

The Impact of Life Course on  
Motivation and Work Satisfaction in  
an Irish Context

by

Jennifer McBennett

Student Number 14130220

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## Abstract

Work in contemporary organisations and the elements which drive high performance is becoming more complex and ambiguous as the working environment too has evolved. It is therefore paramount that employers and management understand what drives motivation, in both its intrinsic and extrinsic form, which in essence forms the basis of this research study.

In endeavouring to comprehend the drivers of such motivation, and in turn work satisfaction, the present study sets out to examine the levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation across multiple industries, assessing variations or commonalities in terms of gender, age and life course. By way of a quantitative approach the researcher has gathered 115 responses in which inferences can be made around motivation and work satisfaction throughout the life course of an individual.

In understanding and having this information available, managers can effectively manage and motivate their entire workforce, tailoring the means and methods to suit the demographic at hand, with the ultimate aim of increasing productivity and commitment to the organisation.

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## 1. Introduction

The work environment over the last decade has significantly changed and evolved due to, in no small part, vast globalisation and technological change which have together impacted the demand and design of work. With these organisational changes come demographic changes including an increase of women in the working environment, dual career partnerships and an ageing population creating a more diverse and dynamic workforce (Brough and Kelling, 2002; Kanfer, Frese and Johnson 2017). The CSO (2013) projects that by 2026 the older age group of 50+ years will make up 30% of the workforce, a huge increase from what was 23% in 2011. The labour force participation rate for women was reported to be 53.4% in 2013, with women representing 44.9% of the labour force in this year (CSO, 2013).

As a result of these changing times, organisations need to become more aware of the differences and variations within their workforce and ultimately what drives motivation, performance and work satisfaction across the different cohorts. Work motivation, as put by Kanfer, Frese and Johnson (2017) affects many things; the skills individuals develop, the careers individuals pursue, the manner in which people allocate their resources affecting the direction and intensity of the activities during work. Motivation can be considered one of the building blocks of performance, productivity and drives high quality work.

The present study attempts to address such matters in an Irish context, specifically analysing the elements of motivation across the Irish demographic taking gender, age and parental status as variables. Results were gathered quantitatively through an online survey, and collectively subjected to statistical analytics in order to draw inferences around how life course effects motivation across a range of demographic indicators.

It is hoped that this paper will expand the knowledge within this field in order to better equip organisations and management with the information required to appropriately motivate their entire workforce in order to increase productivity across the board.

## 2. Literature Review

This chapter aims to review the current literature available which is relevant to the research objectives of the present study. By taking a look at and understanding the field of motivation, and the theories on which the foundation sits, one can begin to comprehend the interlinked components of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which drive satisfaction at work. In order to validate the objectives of this research paper, variances around the different cohorts are assessed, including gender differences, parental status and age in terms of motivation and satisfaction at work. The literature analysed in this paper is taken from multiple sources, however, peer reviewed journals form the basis of the discussion.

### 2.1 Motivation

Employees who are highly motivated towards their work are likely to be persistent, consistent, creative and productive, resulting in high quality and volumes of work (Amabile, 1993). Therefore, it is imperative for leaders and managers to identify the motivating factors which drive the performance of its employees. Motivation has always been apparent as far back as the scientific school of thought, taking in the instrumentality theory which is a simplistic approach believing people will be motivated to work if rewards and penalties are tied directly to their performance (Armstrong, 2015). It has, however, developed from this era and we now know, given the extensive research, that motivation also comes from deep within a person and is not solely dependent on extrinsic factors such as pay and reward; and as such theories have been refined. Amabile (1993) also notes that work motivation is not stable, but fluctuates as organisational change has significant implications on the way people feel about their work. The field of motivation is a hugely expansive area, however in order to begin to identify the relevant motivators one must first consider the relevant and current theories behind the phenomenon. Theories around motivation may be categorised in to two distinctive areas – process and content theories.

### 2.2 Theories Defined

Content theories take the traditional approach in that motivation is driven solely by unsatisfied needs. The most well-known theory being Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, where one is motivated to achieve the basic physiological needs first before moving up the hierarchy to esteem and self-actualisation needs (Hollyforde and Whiddett, 2002). Although the content theories do have merit and a strong foundation in the school of thought they are again a historical and simplistic approach to motivation. Process theories in comparison focus on how behaviour is energised emphasising the psychological forces. In many cases these approaches are thought to be more current and valuable, as believed by Armstrong (2015). Such theories that come to the fore include the Self-Determination Theory, the Expectancy Theory and the Job Characteristics Model.

### 2.2.1 Self Determination Theory

To put it simply the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) addresses such basic issues as personality development, self-regulation, psychological needs, life goals and aspirations along with the impact of social environments on motivation (Deci and Ryan, 2008). The theory distinguishes between autonomous motivation and controlled motivation. Gagne and Deci (2001) outline the former as being motivated by one's own interest in an activity (intrinsically motivation) and also the value and regulation of the activity being integrated within one's self. In contrast controlled motivation addresses the degree of one's controlled extrinsic motivation, reflecting the degree to which one feels coerced by such motivation by reward and punishment. The theory suggests that one must feel competent and autonomous within their role in order to maintain intrinsic motivation. The third need put forward in this theory, and perhaps the most significant is that of relatedness, the feeling of belonging and human relationships which are innate in a person. The Self-Determination Theory ultimately looks at the extent to which the environment allows one to experience feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. It is suggested that the person will perform at optimal levels when these motivational factors are met (Vallerand and Pelletier, 2008).

Ng and Sears (2010) indicate that the majority of individuals have a strong need for self-determination. Conditions that reduce one's sense of freedom will ultimately result in a higher value placed on external rewards. In contrast, some scholars discuss cultural differences, with western countries encouraging a view that the self is independent, motivated to confirm positive self-defining attributes. To the contrary, Asian countries adopt a culture that the self is interdependent, motivated to adjust to, and fit in with the expectations of others (Kitayama, Snibbe, Markus and Suzuki, 2004).

This thought is further compounded by a study carried out by Thapar (2016), centred around the automobile manufacturing industry in India, an Asian country. It was found that the 75 participants were in themselves very self determined, and with this naturally came intrinsic motivation, work satisfaction and committed employees who were not concerned by occupational stressors. The results are consistent with the Self Determination Theory, in that as self determination rises, the consequences become increasingly positive (Thapar, 2016). The study was however only concentrated on the male workforce and so lacks gender differences and variances. Despite this limitation, the SDT was again verified and supported in a Chinese government school study, where it was found that autonomy and intrinsic motivation predicted wellbeing in a vocational setting, not only in quantity of motivation, but also the influences of driving individual behaviour (Nie et al, 2015).

### 2.2.2 Expectancy Theory

The Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964) is a cognitive-motivational model in which individuals' motivation to strive for a particular goal is regarded as a function of their expectancies to successfully attain this goal, and the subjective valence (overall attractiveness) the individual ascribes to that goal (Van den Broeck et al, 2010). In other words, the theory predicts that an individual will act in a certain way based on the expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome, and the attractiveness of that outcome to the individual (Renko, Kroeck and Bullough, 2012).

Hollyforde and Whiddett (2002) do however address the flaws of this theory, noting that Vroom's work concentrated primarily on extrinsic rewards rather than intrinsic. It also fails to consider the individuals' ability and the clarity of the role itself. Therefore, despite being motivated to attain a certain goal, if the employee doesn't have clarity or ability they may not succeed. These concerns are also carried through to Armstrong (2015) who notes there are a number of variables affecting expectations such as leadership behaviour, individual characteristics, the nature of the task along with the practices of the organisation.

That being said, a study completed by Chou and Pearson (2012) addresses, using the Expectancy Theory as a foundation, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) where employees go beyond the formal requirements of their job description or formal reward systems. The study concentrated on IT professionals with a sample size of 85, examining whether the respondents OCB is motivated using the expectancy theoretical framework. The outcome discovered that within IT professionals, the valence of job satisfaction was a significant predictor in OCB, with commitment to the job and the profession scoring high in the valence of job satisfaction. The study reinforces the Expectancy Theory and provides for additional support of its use in an IT setting. As noted, the result is not surprising as previous studies that utilised this theory have found that an individual's perceived valence of a work outcome has a significant impact on their motivation to increase work effort in order to achieve such outcomes (Chou and Pearson, 2012).

### 2.2.3 Job Characteristics Model

A final theory which is relevant to the current study is Hackman and Oldman's (1975) Job Characteristics Model (JCM) which specifies how the characteristics of the job are interlinked and interact to affect the satisfaction, motivation and productivity of employees (Casey and Robbins, 2010). The job characteristics are defined as skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. As discussed by Ali et al, (2014) most research has supported the validity of the Job Characteristics Model as the degree to which a job requires a variety of different activities in carrying out the work, involving the

use of a number of skills and talents of the employee in order to bring about work satisfaction.

In a study conducted by Casey and Robbins (2010) high internal work motivation was compared across sectors including the banking sector, manufacturing, retail, service and sales industries to determine if there were any significant differences or commonalities across the sectors from a JCM viewpoint. The results found that there were no associations across the industries in skill variety and task identity or task significance and autonomy, however indicated that there was a relationship between feedback and autonomy.

Casey and Hilton (2012) used the JCM as the underlying theory which formed the basis of their research work in evaluating motivation in numerous industries in three countries with notable cultural differences across North and Central America. The results found that there were significant variances between each of the characteristics across each of the countries. The researchers noted that a possible cause for such variances may lie in cultural differences, impacting a group's behaviour through attitudes and influences. Casey and Hilton (2012) received a response rate across all countries which was 75% female, which in turn may suggest limitations in the results due to gender imbalance.

The JCM and the theory behind it, had an immediate and long-lasting effect, stimulating changes in the thought process and paradigms around work motivation (Kanfer, Frese and Johnson, 2017).

These theories are relevant and have significant empirical evidence which form the basis of this current study, where motivation and work satisfaction is reviewed based on gender, age and life course. The Self Determination Theory recognises that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is not mutually exclusive, but often one impacts the other. The Expectancy Theory again identifies that one's own motivation is fuelled by the return of such efforts and the overall attractiveness of the return, again taking in both forms of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. Finally, the Job Characteristics Model is relevant to the current study as it sets out the elements contributing to work satisfaction, again heavily weighted in those that are intrinsic nature.

With this as a backdrop the current study attempts to analyse the variations of motivation and satisfaction throughout the life course of an individual, specifically how their gender, age and parental status affects these variables. The research studies reviewed have all been carried out in culturally different settings. This current study attempts to bring clarification in an Irish context.

## 2.3 Employee Satisfaction

Job satisfaction can be defined as the degree of happiness which people experience with the totality and various aspects of their work, a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or experiences, unique to their own circumstances such as needs, values and expectations (Olasupo, 2011). Oshagbemi (2003) as cited by Buitendach and Rothmann (2009) notes job satisfaction is a potential determinant of absenteeism, turnover, in-role job performance and extra-role behaviours, also adding that the primary antecedents of job attitudes are within management's ability to influence once they are equipped with such information.

Employees in the industrial sector often have reduced job satisfaction, due to the large volume of work, longer working hours and low salaries, as discussed by Vukonjanski, Terek, and Gligorović (2014). Their study conducted analysis around work satisfaction in the manufacturing industry in Serbia, and perhaps not surprisingly found that on most dimensions of job satisfaction using the Job Satisfaction Survey, men are more satisfied with their work within this industry. The suggested reason behind this, is that men are encouraged to develop professionally more so than women; resulting in fewer women in authoritative positions leading to decreased job satisfaction among women in the industrial sector. This study, being based in Serbia, may again have cultural implications as suggested previously, which may not carry through to all European countries, although valid and reliable in the country where the research was carried out.

Interestingly in a study completed by Olasupo (2011) an attempt was made to show the nature of relationship between organizational culture, leadership style and job satisfaction in a Nigerian private manufacturing organization. The study could not establish any correlation between the three elements, having used a number of scales including the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. Limitations may be noted in this study, whereby the 150 respondents were in a 5:9:1 ratio of the junior staff cadre, senior staff cadre and management cadre respectively, providing a greater response from senior staff which may not be representative of the entire organisation's workforce, although 80% of the workforce were surveyed. In addition, no gender demographics were provided so differentiations cannot be applied in this sense.

According to Rothmann and Agathagelou (2000), as cited by Buitendach and Rothmann (2009) job satisfaction is a complex variable and is influenced by situational factors of the job environment and the personal characteristics of the employee. The present study attempts to address such matters of motivation and satisfaction and the drivers which impact these over life course. In order to understand employee attitudes towards satisfaction, the job dimensions should too be understood, for example pay, promotion,

recognition etc. These different aspects have come to be arranged in two dimensions: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

## 2.4 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation, as described by Rose (2014) is the internal satisfaction the individual has from doing their work, building self esteem and feelings of competence and self-determination. Such motivation reflects the highest degree of self purpose and includes actions and behaviours that are accomplished for self-fulfillment (Cortright et al, 2013). It can be enhanced by the job itself or by job design taking in skill variety, task identity, significance, autonomy and emotional intimacy, which forms the basis of the Job Characteristics Model discussed previously. Intrinsically motivated employees work on tasks because they find them enjoyable, interesting and that participation is its own reward without the need for tangible reward (Dysvik and Kuvaas, 2013). Hirschfeld (2000) suggests that intrinsic job satisfaction and motivators seem to be influenced to a greater degree by genetic factors, those that are innate in one's own self. This element of motivation would be consistent with the Self Determination Theory and Job Characteristics Model mentioned previously.

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, requires a correlation between the activity and some separable consequences such as tangible or verbal rewards, status and power. Therefore, satisfaction comes not from the activity itself but rather from the extrinsic consequences which are an output of the activity (Gagne and Deci, 2001). For this reason, extrinsic motivation can be seen to correspond to Expectancy Theory.

Benabou and Tirole (2003) review studies which indicate that extrinsic motivation (contingent rewards) can sometimes conflict with intrinsic motivation (the individual's desire to perform the task for its own sake) resulting in decreased levels of performance. This is further compounded by Armstrong (2015) who notes that extrinsic motivation is futile when compared to its intrinsic counterpart, as the latter has a deeper and long term effect as they are inherent in one's own self. Similarly, as discussed by Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, and Lens (2010) an excessive focus on extrinsic values might also come at the expense of the pursuit of intrinsic values, and is therefore antagonistic to basic psychological need satisfaction, which may undermine individuals' optimal performance. It is therefore necessary to have a deep understanding of intrinsic motivation in order to drive the performance of an employee, but is also relevant to consider the extrinsic drivers of satisfaction in the pursuit of total reward.

The studies mentioned highlight the ambiguity around the two constructs of motivation, suggesting that high levels of intrinsic motivation appear to be the preference in stimulating work satisfaction (Benabou and Tirole 2003; Van den Broeck et al 2010).

The current study aims to investigate this thought within the demographic of Ireland, assessing the influences that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have on work satisfaction and the degree to which they differ among the demographic indicators of gender, age and parental status.

## 2.5 Total Reward

Having identified that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and rewards are not mutually exclusive, it is then necessary to look at total reward strategies, a combination of different rewards both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature, with the aim of attracting, motivating and retaining employees. Total reward can be seen as a holistic strategic approach, and includes a flexible mix of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards including training and development opportunities, moving from a more traditional mindset (Hutchinson, 2013). Such a strategy embraces everything that employees value and gain from working, and encapsulates the employer-employee relationship (Rumpel and Medcof, 2006).

It is paramount to recognise that not all employees seek the same thing, or see the same value in something. Therefore, employers need to assess and understand their workforce demographics, tailoring the total reward strategy to suit the employee's needs and expectations specific to each employee in order to gain the greatest value from their approach (Lovewell, 2011).

## 2.6 Generation X and Millennials

Deal et al, (2013) discuss how each generation's unique experiences formulates similarities in characteristics, attitudes and behaviours which can be applied and generalised to the working environment. The Baby Boomers, as seen in Figure 2.1, can be characterised by hierarchical and job focused individuals, Generation X denoted by independent, entrepreneurial and cynical workers, with Millennials being socially oriented and self fulfilling.

Generation X and Millennials (Generation Y) have lost their faith in institutions, but rather invest their trust and loyalty in individuals, as discussed by Martson (2007). With this in mind it has become the norm for Millennials to not believe in the concept of a job for life, but instead believe in moving between jobs recognising this as a means to upskill and gain experience. This cohort has become more self confident with higher expectations being set, and as such have gained a reputation of feeling 'entitled' rather than working their way up through management levels, as suggested by Schullery (2013). Therefore, leaders must recognise that younger generations entering the workforce are seeking self fulfillment in the highest form, and define themselves as individuals for reasons outside of the work place, compartmentalising the work itself (Martson, 2007).

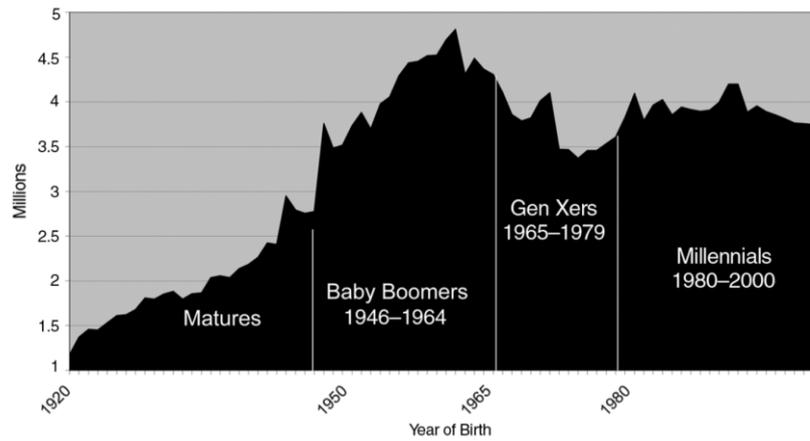


Figure 2.1: Today's workplace popular by birth years (Martson, 2007)

## 2.7 Motivation and Life Course

Giele and Elder (1998) as cited by McCarthy et al, (2007) recognise that depending on one's life stage, different factors take on differing degrees of importance, which in turn affect attitudes and behaviours towards work and in turn employment priorities. Similarly Finegold, Mohrman, and Spreitzer (2002) indicate that the foundations of commitment are likely to change as individuals grow older, adapt and priorities evolve, providing a clear link between life stages and work commitment. That being said there is limited research available around the various age groups, their life course changes and the impact this has on their work related needs as noted by Gervais and Milllear (2014).

In a study completed by Lambert (1991) it was found that jobs which provide workers with the opportunity to do a variety of tasks and work that is personally meaningful provide for work satisfaction, involvement and intrinsic motivation, regardless of if they have children or not. Furthermore, the study posits that young children in the household interfere with the ability of women to find their work satisfying, rewarding and intrinsically motivating, and as such tend to engage in work that is characterised by routine and lacks opportunity for promotion.

A study carried out by Deal et al, (2013) found that intrinsic motivation was not related to any generational cohort, but that all cohorts had equal levels of intrinsic motivation. It did however find that those individuals who are highly motivated intrinsically are more likely to be found at higher levels of management, again consistent with the Self Determination Theory discussed earlier.

Meanwhile Ng and Law (2014) suggest that older workers derive satisfaction from centrality of work, staying connected, receiving recognition and contributing to society. This would be in line with the study carried out by Buitendach and Rothmann (2009) where results indicate that differences exist between the levels of extrinsic and intrinsic job

satisfaction and age, finding that employees in the age group older than 55 experience higher levels of extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction when compared to their younger counterparts. This study had a significant number of male participants at 403 respondents when compared to a mere 71 female respondents. Therefore, the results may lack generalisation in the female subset as the results are male concentrated.

Despite this, the studies of Lambert (1991), Ng and Law (2014) and Buitendach and Rothmann (2009) can therefore give grounding to Clark, Oswald and Warr (1996) who posit that job satisfaction is U-shaped, declining from a moderate level in the early years of employment and then increasing steadily up to retirement. Their study found that not only does satisfaction decline until an age of 31 before increasing, but the age at which intrinsic satisfaction minimises is lower than the minimum for the extrinsic counterpart. In contrast, a study completed by Ghazzawi (2011), although centred on IT professionals, finds that age and satisfaction are not mutually exclusive, but rather younger age groups are generally more satisfied than the older ones on some factors and older age groups on other factors. There was no consistency evident in terms of age group and satisfaction categories to compound previous research. It is noted however that management should be aware of the age dissimilarities making a conscious effort to encourage older employees' reinforcing their contribution to the organisation. In essence, as suggested by Kanfer and Ackerman (2004), as cited by Kanfer, Frese and Johnson (2017), a growing age diversity in the workforce necessitates greater attention to identify age-related differences in motivational processing and key motivational levers at the different points in one's life cycle.

The combination of studies discussed go to aid the thought that motivation evolves as do individuals (Finegold, Mohrman, and Spreitzer 2002; Gervais and Millier 2014). The current study attempts to assess this thought and further the findings in this area, particularly the U-shaped thought as discussed by Clark, Oswald and Warr (1996). In recognising such peaks and troughs in one's motivation organisations can begin to understand the need to tailor total reward packages to ensure levels of performance are maintained throughout the life cycle of all employees.

## 2.8 A Comparison of Motivation in Women and Men

There has been much discussion around motivational differences between male and female counterparts. Konrad and Ritchie (2000) discuss that differences in values, attitudes, and behaviour arise, at least in part, from gender roles or norms, stereotypes, and social structures that influence self-concept and self-presentation (conforming to the image one wishes to present to others). With this in mind their study was consistent with previous research, finding that males more than females valued promotions, freedom, challenge,

leadership, and power, whereas females valued interpersonal relationships, helping others, and a variety of other intrinsic job aspects, consistent with the findings in a study carried out by Schlechter, Thompson, and Bussin (2015).

This thought is further compounded by Lambert (1991) who discusses how studies show that women generally place a higher value than men on social relationships in the workplace, while male counterparts place greater importance on career related job features such as pay, advancement, and autonomy; rendering women to be more relationship-oriented and men more achievement-oriented. In the study conducted by Lambert (1991) the expectation hypothesis was reviewed, postulating that women have lower expectations of the workplace and thus are more satisfied than men under similar job conditions. It was found in this study that on average men and women show similar levels of overall job satisfaction, regardless of women reporting significantly less autonomy, skill variety and financial reward when compared to the male respondents. The results go to support the expectation hypothesis, in that women maintain levels of job satisfaction in line with men regardless of their jobs being less rewarding as females generally expect less from their work. It must be noted that the sample focused on married individuals living with their spouses only. This may well have been the norm for family situations at the time when the study was carried out by Lambert (1991), however in current and modern times nuclear families may not be considered the norm.

Gervais and Millear (2014) note that women, especially those with family responsibilities, were more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction if they perceived their organisations as having more family friendly policies. Their study considered how significant the life course is of a woman with regard to work satisfaction, performance and well-being. Results showed that life course was not an influencing factor when assessing the well-being of women in the workplace, while the greater availability of organisational resources (autonomy, social support and personal resources) improved performance and job satisfaction. Limitations were noted in that the sample had a strong focus on professional women, which may not be seen as representational for all female workers.

Interestingly in a study conducted by Sturges (1999), focusing on how managers define success, it was found that women managers who took part in the study were more likely than men to describe success with intrinsic criteria, especially accomplishment, achievement and particularly, personal recognition. This then relates to a Kaufmanm and White (2015) study which looks at gender differences, egalitarian women versus egalitarian men in a Swedish context. The findings of this study go to strengthen Struges (1999) study, finding that egalitarian women's emphasis is on career advancement and pride at work.

Hakim, as cited by Russell, Smyth, and O'Connell, (2010) argued that many women have different work values than men, and by placing a higher priority on family they choose to invest less in work and are prepared to accept poorer working conditions, including but not limited to lower pay. That said, the study completed by Russell et al, (2010) found that female graduates were more inclined to accept a job based on the intrinsic factors such as opportunities for skill use, training opportunities, doing something worthwhile and the level of responsibility when compared to male counterparts.

These studies highlight the ambiguity around genders, with perhaps women having greater orientations toward intrinsic career rewards and motivation when compared to men. The study at hand endeavours to extend the knowledge in this area relevant to the Irish demographic, perhaps strengthening the stance that women place higher value on intrinsic motivation (Sturges 1999; Russell et al 2010).

## 2.9 Rationale of Current Study

Although intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and its impact on work satisfaction has been extensively researched there is little study which specifically addresses such motivation and the variances in the female and male demographics and life course of individuals in Ireland. Much research has been put forward; Vukonjanski, Terek, and Gligorović (2014) who find that men are more satisfied in their work within an manufacturing industry, Gervais and Millier (2014) who note that women, especially those with family responsibilities, were more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction and Clark, Oswald and Warr (1996) who suggest that satisfaction increases and decreases as one moves through life's cycle. With this in mind the present study applies such questions within an Irish context, attempting to contribute new evidence specific to this demographic. The present study can be defined as 'the impact of life course and gender on motivation and work satisfaction in an Irish context'.

### 2.9.1 Sub Objectives

1. To determine if males and females differ in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
2. To determine if males and females differ in terms of work satisfaction.
3. To investigate if the levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation differ in those individuals who are parents compared to those who aren't parents.
4. To investigate if work satisfaction differs in those individuals who are parents when compared to those who aren't parents.
5. To determine if there is a relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and age range.
6. To determine if there is a relationship between work satisfaction and age range.

7. To analyse the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction.

The study aims to achieve a greater understanding of the motivators across both genders, relevant to life course and parental status. As the labour market continues to grow and evolve, it is paramount that an organisation recognises such factors that motivate and engage employees to ensure they remain satisfied and productive in their work.

### 3. Research Methodology

In this section of the paper the methodology employed to carry out the research will be justified, the sample used will be described and the research techniques and procedures utilised will be detailed. The means of analysis will be set out along with any ethical considerations noted with regard to the research methodology and collection of data.

#### 3.1 Sample and Profile

The research was carried out among a sample of employees in a range of industries, with the highest response rates being from within the technology and manufacturing industries. In total 116 of participants engaged in the research questionnaire, a single response was taken as non-valid due to a lack of consent, leaving 115 responses to be analysed. Of these responses, 41 (36%) were listed as male and the remaining 74 (64%) female. The highest responding age range of the respondent was 18-30, with 44 (38%) responses received within this bracket. This was closely followed by the 30-40 age range with 42 (36%) responses received. Over 64% of respondents have been working in their organisation for 0-5 years, with a mere 15% of respondents being in their organisation for 10+ years. Of the 115 respondents 31 (27%) had 1-2 children, 7 (6%) had 2-4 children, 2 (2%) had 4-6 children with 1 (1%) listing 'other' in their response. The population of 74 (64%) had no children.

#### 3.2 Measures

As described by Creswell (2014) a quantitative research approach is an objective approach in examining the relationship among variables, variables which can be analysed such as numeric enquiry which can be quantified. In contrast, qualitative research explores and attempts to understand individuals in a non-numerical approach but in terms of subjective feelings, values and bias. A commonly used, but not entirely accurate distinction between the two is that quantitative research translates human experiences into numbers, and qualitative research translates human experiences into words (Duffy and Chenail, 2008).

Data collected through qualitative methods can be seen as highly validated, however quantitative data can be seen as highly reliable (Collis and Hussey, 2009). The qualitative approach as discussed by Ghauri and Granhaug (2005) concentrates on understanding and interpretation, however quantitative measures address facts, logic and critical thinking. Recent studies have begun to look at the concerns around the validity of qualitative research methods (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007, Giorgi, 2002, Cho and Trent, 2006).

The researcher has chosen the quantitative survey method in order to limit the bias which can often arise in qualitative methods, provides for a higher test base and allows for standard, repetitive questioning and answering ensuring uniformity in results. After investigating all available quantitative research mediums, the author decided upon an online questionnaire to collect data and formulate conclusions.

Job satisfaction, and the motivators behind such satisfaction can be measured in two ways using self-reporting instruments, as discussed by Steger, Dik, and Shim (in press). Facet measures review satisfaction specific to aspects of the job itself, including co-workers, job security, working conditions, advancement etc. Global measures then take a look at the overall appraisals of the job. The facet approach was selected as it was thought the research questions would be best answered using these means. The most popular and frequently used facet questionnaires are the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), which together form the questionnaire which was distributed to respondents.

The JSS, developed by Paul Spector (1985) assesses 9 facets of job satisfaction evaluating employee attitudes about the job, and aspects of the job on 36 items over a 6 point Likert scale. The nine facets are Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards, Operating Procedures, Co-workers, Nature of Work, and Communication. Respondents rate how favourable and unfavourable they feel their jobs are in relation to these facets ranging from 1 (disagree very much) to 6 (agree very much). Results from all facets are correlated to give an overall score against job satisfaction, the higher result showing increased job satisfaction. The validity and reliability of the JSS has been tested on numerous studies across the industries including Vukonjanski, Terek, and Gligorović (2014) giving a reliability score of 0.703 and 0.870 and Zheng et al, (2017) showing a reliability score of 0.90. Within this current body of research the reliability has proven to be acceptable, giving a Cronbachs Alpha score of 0.79, as seen in Table 3.2.

*Table 3.1 Case Summary*

<b>Case Processing Summary</b>			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	111	96.5
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	4	3.5
	Total	115	100.0

*Table 3.2 Cronback's Alpha Score JSS*

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.79	18

The MSQ is another popular survey which has been used by researchers, specifically addressing two distinct components, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. This survey comes in two forms, a 100-item long version, and a 20-item short version, as developed by Weiss, Powis, England and Lotquist (1967). Given the combination of the two surveys selected for use, and the collective length of both, the researcher opted to use the short form MSQ to reduce the time taken to complete the questionnaire ensuring a higher response rate. This survey uses a 5 point Likert scale measuring very dissatisfied (score of 1) to very satisfied (score of 5). The questions set out in the MSQ are both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature, with 2 questions taking the standpoint of ‘general’ in nature. Questions 1-4, 7-11, 15, 16, 20 assess the intrinsic measure, while questions 5, 6, 12-14, 19 are extrinsic in nature, leaving questions 17 and 18 as general questions.

Much research has found the MSQ a reliable and valid instrument to assess the extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction of employees at selected organisations, it has come recommended for use to ascertain the level of job satisfaction with employees, for example Buitendach and Rothmann (2009) and Ghazzawi (2011). The reliability of results received for this current research paper are acceptable, with scores of 0.833 for the intrinsic element of the scale (Table 3.3) and 0.84 for the extrinsic counterpart (Table 3.4) with the general questions scoring 0.53 (Table 3.5).

*Table 3.3 Reliability Testing MQS*

*Intrinsic*

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.83	11

*Table 3.4 Reliability Testing MSQ*

*Extrinsic*

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.84	7

*Table 3.5 Reliability Testing MSQ General*

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.53	2

Brown, Hardison, Bolen and Walcott (2006) found correlations and consistencies between using both sets of surveys together (JSS and MSQ) with a positive relationship between the paired scales. They do however note that the JSS focuses on 4 areas of satisfaction only - satisfaction with work, satisfaction with colleagues, satisfaction with

supervision, and satisfaction with salary. The MSQ addresses several other facets which are not measured by the JSS, intrinsic and extrinsic in nature. Therefore it was found by Brown et al, (2006) that both scales can be compared with confidence in that similar constructs are being evaluated, one scale complementing the other.

### 3.3 Procedures

The questionnaire was issued via Google docs. All those who received the questionnaire were advised that responses were confidential, anonymous and voluntary with a consent form being answered to initiate the questionnaire. Data was collected for a period of 1 week.

The non-probability convenience sampling approach was used, as it was at the researcher's discretion who initially received the online questionnaire. Non-probability sampling involves selecting samples based on one's own subjective judgement, which is accessible and available as discussed by Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2009). From here a snowball method was applied, where those who were contacted initially identified further members of the population and so on, resulting in a snowball effect. Such samples are prone to huge bias, as noted by Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill (2009), as respondents are most likely to identify other potential respondents similar to themselves whom they are familiar with, resulting in a large homogeneous sample.

### 3.4 Pilot Study

Prior to the distribution of the survey, the author undertook a pilot study in order to pre-test the questionnaire and discover any problems which could be addressed and avoided for the primary participants in the study (Goldsmith, 2010). The pilot study was distributed within the authors organisation in a bid to identify any shortcomings of the survey, taking in approximately 35 employees. The output of the data collected was issued to the Senior Management Team, to equip them with the data and give an insight into the current motivators across the organisation. Upon analysis of the data it was evident that further demographic indicators had to be added to the survey in order to accurately group respondents, for example modifications made to the age groups listed and the number of children if any.

### 3.5 Analysis

Once the survey was closed to respondents, the collected data was exported to an Excel spreadsheet, where the database was inputted and coded within the SPSS database. Firstly, the scales used were tested for internal consistency, using Cronbach's alpha scoring, to ensure acceptable levels of reliability ( $>0.7$ ) (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). The data then went under extensive and numerous statistical analysis to determine if there were any significant statistical differences between each of the cohorts. Sub

Objectives 1-4 used the Independent Samples t-Test which compares the mean score on a continuous variable, for two different groups of participants (Pallant, 2016). The Independent Samples t-Test sets out that if the Sig. value is equal to or less than 0.05 there is significant difference in the mean scores between both groups (Pallant, 2016). If this score is greater than 0.05 there is no statistical evidence to show a significant difference between both groups.

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) is appropriate to use when there are more than two independent groups and there is a wish to explore if there exists significant differences across these groups (Lambert and Darcy, 2017). Therefore, this approach was used for Sub Objectives 5 and 6 to analyse the variances across the age ranges. Sub Objective 7 underwent the Pearson Correlation analysis test which describes the strength and direction of the linear relationship between continuous variables (Pallant, 2016).

The output of results appeared in a graphical format which allowed the researcher to reflect on the findings in a clear and concise manner leading to easy statistical calculation.

### 3.6 Ethical Considerations

The ethical guidelines and procedures as provided by the National College of Ireland were taken into consideration and applied to this research paper. All respondents were informed the purpose of the data being collected and that it was confidential in nature. Prior to beginning the questionnaire all respondents were asked to give consent for the data to be used as set out in the introduction to the questionnaire. Any completed questionnaires submitted, without this consent being provided were removed from the results. It was also outlined that all responses would be reported on collectively to further enhance the confidentiality of the survey. In the researcher's own view no participants were treated unfairly in the process of collecting and recording the data for the purpose of this research paper.

## 4. Results

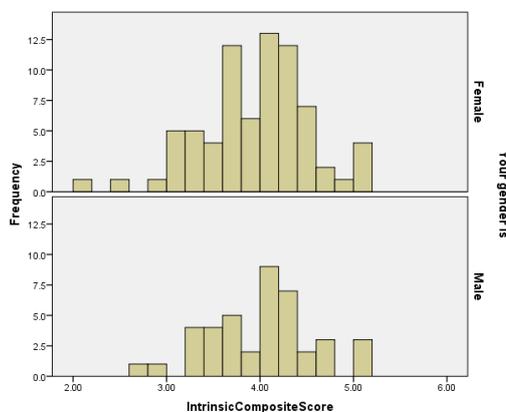
This section of the paper will report upon the findings of the research conducted around motivation and satisfaction at work with regard to gender, age and parental status. In completing a number of statistical analysis tests, it is hoped the drivers of motivation and satisfaction can be better predicted depending on one's own position in terms of life course.

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

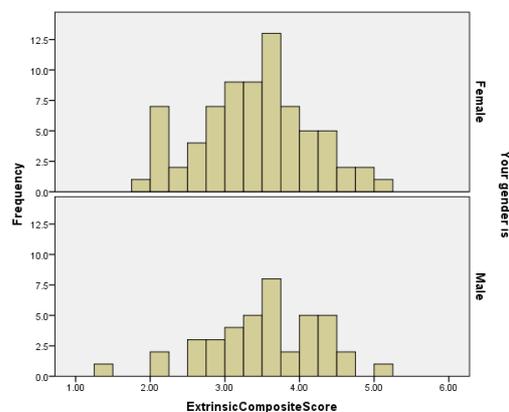
Descriptive statistics allow for the reporting and comparing of the scores for the variables (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). Table 4.1 shows the mean score against intrinsic motivation, the extrinsic counterpart and work satisfaction across the entire population of 115, providing a mean score of 3.95 for intrinsic motivation, 3.43 for extrinsic motivation and 4.00 for satisfaction. Figure 4.1 represented in a histogram format, compares males and females with respect to the intrinsic composite score, while Figure 4.2 represents the extrinsic composite score against the genders. In both cases the horizontal axis represents the motivational construct.

*Table 4.1 Mean Scores Received Against Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation*

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IntrinsicCompositeScore	115	2.11	5.00	3.95	.56
ExtrinsicCompositeScore	115	1.43	5.00	3.43	.75
SatisfactionCompositeScore	115	2.50	5.56	4.00	.66
Valid N (listwise)	115				



*Figure 4.1 Mean Scores received for intrinsic motivation by gender*



*Figure 4.2 Mean scores received for extrinsic motivation by gender*

Figure 4.3 presents the scoring for each gender against work satisfaction in histogram graphing.

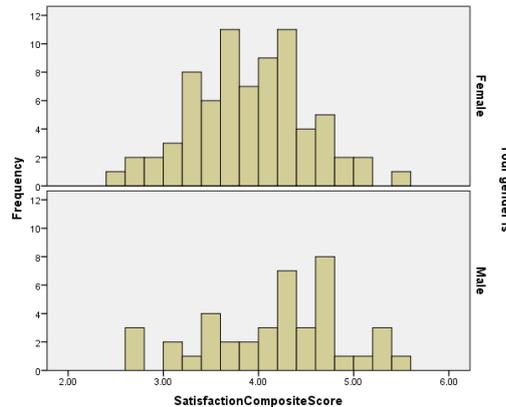


Figure 4.3 Mean scores received for satisfaction by gender

## 4.2 Motivation and Gender Differences

Firstly, gender was reviewed in terms of the levels of intrinsic motivation exhibited against both cohorts. As seen from Table 4.3, 74 responses were from the female subset with the remainder 41 being males. An Independent Samples t-Test was undertaken to ascertain if average female intrinsic motivation levels are different to those of males. The assumption of normality was satisfied through the calculation of a Levene's statistic ( $F = 0.14$ ,  $p = 0.71$ ). The results of the Independent Samples t-Test indicated that there were no significant differences in average male intrinsic motivation levels ( $M = 3.99$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ) compared to those of females ( $M = 3.93$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ),  $t = -.56$ ,  $df = 113$ ,  $p = 0.58$ . All results are shown in Table 4.4

Table 4.3 Group Statistics Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
IntrinsicCompositeScore	Females	74	3.93	0.57	0.07
	Males	41	3.99	0.54	0.08
ExtrinsicCompositeScore	Females	74	3.38	0.74	0.09
	Males	41	3.53	0.76	0.12
SatisfactionCompositeScore	Females	74	3.9	0.59	0.07
	Males	41	4.17	0.74	0.11

Table 4.4 Independent Sample t-Test Intrinsic Motivation

Independent Samples Test		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
IntrinsicCompositeScore	Equal variances assumed	0.14	0.71	-0.56	113	0.58	-0.06	0.11
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.56	87.23	0.57	-0.06	0.11

Table 4.3 identifies the mean score against the genders for extrinsic motivation. Females report a mean score of 3.38 on this variable (SD = 0.74, N = 74) while the mean score for males is reported as 3.53 (SD = 0.76, N = 41). An Independent Samples t-Test is relied upon to test if there are significant differences between both male and female extrinsic motivation levels, the results being presented in Table 4.5. The results of the Levene's Test for Equality indicate that there is insufficient evidence to suggest there are significant differences between females and males with regard to normality, and as such normality is assumed (F = 0.01, p = 0.97). The results of the Independent Samples t-Test, shown in Table 4.5, indicate that there is no significant difference between male and female extrinsic motivation levels (t = -1.01, df = 113, p = 0.32).

Table 4.5 Independent Sample t-Test Extrinsic Motivation

Independent Samples Test		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
ExtrinsicCompositeScore	Equal variances assumed	0.01	0.97	-1.01	113	0.32	-0.15	0.15
	Equal variances not assumed			-1	80.79	0.31	-0.15	0.15

### 4.3 Work Satisfaction and Gender Differences

The next statistical test assessed whether work satisfaction varied depending on gender. The mean score for females was identified as 3.90 (SD = 0.59, N = 74) with males having a mean score of 4.17 (SD = 0.74, N = 41), seen in Table 4.3.

The Independent Samples t-Test, Table 4.6, identifies that there is evidence of significant differences present between work satisfaction across the genders, with males reporting higher levels of work satisfaction (t = -2.09, df = 113, p = 0.04).

Table 4.6 Independent Samples t-Test work satisfaction

Independent Samples Test		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
SatisfactionCompositeScore	Equal variances assumed	2.68	0.11	-2.09	113	0.04	-0.27	0.13
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.97	69.57	0.05	-0.27	0.13

#### 4.4 Motivation and Parental Status

Table 4.7 considers the impact parental status has on intrinsic motivation. The mean score for those respondents who have children is 3.97 (SD = 0.56, N = 41) and for those who don't have children the mean score against intrinsic motivation was recorded as 3.95 (SD = 0.56, N = 74).

*Table 4.7 Group Statistics Parental Status*

Variable	Do you have children?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
IntrinsicCompositeScore	Yes	41	3.97	0.56	0.09
	No	74	3.95	0.56	0.07
ExtrinsicCompositeScore	Yes	41	3.29	0.83	0.13
	No	74	3.51	0.69	0.08
SatisfactionCompositeScore	Yes	41	3.88	0.74	0.12
	No	74	4.07	0.6	0.07

The results of the Levene's Test for Equality indicate that there is insufficient evidence to suggest there are significant differences between motivation and parental status with regard to normality, and as such normality is assumed ( $F = 0.28$ ,  $p = 0.59$ ). Results being shown in Table 4.8.

An Independent Samples t-Test was applied in order to test if there were significant differences between intrinsic motivation and parental status, the results being presented in Table 4.8. The test conveyed no significant differences were present ( $t = 0.14$ ,  $df = 113$ ,  $p = 0.89$ ).

*Table 4.8 Independent Samples t-Test intrinsic motivation and parental status*

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
IntrinsicCompositeScore	Equal variances assumed	0.28	0.59	0.14	113	0.89	0.02	0.11
	Equal variances not assumed			0.14	82.93	0.89	0.02	0.11

Table 4.7 reviews extrinsic motivation against respondents who have children versus those who don't. The results depict a mean score of 3.92 (SD = 0.83, N = 41) against extrinsic motivation for those with children, while those without children showed a score of 3.51 (SD = 0.69, N = 74). Table 4.9 displays the results of Independent t-Test, indicating

there is no significant difference between extrinsic motivation and parental status ( $t = -1.51, df = 113, p = 0.13$ ).

*Table 4.9 Independent Samples t-Test extrinsic motivation and parental status*

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Extrinsic Composite Score	Equal variances assumed	2.58	0.11	-1.51	113	0.13	-0.22	0.15
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.44	71.53	0.16	-0.22	0.15

#### 4.5 Work Satisfaction and Parental Status

The levels of job satisfaction were then reviewed against the respondents who indicated they have children versus those who don't have children. Table 4.7 presents a mean score of 3.88 for those with children ( $SD = 0.74, N = 41$ ), and those without 4.07 ( $SD = 0.6, N = 74$ ). The Independent Samples t-Test depicted in Table 4.10, indicate that there is insufficient evidence to suggest significant differences in work satisfaction across those who were parents and those who weren't. ( $t = -1.55, df = 113, p = 0.13$ ).

*Table 4.10 Independent Samples t-Test Job Satisfaction and parental status*

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Satisfaction Composite Score	Equal variances assumed	2.67	0.11	-1.54	113	0.13	-0.19	0.13
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.45	69.27	0.15	-0.19	0.14

#### 4.6 Age Group and Motivation

In order to assess if age groups differed with respect to intrinsic motivation levels an Analysis of Variance was undertaken. There were four age ranges; 18 to 30 year olds ( $N = 44$ ), 30 to 40 year olds ( $N = 42$ ), 40 to 50 years old ( $N = 20$ ) and those individuals aged 50+ ( $N = 9$ ). The results of the Analysis of Variance depicted in Tables 4.11 and 4.12 indicate there exists a significant difference between intrinsic motivation levels across the age groups, 18-30 ( $M = 3.94, SD = 0.59$ ), 30-40 ( $M = 3.9, SD = 0.55$ ), 40-50 ( $M = 3.88, SD = 0.45$ ), 50+ ( $M = 4.47, SD = 0.46$ ). There was a significant effect of age on intrinsic motivation at the  $p < 0.05$  level for the three conditions [ $F(3, 11) = 2.96, p = 0.04$ ].

Table 4.11 ANOVA age group and intrinsic motivation

ANOVA					
IntrinsicCompositeScore					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.6	3	.88	2.96	.04
Within Groups	33.02	111	.29		
Total	35.67	114			

Table 4.12 Intrinsic Descriptives

Descriptives								
IntrinsicCompositeScore								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
18-30	44	3.94	0.59	0.09	3.76	4.12	2.11	5
30-40	42	3.89	0.55	0.09	3.73	4.07	2.78	5
40-50	20	3.88	0.45	0.09	3.67	4.09	3.11	4.56
50+	9	4.47	0.46	0.15	4.12	4.82	3.78	5
Total	115	3.96	0.56	0.05	3.85	4.06	2.11	5

Table 4.13 depicts post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey HSD test, specifying the age group of 50+ had significantly higher levels of intrinsic motivation when compared to the other age groups. The other listed age groups didn't show statistical difference.

Table 4.13 Post Hoc test intrinsic motivation

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable:						
Tukey HSD						
(I) Age range		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
18-30	30-40	0.04	0.12	0.98	-0.26	0.35
	40-50	0.06	0.15	0.98	-0.32	0.45
	50+	-.53*	0.19	0.05	-1.05	-0.01
30-40	18-30	-0.04	0.12	0.98	-0.35	0.26
	40-50	0.018	0.15	0.99	-0.37	0.40
	50+	-.57*	0.20	0.03	-1.09	-0.05

40-50	18-30	-0.062	0.15	0.98	-0.45	0.32
	30-40	-0.018	0.15	0.99	-0.40	0.37
	50+	-.59*	0.22	0.04	-1.16	-0.02
50+	18-30	.53*	0.19	0.05	0.01	1.05
	30-40	.57*	0.20	0.03	0.05	1.09
	40-50	.59*	0.22	0.04	0.02	1.16

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

An Analysis of Variance was then conducted to compare age and levels of extrinsic motivation. Table 4.14 indicates that there was statistically no significant effect of age on extrinsic motivation [ $F(3, 111) = 0.95, p = 0.42$ ], the mean scores for all four age groups being shown in Table 4.15.

*Table 4.14 ANOVA age group and extrinsic motivation*

ANOVA					
ExtrinsicCompositeScore					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.61	3	.54	.95	.42
Within Groups	62.72	111	.57		
Total	64.34	114			

*Table 4.15 Extrinsic descriptives*

Descriptives								
ExtrinsicCompositeScore								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
18-30	44	3.54	0.66	0.100	3.34	3.74	2	4.86
30-40	42	3.39	0.75	0.12	3.16	3.63	1.86	5
40-50	20	3.22	0.89	0.19	2.80	3.63	1.43	4.57
50+	9	3.54	0.87	0.29	2.87	4.21	2.14	4.86
Total	115	3.43	0.75	0.07	3.29	3.57	1.43	5

## 4.7 Age Range and Work Satisfaction

The Analysis of Variance calculation presented in Table 4.16 and Table 4.17 explores the impact age has on work satisfaction, across each of the four age ranges. The results infer that there are no significant differences across the age groups and levels of work satisfaction experienced [ $F(3, 111) = 1.69, p = 0.17$ ].

Table 4.16 ANOVA age group and work satisfaction

ANOVA					
SatisfactionCompositeScore					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.17	3	.72	1.69	.17
Within Groups	47.56	111	.43		
Total	49.73	114			

Table 4.17 Satisfaction Descriptives

Descriptives								
SatisfactionCompositeScore								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
18-30	44	4.12	0.56	0.08	3.94	4.28	2.61	5.41
30-40	42	3.97	0.68	0.10	3.75	4.18	2.61	5.33
40-50	20	3.76	0.71	0.16	3.42	4.09	2.50	4.83
50+	9	4.22	0.85	0.28	3.57	4.87	2.72	5.56
Total	115	4.00	0.66	0.06	3.88	4.13	2.50	5.56

#### 4.8 Satisfaction and Motivation

In this section motivation and work satisfaction are considered, attempting to identify any correlation between both as suggested previously in the paper. In this instance a scatter plot graph was generated, with firstly the intrinsic composite score taking the X axis and the satisfaction composite score being shown on the Y axis, as seen in Figure 4.4. The graph illustrates that as intrinsic motivation increases so too does work satisfaction. Although there is disparity within the scatter plot graph there is a strong indication that high levels of intrinsic motivation result in high levels of satisfaction. Figure 4.5 takes a look at extrinsic motivation (X axis) against work satisfaction (Y axis), depicting a stronger association between both variables which is signified by the density of the scatter plot.

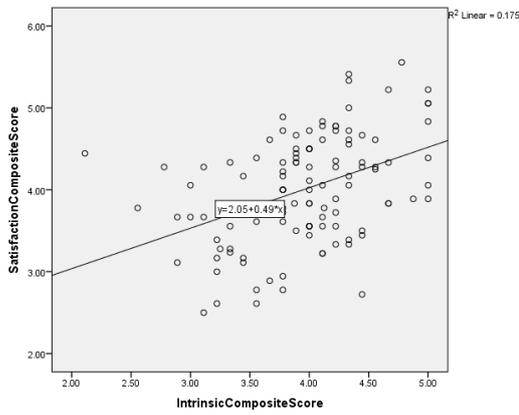


Figure 4.4 Intrinsic motivation and work satisfaction

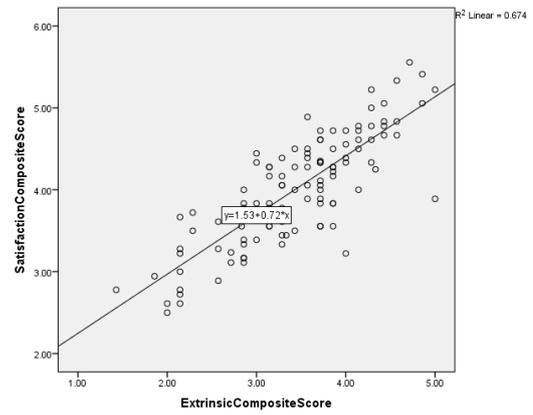


Figure 4.5 Extrinsic motivation and work satisfaction

A Pearson Correlation was undertaken to ascertain the strength of association between levels of intrinsic motivation and levels of satisfaction. The results indicated the presence of a significant association between intrinsic motivation and levels of satisfaction ( $r = .418, p < .001$ ). In addition, a similar analysis was undertaken to identify the strength of association between extrinsic motivation levels and levels of satisfaction. The results indicated a significant strong association between extrinsic levels and levels of satisfaction ( $r = .821, p < .001$ ).

Table 4.18 Correlations

Correlations						
		Satisfaction Composite Score	Intrinsic Composite Score	Extrinsic Composite Score	General Composite Score	Overall Motivation Composite Score
Satisfaction Composite Score	Pearson Correlation	1	0.418	0.821	0.468	0.715
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0
	N	115	115	115	115	115

## 5. Discussion

Here the research findings will be discussed, linked back and compared to the existing literature. Furthermore, implications and recommendations will be put forward along with the limitations of the current study being identified.

### 5.1 Motivation and Gender Differences

In the present study, it was found that there is no statistical evidence to show variance in relation to intrinsic motivation in females relative to males. This was an unexpected outcome, given the literature presented earlier in the paper where it was discussed that females more than males place a higher value on intrinsic motivation and reward, as offered by both Konrad and Ritchie (2000) and Schlechter, Thompson, and Bussin (2015). The results do however demonstrate that there are similar levels of intrinsic motivation across the genders, which may in part be due to findings presented in Lambert's (1991) study which found that women maintain levels of job satisfaction similar to men as they expect less from work both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature.

The outcome of results indicate that there are again no significant differences identified in terms of the levels of extrinsic motivation experienced across both of the genders. This conclusion within an Irish context, disputes the findings of both Lambert (1991) and Schlechter, Thompson, and Bussin (2015) who indicate that males place greater importance and are more orientated towards career related job features such as pay and advancement, promotions, leadership and power.

These results stipulate that there are commonalities with motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature, between females and males within the Irish demographic offering a counter argument for previous bodies of research. Management can therefore use this information when formulating total reward strategies and can standardise motivational practices across the genders.

### 5.2 Work Satisfaction and Gender Differences

The results presented in this study identify there is statistical evidence to imply substantial differences present between work satisfaction across the genders. This compounds the work of Vukonjanski, Terek, and Gligorović (2014) who suggest men are more satisfied at work due to being encouraged to develop professionally more so than women; leading to decreased job satisfaction within the female subset. The result again goes to strengthen the argument offered by Buitendach and Rothmann (2009), noting that job satisfaction is a complex variable and is influenced by the personal characteristics of the employee, however is not solely directed by gender, although it is a strong influencing factor in relation to work satisfaction.

The implications of this result allow management the opportunity to specifically address and drive work satisfaction across the organisation. Albeit there is no variance in motivation across the genders there are differences seen in satisfaction which urges management to place a strong focus on assessing the variances across the workforce.

### 5.3 Motivation and Parental Status

The output of the results found that there were no significant differences identified between those respondents who were parents, and those who weren't parents with regard to motivation in its intrinsic and extrinsic form. Lambert (1991) identified that workers who engage in a variety of tasks and work that is personally meaningful experience high levels of motivation whether they are parents or not; the results from the 115 respondents found this to be true.

It was noted previously in the paper that females have different work values to their male counterparts, accepting poorer working conditions as there is a higher priority placed on family (Russell, Smyth, and O'Connell, 2010). If this were to be true within the current sample, one may expect to see lower levels motivation within those respondents who were parents, as stated the results did not reinforce this thought.

The implications of these results can therefore aid organisations with regard to their work design and structure. As there were no variances found across motivation among those respondents who indicated they had children versus those who didn't, management can standardise practices against all cohorts in this regard.

### 5.4 Work Satisfaction and Parental Status

The findings of the current research posit that there were no significant differences around work satisfaction between those respondents who were parents when compared to those who weren't parents. This result again reinforces the study of Lambert (1991) discussed previously, observing that work which allows employees who engage in a variety of tasks which are meaningful is a stimuli for work satisfaction. The results showed no foundation to the work of Gervais and Millier (2014) discussed earlier in this paper, noting that women with family responsibilities, showed greater likelihood of having higher levels of job satisfaction if their organisations supported family friendly policies.

These results will allow organisations to consolidate their motivational practices and total reward strategies across those individuals who have children and those who don't in order to increase work satisfaction for all employees regardless of their parental stats.

### 5.5 Age Group and Motivation

As literature suggested there are variances in relation to levels of motivation across age ranges. The results specify there is statistically a significant difference between

intrinsic motivation levels across the age groups, most notably there are high levels of intrinsic motivation experienced in the cohort of the 50+ age range. Interestingly no differences were found across the age range with regard to extrinsic motivation. This offers a counter agreement for Deal et al, (2013) who found that intrinsic motivation was not related to any generational cohort, but that all ages showed equal levels of intrinsic motivation.

The findings within this current research strengthen the work put forward by Ng and Law (2014) suggesting that older workers derive satisfaction from centrality of work, staying connected, receiving recognition and contributing to society, all intrinsic in nature. The question can therefore be raised as to why the older age group sees greater levels of intrinsic motivation but not extrinsic motivation. This may be in part due to the reduced financial obligations one would expect to see at this stage in one's life, placing a heavier emphasis on intrinsic motivation.

Management can interpret these results and tailor their total reward packages to suit the needs and values of its workforce based on age range. By placing an increased focus on intrinsic motivation for older age groups and ensuring the key motivational levers are identified at the different points in one's life cycle, management can strive for increased productivity and satisfaction across the age groups.

## 5.6 Age Range and Work Satisfaction

As discussed, Buitendach and Rothmann (2009) found that differences exist between the levels of extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction and age, finding that employees in the age group older than 55 experience higher levels of job satisfaction. The results of the current research did not further this thought but rather offered a counter argument, identifying that there were no suggested differences with regard to work satisfaction and age ranges. Again the results were not found to support the U-shaped model as set out by Clark, Oswald and Warr (1996) who indicated that there is a decline in levels of work satisfaction in the early years of employment before increasing steadily up to retirement.

The findings go in some way to support Ghazzawi (2011) who suggested younger age groups are generally more satisfied than the older ones on some factors and older age groups on other factors, which may perhaps provide for an even average across all age ranges, as found in this current study. With this in mind management need to be aware that although there are differences in levels of intrinsic motivation there are no variances with regard to work satisfaction, although the two are closely related.

## 5.7 Satisfaction and Motivation

From an organisational perspective studies have shown the self-fulfilment, emotional intimacy and the self-determination nature of intrinsic motivation is what drives long term satisfaction, with the extrinsic counterpart being futile and associated with an expiration date (Benabou and Tirole, 2003; Armstrong 2015). It is perhaps therefore again surprising that the results found in this current study denote extrinsic motivation as being a greater influencer of work satisfaction within the pool of respondents, contradicting the previous research available. It again must be noted that excessive focus on extrinsic values might also come at the expense of the pursuit of intrinsic value as discussed by Van den Broeck, Vansteenkiste, and Lens (2010).

Organisations therefore will be required to place a strong focus on extrinsic reward if high levels of work satisfaction are to be achieved. Taking in to consideration the older cohorts reporting higher levels of intrinsic motivation as discussed earlier, management will need to tailor their motivational and reward strategies based on age ranges, more so than any other demographic indicator.

## 5.8 Limitations

The current study findings should be reviewed with a number of limitations in mind. Firstly, the response rates were quite low, with 115 complete responses being received. Although of an acceptable level the study could have benefited from a higher response rate in order to support the generalisation of the findings. Of the 115 responses, it is not apparent where these respondents sit within the organisation, be it operational, administration or management staff. Therefore, it is not possible to make inferences in relation to motivation within company structure. The responses received were also heavily weighted with the younger age ranges, with only 9 responses being from the 50+ age group. This may misrepresent the output of results and limit generalisation.

Another limitation identified is the use of age and parenting status as the two proxies used to determine life stage which may not be a robust demographic point to indicate or denote life stage. The pilot study failed to identify the need to ascertain the proportion of full time and part time workers which would have been beneficial and strengthened the output of results. An additional limitation was noted in that the study did not address the culture, values or working environment of the organisations, which all influence the satisfaction and motivation within an organisation. Finally, the survey provides a moment in time snap shot of the respondent's current state of mind, therefore the study could have benefited from a longitudinal approach had time been available.

## 6. Conclusion

This research paper was conducted in order to analyse the impact of life course on motivation and work satisfaction in an Irish context. The respondents of the research provided for rich and interesting data which demonstrated the levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation along with satisfaction throughout the life course of the respondents taking in gender, age and parental status. A thorough review of the relevant literature provided an insight into such topics of discussion. The conclusions drawn from these studies were used as a benchmark throughout the paper, with the research findings going to strengthen such conclusions or to offer an alternative viewpoint on such matters.

The study found that there were no significant differences in intrinsic or extrinsic motivation across the genders, an outcome which largely conflicts with past literature. It also concluded that there was a correlation between satisfaction and gender, which strengthened and further compounded previous research positing that males see higher levels of work satisfaction. There were no differences identified between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation between the cohorts which were parents and those who weren't. Furthermore, it was found that there was no correspondence between work satisfaction and parental status found among the 115 respondents rendering previous research to be found inaccurate with regard to the Irish demographic surveyed. The results found that there are largely differences in intrinsic motivation across the age cohorts, whereas extrinsic motivation did not greatly differ across the specified age ranges. That said there were no differences found with regard to work satisfaction and age groups. Finally, the research found that extrinsic motivation was a greater influence on work satisfaction than its intrinsic counterpart. This result was of great interest, as many previous studies found that intrinsic motivation was a greater influencing factor in work satisfaction.

In organisations today, employees are required to be a greater source of problem solving creativity and added value (Thomas, 2009). Therefore, employees need to be engaged in their work and fulfilled both intrinsically and extrinsically, taking in purposeful work and collaborative relationships along with pay and reward to provide a total reward strategy for employees. This in turn will aid motivation, satisfaction, productivity and commitment. It is hoped that this current research has provided an insight into the variances and commonalities among the cohorts of gender, age and parental status in the hope that organisations may use this as a basis in an Irish context to implement strategies relevant and appropriate to all employees regardless of their life course, in order to bring about motivation and work satisfaction.

## 7. Recommendations

The findings of this current study provide a clear insight into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and work satisfaction across the life course of an individual. A quantitative, non-probability snowball approach was adopted for this study which streamlined answers without any bias. That being said bias may have been introduced by using the snowball method as it is expected like-minded individuals were targeted. It is recommended, given the limitation noted, that a qualitative approach in the form of interviews may allow for a greater understanding of the drivers of motivation relative to the life stages of an individual. In this way, the researcher will recognise milestones and events in one's life cycle which have subsequently impacted their current motivational standpoint.

Any subsequent study around intrinsic motivation may benefit from concentrating on specific industries. The current study reached many different sectors, as discussed motivation across various industries compel different results and approaches (Ghazzawi, 2011; Casey and Robbins, 2010; Thapar, 2016).

A further recommendation is that management firstly understand that the working environment and workforce are fundamentally evolving. With this in mind it is paramount that management review and comprehend the demographics of their own workforce, collecting data in the form of quarterly and annual employee reviews. Taking the findings of this current study, it is recommended that the organisation apply a total award approach encompassing intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to satisfy the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation within each of the cohorts.

Finally, it is recommended that a proactive engagement approach is taken, identifying gaps in job design, autonomy etc., planning for the future to ensure continued motivation (Kanfer, Frese and Johnson, 2017). In doing so the organisation can hope for increased productivity, commitment and work satisfaction.

### 7.1 Implementation and Cost Estimates

In order to gather data around the specific shortcomings of an organisation in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation it is suggested that all employees complete quarterly reviews with their line manager and in some cases Human Resource Manager. Here discussions will take place specific to each employee with regard to the status of their motivation. Over the course of 6 -12 months' trends will emerge which can be categorised with strategies developed around such trends. The pace at which this takes place will be dependent on the organisation and the urgency and significance they place on the task.

The financial implications around implementing a total reward strategy will vary depending on the organisation in question. For smaller organisations this task can be carried out by internal line managers and senior management. For larger and more enterprise-oriented organisations a dedicated Human Resource Manager may be a requirement and may need to be employed. The associated salary for a Human Resource Manager is currently on average €45,691 (PayScale, 2017). The costs in terms of the total reward strategy will need to be set by senior management, allocating a budgetary allowance. The intrinsic reward is expected to have little direct costs but takes in feedback and learning, skill variety, task identity, significance and autonomy. In this respect the organisation will need to assess job design for each employee to ensure they are all fulfilled in all aspects of intrinsic motivation. The extrinsic motivation element will see more direct costs taking in pay and benefits along with training and development, for which the budget will be allocated. Organisations need to recognise such a strategy as an investment rather than a cost as once implemented it will drive motivation, satisfaction, high productivity and commitment.

## 8. Personal Learning Statement

The researcher found the process of the dissertation a challenging and rewarding academic journey. The opportunity to explore in depth an interesting topic of choice was welcomed and further enhanced the interest and awareness in the field of motivation.

It was necessary to review all research methodologies early in the dissertation. The decision to opt for the quantitative approach was influenced by the availability of the quantitative resources in the form of the SPSS database and the lecturers available to assist with the analysis. Notwithstanding this the use of the SPSS database was a daunting and difficult experience, however through accessing the available resources the researcher now feels competent in generating statistical analysis using this forum.

In outlining the recommendations, it was felt a valuable opportunity was provided to transfer the findings of the research to a practical setting. In this way, the researcher felt that they made an impact and furthered the available research, attempting to fill gaps in the knowledge or offer counter arguments.

In completing the dissertation, the researcher feels they have gained a deep understanding of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation along with work satisfaction, and is better equipped to apply these learnings to their own organisation. Furthermore, analytical and research skills were developed which will benefit the research in all future educational and professional endeavours undertaken.

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