With this kept in mind, based on the results from Q8, it was determined that 63% stated that they didn’t have any family or friends in America before they went (See Figure 21).

In Figure 20, it was asked in the survey to reflect on reasons to go on a J-1, in comparison, the participants were also asked, based on their experience what was an important factor. It was shown in Q3 that prior to going, travel was a main motivator for the students to go, presented in Figure 22.
This was presented, following criteria A ranking the level of importance.

In relation to how important these factors were, 98% believed that travelling is important combined (somewhat to very important) regarding participating in the J-1. In comparison nearly 91% believe independence is important (combined somewhat to very important). Otherwise, 88% believed making friends was important (combined somewhat/very), followed by cultural importance (84%), making money (73%) and work experience (49%).

When reflecting on the factors that were the least important to them, work experience and received the largest percentage of not being an important factor combined. This is shown with 38% believing work experience wasn’t an important factor (somewhat not very/not very important).

**Work Experience**

When assessing working in America (Q12), the results showed that nearly half of the participants (49%) were recruited with the help of administration services, such as USIT and SAYIT, followed by 24% getting recruitment assistant through a family/friend or previous J-1 participant. In comparison, those who decided to choose the “Other” option were 16%, shown in Figure 23.

![Figure 23- How J1 recruited job in USA?](image)

*Other- handed CV instore, emailed businesses and through Study abroad visa*
Nearly half (47%) of the J-1 SWAT participants expressed working in restaurant or café’ industries, noticed in Figure 24. Out of the industries available, 17% selected Pub/Bar as the next popular industry that was chosen by participants. It is shown from Q13 that 19% of the survey results demonstrate a “Other” industry that was not listed as one of the selections for criteria C.

*Other-Retail, Bike Shops, Construction Advertising, Student work and Food Work

Figure 24- Industry J1 worked in

4.4.3 Section 3- Retrospective Point of View

When the participants were asked to reflect on their experiences after they went on their SWAT, Q6 showed that, just like prior to going, Independence and Travelling, proved to be the most important aspect of their J-1 experience. This is presented in Figure 25.

Based on the survey results, the participants reflected on the importance of these factors, after they have returned home. It showed that 96% of the respondents believed that travelling was the most important aspect of their experience (somewhat/very).

As the researcher reviewed the data collected, more than 50% of the results proved very important to the participants with Independence rating at 88%, followed by culture experienced (80%).
In comparison, the largest response likely to not be very important (combined) was making money and work experience resulted in 22% and 21% respectively.

With “Making Friends” at 81% of importance after their J-1 experience, it was shown through the results that most participants made friends during their SWAT. The Figure 26 shows 88% of the participants responses (Q9).

When looking at the decision for many of the participants to partake in a programme like a SWAT, it became clear in Q4 that after living in America there was a split opinion on their perception. Based on Figure 27, there is a clear response that 48% of those partaking in the survey felt a positive change in perception, with 47% expressing no change. This is compared to the 5% that felt their perception changed for the negative.
Based on the Q5 survey results, the participants were asked how they felt the importance of the programme is to students, with an 88% rating of “Very important”, compared to 1% believing it is “Not very important” or 11% “Neither”. This is presented in Figure 28.
When looking at how the J-1 participants would rate the programme \((Q15)\), results were based on criteria D rating scale in Figure 29.

It was noted that at least 51% of the results surveyed gave it a high rating of 5/5, with 27% giving it a 4/5 on the rating scale. Compared to the 4 and 5% that gave it a 1 or 2 on the rating scale.

In \(Q16\) regarding on what the participants would rate the programme, when it came to be recommending it to a friend. A 69% rating believe they would give it a 5/5 on the scale with another 16% giving the programme a 4/5 in recommendations (See Figure 30).
5. Discussion

It is said by Rudestan and Newton that the discussion is “an opportunity to move beyond the data and integrate, creatively, the results of the study into existing theory and research” (2015, p. 229). There has been discussion from authors (i.e. Terry, 2015; Chazottes, 2001; Howe & Owens) exploring the idea of seasonality work programmes, however the lack of study analysing the impact on seasonal industries (Terry, 2015, p. 113) shows an opportunity to explore the data collected. The findings have been presented in chapter 4 based on the results from the quantitative surveys and qualitative electronic interviews. The results of the survey and interview determined the perception and feedback from participants and employers who have worked with a J-1 SWAT programme. These findings, along with the information presented in the literature review (Chapter 2) are discussed and compared in this chapter. The breakdown of the discussion will follow the common themes discussed throughout the study: Seasonality of the programme based on two perspectives: Irish students working in America, and the overall impact of American companies working with seasonal workers.

5.1 Irish Participating on the J-1- SWAT programme

Through the literature reviewed, there have been many articles, and cases presented to explore the experiences and impact of seasonal-type workers. It has been discussed by Moriarty et al (2015), and Mavroudi et al (2017), the reasons for a programme like the J-1 is the experiences that provide participants the chance of social belonging, a sense of identity and cultural diversity.

Contrast to these reasons, the literature discussed with Doyle (2011) and European Commissions (2014), showed that through their research, undergraduate students between ages of 20-25 years old are more likely to move away due to the economy, employment situation or the opportunity to live abroad. The results from the student survey are consistent with this as 67% were students and out of all the participants 97% were between the ages 19-24 years of age. This level of motivation and interest in the programme at this age, is often due to the opportunity to live abroad, travel and experience different places. When assessing the student survey, above all reasons to go on a J-1, a holiday away and to travel proved to be the main factor. The collected results showed that a holiday proved to be a main reason why participants were likely to go on the programme with a combined 93% choosing this. When the participants were asked to reflect on their experiences, 96% stated that traveling was an important part of their J-1.
Through the student survey, a combined 68% of the students had previously visited America, which demonstrates the programme encouraged nearly 32% of Irish students to experience America for the first time. This desire to move and see new things was discussed with Courtois (2016) as it was a dominant English-speaking country providing opportunities. Moriarty, et al (2015) research showed a large percentage agreed that it was a chance to improve new skills, such as work experience. Based on the student data collected, work experience proved to be a combined 68% likely of a reason for students to partake in a J-1, which was presented to be the 3rd likely reason, following a trend from a study by Glynn, in which 43.6% agreed.

Social Belonging has been mentioned to be a factor of a J-1 programme, as many participants partake in an experience like a SWAT with friends. This is shown through the student survey as 71% of the participants went with friends, compared to the remaining 29% who chose to go alone. Those who branch off on their own, may get a broader sense of independence then those who travel with friends prior. As mentioned through literature by Dr Courtois (2016), his thoughts that any form of international experience can in some way provide a sense of freedom. Based on the data collected from the student survey, independence can support the theme of gaining a sense of Identity with 91% of the students rating Independence as an importance factor.

Regardless if the students travel with or without friends, it has been shown that to embrace the American culture, interaction is a must. The student data collected showed that 63% of the participants had no US friends or family before entering America, and that making friends became 88% likely the reason they wanted to partake in the programme (3rd likely reason combined). With this data, making friends was a large level of importance in both prior and after their J-1 experience, as it was reflected that this still rated the 3rd most important aspect of their experience after it was over (85%). This information was consistent throughout as they demonstrated interaction with locals provided a chance for them to make friends. It was shown in the survey that 88% of the respondents made friends with locals, staying consistent with the data results.

These experiences mentioned are based on those participating on the J-1, as well as those employers recruiting Irish students. It has been discussed by Terry, 2015, that students choose a programme like this to work in seasonal positions and embrace the American culture. The survey results for the students showed that 83% of Irish students believed that the cultural experience was important to them prior to going on the J-1 and reflecting back after the experience they continued to believe it was an important aspect to them (80%).

Similarity, the research conducted by Glynn, et al (2013) and Ryan (2015) is consistent with
the survey as students tend to define their own identities through embracing new cultures and diversity. This is shown through research conducted in 2013 by Glynn, et al as 40% of those leaving Ireland, did so to experience another culture.

When the researcher analysed the impact of the J-1 SWAT, cultural impact was a main foundation of the programme, as discussed in the literature review. It was shown through the experience that cultural activities are available to the students, as employers mentioned through the interviews that they “pride themselves on having a positive multicultural environment” (E2). Others ensure that there are American cultural activities that are embraced through work such as “staff parties” and “work day trips” to provide a sense of team bonding. When the employers are surveyed, regarding culture, the results showed that 57% of the employers provide a chance for the students to meet locals, followed by 43% embrace events going on. One employer (E1), when interviewed stated that parades, 4th of July celebrations and banquets are embraced to have the students join the community.

When looking at the decisions and experiences by the students, Courtois (2016) study showed that 64% of those partaking in a programme like SWAT strongly recommend the experience, which remains consistent with the information collected from the student surveys, where 69% rated the programme a 5/5. In contrast, based on the student survey results, and the data collected, it appeared that after the experience, there was a split opinion on the change of perception for the students. The researcher presented the data and 48% showed a positive perception change compared to 47% expressing no change in perception. Reasons for this are based on individual experiences and can be due to the number of times they have visited the country prior. It was discussed in the findings that 68% of the students have been to the US prior to their J-1 and out of all the participants, 11% of them confirmed that their last J-1 was not their first, perhaps making their perception indifferent.

5.2 US employers recruiting SWAT students

When American companies are reaching a demand over the season, Chazottes (2011) discussed the many benefits with working with SWAT students. Through his research, it was pointed out that the J-1 programme allows the finding of workers to fill the seasonality need within the industry. This provides fresh ideas, as well as provide valuable experiences for both parties. This need was shown by employers, as 60% of the employers, consider their business seasonal and the seasonal nature was due to the busy time of the year (61.9%). The results of the employer study are consistent with the literature of Terry (2015) and Howe & Owens (2016) as based on the seasonality of the roles needed, the demand for extra work has caused challenges. Through the findings, 49% of the employers believed that extra staff
is needed due to busyness, as well as staff is needed to cover vacation and holidays. The need was discussed through the interview findings in Chapter 4 where many of the employers described their business as either “100% seasonal” or “open all-year round”, with the latter being shown to be the busiest during summer months.

The seasonality need of the companies, can overall be based on their accessibility to resources within their industry. These resources can determine what needs the employers have, including those in small businesses. The survey results from the employers show that 38% of the businesses asked were considered a small business, along with Medium size representing 48%. This size difference can show that companies that are smaller within the industry may not have the same source of resources or long-term staff as those that are larger in size. Another resource concern may also include the location and accessibility of the business, which one interviewed employer (E1) felt provides a “weakness” due to the remote location. These factors can depend on the resources and environment within their industry. Out of the employers surveyed, over 1/3 of the responses agreed that their business was in the restaurant industry, followed by 1/3rd of the employers selecting “Other”. The researcher assessed the data collected and discovered that out of the industries, primary food services (ie Pubs and restaurants) made up 42.8% of the results, followed by hospitality style industry (ie hotel, resorts) with 21.4% of the results. The researcher feels that this demonstrates an importance to both Hotel and food industries in relation to hiring seasonal workers, due to summer season tourism.

These industries, discussed by Booze (2017) and Terry (2015) are the largest in need of seasonal workers, demonstrating a large turnover each year. Through the data collected by Booze, hospitality roles through hotel work and restaurants saw the largest turnover rate for employers, due to American seasonal staffing, reaching a high in 2015 in some areas. Due to this turnover, employers must investigate the challenges, and as Terry (2015) discussed through his findings, look to fill all types of hospitality because by 2022, 1.3 million positions are expected to be in need to fill. Based on the data collected by the student surveys, a combined 64% of the students expressed working in the food industry (restaurants, café’s, pub or bar) and 12% showed they worked in hospitality (hotel, resort).

Through the literature discussed by Terry (2015) and Bosmans, et al (2015), many employers look to seasonal workers as a chance to not only fill the seasonal need, but also help the recruitment need without forcing employers to release those hired during off season. It was discussed through both that the recruitment need is based on the flexibility of the workers. Moriarty (2011), Wickhama, et al discuss this level of flexibility and how it allows the employer to fill a shortage of workers to meet a larger demand in the summer season.
One-third of the employers, when surveyed on the requirements of the students they hire and selected “Other” stated flexibility was important. The flexibility with seasonal workers helps provide a sense of freedom for the employers and in return, hope to deliver the same amount of freedom and motivation to the employees. One employer interviewed (E4), believed that flexibility can provide a “give-take” method of freedom on both ends by “offering students who wanted to work, hours and then allow them to travel during the off month”.

When it comes to the discussion of shortage of workers, the rational thought is to hire locally, in America. It was mentioned by Terry (2015), that when it comes to discussion on seasonal or temporary work, his research showed that finding locals was always an important aspect to recruitment. Through feedback from the electronic interviews it was shown that the employers always aim to get American workers, but it may not always work out, and the employers still need to meet the demand. What can be the reason for the lack of seasonal work, being done by Americans? This was discussed by Håkansson & Isidorsson (2015) and Bosmans et al (2015) that a main factor can come down to the need and motivators for Americans to take on seasonal, temporary work. Through their research, it was shown that there was a lack of career advancement and growth available in these roles and although there may be a large amount of positions available, after peak, there was a large termination. This level of peak demand, as discussed, is due to seasonal nature of the business. When interviewed, one employer (E3) stated that this is a weakness to recruiting as “they can never predict the peak season and the challenge becomes transitioning workers when things slow down”. Many of the employers discuss that season can be busy and extra staff is needed, but also 16.6% of the employers also mentioned through the survey that they are only in business during the specific season.

Due to the needs of the companies, employers interviewed expressed that recruiting is a challenge and they depends on many students to work, and “sadly the American students often have shorter breaks that SWAT” (E2). This was a concern for all of the employers interviewed as the availability of the local staff was sometimes harder to get. The research study by World Economic Confederation (2017) showed that 75% of american students are looking for full time work, compared to 31% of americans that are after seasonal. This topic of lack American recruits by seasonal companies was a strong concern by many, as discussed by Bowman & Bair (2017) and a fear that the SWAT J-1 was “taking away American jobs”. In relation to these arguments against the programme, being used as cheap labour, students who participated in the student survey did suggest that work experience proved to be a reason to partake in a J-1, however 38% of them rated it not important. All five of the employers interviewed, dismiss the idea of J-1 workers taking American jobs, expressing that seasonal roles are meant to be fun and not career oriented, “which doesn’t
seem to appeal to American students" (E1). One employer (E3) stated that the idea, expressed by Bowman and Bair of taking away American jobs is “nonsense”, while another (E4) explained that due to the type of business, locals tend to “work but only want to work part-time and many didn’t want to work weekends”. Another concern was that American staff would want time off for holidays, or request Labour Day weekend off, which one employer states, “the first weekend in September is the end of the season and tends to be one of the busiest”.

When assessing the results from the employer survey, recruitment of seasonal workers was done mainly through two forms of communication, one was through email (50%), while the other as through Skype (50%). As much as technology has become advanced, it was made clear that 31% of the employers do it face-to-face when it came to recruiting workers. The usage of Irish Administration, such as USIT and SAYIT, were seen through the data collected to be major support systems for employers. Through the surveys, over half (55%) of the employers worked with these businesses, and 1/3 of the employers (36%) dealt directly with US sponsors. This use of third-party companies allows for successful recruitment, without having to even visit the country. It was shown through the survey, out of the employers who participated, 88% of them have never been to Ireland. The research believes that this shows a great deal of reliance on these administrators, as 50% of the employers believe that recruitment of J-1 is easier than US recruitment. In contrast, 21% of the employers surveyed believe it is harder to recruit J-1 participants, with one employer (E5) interviewed stating that “hiring walk-ins is the easiest”. This is usually through a fast paced, face-to-face interaction, where in comparison to visa recruitment, some may have concerns committing to the employers, cancelling or switching jobs before arriving.

5.3 Impact of the programme

With reports discussing that the programme, removes jobs for American students, the removal, demonstrated by the literature could cause some challenges to seasonal businesses. Through the literature discussed by Miller (2017) and Glasner (2017), many employers within the seasonal industry expressed concerns regarding their ability to survive if the programme was removed. The information discussed showed that some businesses find that finding seasonal help is difficult, with some companies having to relocate or look at limiting their number of worksites. Through the findings, with employers interviewed, one employer (E1) stated that the removal of the programme “limits the staff we are able to get, and by doing so, limits the decisions we make within the business”. This fear is due to the level of employers they need for the seasonal business. When the employers were surveyed, 81% of the employers agreed that they hire between 1 to 25 J-1 students (on
average) a year. When the researcher assessed the data collected, it was presented that over 95% of the employers showed that they hire 1 to 25 Irish students (on average) a year to fill this staff limitation. This is consistent with literature collected from Alliance for International Exchange (2016) that discussed 97% of the employers they reached out to mention they wouldn't have the workers available to fill the staff needed. In relation to this, 25% of the employers discussed by their research showed they would very likely have to close a worksite. The data collected, based on the employer survey showed that 52% of the employers responding, had only one worksite.

Based on the literature by Miller (2017), the employers were surveyed and asked regarding the impact on the business, if the removal of the programme was to occur, and the data was collected. It showed that 43% of the employers feel that it would have a great impact on the business, and 26% believed it would have some impact. When the employers were interviewed to provide some insight, they stated that they “highly depend on workers to help us during these busy months and offset the winter”, and two employers made note that without the help, it may “offset the non-seasonal months, and they may not be able to stay open all year round”. This information was reviewed when looking at the importance of the programme on businesses as, through the data collected, 50% of the employers believe on average 51-100% of their revenue came from the seasonal months. Despite these claims, 19% of the employers surveyed felt that the closure of the programme would have no impact. This was addressed through the employer interview as all the employers made note that they “would like to think that without the students, we wouldn’t close” (E2) and while it may be difficult, (E1) “we would like to think it is not impossible to run a successful business”. These comments are in line with the survey results regarding how much impact, as over 50% of the employers clarified that without seasonal workers, it was not likely the company would close, cancel reservations, reduce hours or create layoffs. One employer stated that “there overall would probably not be much of an impact if we can’t get Irish students, as we will always try to work with other countries or international workers that are presently in America”.

Through the literature discussed in Chapter 2, the removal of the J-1, and the shift to reliance on American workers to fill the need of the seasonality workers can lead to lack of satisfaction from the workers. The literature by Terry (2015) and Bosmans, et al (2015) discuss the fear of hiring local American workers temporarily. The information presented showed a large dissatisfaction for the roles, due to low increase in advancement in the role, as well as showing aspects of being short term, presenting lack of commitment. It was discussed through the research done by Bosmans, et al that 72% of the respondents showed that productivity, teamwork and commitment were affected due to the low
motivators. Which as discussed previously, by Terry (2015) creates the large turnover rate in these seasonal industries.

The usage of the Summer J-1 visa was meant to be a positive experience, that also must meet requirements of the programme, but fulfils the supply and demand of work for a short term. These requirements and specifications of students and employers are discussed through Itkowitz (2017) Parr (2017) and Walsh (2017) as having an end date along with employers being vetted and provide proof of seasonality need. When the employers were questioned through the survey and interviews, regarding the impact of the programme, it was shown through the data collected that 76% of the employers felt like it created a positive experience. One employer (E5) interviewed stated that “it’s a busy time, high demand and the J-1 students are enthusiastic and excited to staff and customers during the season”.

Many employers embraced the programme as positive and feel the students are “eager for fun and new experiences” (E2) and others felt that the students were “diligent, hard working and willing to work” (E4). This was consistent with the employer survey findings as 56% of the employers believed the programme was likely to bring fresh ideas, and 53% believe the Irish students can attract customers. This is reflected in the literature by Miller (2017) and Glaser (2017) as many employers show support for the programme due to the impact and cultural exchange it brings. When looking at the data from the employer surveys, 86% feel that the programme provides a cultural experience and a positive experience for them with many believing it is good for business and helps aid with the business requirements and add to the multicultural environment.

Despite the concern if the programme was removed, the consensus for J-1 students is positive, with even the support of 17 US senators (Soper, 2017) stating the seasonal workers can bring in business to the economic growth for the summer, without affecting job opportunities of the US workers. The programme can lead to continuous support through returnee J-1 students, or recommendations from previous J-1 students. In research found and discussed by Cornish (2018) the positive satisfaction of the programme can lead to continuous participation in future years. This is demonstrated in the employer survey findings as 62% of the employers receive help recruiting from word of mouth or previous worker. Findings from the employers interviewed showed that (E5) they have success with the ones’ they get and try to go out of their way to get some culture to the Irish students. It is shown through the student survey that overall, 88% of the students feel that the programme is very important to students, whereas 85% of the participants that were surveyed believe the programme was worth a high rating when they were asked on recommending it. In comparison, employers surveyed stated they were 84% likely or somewhat likely to recommend to other businesses, compared to 2% that suggested they were “Not likely”. An
individual opinion based on personal experiences may have resulted in 14% of the employers stating they were “Neither” for or against recommending it.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter contains the conclusion and recommendations regarding the information gained through the literature presented and the findings collected through qualitative and quantitative methods. The overall purpose is to show the level of understanding made through the analysis and research and to conclude based on the awareness a recommendation based on the discussion.

6.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature and data analysed and collected were condensed into main topics to demonstrate the impact of recruiting Irish students on the SWAT J-1 programme on the American seasonal companies. It was shown through the findings and discussion made that many businesses rely on hiring seasonal workers to support the need for extra staff and extra productivity during the high demand season. It was shown through the literature, that the historical programme of the J-1 has changed over the years to provide a more cultural exchange impact, while also providing temporary work for seasonal businesses. These changes were made to step away from the labour challenges and situation that occurred, as well as to justify the nature of the need for the programme. Based on the data collected, many of the students embrace the programme to gain life experience, independence and a sense of cultural diversity, all while getting to embrace the American dream. In comparison, the employers, regardless of size of business or industry get to embrace a programme that helps fill both the seasonality and recruitment need that becomes a challenge when hiring locals.

The many factors presented to recruit seasonal workers was based on the literature presented to explain the reason for less local Americans hired for these seasonal positions. The main factors expressed, were the need for flexibility with both employers and students working to create a successful work environment. The main concerns brought to fruition based on the employer interviews and survey results was the lack of flexibility and motivation by local American workers to take on these short-term seasonal roles. Through the analysis, many employers expressed concern and need to fill the staff limitations available.

Through the process of recruiting seasonal workers, the employers gain staff to help stabilize the seasonal revenue gained during the busy time, and the students get a chance to embrace the American culture. It was shown through the discussion that the students are
not looking for a career-driven role, in contrary, the results show many are looking to meet locals, make friends and travel on a holiday. Those that are interested in career aspects, do it by gaining work experience in a new country, thereby still embracing the cultural imprint on the programme.

Critics against the programme, make points that they remove jobs from Americans, however the roles are always advertised and presented to locals, leading to interested parties that are either part-time work or lack commitment and motivation. Through the literature it was shown that despite these claims, many of the students are not only not taking roles away from Americans but helping American companies through labour shortages. Many employers believe that the impact of having more interest from American locals would be beneficial and can present easier methods of recruitment. The level of feedback presented through the data collected would demonstrate that not every seasonal employer hire J-1 students to be cost-effective, and many would rather hire American locals, although it may not always be available, due to their larger options and accessible time. Many employers interviewed support claims in the literature that there would be an impact on the business, due to the seasonal amount of revenue they take in, however they also make note that they would believe they would be able to still run a business successfully.

Overall, seasonal companies face challenges, and based on their industry they rely on the extra staff to provide a positive experience for their workers and customers. It is shown through the research that by implementing the SWAT programme, it helps embrace a sense of cultural change over short three months and bring a level of community between American and Irish culture, while helping the economic situation occurring in the industries during the busy summer months.

6.2 Recommendation

Through the work presented, the researcher addressed the elements proposed in the research question regarding the impact of the seasonality roles in America, for companies relying on Irish workers on a Summer J-1 in today’s world. It is in the researcher’s opinion that overall there would be an impact on the removal of the programme, although it may not necessarily be economical, it will be in various other aspects. The outcome of the performance the programme has on the companies, staff and students seems to be a far greater experience, then just work and money. These results were shown not only from the perspective of the results found, but through the analysis of the literature from other countries with similar programmes. The threat of removing the programme would demonstrate a lack of cultural exchange and importance seen through the results and a lack of overall experience for all those participating.
It is in the researcher's recommendation that the removal would in fact, create a great impact overall, and hopes that the study presented would create a sense of awareness to those who have participated or wish to participate in the future. Through the data collected, and literature presented, it is shown that the impact will be large on the overall cultural exchange, work and travel programme.
Reflection

Reflecting on the experience to complete this research study, led me to not only look back on the work completed to get here, but the overall process of the MBA program, as one entity. As I ventured on the task of returning to school, nearly seven years after completing my undergraduate, the situation would be one in which I was fearful of. So many things have changed since I was in school, the world had changed, and more importantly I had changed. Despite the fear, the challenge to step out of my comfort zone and not only challenge my mind and my wallet, but also the chance to challenge myself.

The roadmap that led me to the research question, was based on the interest and background I had with the topic.

My personal objective of this topic was based on the experience I have had, as a Canadian, working and living in a new country, Ireland. Though the work and holiday visa I was on, may not be based on seasonal or short-term work, it would lead me to a role in which I would get to experience the prospects of the programme. Reaching employment in a company that works to provide administrative support to Irish students and provide recruitment contacts to ensure each student gets the chance to embrace the life changing experience, in a way, made me feel as if I was giving back to the country.

Through the MBA process, the courses we as students are introduced to, began to spark an interest in the importance of not only business aspects of a company, but the management of people and international workers overall. It was through the variety of the courses I found myself challenged by the work, the lectures, and the fellow students to really try to embrace the prospects of the course and MBA curriculum.

Not long after I began the first semester of the MBA, did news reports begin to spread regarding the US president, threatening to remove the programme, to “Make America Great Again”. Rumours spread and eventually prospects of the work and role of employment I had, also was at risk. These turns of events made me spark an interest on what would happen if I, along with my fellow colleagues lost our jobs in this role, and more importantly the impact it had on the students and eventually this led me to the research question presented.

As the workload began to pile up, many of the topics discussed began to flow within one another and over the year, the information learned through HRM, International business, and Business strategy began to interlink with the lessons being learned and it felt as if I was being led to the topic again and again.
As the first semester ended, the topic, question and overall roadmap of what I wanted to do was set up and I began to do some reading on the history of the J-1, the SWAT programme and eventually the reasons Irish people immigrate. The subjects listed began to open my eyes to not only the concerns brought up regarding the programme, but situations that occurred that led to the programme to change its overall structure. The more I read, the more I was able to see similarities in not only the visas I was reading on to the one I was on, but I was also able to read and learn more about the history of Irish students, and the history of the Celtic Tiger.

With the background of information presented and the reading of the subjects done, the primary research of the paper began, providing new concerns and frustrations. Through countless emails, and posts through social media, I began to get discouraged over the lack of information I was receiving, if not only because I wanted a large sample of information, but also because of the importance I felt the research was.

Overall the struggles and moments of frustration would fade, and slowly it would all come together.

The objective of the study was to broaden my view and investigate the importance of the programme, from a business perspective, not only to get a sense of awareness, but to also provide information (primary and secondary) to bring awareness to students and future employers as well.

As I complete this study, not only do I feel that it completes a circle of the MBA, but also completes a chapter of the experience I have had of going on a similar visa, working with a company that supports and aids the J-1 programme, to finally providing a sense of literature, research and new information regarding the subject as well. In a way this closes this chapter, allowing me to take the education, knowledge and experiences with me.
Bibliography


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Appendices

Appendix 1- Participant Consent Information Sheet

What is the impact on seasonality roles in America, for companies employing Irish students, on a Summer J1 visa in today's world?

You are being asked to take part in a research study on the impact of having Irish participants on a J1 Summer Work and Travel program in America and the impact on companies relying on seasonal workers. As a current MBA student in Dublin, Ireland there has been research and literature reviewed to assess the current economic impact to seasonality companies hiring seasonal workers.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

In this study, you will be asked to provide your honest opinion and feedback on the process, the behaviour and result of participating in a program such as this. There is no correct answer as we want to ensure we provide a full approach to the questions asked.

TIME COMMITMENT

The electronic survey typically takes between 3-5 minutes and located in link below. If you wish to provide more feedback, please feel free to contact me.

PARTICIPANTS’ RIGHTS

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation required from you. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn / destroyed.

You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you.

You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study’s outcome. A full de-briefing will be given after the study). If you have any questions, because of reading this information sheet, you should ask me, the researcher before the study begins.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data I collect does not contain any personal information about you except your general opinions and thoughts that you wish to provide. This data will be used to support the research being carried out for the use of the dissertation.

By continuing and filling out the survey you are agreeing that:
(1) You have read and understood the Participant Info Sheet
(2) You are taking part in this research study voluntarily

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

I or DBS assigned supervisor will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact my supervisor at ian.sherwin@dbs.ie or myself at 10370473@mydbs.ie
APPENDIX B- Survey Request to Employers

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Kyle Burke, and I am currently enrolled in a Master's in Business Administration at Dublin Business School in Ireland. I am writing on behalf of myself as I am currently in the middle of my final dissertation research paper.

I am contacting you as recent reports, from the White House, regarding restriction of J1 visas, has sparked an interest in my studies.

I am reaching out to you regarding your experience with the J1 participants from Ireland and would like to know if you would be interested in providing some feedback regarding this experience.

If you wish to participant, you will be asked to take part in a brief survey to aid the research study on the impact of having Irish participants on a J1 Summer Work and Travel program and the impact on the companies, employers and other employees participating.

I hope with the assessment of the impact to seasonality companies hiring seasonal workers we can shed some light on programs such as this, along with provide insight to get more interested.

If you are free to provide any feedback, please reply to this email/

I would very much appreciate any help at all,

Kind Regards

Kyle Burke
APPENDIX C - Questions submitted to Employers

Q1 - Is your business seasonal?
   - Yes
   - No

Q2 - Does your business have more than one worksite?
   - Yes
   - No

Q3 - What was the seasonal nature of the position?
   - Busy Time of the Year
   - Extra Staff needed
   - Vacation Staff, Holiday cover
   - Only open during season
   - Other (please specify)

Q4 - What were the average number of hours?
   - Less than 20
   - 20-30
   - 32-40
   - More

Q5 - Any specific requirements from participants?
   - Over 21 age
   - Drivers Licence
   - Experience in industry
   - Able to do heavy lifting
   - Other

Q6 - What type of cultural activities do you provide?
   - Meet Locals
   - Group Days out
   - Discount tourist attractions
   - Events
   - None of the above
   - Other (please specify)

Q7 - Is your main business considered to be which of the following size?
   - Small
   - Medium
   - Large

Q8 - How would you rate your satisfaction with working with Irish SWAT participants?
   - Not Very
   - Somewhat Not Very
   - Neither
   - Somewhat Very
   - Very

Q9 - How many students, do you usually hire? Estimate Range

Q10 - How many students, do you usually hire from Ireland? Estimate Range

Q11 - Based on average, what percentage of revenue is based from Seasonal months?
   - 0-25%
   - 26-50%
   - 51-75%
   - 76-100%
Q12- What impact would a removal of the program have on your business?
- No Impact
- Little Impact
- Some Impact
- Great Impact

Q13- How likely would the following occur without seasonal workers?
Rate based on Not Very- Very
- Not able to remain open
- Cancel reservations
- Reduction of hours
- Close business locations
- Lay Offs

Q14- How likely did the program? Rate based on Not Very- Very
- Create a positive workspace
- Provide cultural contribution
- Attract customers
- Bring fresh ideas to the business

Q15- Would You recommend the J1 program to other businesses?
Rate based on Not Very- Very

Q16- What kind of industry is your business in?
- Restaurant
- Hotel
- Pub or Bar
- Amusement Park
- Cinema
- Resort
- Other (please specify)

Q17- Did you find the J1 recruitment harder or easier than US recruitment?
- Harder
- Easier
- No Difference

Q18- How did you recruit the J1 participant?
- Email
- Face to Face
- Skype
- Social Media
- Other (please specify)

Q19- Did you get help from the one or more below for recruitment?
- Irish Administration Office (ie USIT or SAYIT)
- US Sponsor
- A friend, or word of mouth
- Previous worker
- Online recruitment

Q20- Have you ever visited Ireland to recruit?
- Yes
- No

Q21- What US state are you manly located in?
APPENDIX D- Questions submitted to J1 SWAT Participated Irish Students

Q1- Before you went on a J1, how likely was it that you visited America before?
   - Not Likely
   - Somewhat Not Likely
   - Neither
   - Somewhat Likely
   - Very Likely

Q2- Based on the below, how likely was the reason to go on a J1 one of the below? Rate from Not Very likely to Very Likely
   - Holiday
   - Education
   - Work Experience
   - Family or Friend suggested
   - Previous J1 or Visa experience

Q3- Based on your experience, how important were the following before you went? Rate from Not Very likely to Very Likely
   - Work Experience
   - Independence
   - Cultural Experience
   - Earn Money
   - Make Friends
   - Travel

Q4- After living in America, how did your perception change?
   - Negative
   - Same
   - Positive

Q5- After your J1 Experience, how important do you think this program is to students?
   - Not Very
   - Neither
   - Very

Q6- Reflecting back, once you were about to return home, or after, How important was the below after all. Rate from Not Very to Very
   - Work Experience
   - Independence
   - Cultural Experience
   - Travel
   - Making Money
   - Make Friends
   - Working Part time
   - Other (please specify)

Q7- Are you currently?
   - Student
   - Working full time
   - Unemployed
   - Working Part time
   - Other (please specify)

Q8- Did you have any friends or family in America before you went?
   - Yes
   - No

Q9- Did you make friends with local Americans while you were there?
   - Yes
   - No
Q10- Was the last J1 you participated in your first?

- Yes
- No (if No, please explain)

Q11- When you participated in the J1, did you go alone or with friends?

- Alone
- Friends

Q12- Where did you find your job?

- Through administration company (SAYIT, USIT)
- Social Media
- From a friend, family member, or other
- Online advertisement
- Other (Please specify)

Q13- What industry did you work in?

- Restaurant or Café
- Hotel
- Pub or Bar
- Amusement Park
- Resort
- Office
- Other (please specify)

Q14- Did your employer provide assistance with housing?

- Yes
- No

Q15- How would you rate the J1 programme? Rate it 1-5

Q16- Would you recommend working in US during the Summer? Rate it 1-5

Q17- What county in Ireland are you from?

Q18- What state in America did you work in?

Q19- What is your preferred gender?

Q20- How old were you when you went on your last J1?
APPENDIX E- Electronic Interview Questions to Employers

1. What are the organization's/company's strengths and weaknesses when it comes to seasonal work?
2. Why did you decide to participate with SWAT students?
3. What is the impact of removal of participants on a J1 on the business?
4. What are some cultural activities promoted by yourself, or the business?
5. When it comes to recruitment, what are some reasons it may be difficult to get Americans, and/or easier to recruit Irish students?