What is the Prevalence of Occupational Stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland?

Are supports in place to safeguard their mental health and wellbeing?

An exploration of demographic, environmental & organisational predictors of stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland

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Master of Arts 2019

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Research Question & Abstract

What is the Prevalence of Occupational Stress among Post-Primary Teachers
in Ireland?
Are supports in place to safeguard their mental health and well-being?

*An exploration of demographic, environmental & organisational predictors of
stress among the profession*

While every job presents with its own set of challenges, frustration and anxiety, teaching is no different. However, occupational stress (OS) among teachers can make their work somewhat more complicated than it has to be, inflicting significant negative influences on employee performance and job satisfaction.

The aim of this study was to establish the prevalence of OS among post-primary teachers (PPTs) in Ireland, while identifying the main predictors and manifestations of OS experienced within their working environment. Demographic, environmental and organisational (DEO) predictors of OS were explored and cross-tabulated, to reveal high risk factors/cluster groups that impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession. The study also explored existing safeguards/support structures that are in place to help alleviate/prevent the occurrence of OS and protect the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs. Hence, a risk assessment of the main predictors and manifestations of OS was produced, while establishing if available supports are utilised by the profession, fit for purpose and in line with, The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

The current study employed a convergent parallel mixed method approach, that simultaneously collected both qualitative (objective) and quantitative (subjective) data via a semi-structured online survey (encompassing both closed and open-ended questions). Data was merged and cross-tabulated, to help strengthen and expand conclusions, heighten knowledge and reinforce the validity of the current research study.

Post-primary teachers (PPTs) across Ireland were selected as the preferred sample group to explore the objectives of the study on a national scale. A

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random sampling procedure was employed inviting participants from the sample population to complete an on-line survey via Qualtrics (a web-based survey tool). Random sampling ensured that all post-primary schools nationally had an equal opportunity to partake in the study. Hence, the geographical location encompassed all urban and rural schools including the five different school types across the republic of Ireland. In total six hundred and fifty respondents (PPTs) completed the on-line survey from a total of 713 surveys that were emailed to each school Principal for dissemination among their teaching staff.

Main findings of the current study revealed; 71% of PPTs in Ireland experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 39% of those experiencing OS daily. Female teachers are 9% more likely to experience OS up to 3 times per week, and 8% more likely to experience OS on a daily basis compared to their male counterparts.

The main environmental predictors of OS across Irish post-primary schools include; time management, staff shortages and class disruption. While the main organisational predictors of OS include; pay and conditions of the job, the amount of non-paid (extra-curricular) working hours involved, and the demands of the job against the lack of resources available. Regarding supports and interventions; the lack of prioritising and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs, both in the schools and in the staffrooms is concerning and the lack of supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is also a cause for concern. Additionally, 63% of the respondents stated that voicing concerns regarding their experiences of OS would compromise their position/status as a teacher. With a further 71% of PPTs agreeing that there is enough CPD training in place yet, raised concerns regarding the content and consistency of the training. Hence, the lack of in-school supports available for teachers, may add to the prevalence and frequency of OS experienced and therefore, adequate in-school supports/interventions may need to be developed/implemented to help alleviate the prevalence of OS experienced by PPTs across Ireland.

Some of the most demanding aspects of teaching according to the respondents include; time management, planning classes, curriculum changes and meetings. Followed by workload and administrative duties, student behaviour/lack of disciplinary interventions, management expectations/conflict issues, policy/initiative overload and, the lack of departmental and management support. Some suggestions from the respondents to improve the current situation within their schools include; policy change, CPD and curriculum change/improvement. Followed by improving management staff collaboration, effective communication and support and, reduced administrative duties and workload.

The purpose of this research was to add to the body of Irish literature regarding the prevalence of work-related stress among PPTs in Ireland. Results and recommendations that evolved from the study will be made available to schools, agencies and governing departments, affiliated with the Irish post-primary education system. This may help create awareness of the prevalence of occupational stress among the profession and the significance of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. Interventions or policy change to help alleviate the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland, should be closely correlated with sustaining a quality administrative, educational and supportive experience. This would act as a 'parallel process' benefiting not only teachers but students also, through the effective provision and delivery of education. Additionally, findings and recommendations may enhance or encourage further research in the field of study.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1: The Irish Education system

The Irish education system is a central bolt in the social, economic and cultural development of Irish society (DES, 2013; ESRI, 2017). Internationally Ireland is acknowledged as having a high performing education system with both national and international employers affirming the quality of the graduates that derive from the Irish education system (Comhairle na nOg, 2017; DES, 2013; ESRI, 2017; IPSOS 2017; OECD, 2013; Teaching Council, 2010). This recognition has been advanced by the quality of our teaching staff who empower learning that is vital for Irish economic and social progress. Hence, choosing this profession shoulders much responsibility, inspiring quality learning for all students, where the actions and characteristics of the teacher significantly link to the students learning experience and outcomes (Rockoff, 2004; Kerr et al., 2011).

Even during social, political and economic difficulty the desire for education was very much evident and highly valued in Ireland. When the National System of Primary Education was established in 1831, the teacher held a peculiar position within the school system. This position evolved from the older tradition of the hedge school, where the *master* was held in a position of high status – a *man* with knowledge. However, in the world of bureaucracy the teacher was seen in a different light and steps were taken to impress upon them, not to have ideas above their station, only needing knowledge a little ahead of that of their senior pupils. A set of rules were detailed ordering the teacher's behaviour and work, and these regulations remained unchanged throughout the century (Donnelly, 2011).

In Ireland there are over 90,000 registered staff in the teaching profession, working in almost 4,000 schools consisting of almost one million students (The Teaching Council, 2016). In the case of all organisations, effective management is the only way for educational institutions to realise their goals by performing activities in a productive and efficient manner. Through policies, administrators

influence teaching staff whose interest is based within the organisation itself. Hence, administrators and the implementation of policies within the educational organisation, influence the operations, staff and ultimately, the fundamental structure of the Irish education system (Russell et al., 2018).

As educational systems are constantly changing, administrators have an important role to play to ensure the cycle produces improvements and regeneration. However, teachers also play a major role within the system and therefore, presenting their views and experiences on all educational matters including the prevalence of work-related stress, is very important (Argon & Dilekci, 2016). Such disclosures facilitate organisational power sources to effectively implement constructive change/improvements to legislation and policies and the general operations of the institute/education system. Both national and international legislation specifies that all employers have a duty of care towards employees, to ensure their safety, health and welfare is not unreasonably compromised by their work. This duty of care extends to personal injury and the mental health and wellbeing of workers (HSE, 2005; Employment Rights Ireland, 2015; UN General Assembly, 1948).

Effective care and attention towards employees will also benefit the economy, as there is mounting recognition that work-related stress has significant implications on the physical and mental wellbeing of employees with excessive costs for employers and the economy (Russell, 2018).

1.2: Occupational Stress

Since the late 20th century occupational stress (OS) has become an important health issue and is understood as a risk factor, or threat to an employee's mental health and wellbeing (ASTI, 2018; Clipa, 2017; Greenglass et al., 2003; Russell, 2018) Today, OS is one of the most pressing challenges for organisational managers, having significant negative influences on employee performance, job satisfaction and employee retention (Ajaganandam & Rajan, 2013; Clipa, 2017; Duff, 2018).

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2005) defined OS as:

> *'Work-related stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope'.*

<div align="right">(World Health Organisation, 2005, p.3).</div>

While some individuals face stressful situations as a welcome challenge, others experience excessive pressure while dealing with it (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This relates to variances among individual characteristics. Studies regarding the prevalence of OS have largely considered environmental and organisational factors. Although, individual differences regarding the perceptions of stress is recognised (Kerr et al., 2011; Seibt et al., 2013) models used to measure OS − *Effort-Reward Imbalance Model* (Siegrist, 2016) *and Job Strain Model (Karasek, 1979),* assess characteristics of the work environment and their health effects, regardless of the individual factors.

1.3: Predictors of Occupational Stress among Teachers

Every teacher is different in terms of skills, knowledge and years of teaching experience; therefore, it is important to consider individual factors when assessing or measuring the prevalence of stress among the profession. According to Fimian's (1988) *Teacher Stress Model*, OS experienced by teachers is caused by multiple factor constructs that are significantly related to one another. Thus, suggesting that the occurrence of stress is relatable to environmental events and teacher's perceptions of those events, rather than the professional or personal variables such as age, gender, education level, years teaching (demographics). Yet, Fimian (1988) did recognise the frequency to which stress occurs, and that the strength of these occurrences depends on the individual teacher (Fimian, 1988).

Hence, investigating and analysing demographic variables against the prevalence of OS may reveal why some teachers' levels of performance 'falls off' quicker than others, regarding individual predictors of stress such as age,

gender, years teaching experience, coping strategies used etc. Therefore, this study will investigate the demographic profile of Post-Primary Teachers (PPTs) along with situational demands (environmental & organisational) to assess the impact these variables have on the 'causes and consequences' of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

Fig. 1.1:   **Causes & Consequences of Occupational Stress**

WORK   **STRESS**   **HEALTH**

Some Work-related stressors

Demographics:
Gender, Age, Years teaching experience.

Environmental:
Workload; Conflict; Time constraints; Student behaviour; Lack of resources.

Organisational:
Policies V Resources.
Work overload.
Job insecurity.
Staff Retention & Recruitment.
Lack of support/resources.
Job Intensity/demands.
Pay Inequality.
Organisational and managerial conflict.

Stress Reactions
Physiological reactions
Behavioural reactions
Productivity
Absenteeism/Leaving the profession
Smoking
Making Errors
Emotional Reactions
Cognitive Reactions

Long-term consequences
On the employee
High blood pressure
Affective disorders
Disturbed metabolism
Alcohol dependence
Musculoskeletal disorders
Consequences for employers & companies
Increased absenteeism
Lateness
Impaired teacher/student performance & productivity

Individual Characteristics
Gender
Age
Years teaching experience
Competitiveness
Over commitment
Self-confidence

Adapted by Ennis (2019) from Kompier & Marcelissen, 1990.

1.4: Current Context of Occupational Stress among Teachers

While every job presents with its own set of challenges, frustration, tension and anxiety, teaching is no different. In recent years studies have been conducted both nationally (ASTI, 2018; Darmody & Smith, 2011; Duff, 2018; Wynne et

al., 1991) and internationally (Caringi et al., 2015; Guglielmi et al., 2012; Marlow et al., 2015; Quinlan, 2015; Seibt et al., 2013; Wang, et al., 2017) on the prevalence of OS among teachers. Stressors that affect teachers have been identified from both quantitative and qualitative research and include excessive workload, disruptive students, unsupportive administrators and overly prescriptive supervisors who limit the teacher's autonomy (ASTI, 2018; Ahola et al., 2014; Clipa, 2017; Kerr et al., 2011; Teachers' Union of Ireland, 2017).

Although, research exposed high levels of OS and common mental disorders, few studies have explored which factors are associated with stress and burnout among the profession (Darmody & Smyth, 2011; Wang, et al., 2017). Data released by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) showed that, psychiatric illness is the number one reason why teachers retire early on ill health grounds (ASTI, 2018). Ingersoll (2016) stated, of all occupations for which a college degree is required, teaching has the highest turnover rates, even higher than nursing (Ingersoll, 2016). Hence, the prevalence of OS experienced by teachers is a cause of concern.

Although, Ireland is acknowledged as having a high performing education system (Comhairle na nOg, 2017; DES, 2013; DCYA, 2017; IPSOS 2017; OECD, 2013; Teaching Council, 2010) the issue of recruitment and retention is prevalent across post-primary schools in Ireland, as school management struggle to obtain part-time and substitute teachers for casual vacancies arising from the absenteeism of teaching staff (ASTI, 2018; Duff, 2018). It is evident that high levels of occupational stress and job dissatisfaction were key components in teacher absenteeism, and recruitment, and in some instances, the reason for teachers to leave the profession altogether (Bianchi et al., 2015; Duff, 2018; Ingersoll, 2016; Kerr, et al., 2011). This subsequently impacts on the students, learning experience and outcomes (Hinshaw et al., 2010; Wang, et al., 2017).

Working conditions and factors that influenced job satisfaction showed both personal and economic implications that lead to OS and burnout among the profession (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005; Seibt et al., 2013; Wang, et al., 2017;

Wynne et al., 1991). These studies had many recurring themes including, job-demands, student behaviour, workplace culture, school environment, and demographic characteristics of the teachers, such as, age, gender, amount of years in the profession and so on. Research has also recognised an increase in the expectations of staff performance (Tang, et al., 2017) with studies conducted in Ireland on occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers revealing, that three out of every ten teachers, regard their jobs as extremely or very stressful (Mlaki, 2012; Kerr et al., 2011; ASTI, 2018).

1.5: Purpose & Aim of the Research Inquiry

The purpose of this study is to use theoretical perspectives to explore the prevalence/frequency of OS among post-primary teachers (PPTs) in Ireland, and explore existing supports implemented to alleviate OS among PPTs. There are particular dimensions of the topic that are relevant to the aim, these dimensions are listed in the objectives (Section 1.8 below) and in the overarching theoretical framework employed for the study (Table. 1.1 below). These need to be explored in order to establish the prevalence/frequency, main predictors, and the manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

Hence, this study will explore and analyse demographic, environmental and organisational (DEO) predictors of OS, as 'standalone variables' to establish their impact on OS, and also analyse DEO through association, - grouping variables, to establish if 'cluster groups' of OS evolve as main predictors of OS among PPTs. Existing coping strategies implemented to alleviate OS will be explored to establish if they are used by PPTs, fit for purpose and compliant with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 (HSE, 2005). The research aims to compare findings against theoretical perspectives exploring the prevalence of OS among PPTs, to produce a risk assessment of the main predictors and manifestations of OS among the profession in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

1.6: Rationale & Personal Justification.

Occupational stress is an issue of growing concern for employees, employers, the economy and society. The nature of teaching as a service – provider of

education, means that teachers are exposed to more psychological (time pressure, emotional demands), rather than physical demands. However, manifestations of such stressors (psychological) are less visible (Jespersen et al., 2016), with international research suggesting that employers find these types of health risks more challenging to address than physical risks (EU-OSHA, 2016).

Choosing the topic of this study was initially informed by the values held by the researcher. These values combined with my understanding of occupational stress (OS) that were observed during my professional practice as an undergraduate, sparked a gripping interest in the phenomenon. As an undergraduate I completed my professional practice working for two different, yet similar disciplines. Initially I experienced the daily life and practices of PPTs and students in a school setting, as an assistant on a *School Completion Programme.* Thereafter, I experienced the working days and practices of social care professionals while working with the *Children in Care Team,* under the guidance of The Child and Family Agency (TUSLA). Through these invaluable experiences I observed the stressors faced and experienced by both professions in their working environment, and the psychological manifestations of stress experienced by staff in these demanding yet rewarding professions. Both disciplines involved working with children and families while adhering to policy/legislation and, encompassed a 'cross over' regarding some of their roles, responsibilities and stressors experienced.

Staff supervision is practiced on a regular basis in the social care sector as an intervention allowing staff to 'offload' work related stress in a safe non-judgemental environment. This resource can help prevent the manifestations of stress from escalating and impacting on the employee both personally and professionally. This demonstrates the importance of 'self-care' and building resilience through consistent professional supervision in the workplace, while minimising the prevalence and consequences of OS among social care workers. Connecting the roles and responsibilities of both disciplines - PPTs and social care workers, I developed the topic for my undergraduate thesis *'The importance of positive mental health and well-being in post-primary schools for teachers: An exploration of the sources of stress, stress responses and coping strategies*

experienced by teachers' (Ennis, 2017). Through data analysis I found curious gaps that were worthy of investigation. 1). How prevalent/frequent is OS among PPTs? 2). What are the main predictors of OS? 3). What are the manifestations of OS among the profession? and 4). What safeguards are in place to alleviate OS for PPTs in Ireland?

Hence, this research was developed to conduct a national study to explore these gaps and add to the existing body of knowledge regarding the prevalence, manifestations and consequences of OS and the impact it has on PPTs in Ireland.

1.7: Research Question & Objectives

What is the Prevalence of Occupational Stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland?
Are supports in place to safeguard their mental health and wellbeing?

An exploration of demographic, environmental & organisational predictors of stress among the profession.

Objectives:

1). To assess the prevalence of occupational stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland?

2). To explore the main predictors that impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland? (Demographic, Environmental & Organisational predictors).

3). To evaluate the predominant manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland?

4). To assess existing support systems that are available/used by PPTs to alleviate OS?

1.8:   Theoretical Frameworks

While establishing a theoretical base, the manifestations of OS were explored and the predictors of such identified through existing research and literature. This defined the ontology of the research phenomenon (OS) - *what is already known about it*, giving an insight into the assumptions and claims regarding the reality of the prevalence of OS and burnout among PPTs. This helped develop a theoretical framework around the research design.   An adapted version of Bronfenbrenner's & Ceci's (1994) Bioecological Social Systems Theory, was employed as an overarching theoretical perspective to help conduct the research inquiry and guide the analysis of findings (Fig. 4.2, p.99; Appendix 1.1). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs – five motivational needs framework was also adapted to lend itself to this research inquiry (Fig. 4.3, p.162; Appendix 1.2). Three other prominent theoretical models were also utilised and depicted below in Table 1.1 (Appendix 1.3, 1.4, 1.5).

Table 1.1: Theoretical Frameworks & Models Employed

Theoretical Frameworks Employed	Function
Bronfenbrenner & Ceci's (1994) Bioecological Systems Theory (Developed by Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994).	*Emphasises complex interactions between multiple systems of influence on an individuals' development. Ranging from individual, environmental & organisational (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).* (Fig 4.2, p.99; Appendix 1.1).
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Developed by Maslow, 1943, 1954).	*Five motivational needs- core components for effective employee wellbeing (Valvano, 2016).* (Fig 4.8, p.162; Appendix 1.2).
Job Demands-Resources Model (*Proposed by Demerouti et al., 2001).* (Appendix 1.3)	*Job resources may reduce the impact of job demands on stress-reactions – job resources are motivational when job demands are high (Bakker, 2015).*

Yerkes-Dodson's Human Performance Stress Curve (Developed by Yerkes & Dodson in 1908)	*Good stress & bad stress - Finding the balance: Stress will motivate and sustain performance: Too much stress will degrade performance, compensating for decreasing performance, will create more stress, further decreasing performance (Meier,2015).* (Fig 4.1, p.70; Appendix 1.4).
Effort Reward Imbalance Model (Developed by Siegrist, 1996). *(Appendix 1.5)*	*Failed reciprocity between high efforts at work and low rewards elicits negative emotions and stress reactions with adverse long-term effects on health (Siegrist, 2017).*

These models are both reliable and valid, having been applied extensively to occupational research to investigate associations between environmental and organisational work characteristics, and health outcomes for employees (De Lange et al., 2002; Kivimaki et al., 2011; Stansfeld & Candy, 2006).

1.9: Significance of Research

The significance of a healthy teaching workforce has been recognised as major contributing factor to ensure the effective provision and delivery of education (Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2011). Therefore, a culture that values and promotes the mental health and well-being of teachers by reducing the prevalence of work-related stress must be assured. This study explores the main predictors of OS, the manifestations of such and the availability of adequate supports to alleviate such stressors. Findings will help establish if the effective provision and delivery of education is hindered by the prevalence of OS among PPTs; and if existing supports are fit for purpose and compliant with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Results and recommendations that evolve from the study will be made available to schools, agencies and governing departments, affiliated with the Irish post-primary education system. This will create awareness of the prevalence of occupational stress among PPTs in Ireland in 2019. The findings may also

provide evidence for the necessity to promote the mental health and wellbeing of teachers as a mandatory part of their Continuous Professional Development (CPD). If implemented or deemed necessary, policies would be closely correlated with sustaining a quality administrative, educational and a supportive experience. This would act as a 'parallel process' benefiting not only teachers, but students also, through the effective provision and delivery of education. Additionally, findings and recommendations may enhance or encourage further research in the field of study.

1.10: National & International Legislation

Policies and legislation to tackle OS operate at national and European level. At national level OS is covered by legislation in accordance with the EU Health and Safety Directive (89/391/EEC) (European Communities, 1989). The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, (HSE, 2005) replaced the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 1989, setting out the roles and responsibilities of employers to prevent mental and physical ill health among employees. Part 2, Section 8 of the Act, states that employers have a general duty of care to take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and welfare of their employees. This includes protecting against personal injury to the mental health of employees arising from job stress. The Act details the functions and role of the Health and Safety Authority and provides enforcement measures specifying penalties that may be applied for any breach of occupational health and safety (Health and Safety Executive, 2005).

For an employer to be compliant with the 2005 Act they must:

- **Identify the hazards in the workplace**
- **Assess the risks**
- **Choose control measures**
- **Write a safety statement**
- **Record and review the statement on a regular basis.**

(Employment Rights Ireland, 2015)

Regulations 2007-Statutory Instrument 299/2007 covers all the requirements of employers and employees arising from the 2005 Act: These regulations include (but are not limited to) the following:

- **Employer's obligations**
- **Safety statement and risk assessment**
- **Health and safety leave**
- **Victimisation**
- **Bullying**
- **Harassment**
- **The role of the** *Health and Safety Authority*

(Employment Rights Ireland, 2015)

The Organisation of Working Time Act 1997, (sections 11 to 23) lays down minimum provisions for leave from work and maximum limits on hours of work ensuring that workers are not subjected to excessive work demands and have adequate rest periods.

Many international laws are in force to protect human rights of employees in the workplace. Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights include (but are not limited to) the following; conditions of work must be just and favourable; employees have the right to equal pay for equal work without discrimination; are worthy of human dignity, and favourable remuneration ensuring an existence worthy of human dignity (UN General Assembly, 1948).

To prevent and control the cause of work-related stress the International Labour Organisation recommends that:

'it could be beneficial to implement collective risk assessments and management measures for psychosocial risks to inform collective and individual preventive and control measures. This could be complemented by improving the coping ability of workers by

increasing their control over their tasks, building up social support systems for workers and taking into account, the interrelation between working and living conditions'.

(International Labour Organisation, 2016, p.1)

1.11: Role of Government.

Irish governing departments play a key role in ensuring that adequate policies are in place to address workplace stress and protect the mental health and wellbeing of employees. Not only are they responsible for identifying vulnerable populations at different workplaces, but they must ensure that all sectors have appropriate policies and safeguards in place to protect the rights of all employees including vulnerable populations (Employment Rights Ireland, 2015). The Government must have safeguards and strategies in place to address any issues that relate to certain sectors that may have higher levels of psychological or physical stress such as the teaching profession. Both national and international Health and Safety legislation places and onus on employers to ensure that, the safety, health and welfare of employees is not compromised by their work. This duty of care extends to the mental health and wellbeing of employees (Russell, et al., 2018).

The state provides a compensatory social insurance for injuries and illness incurred by employees due to work. Occupational Injury Benefit is available to employees suffering from physical injuries that occur in the workplace or from disease contracted at work, however no equivalent payment is available for illnesses arising from OS – depression or anxiety. In this instance the employee must claim Illness Benefit, a payment for all kinds of illnesses, regardless if they are a result of workplace harm. Therefore, it is not possible to track the cost of OS to the Exchequer (Russell et al., 2018).

1.12: Role of the Researcher

The purpose of this study is to investigate the prevalence of OS among PPTs in Ireland while assessing available interventions to establish if they are fit for purpose. This involved facilitating the development of dialogue, articulating

shared values and providing action (research evidence) for social change. The role was both demanding and enjoyable and required ongoing commitment to detail regarding every aspect of the study, in order to present primary research that may be worthy of implementing social change if deemed necessary. The role involved remaining connected to the purpose of the study while not losing sight of the usability and meaningfulness of the research.

Ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout the study (Section 3.8, p.63-65). Kumar (2015) suggested that regardless what paradigm the researcher chooses, certain ethical values must be adhered to regarding; maintaining objectivity and controlling bias in terms of the research procedure and the conclusions formulated (Kumar, 2015). Therefore, when reporting on data analysis, claims were only presented when supported by data findings. All data was analysed in a non-judgemental manner, and direct quotations were used to back up quantitative analysis where possible. In doing so a non-biased approach was maintained throughout the inquiry to minimise the impact/influence of personal bias on the overall results and presentation of data findings.

1.13: Summary

Work related stress among the teaching profession is of concern, as there is increasing recognition that OS has significant implications for the physical and mental health of teachers, and additional cost for the economy. The following chapter – literature review, will explore and analyse existing research and literature. This will help categorise a range of existing predictors, manifestations and coping strategies relating to OS among teachers, both nationally and internationally.

The manifestations of OS produce emotional, cognitive, behavioural or physiological responses that may lead to long term health problems. This depends on individual characteristics (gender, age, years teaching experience), the working environment and organisational structures. Hence, due to the nature of this research inquiry, the analysis will focus on the main predictors of stress, the manifestations of such and stress reactions, and not long-term health consequences.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

Stress among Post-Primary School Teachers

Demographic Characteristics of Work-Related Stress

Environmental Characteristics of Work-Related Stress

Organisational Characteristics of Work-Related Stress

Coping Strategies & Support Interventions

2.1: Introduction

The search to construct and refine a suitable topic for the current research inquiry began with the process of conducting a thematic literature review. This helped develop expertise around the area of study by disclosing, what existed regarding the prevalence of occupational stress (OS) and the impact it has on teachers both nationally and internationally. The examination of existing literature also helped construct the research design, methodology and theoretical perspective for the current study by combining different perspectives of existing research methodologies.

2.2: Stress among Post-Primary School Teachers

In recent years studies have been conducted both nationally and internationally on OS among teachers (Borg, 1990; Caringi et al., 2015; Darmody & Smith, 2011; Guglielmi et al., 2012; Greenglass et al., 2007; Jing, 2008; Schultz and Schultz, 2010; Wang, et al., 2017). According to research findings, teaching is identified as a very stressful career (Borg, 1990; Borg & Falzon, 1993; Fontana & Abouserie, 1993; Jing, 2008; Seibt et al., 2013), with major concern developing around the prolonged experience of teacher stress and its effects on the mental and physical health of teachers (Chance, 1992). Occupational stressors that affect teachers have been identified in both quantitative and qualitative research and include (but not limited to) workload, disruptive students, unsupportive administrators and overly prescriptive supervisors who limit the teacher's autonomy (Ahola et al., 2014; Bianchi et al., 2015; Clipa, 2016; Desouky and Allam 2017; Schonfeld, 2006; Hadi et al., 2008; Shirom et al., 2009; Sinclair et al., 2002; Younghusband, 2008).

However, every teacher is different in terms of skills, knowledge, years of teaching experience, and is therefore important to consider demographic factors when assessing or measuring the prevalence and frequency of stress among the profession. Investigating and analysing demographic variables against environmental and organisational variables/situational demands, may help uncover why some teachers' levels of performance 'falls off' quicker than others, regarding individual predictors of stress such as age, gender, years of teaching experience, coping strategies used etc. Therefore, the current study will

investigate the demographic profile of PPTs along with situational demands (environmental & organisational), to assess the impact these variables may have on each other, and on the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland.

Fig. 2.1: Demographic, Environmental and Organisational Predictors of OS.

Demographic Predictors
Age. Gender. Years teaching experience. Physical mental & cognitive abilities. Health, family & lifestyle. Alternative coping strategies.

Organisational Predictors
Job insecurity. Unequal pay. Relationship with management. Lack of support. New initiatives. Goals & policies.

Environmental Predictors
School/classroom environment. Relationship with co-workers. School type. Student behaviour. Time constraints. Work demands/ resources & supports.

(Ennis, 2019)

2.3:   Demographic Characteristics of Work-Related Stress.

2.3.1: Work Related Stress among Second Level Teachers in Ireland.
Bolton (2015) conducted a quantitative study on Work Related Stress among Second Level Teachers in Ireland. The study was conducted via an online survey distributed across seven post-primary schools in Ireland and collected data from a total of 80 respondents.

Findings from Bolton's (2015) study showed; teachers experience high levels of stress, with a significant number experiencing stress for at least half of their typical working week. Additionally, excessive workload, lack of recognition, time issues, lack of effort from students and poorly motivated students were the top sources of stress. Fatigue and emotional manifestations of stress were experienced by a high percentage rate of the respondents. Female teachers experienced higher levels of OS than their male counterparts and, were more likely to use coping strategies such as, professional help and seek advice and support from their work colleagues and friends. No significant difference regarding age difference and the prevalence of OS was found. However, those with 11 to 15 years teaching practice, experienced greater levels of professional investment stress then those with 11 years or less teaching experience. Additionally, 21% of respondents found teaching very stressful; when asked how often they experience stress in a typical week, 3.75% stated 'always' with 18.75% stating 'most of the time'. Additionally, 45% specified, they try doing more than one thing at a time, with 51% stating, they do not have enough time to complete daily tasks (Bolton, 2015).

Investigating the use of coping strategies, Bolton's (2015) findings revealed, 45% of respondents engaged in action planning quite often, with 25% 'always' using action planning to alleviate OS. Exercise was the second most popular coping strategy used, with 33% exercising quite often and, 20% always using exercising to alleviate OS. However, the support intervention used the least was, seeking professional help, with 82% of participants never using this intervention to alleviate work related stress. Other coping strategies used quite often included, relaxation 17%; hobbies 25% and advice and support 37% (Bolton, 2015).

Some limitations of Bolton's (2015) study included: The survey questions were fixed and therefore, did not allow the respondents to elaborate on their concerns or experiences, which may have backed up or enhanced the findings of the study. Additionally, the research explored seven secondary schools across Ireland generating 80 responses however, the size of the sample group compared to the sample population limited the generalisability of findings. The current study

will try to overcome such limitations by conducting a national study inviting all post-primary schools to participate in the research. The survey will encompass a mixed method approach, to generate both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis. This will allow for triangulation of findings by merging and cross-tabulating different data sets to strengthen data analysis and, enhance the validity of the current research inquiry.

2.3.2: Teachers' Experiences of Work-Related Stress

Buckley et al. (2017) conducted a study exploring Irish Teachers' Experiences of Stress. The study investigated teachers' experiences of work-related stress in both primary and secondary schools from county Cork in Ireland. The levels of stress experienced based on the amount of years teaching practice, was explored along with; coping strategies used by the respondents to help alleviate OS. Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted among female teachers from, five primary and five secondary schools. From data analysis Buckley et al. (2017) identified five main overarching themes (Buckley et al., 2017).

The first theme, *desire for control* related to, the lack of control in the classroom which significantly contributed to the respondent's overall stress levels. The participants of Buckley's study also had a desired to have control over; student behaviour, inspections and how their colleagues conducted their work, as these factors caused work related stress for the teachers. Two of the 10 participants believed inspections placed them in a vulnerable position that created additional stress. The second theme of Buckley et al. (2017) study related to *the stressed self* and identified how teachers felt stressed and perceived their experiences of stress. The participants stated that, the job itself caused them stress regardless of the type of school they worked in (primary or secondary), or irrespective of their years teaching experience. Seven of the 10 participants stated that stress impacted on their mental health and wellbeing. Three of the 10 perceived work-related stress as, feeling under pressure but did not view it too seriously, while one teacher believed the stress she experienced impacted on her mental wellbeing causing anxiety and worry (Buckley et al, 2017).

The third theme of Buckley et al. (2017) study related to, *the beneficial supports in the profession.* The participants discussed supports they believed would benefit the profession and also the existing supports available to them. Recreational activities such as staff evenings were discussed as a positive intervention to support teachers, however some suggested that life was too demanding for such activities. Additionally, 8 of the 10 participants found professional supports - the availability of a psychologist and counselling services, beneficial in helping them cope with work related stress. However, some participants suggested that an external counselling support would be more beneficial than an in-school staff member. *Identity* was the fourth theme and related to the teachers sense of identity. Participants discussed confusion over their professional identity and the impact this had on their stress levels and resulted in teachers' questioning their chosen career. The fifth and final theme discussed was the *significance of relationships on the self.* Relationships with colleagues appeared to have a significant impact on the reduction of stress among teachers. While newly qualified teachers desired to be acknowledged/positively affirmed not only by management, but by their colleagues. This helped them feel confident in their teaching practice and ability. However, the participants stated that negative relationships among colleagues contributed to the experiences of work-related stress (Buckley et al., 2017).

Some limitations of Bukley et al. (2017) study may be from an empirical or quantitative perspective, as findings were not generalisable to the wider sample population. This was due to the limited number of ten participants from the overall population group. Additionally, the participants of Buckley et al. (2017) study were all female although this was not by choice, no male teachers responded to the open invitation to participate in the research.

To help overcome such limitations the current study will employ a mixed method approach (pragmatic) to gather both qualitative and quantitative data, across all post-primary schools in the republic of Ireland. Hence, allowing for the generalisability of findings once the recommended sample size is achieved (Section 3.5.3). Additionally, cross-tabulating data sources will triangulate

findings and strengthen the data analysis and recommendations of the research inquiry. In Buckley et al. (2017) study, finding such as; *teachers lack of control in the classroom,* may be directly linked to student behaviour however, this may not be the case. The current study while exploring predictors of class disruption (Section 4.2.2.5) will cross-tabulate other variables/data sets against the prevalence of class disruption to establish if other situational demands impact on the prevalence of class disruption. Such demands may include, demographic variables (Section 4.2.1 - age, gender, years teaching experience) environmental variables (Section 4.2.2 - location of school, type of school, general ethos of the school, impact of staff shortages) or organisational variables (Section 4.2.3 - type of contract held, salary, extra-curricular activities, workload/resources available).

Cross-tabulation of findings may uncover underlying factors/demands that contribute to initial findings - *lack of control in the classroom*, and help prevent assumptions being made such as, *the teacher lacks control in the classroom as a result of student misbehaviour*. Inaccurate assumptions may lead the teacher to doubt their own capabilities within the classroom environment diminishing their levels of control, self-esteem and job satisfaction. Self-esteem relates to a person's overall sense of self-worth involving a variety of beliefs about the self (Myers, 2007). Based on Bandura's (1995) social cognitive theory; a teacher's self-efficacy is conceptualised as 'the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance' (Bergman et al., 1977, p. 137).

2.3.3: Determinants of job satisfaction.
Reilly et al (2014) conducted a study on *Teachers' Self-efficacy, Self-esteem & Job Stress as Determinants of Job Satisfaction*. The aim of the study was to explore the impact individual demographic characteristics had on; teaching, self-efficacy, perceived stress, self-esteem and job satisfaction. The sample group consisted of 121 teachers from eight Irish primary schools.

Results indicated no significant difference among male and female teachers regarding job satisfaction, self-esteem, self-efficacy or perceived stress. The

number of years teaching practice was found to have a negative relationship with job satisfaction, showing that, as the number of years teaching increased – job satisfaction decreased (Reilly et al., 2014). However, Chaplain 1995 (cited in Hallow, 2010) identified a tendency for less experienced teachers to be more stressed regarding professional concerns than more experienced teachers, and also found, female teachers experience more stress than their male counterparts. Chaplain (1995) also identified two groups that were most likely to experience the highest stress levels through demographic association - the youngest teachers and the oldest teachers (Chaplain, 1995, cited in Hallow, 2010). However, Reilly et al. (2014) study found that less experienced and younger teachers reported higher levels of job satisfaction than the more experienced and older teachers (Reilly et al., 2014). Striving to achieve high levels of job satisfaction among the less experienced teachers relates to the 'honeymoon period', suggesting that teachers in their early careers embrace opportunities and challenges that arise in teaching, to experience greater job satisfaction (Schmidt, 2007). However, concerns may arise, as the combination of overloaded challenges, and low self-efficacy of less experienced teachers to manage the job demands can increase an individuals' vulnerability to OS and burnout (Leiter, 1991).

These findings were consistent with previous research of Perie and Baker (1997) & Poppleton & Riseborough, (1991). However, Huberman (1993) revealed that teachers at each stage developed worries and self-doubt. Reilly et al. (2014) also suggested, teachers who experienced moderate stress, showed high levels of self-esteem, moderate self-efficacy and were highly satisfied with their jobs and experiences (Reilly et al., 2014). Findings were consistent with Pierce & Gardiner's (2004) study, suggesting that individuals' self-esteem formed around work and organisational experiences, and played an important role in shaping job satisfaction, and establishing a relationship between job satisfaction and self-efficacy (Pierce & Gardiner's, 2004).

Some limitations of Reilly et al. (2013) study that need to be interpreted are: the sample was restricted to eight primary schools from one county of Ireland (Cork). Therefore, the findings were not generalisable to the sample population.

Consequently, the current study will explore all counties and different school types across the country, as well as demographic and organisational factors that may impact on the prevalence of OS among PPTs. Reilly's et al. (2013) study also stated that perceived stress was the main predictor of job satisfaction, leaving it unclear what the main sources of stress were (environmental, organisational or demographic factors) - workload, student behaviour, role/responsibilities, unequal pay, school type/location, support-or lack of etc. Additionally, a particularly valuable insight emerged from the work of Huberman (1993), who studied Swiss teachers with different years of experience. An implication of Huberman's work is that rather than identifying a particular group of teachers who were overwhelmed, it was more appropriate to examine the conditions that give rise to stress with a view to identifying features that are especially problematic (Huberman, 1993).

Hence, the current study will explore predictors of OS as standalone factors from initial findings, while also exploring high risk cluster groups (groups of variables) by association/triangulation. This will help identify individual stressors from initial data findings and possible 'high risk cluster groups' when cross-tabulated with other data sources. Additionally, investigating international literature relating to the prevalence of OS among teachers, may reveal similarities regarding predictors of OS among teachers. This will give a broader understanding of commonalities and variances of OS among teachers from an international perspective.

2.3.4: Job Related Predictors of Teacher Stress.

An international study conducted by Hanif, et al. (2011) in Islamabad, explored Job Related Predictors of Teacher Stress (Hanif, et al., 2011). Demographic variables were investigated (gender, age, years of teaching experience, school systems, geographic location etc) that impacted on teacher stress and job performance. This study combined two sample groups to for data collection. One group comprised of 400 teacher's male and female from both primary and secondary schools, to establish job related predictors of occupational stress among teachers. Sample group 2 comprised of 1200 students from the classes of those teachers and were asked to evaluate their teacher's job performance.

Findings revealed that gender, the school system, job experience, and the number of students in the classroom as significant predictors of occupational stress among teachers; the school system, gender, job experience and age were significant predictors of job performance among teachers' (Hanif et al, 2011). These findings incorporated demographic, environmental and organisational (DEO) predictors of work-related stress and suggested, teacher stress had a negative significant correlation with teachers' job performance. Findings of Hanif et al. (2011) study concurred with existing literature (Chance, 1992; Dickman & Emener, 1992; Ivancivich & Matterson, 1980; Jamal, 1984; Motowidlo et al., 1986).

Hanif et al. (2011) study also revealed five causal factors that contributed to job performance and OS; the school system, gender, age, number of students per class and number of family members. These five variables accounted for a total variance of 45% of causal factors of job performance and OS among the profession. While it is important to consider demographic, environmental and organisational (DEO) variables, the current study will triangulate DEO predictors of OS for a more in-depth analysis of findings. This may reveal, *high risk cluster/groups* that as 'standalone' predictors of OS may have minimal impact on the prevalence of OS, but when associated/merged with other DEO predictors, may have significant impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS among the teaching profession.

The sample size of Hanif et al. (2011) study limited the generalisability of the findings, as only schools in Islamabad were selected. Although Islamabad is the capital of Pakistan, the reality is that teachers of Islamabad may not face the same conditions that teachers from smaller rural towns and cities face (Hanif et al., 2011). To overcome such limitations, the current study will distribute the on-line survey nationally, incorporating all counties, cities, towns, urban and rural post-primary schools. DEO predictors of OS among teachers will be analysed and cross-tabulated allowing for triangulation and, the generalisability of findings from the sample size to the sample population of the research inquiry.

A further limitation of Hanif et al. (2011) study was, the evaluation of teachers' job performance, this was rated by the students (sample group 2). Although this controlled self-reporting measurement bias from the teachers, the students themselves may have been bias in their reporting of certain teachers. However, the current study, will invite teachers to self-report on their experiences of OS and the coping strategies they use to alleviate such stress. Although this may incur self-reporting measurement bias (Section 3.4.4), the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity may encourage the participants to overcome this issue.

Fig 2.2: Demographic predictors of OS & Demographic resources
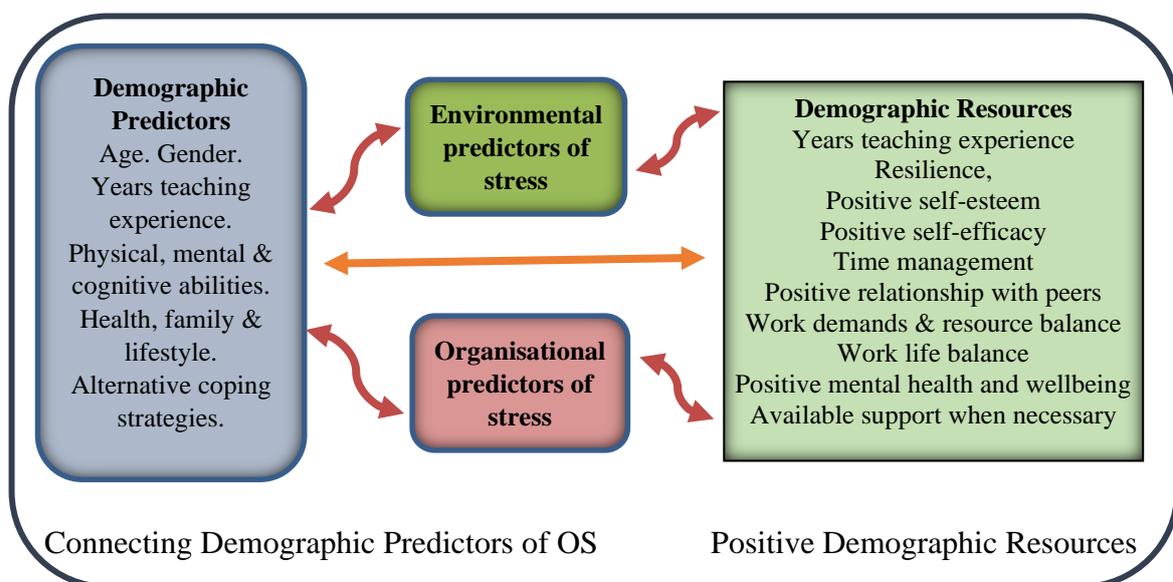
(Ennis, 2019)

2.4: Environmental Characteristics of Work-Related Stress.

Occupational health literature states that, some school environments are so chaotic that they impede teachers' goals, depriving them of the autonomy they require to teach in a meaningful way, hence, giving rise to considerable distress (Karasek, 1979; TUI, 2017; Duff, 2018). Although there is substantial research on occupational stress, much is focused on psychosocial aspects of the organisation and the social context of the work environment (Cooper & Cartwright, 1999). However, there is limited research examining the association between the OS and the physical work environment. The current study will explore the physical work environment of PPTs. Both environmental and organisational structures will be explored to establish what impact they may have on teacher's job satisfaction, workload and the occurrence OS among the profession.

2.4.1: Teachers Attitudes towards Work and Job Satisfaction.

The Association of Secondary School Teachers in Ireland (ASTI) conducted a study in 2018, to gather data on Irish PPTs attitudes towards their work and job satisfaction, while exploring the intensity and type of work expected of them (ASTI, 2018). A total of 2,341 post primary teachers responded from a sample of 10,350 ASTI teaching staff, represented a response rate of 23%.

Findings revealed that 51% of teachers were satisfied with their job, however, just under a decade ago a Millward Brown/ASTI Survey (2009) revealed 77% job satisfaction among PPTs in Ireland. This showed a significant decline of 26% in the levels of job satisfaction among PPTs within a nine-year period.

The ASTI (2018) survey also revealed that helping students was the main source of job satisfaction. However, the participants also stated that they were unable to complete their professional tasks throughout the normal school-working hours, and therefore had to work an additional average of 20.07 hours per week to fully discharge their professional duties. The impact of this led to reduced levels of job satisfaction among PPTs, as it produced high levels of demotivation and stress while compromising their sense of control regarding their work (ASTI, 2018). This coincided with Buckley et al. (2017) study suggesting that,

that the lack of control experienced by teachers significantly contributed to their overall stress levels (Buckley et al., 2017).

If job satisfaction levels are found to be low in the current study, additional investigation through cross-tabulation may reveal why this is so. Low levels of Job satisfaction may be due to DEO factors, or a combination of all three. However, to limit bias or assumptions regarding the levels of job satisfaction, triangulation of findings may produce a more indebt analysis and, validate comparisons or variances against existing research and literature.

The ASTI (2018) survey also revealed that additional demands of the job and the introduction of new initiatives had caused unsustainable workload and increased levels of stress. 97% of the respondents stated that their *work intensity* has significantly increased from multiple sources. With 74% stating they had unacceptable workloads which compromised their autonomy of job control, which contributed to levels of job satisfaction among teaching staff (ASTI, 2018). It was apparent from existing literature and research that PPTs experience significant levels of work intensity which contribute to OS among the profession (ASTI, 2018; Bianchi et al., 2013; Desouky & Allam, 2017; Dollard & Bakker, 2010; González-Morales et al., 2010). The current study will investigate the workload of teachers and how this may impact on the prevalence and frequency of OS experienced. Extra-curricular activities including additional non-paid working hours will also be explored to establish if Irish PPTs are working within recommended guidelines.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2016) revealed that post-primary teachers in Ireland teach 735 hours per annum, compared to the OECDs average of 669 hours and the European average of 642 hours. Additionally, the 935 hours allocated for instruction time per secondary school student in Ireland, is far greater than the OECD average of 915 hours, and the European average of 895 hours (TUI, 2016). These additional hours are adding to the workload demands of the profession. The current study will investigate the status of hours worked by PPTs in Ireland in 2018. Additionally, by merging/cross-tabulating findings from different data sets (e.g. staff

shortages, time management), the reasons why Irish teachers are working longer hours than the OECD and the European average may be exposed.

Additional findings of the ASTI (2018) study revealed that 92% of participants teach full-time – 21.20 hours per week comprising of 32 class sessions of 40 minutes per class. However, the typical working week of a full-time post-primary teacher extends beyond 21 hours per week as teachers on average spend 20.07 hours per week engaging in non-teaching activities. The additional 20.07 hours are spent engaging in non-teaching duties including: preparation, lesson planning, and assignment/homework marking, providing feedback, completing pastoral care duties and attending school meetings. A significant 89% of respondents, stated that they could not complete their non-teaching duties during the school day, with 15% stating that they had an acceptable workload with just 1 in 4 suggesting that they had a good work-life balance. Lacking in energy, feeling tired and frustration were some of the classic symptoms of occupational stress that caused discontentment within the profession; 50% of respondents agreeing with the statement – '*frustrated that I cannot engage in new approaches/innovations in the classroom*'; 41%, '*frustrated that I cannot spend time with individual students*'; 40%, '*frustrated that I have no time to do professional learning*'; and over one third of the respondents - 37%, agreed that they were demotivated in their job (ASTI, 2018).

The teaching staff also engaged in substitution and supervision duties on a weekly basis along with attending term events, such as graduation nights, school open nights, parent teacher meetings – all of which requires the teachers to spend additional time at work (ASTI, 2018). The current study will explore the amount of non-paid (extra-curricular) hours Irish PPTs work per week. These hours may impede on the teacher's personal lives and may not be defined within their roles/responsibilities.

2.4.2: Irish Teachers' Perceptions of their daily stress
Kerr et al. (2011) conducted a qualitative study where interviews were conducted with fifteen secondary school teachers from a variety of school types in Eastern Ireland. The study explored Irish teachers' perceptions of their daily

stress and how they attempt to cope with their experiences. One participant, despite careful planning, struggled to get things done – stating that:

> *'There just isn't time; there isn't physically time in the day to deal with everything, and far from relieving stress, break times and lunch times can be some of the most stressful times.'*
>
> (Kerr et al., 2011, p33).

An additional four of the fifteen participants stated that teaching mixed ability classes caused major stress, as it involved a significant increase in workload. A further two stated that they experienced stress from the work they had to bring home and working late (Kerr et al., 2011). The Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) (2017) also conducted a study exploring the workload of post-primary teachers in Ireland. Findings showed that extra workload (job demands) placed on teachers is impacting on their personal time. Findings from the study confirmed that teachers were experiencing significant increases in their workload but lacked resources to complete daily tasks. This can produce significant negative consequences in relation to the onset of stress and occupational burnout among the profession (TUI, 2017).

TUI findings confirmed that 30% of recent entrants to the post-primary profession believed it would be unlikely that they will be in the profession in ten years. While 91% stated that bureaucratic duties deflected form their teaching responsibilities. An additional 96% stated that there was a significant increase in their workload in recent years. The teachers' workload according to the respondents was more administrative, with a focus on what teachers refer to as, box-ticking and form-filling duties, that deflected from the core functions of their profession – teaching and learning. Additionally, due to financial cutbacks the respondents stated that, their workload had also increased dramatically as the teacher/pupil ratio worsened additionally, middle-management structures were dismantled restricting the provision of guidance counselling. The TUI suggested that these new structures were anti-educational measures, that damaged the support networks for students and the effectiveness of the schools overall (TUI, 2017).

Due to changes and increasing workload within the profession, teachers are among those with the highest occupational stress and burnout levels across many professions (Steber & Rennert, 2008). Teachers are often involved in up to 1000 interpersonal connections a day (Holmes, 2005), and the quality of these interactions may either enhance or diminish their wellbeing. The current study will explore environmental and organisational structures to establish what additional workload if any, is put on PPTs across Ireland. Support structures will be investigated also, to establish if they are fit for purpose in assisting with the workload placed on the profession and establishing compliance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Student behaviour will also be explored as a possible environmental predictor of OS, while supports available for teachers to deal with unacceptable behaviour in the classroom will be investigated. This may help establish if current interventions are adequate, fit for purpose and in the best interest of the school, teacher and student.

2.4.3: Student Behaviour

Both national and international literature identifies disruptive student behaviour as one of the greatest stressors for teachers, threatening boundaries and challenging their control (Boyle et al., 1995; Hallow, 2010; Justin et al, 2010; Richards, 2012; Tolker and Feitler, 1986). Kyriacou (2001) identified the heavy workload of teachers and disruptive behaviour of students as key stressors for post primary teachers yet, concurred with Lazarus and Folkman (1984), acknowledging stress as very subjective phenomenon (Kyriacou, 2001) (individual self-reported/subjective experiences of OS – Section 3.3.3, p.49).

Kerr et al. (2011) study examined teachers' perceptions of their daily stress and how they attempted to cope with these experiences. Several stressful factors were identified including, heavy workload, disruptive student behaviour and maintaining boundaries, particularly when dealing with students who had personal problems. The participants acknowledged that, the nature of teaching involved constantly dealing with unpredictable and varied issues. One teacher stated:

'The classroom is a battleground, where students bring their baggage, and teachers bring their baggage, and the classroom is the cauldron. The result isn't always pretty'.

(Kerr et al., 2011. p.32).

Some participants were concerned that they could not reprimand disruptive students in a way that seemed both fair but firm regarding both verbal and physical abuse. While others stated that problems often arose in the classroom because teachers were 'kept in the dark' regarding problems in the home. Another respondent found it stressful reporting disruptive students to the principal – *'because I know he'll think I'm not capable of handling some pupils* (Kerr et al., 2011). Two participants of Kerr et al. (2011) study were annoyed that legal protections for children did not extend to teachers, leaving them feeling vulnerable in the classroom with physically strong adolescents.

The current study will investigate the main factors of class disruption for PPTs in Ireland. However cross-tabulation of other possible predictors of OS may reveal underlying factors that contribute to the initial findings regarding class disruption. Many studies in this section established that student behaviour is a problem, however, underlying factors may impact on what is perceived as student discipline problems such as; lack of support from management, or lack of autonomy regarding roles/responsibilities and accountability when dealing with vulnerable students. Additionally, if teachers have to teach classes other than their specialised subject the teacher's job-demands outweigh their available resources to effectively complete tasks. Hence, occupational stress is inevitable and the variance between the demands and resources determines the level of stress experienced by the teacher. Although some of the examples given are not directly associated with student behaviour, they still may impact on results when cross-tabulated with findings relating to 'class disruption'.

However, Hallow's (2010), study on work related stress among Australian teachers' found that, experiences of occupational stress resulted from verbal abuse, threats of physical abuse, dealing with consequences of neglect or abuse of students, refusal to work by a student and dealing with abusive and aggressive

parents (Hallow, 2010). While Justin et al. (2010) identified the main sources of stress experienced by teachers in the United Kingdom as issues relating to student discipline, student motivation and time management (Justin et al., 2010). Romano et al (2010) identified five major stressful factors for teachers and student demands were among the five factors listed (Romano et al., 2010). Unsustainable workloads, extra-curricular and administrative duties were also recurring themes across the studies, with staff shortages adding to the workload and additional duties for teachers.

2.4.4: Staff Shortages

A survey conducted in 2017 by the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS), (national representative association for 96 community and comprehensive schools in Ireland), showed an under-supply of teachers in post primary schools. 96% of respondents reported 'difficulties in recruiting part-time or temporary teaching cover.' As part of the survey schools revealed that following initial advertising and re-advertising there were no applicants for the advertised positions. Therefore, schools reverted to engaging unqualified personnel to teach certain subject specialisms. School management responding to the ACCS (2017) study also stated that it was difficult to find subject-specific substitute teachers that were available for casual substitution. Consequently, state examinations are impacted by the absence of subject-specific substitutes to provide adequate cover for the practical and leaving certificate oral examinations.

The current study will investigate if teachers are currently asked to teach classes other than their specialised subject while exploring the impact staff shortages may have on the profession. Findings will be explored to establish whether there is compliance with current policy and legislation.

The literature reviewed and discussed on workload, demands, student discipline and resources showed consistency with other national and international literature (Borg, 1990; Caringi et al, 2015; Darmody & Smith, 2011; Guglielmi et al, 2012; Greenglass et al, 2007; Jing, 2008; Schultz and Schultz, 2010; Wang, et al 2017). All suggesting that once a teacher's job-demands outweigh their

available resources to effectively complete tasks, occupational stress is inevitable (Darmody & Smith, 2011; Karasek, 1979; Wang, et al 2017). Additionally, teachers who are dissatisfied with their work can negatively impact on their student's motivation and behaviour as they portray lower work commitment (Hatfield et al., 1993). The current study intends to investigate workload, demands of the job and resources available to PPTs and assess outcomes against the theoretical frameworks discussed (Section 1.8, p.9).

Fig 2.3: Environmental Predictors of OS & Necessary Resources
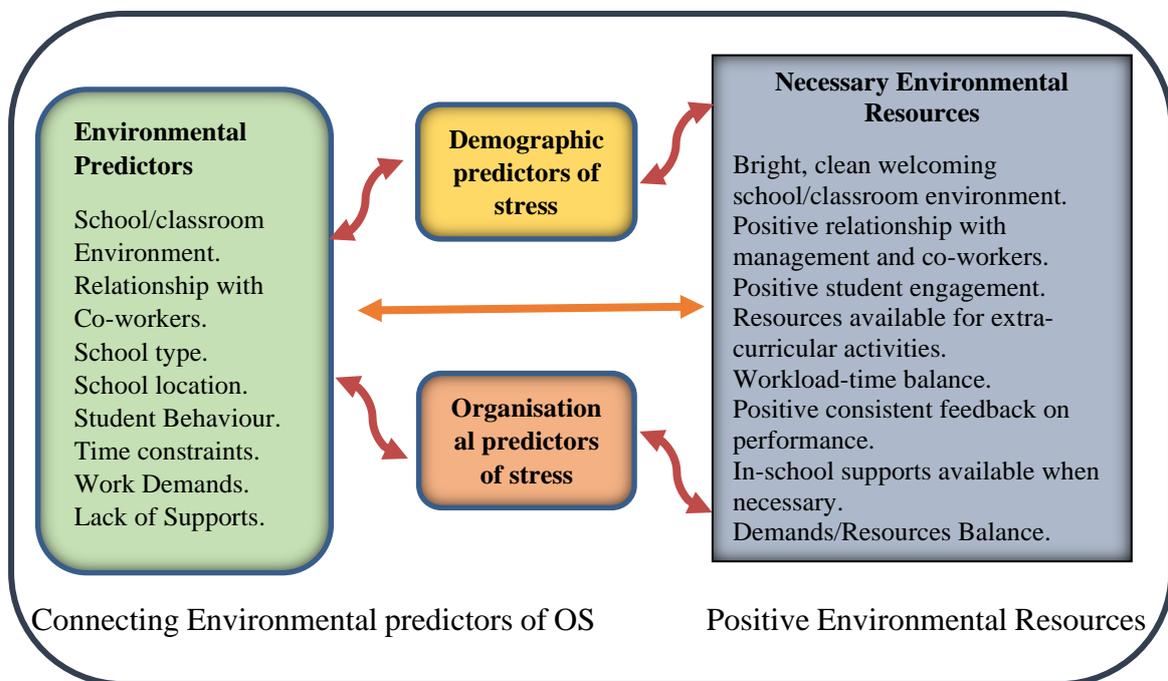
*(*Ennis, 2019)

2.5: Organisational Characteristics of Work-Related Stress.

Literature discussed above (Borg, 1990; Caringi et al., 2015; Darmody & Smith, 2011; Guglielmi et al., 2012; Greenglass et al., 2007; Jing, 2008; Schultz and Schultz, 2010; Wang, et al., 2017) confirmed that teachers experience higher rates of job stress then many other professions. This in turn may lead to negative outcomes not only for the teacher but students, educational institutions and governing organisations. Therefore, investigating such occurrences should not only explore demographic and environmental issues, but organisational factors also. This may help uncover predominant predictors of OS and in turn, develop adequate interventions to reduce the prevalence/frequency of OS and safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs, if deemed necessary.

There are a range of organisational factors that affect teachers and determine the quality of teaching – work conditions, salary scale, retention and recruitment, the status of teaching in society and, the attractiveness of a teaching career for new undergraduate student's (Duff, 2018). Many of these factors if inadequate, can also add to the prevalence of OS among the profession, and the 2011 pay cuts to teacher's salary has impacted greatly on the profession (ASTI, 2013; INTO, 2016; Keogh, 2011; Murray, 2012).

2.5.1: Teachers pay and Rewards

Murray (2012) commenting on a report compiled by the European Commission (2011) stated that; in 2011 the salary of Irish teachers was among the worst hit by cutbacks across 34 countries (European Commission, 2011, cited in Murray, 2012). Teachers who commenced work on or after 1st January 2011 started on 13% less than their working colleagues, while those appointed since February 2012 faced an additional drop of 20% due to the suspension of the qualification allowance. However, the salary of serving teachers before the signing of the Croke Park deal in 2010 could not be cut by Government. In a statement for the Irish Examiner, the president of St Patrick's College in Dublin, Dr. Daire Keogh (2011), suggested that salary cuts for new teachers entering the profession, would make a career choice of teaching less attractive, adding that suspending the payment of the qualification allowances to serving teachers, would most

definitely discourage them from improving on their skills (Keogh, 2011, cited in Murray, 2012).

The most recurrent dominant theme for younger teachers from the ASTI (2018) study was their dissatisfaction regarding the unequal pay scales. They expressed disillusionment, anger and were clear regarding the financial difficulties they were experiencing, with many fearing they would never own their own home or be able to live an independent life. Pre-2010 teachers also expressed their concerns regarding the impact that low pay had on the status of the teaching profession (ASTI, 2018). The research also indicated that since January 2011 when new pay scales were introduced a crisis emerged. This was intensified by the termination of qualification allowance payments in 2012, and by the increase from one to two years, for secondary school teacher training qualification (Professional Master of Education) from 2013.

In 2016 the TUI, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) recognised that pay was at the heart of the crisis and these agencies and Departments agreed to incorporate the Honours Primary Degree allowance into the salary scale for qualified teachers that were appointed since 2011 – which was one of the withdrawn allowances in 2012. This was to be an interim measure and part of an ongoing process leading to pay equality for teachers, (INTO, 2016).

The current study will explore, *satisfaction with pay and conditions*, cross-tabulating findings against - *commenced employment on or before January 2011* when the initial pay-cuts were introduced. This will help establish if Irish PPTs are satisfied with their pay, and if the pay-cuts introduced in January 2011 reflect/impact on these results. Additionally, findings will be cross tabulated with results from, *the prevalence and frequency of OS experienced*, this will show, if pay cuts and conditions may be an organisational predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced. Further analysis/cross-tabulations may also reveal if such stressors impact on teacher retention and recruitment.

2.5.2: Teacher Retention and Recruitment

The ASTI (2018) study indicated that although anxiety and stress are the most common causes of absenteeism among Irish teachers, they were also significant contributing factors regarding teacher retention and early retirement (ASTI, 2018). Additionally, 95% of participants from the TUI (2018), study agreed that pay inequality had a 'negative or very negative' effect on staff morale within their schools, and when asked if they would advise a younger relative to pursue a career in teaching 52% said no, 36% were not sure and only 12% said yes. Additionally, findings confirmed almost half of post primary teachers who commenced teaching after 1st January 2011, stated that it was unlikely or very unlikely that they would still be working in the profession in ten years' time. However, if pay equality was reinstated, 94% stated that it was very likely or likely, that they would remain in the profession (TUI, 2018). Ingersoll et al (2014), also found that 12% of new teachers left the profession before completing their first year of teaching; 28% by the end of three years of teaching and 41% by their fifth year (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Duff's (2018) study found that; in Ireland the introduction of pay cuts led to a retention and recruitment crisis within the teaching profession, leading to a decline in the quality of teaching that innovative and excellent education requires (Duff, 2018).

2.5.3: Teacher Retention and Recruitment: An International Problem

Many of the teachers who left the profession, sought teaching posts in other countries, however OS among teachers is an international problem that seems to manifest regardless of the location of school or country of employment. The Irish Times Abroad (2017) conducted a study among Irish teachers who had left the country in recent years to teach in the United Kingdom. Three quarters of the 175 respondents to the voluntary online survey, had left Ireland since the recession in 2008. Although no scientific conclusions could be drawn from the findings, some interesting trends emerged from the open text fields. One third of the respondents stated that they had not left the Irish teaching profession by choice, but 'felt they had to'. Reasons cited for their involuntary departure to the UK were; lack of full-time work, poor wages, insecure contracts, poor benefits and the two-tier salary scale (Kenny, 2017).

However, OS is also a consistent problem among teachers in the UK. The Guardian (2018) investigated case studies of post primary teachers in the United Kingdom and found; overwork and lack of supports were driving teachers across England out of their chosen profession faster than they could be replaced. The article revealed that some teachers were working up to 70 hours per week and spent their Sundays preparing lessons. Some lost touch with her friends as they had no time to spend with them. One teacher reported working a 'toxic routine', planning lessons into the early hours of the morning. UK statistics show that in just four years the number of female teachers leaving the profession in England had increased by more than a quarter (Tapper, 2018). The UKs education secretary Damian Hinds stated that his priorities were to, reduce teachers' workload and the fear caused by the 'spectre of our accountability system' (Tapper, 2018).

Marlow, et al (1996) conducted a study in the United States to examine teachers' reasons for considering leaving their profession. The researchers aimed to achieve a clearer understanding of the teachers working environment, and how it impacted on the teacher's decision to leave the profession. A random selection of 212 teachers from seven US states participated in the study. Findings showed the main reasons for teachers to leave or consider leaving their jobs were; student behaviour, emotional aspects; lack of respect; working conditions and salary. Low salaries were reported to be one of the most significant reasons. The dedication of teachers towards their work was evident from the findings, suggesting that 54% believed their teaching practice to be important, compared to 25% who remained in the profession to acquire some form of income. These findings concurred with conclusions from research conducted in eleven other states across the United States between 1991 – 1994 (Marlow, Bentancourt-Smith & Marlow). Additionally, McClay's (1995) study, reported teachers as caring more about the students whom they taught and not so much about extrinsic motivation and rewards (McClay, 1995).

The current study will explore staff shortages among the profession, while also investigating if teachers experience, thoughts of changing career, or if they would recommend teaching as a career choice. This will help establish if

teachers are satisfied with their career choice or if they have thoughts of leaving the profession. The different contract types held by the respondents will also be explored to investigate job security against the length of time the respondents have been working in the profession.

2.5.4: Contract Type and Extra-Curricular working hours

Respondents to the TUI (2018) survey were asked if they had received a contract of full hours in their first year of teaching, 78% replied no. When asked if they were involved in unpaid, extra-curricular activities – outside of timetabled hours, such as drama, sports, musicals, debating, 91.5% said yes; with 35% putting in an extra 2 hours a week, 39.5 up to four extra hours a week and 25.5% in excess of four extra hours a week. Respondents were also asked, if bureaucratic duties deflect them from their core role of teaching to which 84% agreed. Additionally, 93% of respondents agreed with the statement that, the morale of teachers had fallen in recent years (TUI, 2018). Atkins and Rodger (2016) recognised the importance of teacher self-care and building resilience, especially when educating newly qualified/student teachers regarding their own mental health, suggesting that: *'the expectations placed on beginning teachers are identical to those placed on very experienced teachers, a situation unheard of within other professions'* (Atkins and Rodger, 2016).

This theme was also evident in Rodger et al. (2014) study suggesting that, it is the responsibility of the teacher education programs to provide teachers in training with adequate knowledge, tools and the resources necessary for self-care to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing (Rodger et al., 2014). The current study will explore self-care among PPTs to establish if self-care is promoted and encouraged within their schools and staffrooms, and if adequate supports/interventions are available when necessary.

2.5.5: Governance.

The first European work-related stress survey conducted by the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE, 2011) identified five main stressors that directly affected teachers' daily work, and interestingly most of them related to school management and organisational factors. These five factors include;

work intensity/workload, increased class size, role overload, lack of support from school management and unacceptable student behaviour. The study concluded that school management should be involved in assessing risk factors regarding work related stress. The ETUCE emphasised the importance of involving all employers in tackling work related stress among teachers, stating that; they must accept their obligations to identify, prevent and reduce problems regarding the issue, not only because employers are legally required to do so, but because of the social and economic benefits of having a healthy and motivated workforce. The findings of the study demonstrated current and concrete statistics, and legal obligations of a risk assessment including measures to protect against work related stress. These factors are prerequisites for all teacher unions in addressing issues in their national dialogue. (ETUCE, 2011).

The OECD (2003) recommended that, to achieve heightened expectations of schools, consideration must be given to what actually counts for effective education, looking beyond academic achievement to include, student engagement, self-concept and participation, and community social capital (attention to areas that have greater validity for life experiences and successes) (OECD, 2003). This coincided with the International Labour Organisations policy (1975) – (a specialised agency of the UN promoting social and economic progress to improve labour conditions). Suggesting that work should not only respect workers' lives and health and leave them free time for rest and leisure, but also serve society and achieve self-fulfilment by developing their personal capabilities. It is the responsibility of organisations and management to identify hazards and gaps within the education system and implement positive supports to address issues of concern (International Labour Organisations policy, 1975).

Internationally, there is an obligation on employers to risk assess all known hazards including psychosocial hazards, which may lead to workplace stress. However, one in 10 teachers in England stated that they had been prescribed anti-depressant medication to cope with the pressure of their job according to a teachers' union survey (NASUWT, 2016). The survey of 5,000 teachers found that 22% had increased their alcohol intake and 21% consumed caffeine in response to stress. The survey found that 5% of participants increase their use

of tobacco. 14% had attended counselling while 5% had been admitted to hospital due to work related stress issues. 79% reported experiencing work-related anxiousness while 86% suffered sleeplessness. Additionally, 2% of teachers reported that they had self-harmed due to work-related pressures. The union debated a motion in Birmingham calling on its members to condemn the government and employers *'for their inaction on tackling excessive workloads, which is reported as the major cause of stress'* (NASUWT, 2016).

Fig 2.4: Organisational Predictors of OS & Organisational Resources
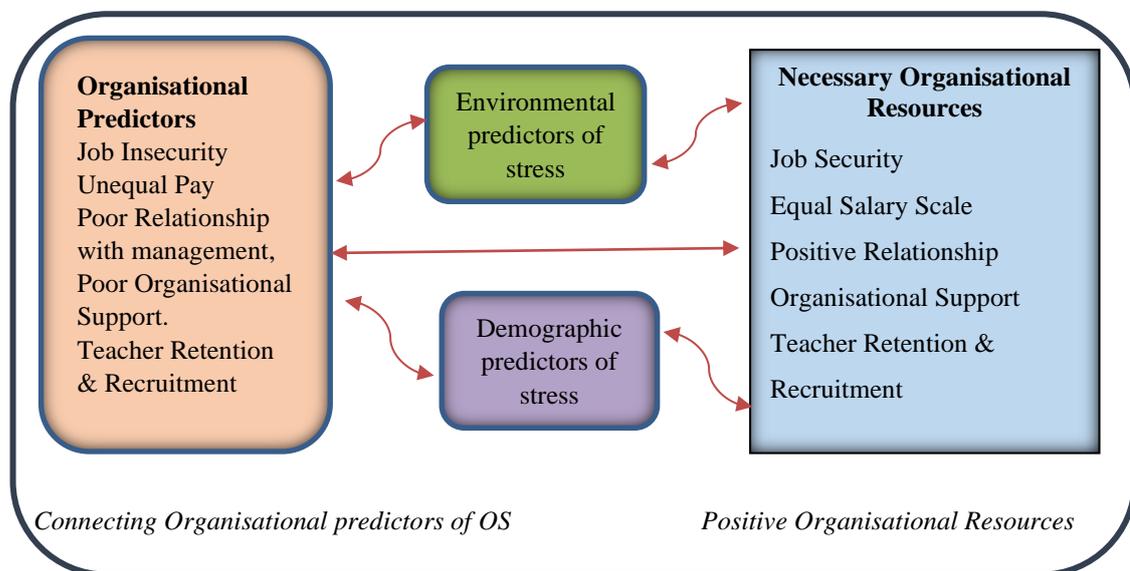
(Ennis, 2019)

2.6: Coping Strategies & Supportive Interventions

'.... the extent and strength of an individual's coping resources can mitigate the strain produced by occupational stress'

(Pithers, 1995, p 390)

Coping relates to the way individuals through behaviour and cognition manage environmental demands in their lives (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Chan (1998) examined coping strategies used to alleviate stress among teachers in Hong Kong and found that the types of coping techniques used, mediated the effects of OS on their emotional wellbeing. Adding that, teachers who avoided issues and problems they encountered at work exacerbated the prevalence of distress (Chan, 1998).

Thirteen of the fifteen participants from Kerr et al. (2011) study stated that their teaching colleagues were their main means of support and turned to them for support with stressful issues. While it was clear that most teachers looked to other teachers when feeling stressed, twelve of the fifteen participants spoke of their general respect for their principals. However, none felt comfortable admitting to the principal that they had difficulties with stressful situations. Five of the participating teachers listed friends, family and outside school activities as helpful in supporting stressful occurrences (Kerr et al., 2011). However, a limitation of Kerr et al. (2011) study is that, the sample group consisted of only fifteen participants, nine of whom had less than twelve years teaching experience, this limited generalisability of the findings to the sample population.

However, it did emerge from the findings of Kerr et al. (2011) study, that the participants sought solutions and support from their colleagues, regardless of gender, age, size of school, designation, socio-economic or subject taught. Two participants from the same school perceived personality as a major factor in the differences of support received from colleagues. The participating teachers alleged that student issues were a major concern for teachers, who feel untrained and uncomfortable when confronted with sensitive matters such as relationships, family issues or mental health. Adding that, the only support

intervention for the teacher or the student was, a legal warning about not being alone with a pupil. This too caused difficulties for some teachers when trying to deal with student issues/problems. Nine of the fifteen participating teachers had less than twelve years' experience, and all spoke of the shock they experienced when they realised how much, planning, discipline and stress was involved in teaching. One teacher stated: *'You have to hit the ground running. You really don't have time to think in the classroom. It can be exhausting.'* Another participant describing the term 'teaching' as: *'being on a roller coaster, with the end of the ride being your next holiday, your next escape.'* Many of the fifteen participants had expected the teacher training course to prepare them for the real situations involved in teaching, but this was not the case (Kerr et al, 2011). The current national study will explore existing support structures to establish if they are, used by the profession, fit for purpose and compliant with both national and international law including, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 (Section 1.10, p.11).

2.7: Chapter Summary.

Workplace stress can be defined as the harmful emotional and physical responses that occurs when the demands of a job do not match their resources, capabilities or needs (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Edworthy, 2000). The literature review has identified teaching as one of the most stressful careers, and findings show that teachers find their occupation 'very or extremely stressful' (ASTI, 2018; Clipa, 2016; Hadi et al, 2008; Seibt et al 2013; TUI, 2017).

However, as discussed in the literature review, limitations of studies conducted by Bolton (2015), Hanif et al. (2011), Kerr et al. (2011) & Reilly et al. (2013) included the restraint on the generalisability of findings due to the ratio between their sample groups and their sample population size. To overcome this limitation the present study will conduct a national study inviting all PPTs in Ireland to participant in an online survey. Additionally, the cross-tabulation of different data sets will produce triangulation of cluster groups, (school types, geographical location, years of experience, gender, age workload etc) to strengthen findings and help justify recommendations. A further limitation of Hanif et al. (2011) study was, the evaluation of teachers' job performance,

which was rated by the students of the participating schools. Although this controlled self-reporting measurement bias from the teachers, the students themselves may have been bias in their reporting of certain teachers. The present study will invite PPTs to self-report on their experiences of OS, and preferred coping strategies used to alleviate the problem. Although this can present self-reporting measurement bias (Section 3.4.4, p.55) from the teachers, the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity to protect the identity of all respondents, may encourage the participants to be open and candid with their responses, thus overcoming this limitation.

Additionally, it was apparent from existing literature that PPTs experience significant levels of work intensity which contribute to occupational stress among the profession (ASTI, 2018; Bianchi et al., 2013; Desouky & Allam, 2017; Dollard & Bakker, 2010; González-Morales et al., 2010; Reilly et al., 2013 & TUI, 2017). The current study will also attempt to identify dominant work intensity factors that impact on PPTs in Ireland. Findings uncovered will be equated to the coping strategies and supports available and used by PPTs. The accessibility and significance of these supports will be investigated to establish if they are fit for purpose and in line with national and international legislation regarding, the health, wellbeing and safety at work for teachers (Safety, Health and Wellbeing at Work Act, 2005).

Literature also showed that individual experiences of work-related stress can alter the way teachers think, feel and behave, producing changes in their physiological, psychological and behavioural functions. Many of these manifestations can simply represent, a modest dysfunction and some associated discomfort. However, when stress reaches the optimum level, an individual's performance will subside or 'fall off' (Ivanchevich & Matterson, 1980), or decrease with increasing levels of stress (Jamal, 1984; Motowidlo et al., 1986). Therefore, low performance can be anticipated where high stress levels are experienced. The current study will cross-tabulate various data sets that may expose where stress levels are greatest and impact on a teacher's professional performance. Findings from the current study may assist in the development of

positive support interventions or change in organisational procedures if deemed necessary.

From reviewing and identifying gaps in existing literature, a list of questions evolved. These questions were formatted and categorised to produce a survey that would help answer the research question and objectives of the current study (Appendix 3.2).

The following chapter presents the research question and the objectives of the research inquiry. The research process that developed the structure and formed the research design of the study are discussed in detail and clarified. The chapter also defines the overarching worldview of the researcher, and how conflicting paradigms were combined to enhance the research process.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODLOOGY

Introduction

Research Question

Philosophical Elements: Ontology, Epistemology & Paradigms

Praxis: Theories, Methods, Design & Methodology

Research Sample

Triangulation

Analysis of Findings

Ethics

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the research question and the objectives of the research inquiry. The philosophical elements of the research process that developed the structure and formed the research design of the study are discussed in detail and clarified. The chapter also defines the overarching worldview of the researcher, and how conflicting paradigms were combined to enhance the research process.

Identifying paradigms, making connections and discovering the relationship between the research methods and epistemological foundations at the start of this study was crucial. The procedure determined the methods employed for the research process and identified the relationships between the components making the research truly meaningful (Darlaston-Jones, 2007, p.19). Consequently, the epistemological theoretical perspectives (Table 1.1, p.9) and methodologies that influenced the choice of methods employed for the research process are discussed in detail. This involved combining different elements of epistemology in order to investigate the various objectives (Section 3.3.5, p.51) of the study (Leavy, 2017, p.263).

Section 3.8 (p.63-65) explains the ethical considerations that contain elements of philosophy. However, it also clarifies and defines, ethics, reflexivity and values; as potential impacts, risk or harm to participants and/or the wider community had to be taken into account. Hence, the ethical procedures and guidelines were central to all aspects the research study.

3.2:   Research Question

What is the prevalence of Occupational Stress among Post-Primary Teachers
in Ireland?
Are supports in place to safeguard their mental health and wellbeing?

*An exploration of demographic, environmental & organisational predictors of
stress in teaching.*

The research question aimed to explore the prevalence and frequency of
occupational stress (OS) among post-primary teachers (PPTs) in Ireland.
Although there is vast international research in the area, (Ajaganandam & Rajan,
2013; Clipa, 2017; Corina, & Valerica, 2012; Seibt et al., 2013 Caringi et al.,
2015; Guglielmi et al., 2012; Marlow et al., 2015; Quinlan, 2015; Seibt et al.,
2013; Wang, et al., 2017) no substantial research has been conducted in Ireland,
other than that of agencies affiliated with the Department of Education and
Skills (DES) or the teachers' unions in Ireland (ASTI, 2018; TUI, 2016).
Therefore, the purpose of this research is to add to the existing body of Irish
literature regarding the prevalence of OS among teachers from the perspective
of an 'outside investigation'. This study aims to be free from bias and, has no
direct connection or association with the DES, governing bodies/agencies or the
post-primary teaching profession.

3.2.1: Research Objectives

1).   To assess the prevalence of occupational stress among Post-Primary
       Teachers in Ireland?

2).   To explore the main predictors that impact on the prevalence/frequency
       of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland? (Demographic, Environmental &
       Organisational predictors)

3).   To evaluate the predominant manifestations of OS among PPTs in
       Ireland?

4).   To assess existing support systems are available/used by Irish PPTs to
       alleviate OS?

3.3: Philosophical Elements: Ontology, Epistemology & Paradigms

There are many views that helped guide and direct this research;

➢ What is known/real about social life and the prevalence of OS among PPTs.

➢ What is believed about the construct of the social world (demographic, environmental, & organisational) that impacts on the prevalence of OS among the profession.

➢ How the research should proceed (*research design*).

➢ What knowledge is valued for the study (existing research/literature and the perceptions of PPTs regarding the phenomenon).

➢ How to access and gather this knowledge.

Combined, these elements formed the philosophical substructure of the research - ontology, epistemology and paradigms. These philosophical elements informed decision making, from the topic and objectives chosen, to the final analysis, recommendations and conclusion of the research findings.

Table 3.1:

ONTOLOGY **+** EPISTEMOLOGY **=** PARADIGMS

(Leavy, 2017)

3.3.1: Ontology: How it relates to the Research

Ontology relates to the philosophical belief system regarding the nature of the social world, for example; whether the social world is predictable and patterned, or continually re-created by humans. Social scientists believe that reality can be *observed* by researchers, as reality is there to be observed, explained and identified, social scientists adopt this as a *realist (objective) ontology* (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2015, p45). B.F Skinner (1989) believed that, in psychology a researcher only needed to concentrate on positive and negative reinforcers of

behaviour to predict how people would behave, as everything in between - *what the person was thinking* (subjective) was extraneous. According to Skinner, if a phenomenon could not be measured it was irrelevant (Skinner, 1989). Hence, some theorists alleged that it was only possible to study what could be measured and observed – realist ontology, suggesting that thoughts and emotions were not legitimate variables for scientific study as they could not be measured. However, the main consensus now is that all methodological and conceptual issues can be investigated through research (Hetherington, 2000, Kumar, 2015).

3.3.2: The Researcher's Ontological View

The researcher's ontological belief system is that, *the social world is continually re-created by humans* and assumes that, occupational stress is a phenomenon that exists and is experienced by humans. However, humans can be conditioned to ease the problem or intensify/re-create it. Therefore, a sense of the social world relatable to the research topic had to be identified - to explore what could be learned about it, and how this learning could be achieved (Leavy, 2017). For example, when one variable - *work overload,* relates to other variables - *occupational stress* it is possible through research to explain why (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2015, p45).

The researcher had some knowledge of the social entities related to the topic, however applying a philosophical perspective gave insights on how the research inquiry should be conducted and what it should entail (Leavy, 2017). The research design characterised the epistemological aspect of the study, representing the philosophical belief system of how the research should proceed and what counts as relevant knowledge regarding the objectives of the study (section 3.2.1, p.47). Therefore, to develop a research design it had to established if the social entities involved (prevalence/frequency of occupational stress) should be perceived as *subjective* or *objective* phenomenon.

3.3.3: Epistemology – Subjective Perspective

Subjectivism implies that, reality is socially constructed between a social entity/OS and the persons who actually experience it (Gergen, 1994). The researcher believes that social actors/teachers are responsible for knowledge

development regarding OS, and to understand it involves interpretive construction on the part of the individual from their lived experiences. This perspective coincides with Guba and Lincoln (1989) who suggested; the subjective paradigm assumes that realities are not 'out there' objectively, but are entities constructed by people who are often affected by cultural and social factors, that lead to a shared construction. Hence, socially constructed realities are not separate to the 'observer' but totally depend on her/him for whatever existence they may have (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p 12). This may apply to the prevalence and frequency of OS experienced by PPTs; the constructionist states - depending on the context in which actions occur, are shaped by social norms, cultural, historical and political aspects (demographic, environmental & organisational) that operate within a certain time and context (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). Thus, suggesting that, reality is different for each person (PPT) based on their personal experiences and understanding of their social world.

Therefore, subjectivism perceives that social entities are created from the perceptions and actions of social actors that are concerned/interact with their existence (Howell, 2013). This subjective (constructionist) approach was identified as the researcher's own worldview however; social entities such as OS exist external to social actors (teachers) that may be concerned with its existence and therefore, a realist approach (objectivist) had to be explored as a comparative approach to limit bias and justify findings of the research inquiry.

3.3.4: Epistemology – Objective Perspective

The objectivist approach (positivist/realist paradigm), suggests that social entities (OS) exist external to social actors (PPTs) that may be concerned with their existence.

Empiricism is the theoretical school of thought connected with the objectivist/ post-positivist paradigm, which states that it is only possible to research what can be observed as something that is not observable is outside the realm of science (Croucher, Cronn-Mills, 2015, p.42; Skinner, 1989). This process uncovers the facts of the phenomenon under investigation; however, this can only be achieved when research is pursued *free of any values*. Meaning that,

objective inquiry must ensure *control* by the researcher, to prevent influencing variables and personal biases from interfering with the research study. This process allows for claims to be made objectively as they are 'value free' (Gilbert, Stoneman, 2016, p83). Additionally, the personal feeling and emotions of the researcher, must not interfere with the findings or predictions of the study.

However, it could be argued that a researcher's pre-determined preference, to some extent will influence research methods and findings (Croucher, Cronn-Mills, 2015, p.43). For example; the sample group (section 3.5, p.55) of this study participated in the research by means of an online survey (Appendix 3.2) usually a quantitative study that produces statistics - this is classified as an objective (positivist) scientific approach. Although recognised as a 'value free' procedure (Kumar, 2015), the questions for this study were constructed and geared them towards the objectives of the study. Therefore, to some extent although classed as a positivist approach, realistically the process is not completely 'value-free', and therefore may affect the objectivity of the claims exposed. However, by omitting bias, personal emotions and preferences as much as possible; combining the different paradigms, theoretical approaches and methodologies; the objective analysis of quantitative findings will be strengthened, yet not completely 'value free'.

Since the 1960s a consensus developed among scholars and academics that, both approaches (objective & subjective) may have their place in a single research study. Bryman (2008) suggested that objective and subjective approaches may be defined as two important concepts of ontology to employ for the purpose of social research (Bryman, 2008). Arguing that, to apply one approach to all the research objectives may indiscriminately be inappropriate and misleading (Bryman, 2008; Kumar, 2011, p.33).

3.3.5: Combining Objective and Subjective Approaches

Consequently, the process employed for data collection was a mixed method approach (pragmatic) incorporating both quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) research strategies (Sections 3.4.2. & 3.4.3, p.53,54). This approach

coincides with Bryman's (2008) opinion of, utilising both objective and subjective perspectives for the purpose of social research (Bryman, 2008). OS is an entity that can exist external to social actors/teachers, yet the prevalence of OS is created from the perceptions of teachers regarding their experiences of OS. Hence, the application of both objective and subjective approaches would help explore internal and external interpretations of the social world - *what is real*, and what is being experienced, *the self*.

The paradigm employed (pragmatic) became the window through which the research was conceived and accomplished and are therefore important to define and acknowledge. Hence, this research is situated within the pragmatic paradigm and although objective and subjective paradigms represent different approaches to social research, it would be counterproductive for the researcher to choose one approach over the other for the purpose of the current study. Together they may add fluidity to the analysis of findings and a more in-depth approach to triangulation, generalisability and the justification of findings and recommendations. Table 3.2 below displays the ontological approach to the research inquiry.

Table 3.2:   Ontology of the Research Philosophies Employed

Research Philosophy	Ontology: The researcher's approach to the nature of reality regarding the research topic.
Pragmatic Approach: Mixed method: On-line survey incorporating both quantitative & qualitative data collection	An external paradigm that accommodates multiple concepts enabling various objectives of the research question to be analysed. The combined concepts addressed aspects of the social world external to social actors and also variables that PPTs are in the process of experiencing and fashioning as aspects of their social world.
Subjective: Interpretivist/ Constructivist	The interpretivist approach is socially constructed; subjective - may change. Suggesting that social entities are created from the perceptions and actions of social actors (PPTs) that are concerned with their existence.
Objective/ positivism: Realism	Realism is objective and exists independently of human thoughts, beliefs or knowledge of their existence (realist), but is interpreted through social conditioning (critical realist).

3.4: Praxis: Research Design, Theories, Methods & Methodology

3.4.1: Convergent Parallel Mixed Method Approach

This study employs a 'convergent parallel mixed method approach' that simultaneously collects both qualitative and quantitative data from a semi-structured online survey (encompassing both closed and open-ended questions). The rational for utilising this approach is that one data set supplies strengths that offset the weaknesses of the other data set, exposing a more complete understanding of the findings (Kumar, 2015). Hence, such comparisons during analysis of the two datasets will produce a convergence of data sources (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). This will strengthen and expand the study's findings/conclusions and therefore, heighten knowledge and validity of the research inquiry.

3.4.2: Quantitative Research

The quantitative research approach evaluated the research objectives through empirical assessments that employed numerical measurement and analysis (Zikmund, 2010). Acquiring data from the quantitative aspect of the research involved conducting a linear method of data collection, aimed at proving, disproving or adding credence to existing theories (Leavy, 2017) regarding the prevalence and frequency of OS. This method involved measuring variables and comparing relationships between variables to reveal causal relationships, patterns and/or correlations.

This process resulted in the presentation of statistical data in graph/table form for visual enhancement (Chapter 4 – findings & analysis p.67-178). The values that underlined the quantitative research included the acquisition of objectivity, neutrality and a substantial scope of knowledge/data collected from the sample group (PPTs). Additionally, applying this quantitative/objective approach proved appropriate as the primary purpose of the sample selection was to explore and interpret the prevalence and frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

Although, the overall experience of stress for teachers may have become second nature, once such experience are investigated (answering questions from the online survey) – the respondents may *transcend* the taken for granted components of their experiences, and hidden stressors/predictors of OS among the profession may be exposed. Husserl referred to this process of transcending as *epoché* - gaining a deeper understanding of the taken for granted aspects of an experience (Croucher, Cronn-Mills, 2015, p.53). This process may help generate knowledge to answer the objectives under investigation from qualitative and quantitative data collected.

3.4.3: Qualitative Research

Conducting qualitative research helped address the objectives of the research through techniques that allowed the researcher to provide interpretations of the phenomenon without depending on statistical/quantitative measurement (Zikmund, 2010). Hence, qualitative data findings exposed the meanings/opinions and experiences of PPTs regarding OS, while developing a view of their understanding regarding the effects OS has on the profession. Existing supports and their effectiveness to alleviate the problem were also explored and evaluated through both quantitative and qualitative data collection. This process focused on discovering new insights and true inner meanings from the professionals themselves (Zikmund, 2010).

The values that underlined the qualitative research included the importance of the individual's subjective meaning-making processes. This encompassed their experiences and acquisitions of knowledge and understanding of OS, and how it affects them, both personally and professionally. The approach proved appropriate as the primary purpose of the research inquiry was to describe, explore and infer PPTs understanding of their experiences of OS. However, using a qualitative method as a stand-alone design would not establish causal explanations between different variables, as this is classed as 'self-reporting data' (Croucher et al., 2013).

3.4.4: Self-Reporting Data

The online survey required the respondents to report on their own experiences of OS – self-reporting data. However, self-reported data is often critiqued as having statistical problems, for example; some scholars argue that when individuals' take surveys they often over or underestimate their behaviours/experiences and themselves (Kumar, 2015). Croucher et al, (2013) found a minor statistical variance between how *others* report on an individual's level of difference within an organisation, compared to the individual self-reporting. Yet self-reporting is classed as a valid and reliable form of measurement, despite the limited amount of studies suggesting the over and under estimation of the self when completing such surveys (Croucher et al, 2013).

To help overcome such statistical issues, the current study will collect and analyse data in a systematic manner consisting of numeric (quantitative) and non-numeric (qualitative) data. Additionally, unobtrusive research of existing literature (Chapter 2: literature review) will be applied to findings of the current study for comparative assessment, this may justify or challenge new findings. Using unobtrusive methods as a comparative tool will offer a critical approach to the research (Lee, 2000) that may expose new interpretations relating to the objectives of the study (Section 3.2.1, p.47).

3.5: Research Sample Group

The process used to investigate the objectives of the study involved selecting a sample group, and the number of responses needed to make the study credible. Post-primary teachers (PPTs) from Ireland were selected as the preferred sample group to explore the objectives of the study on a national scale. A *random sampling procedure* was employed inviting all post-primary schools in Ireland to participant in the study. Random sampling ensured that all PPTs nationally had an equal opportunity to participate in the study.

3.5.1: Random Sampling

Principals of all post-primary schools in the Republic of Ireland (713 schools) were emailed, seeking their permission and assistance to conduct the research

among their teaching staff. It was important to get the school Principal's on board, as they had access to the work emails of their teaching staff. This enabled Principal's to disseminate the email with attachments, inviting each teacher to participate in the study. This type of random sampling, known specifically as '*simple random sampling*' is usually impossible in most cases, as it is difficult to access contact details of preferred participants; especially with a large population size. However, in this instance it proved practical and theoretically possible (Kumar, 2015). An information sheet explaining the research inquiry and a consent form was attached (Appendix 3.1) along with a link to the on-line survey consisting of 26 questions (Appendix 3.2).

The geographical location encompassed all urban and rural schools and all five different school types (Table 4.10 & 4.11, p.83-85). Six hundred and fifty respondents completed the survey from the original 713 emails that were distributed to each school Principal. This demonstrated a response rate of 91%. However, it is not known how many school Principals distributed the survey among their teaching staff and therefore, an overall calculation of disseminated surveys via school Principals is not possible.

3.5.2: Research Sample

All respondents completed an on-line survey via Qualtrics (a web-based survey tool). The email included an information sheet, a consent form and, anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed to all respondents (Appendix 3.1 & 3.2). A pilot study was conducted among 12 members of the population group, to ensure the questions were clear and understandable, all feedback/recommendations were applied where necessary to improve the survey before final distribution.

The number of complete responses to the online survey totalled 650. The number of female respondents totalled 472 and, the number of male respondents totalled 175; additionally, 3 of the 650 respondents chose not to elect a gender type. These 3 represent 0.46% of the respondents and may be classed as 'outliers' during analysis/cross-tabulations of data. Meaning, the input of data from these 3 respondents will not alter the findings, as the 3 respondents

represent 0.46% of the total sample size. However, when analysing demographic characteristics all 650 respondents will be considered to achieve a true reading of gender type, age difference and amount of years teaching experience gained.   The demographic characteristics of the respondents regarding the current study are presented below.

Table 3.3: Demographic Characteristics of the Current Study

Sample Group Irish Post-Primary Teachers	650 Consenting Respondents
Gender Type	
Female	n=472 (27%)
Male	n=175 (73%)
Prefer not to say	n= 3 (0.46%)
Age Groups	
Under 25	n= 27 (4%)
25 to 34	n=173 (26.6%)
35 to 44	n=222 (34%)
45 to 54	n=163 (25%)
55 and over	n=65 (10%)
Years of Teaching Experience	
Less than 2 years	n=30 (4.6%)
2 to 5 years	n=77 (11.8%)
5 to 10 years	n=122 (18.7%)
10 to 15 years	n=95 (14.6%)
15 to 20 years	n=81 (12.4%)
25 years or more	n=123 (18.9%)

3.5.3: Calculating Sample Size

In order to make the study generalisable the sample size and population had to be calculated to give it context and reflect how the overall survey results reflect the views of the overall population.

The population size - relates to the total number of people in the group of study, this encompassed all employed PPTs in Ireland, totalling approximately 20,540 PPTs (DES, 2018). The current study used random sampling; this procedure ensured all PPTs in Ireland had an equal opportunity to participate in the online survey.

The Sample size – relates to the number of completed responses collected from the on-line survey. It is referred to as the sample size as it represents part of the population group (target population) whose behaviour and opinions are relevant to the study. The total response rate to the on-line survey was 653 responses with 650 consenting to participate in the research inquiry (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Consent from Respondents

(Qualtrics, 2019)

The *Margin of error* – represents the percentage rate that reflects, how much the survey results reflect the views of the overall population (Irish PPTs). Hence, the smaller the margin of error, the closer findings are to having the correct/exact answer at a given confidence level.

Table 3.5 & 3.6 below, displays a population size of the sample group - 23,000 PPTs, with a confidence level of 95% and a 5% margin of error. Both on-line sample size calculators (Qualtrics & SurveyMonkey) recommend a 378-response rate from the overall population size, to ensure credibility. The total response rate to the on-line survey was 650 completed responses. This ensured a 95% confidence level in findings regarding sample representation. However, as discussed, this encompasses the surveys sent to the school Principals only, and not the survey disseminated by the school Principals to their teaching staff.

Table 3.5: Sample Size Calculation 1

(SurveyMonkey, 2019)

Table 3.6: Sample Size Calculation 2

(Qualtrics, 2019)

3.6: Triangulation

Triangulating data will help strengthen and justify the research findings and recommendations. Hence, many academics are interested in implementing triangulation into their research (Campbell & Fiske, 1956; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Fielding & Fielding, 1986; Gilbert & Stoneman, 2016; Greene et al., 2001; Kelle, 2001; and Webb et al., 1966). The concept involves measuring phenomenon in two or more ways to generate a more accurate measurement of it (Gilbert & Stoneman, 2016, p.121). The process demonstrates credibility by using various data sets, multiple methods and several theories to explore the phenomenon (Croucher & Cronn-Mills, 2015, p. 111). Analysing data from multiple sources (age, gender, years teaching experience, school type, county of employment and both qualitative and quantitative data sets) will help explore the objectives of the research in-depth, providing a better understanding of the phenomenon, and more accurate analysis of finding (Kumar, 2014, p. 386). Additionally, cross-tabulations will also help triangulate findings and determine correlations or causation among different data sets regarding the prevalence/frequency of OS, the main predictors of OS and the manifestations of such among PPTs.

Executing triangulation during data analysis will involve utilising three main components as a means of achieving validity including; *time, space* and *person;* meaning that the data should be collected at various times, from different locations and from a variety of persons. This was achieved for the current study by distributing surveys to all post-primary schools in the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland, encompassing all five different post-primary school types - *space*. Data collection was conducted over a four-week period, from November 20th, 2018 to December 18th 2018, and the respondent could complete the survey at any time from a computer or mobile phone in one sitting or several - *time*. Finally, gender type and various age groups, from those in their early 20's up to and including retirement age, all were invited to participate in the research inquiry - *persons*. Additionally, the mixed method approach (pragmatic) employed for the current study, will allow for data to be cross-checked during the triangulation of findings (Bryman, 2008, p.700).

3.7: Analysis of Findings

An on-line survey was employed to gather both qualitative and quantitative research data. This allowed for data to be collected from a larger sample group and a wider demographic, insuring the generalisability of findings. Although surveys are quantitative in nature, text boxes gave the respondents the option to voice their opinions, concerns and/or recommendations throughout the survey. Hence, additional insights may be exposed regarding problems/concerns the respondents experience regarding OS within the schools.

The Qualtrics software system employed to distribute the research surveys involved each participant responding to the same set of questions written in the same order. The completed surveys will be returned to the researcher on-line via the Qualtrics survey link (Appendix 3.2). All quantitative data collected will be analysed via numerical data analysis, a mathematical based method. The data will be formatted and coded on the Qualtrics data and analysis package and visuals will illustrate results via tables and graphs throughout the findings where necessary. Findings from qualitative data will be organised into themes using the Qualtrics software. The data and analysis tab on Qualtrics will allow data to be filtered, classified, merged, cleaned and statistically analyse the narrative data responses.

A qualitative content analysis will be employed to analyse and interpret the qualitative narrative data of the current study. This form of analysis is considered a research method of analysing descriptive/textual data (Patton, 2002) to classify oral or written data into categories of similar meaning (Moretti et al., 2011). Hence, content analysis may be used to examine different communication materials including, open-ended survey questions, narrative responses, focus groups, interviews, books, articles, manuals or observations (Abrahamson, 1993 cited in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278). One of the characteristics of qualitative content analysis will allow for the flexibility of using either one or both inductive and/or deductive approaches in the data analysis (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). However, for the purpose of the current study an inductive approach will be employed, whereby themes, codes and categories will be directly drawn from the data. This process will focus on selected aspects

of data and reduce the volume of data by limiting the analysis to specific themes/categories relevant to the research question and objective under investigation (Schreier, 2012).

The process of qualitative content data analysis will involve:

1) Selecting the unit of analysis (a means to reduction) - The researcher will decide which data will be analysed by focusing on a particular aspect, this will depend on the question under investigation.

2) Create categories – a category refers to, 'with similar meaning and connotations' (Weber, 1990, p.37). This process allows for large volumes of text to be compressed into fewer content related categories.

3) Establish the main themes – When cutting across different categories a recurring regularity is identified to form the main themes (Polit & Hungleer, 1999). The outcome of employing qualitative content analysis will format information into themes that answer the research question and objectives. Once this initial coding is complete, themes may be combined or renamed to produce a manageable number of themes to interpret (Sauro, 2017). The comments within each theme will then be counted, calculated into percentage rates and displayed in thematic tables in the findings chapter (E.g. Table 4.59, p.177).

In order to increase the credibility of findings from qualitative content analysis, triangulation will be applied (section 3.6, p.60) across findings from quantitative data analysis and existing research. This will help gain a more in-depth understanding of the research objectives (Creswell, 2013) and also help diminish researcher bias and the likelihood of any misinterpretation when cross checking findings against various perspectives and data sources (Young Cho & Hee Lee, 2014).

To communicate findings, tables and cross-tabulations will be illustrated, displaying the figures and percentage rates of responses. This will demonstrate differences or associations among demographic, environmental and

organisational variables related to the field of study. The use of tables and graphs will visually enhance the clarity of the findings. Existing support structures will also be explored, and cross checked to establish if they are utilised by PPTs, fit for purpose and compliant with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

3.8: Ethics

Kumar (2015) suggested that regardless what paradigm the researcher chooses, certain ethical values must be adhered to regarding; maintaining objectivity and controlling bias in terms of the research procedure and the conclusions formulated (Kumar, 2015). The paradigms chosen worked as a framework, or worldview through which information and knowledge was filtered (Kuhn, 1962, Lincoln et al., 2011), and the application of ethical values ensured objectivity and the control of bias during the research process.

3.8.1: Research ethical procedures

The application of ethical principles set out in IT Carlow's Strategic Plan 2014-2018 (IT Carlow, 2018) was applied to all aspects/stages of the research process. This included being accountable while upholding strong governance and maintaining high values of integrity throughout all aspects of the research process. The main considerations for the research procedures and the possible effects on research participants and any other parties involved, was to establish a good relationship where there is trust, ethical equality and mutual responsibility. Ethical approval for the current study was approved and received on 12th February 2018 from the, Institute of Technology Carlow Ethics Committee (Appendix 3.3).

3.8.2: Ethical considerations of this research inquiry

While conducting the research, positive practice in ethics was adhered to at all times in order to protect the welfare and rights of the respondents. Adhering to ethics also protected the community and wider society where the research was conducted. All research methods employed, are fit for purpose, findings reliable, generalisable and valid. The composition of the sample group will be selected regardless of gender, age, race, class, sexuality, culture, nationality,

faith, partnership status, political beliefs, disability or any significant difference. Designations that gave rise to generalisation that may have resulted in stigmatisation were avoided.

Research participants received an information sheet regarding the study, a consent form and assurance that participation was on a voluntary basis. Furthermore, those who responded, had the option to withdraw from the study at any time before the 'submit' button was activated on the online survey. All information gathered will be confidential and it will not possible in any way to identify the respondents from the completed surveys, assuring anonymity protection. All data will be securely stored for the duration of three years in accordance with the requirements of IT Carlow Ethics Committee and thereafter, all data collected in relation to the proposed research study will be destroyed. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants will remain safeguarded in the occurrence of any 'third party' (organisation/agency or government body) interested in reviewing the research findings. An ethic of respect will be upheld for the person, democratic values, knowledge, academic freedom and the quality of educational research.

3.8.3: Additional Procedures Incorporated

The following procedures were incorporated into all aspects of the research inquiry, particularly when engaging with participants.

- Committed to the well-being, protection and safety of all participants
- A duty to respect the rights and wishes of those involved
- Obligated to address the issues of who ought to receive the benefits of research and bear its burdens.
- Committed to conducting high-quality research.
- Will communicate the results of research to relevant stakeholders and policymakers.
- The Four pillars of ethical research were also used as guidelines to ensure:

1. Respect for human dignity
2. Voluntary informed consent
3. Protect privacy and confidentiality
4. Minimal risk of harm

3.8.4: Access the results

A thank you email will be sent to all post-primary school Principals for disseminating the survey among their teaching staff. The email will include 'research summary document'. This will be concise and clearly summarised showing the key findings and recommendations from the research study. The document will be organised by topic area and consist of the following components. Key findings will be articulated using bullet points that will guide the reader to an in-depth explanation or fact sheet. Each fact sheet will be no longer than one page and where applicable, graphical images will be inserted to illustrate particular points.

3.9: Summary

Identifying paradigms and discovering the relationship between the research methods and epistemological foundations was crucial in developing the appropriate methods for research advancement. This chapter presented the research question, and objectives of the research inquiry. The overarching worldview of the researcher was discussed along with the chosen paradigms that were combined to enhance the research process and help produce significant findings. The mixed method (pragmatic) approach employed incorporating both quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) research strategies were presented and justification as to why, both an objective and subjective approach was employed is discussed in detail. The purpose of this research is to add to the body of Irish literature from the perspective of an 'outside investigation', free of bias or personal connection with the DES or the post-primary teaching profession in Ireland.

In chapter four analysis and findings of data will be discussed and illustrated. This will reveal statistics on the prevalence/frequency and main predictors of OS, while exposing the manifestation of such and the supports available and utilised by PPTs in Ireland. A discussion will follow relating to the four objectives of the study and any additional findings that may evolve from data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE 1:

How prevalent is occupational stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland?

OBJECTIVE 2:

What are the main predictors that impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland? (Demographic, Environmental & Organisational predictors)

OBJECTIVE 3:

What are the predominant manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland?

OBJECTIVE 4:

What support systems are available/used by PPTs to alleviate OS?

Chapter 4: Findings & Data Analysis

4.1: Introduction

This chapter presents the prominent findings from data collection to help answer the research question, while giving an in-depth analysis addressing the objectives of the study.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of the Current Study

Sample Group Irish Post-Primary Teachers	650 Consenting Respondents	
Gender Type		
Female	n=472	(27%)
Male	n=175	(73%)
Prefer not to say	n= 3	(0.46%)
Age Groups		
Under 25	n= 27	(4%)
25 to 34	n=173	(26.6%)
35 to 44	n=222	(34%)
45 to 54	n=163	(25%)
55 and over	n=65	(10%)
Years of Teaching Experience		
Less than 2 years	n=30	(4.6%)
2 to 5 years	n=77	(11.8%)
5 to 10 years	n=122	(18.7%)
10 to 15 years	n=95	(14.6%)
15 to 20 years	n=81	(12.4%)
25 years or more	n=123	(18.9%)

4.2: Objective 1:

How prevalent is occupational stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland?

To investigate objective 1, respondents were asked - Q14: *How often if ever, do you experience occupational stress?* This was a multiple-choice question consisting of six answer choices ranging from 'Daily' to 'Never' (Table 4.2 below).

Table 4.2: Findings Relating to Objective 1

Q14. How often, if ever do you experience occupational stress?			
Answer	%	Count	
Daily	39.08%	254	**71%**
2-3 times a week	32.31%	210	**464**
Once a week	14.15%	92	
Once a fortnight	5.08%	33	
Once a month	7.08%	46	
Never	2.31%	15	
Total	**100%**	**650**	

Table 4.3: Statistics Relating to Results of Objective 1

Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	125.00	131.00	127.16	1.31	1.72	650

Findings from the 650 *consenting respondents* (Appendix 4.2) revealed, 98% (635 of 650) of PPTs experience OS at some level, with 71% (464 of 650) experiencing OS up to 3 times per week and 39% (254 of 650) of those experiencing OS on a daily basis (Table 4.2).

4.2.1: Discussion on finding of objective 1.

These figures coincided with existing studies both nationally and internationally (ASTI, 2017; Bolton, 2015; Borg, 1990; Caringi et al., 2015; Darmody & Smith, 2011; Guglielmi et al., 2012; Greenglass et al., 2007; Jing, 2008; Schultz and Schultz, 2010; TUI, 2018; Wang, et al., 2017) identifying teaching as a very stressful career. The current findings also concurred with Bolton (2015) study suggesting that teachers experience high levels of stress with significant numbers experiencing stress for at least half of their typical working week (Section 2.3.1, p.18).

However, it must be noted that responses from the sample group of the current study are subjective (Section 3.3.3, p.49) representing individual perceptions of the prevalence and frequency of stressful experiences. These individual subjective perceptions of stress are reliant on the individual's tolerance of a stressful situations, or the teacher's ability to perform certain tasks. However, some perceived stressful situations are manageable and necessary to perform up to one's optimal level. Therefore, unless elucidated that respondents reported only on levels of stress beyond their control - negative stress (fatigue, exhaustion, ill health, breakdown and/or burnout), and not experiences of stress that enhance/motivate their performance, it should not be presumed that the high levels of stress exposed in the current study (Table 4.2, p.68) are wholly damaging to the mental health and wellbeing of teachers.

The Human Performance Stress Curve (Fig 4.1 below), one of the theoretical frameworks employed to elaborate on findings from the current study demonstrates how motivational and negative stress can enhance an individual's performance up to their optimal level, but beyond this level distress may occur (Meier, 2015).

Fig 4.1: Yerkes-Dodson Human Performance Stress Curve
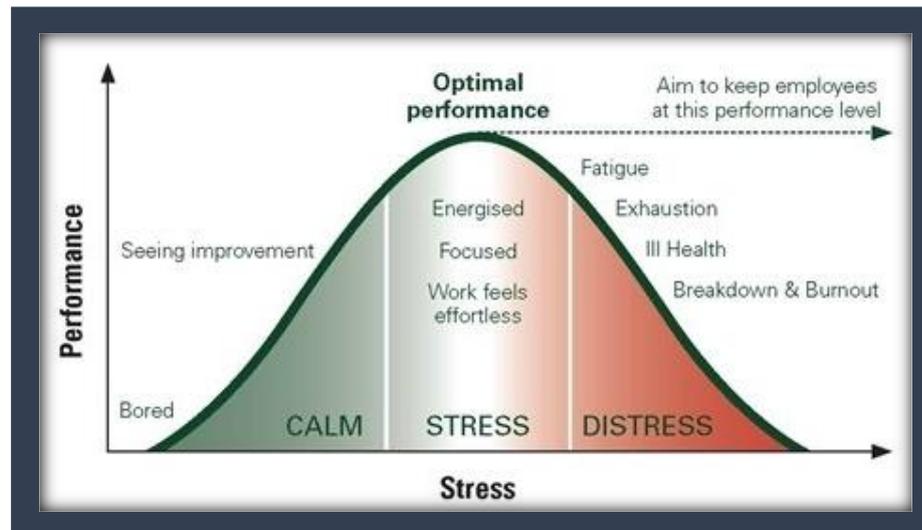
(Meier, 2015)

Hence, it is expected that some positive/motivational stress is represented in the percentile findings of objective 1 (Table 4.2, p.68). While these results show the prevalence and frequency of OS as high (98% at some level, 71% up to 3 times per week and 39% on a daily basis), should we label teaching as a stressful career? or a career that consistently motivates teachers to perform to their optimal level.

Research states, teachers who experience prolonged stress (motivational or negative) are considered as undergoing the process of burnout or suffering from depressive symptoms (Beer, 1992; Chance, 1992; La-Dou, 1997; Mausner-Dorsch, 2000; Meier, 2015). Therefore, any form of stress that is consistent and prolonged (71% experiencing stress up to 3 times per week or 39% experiencing stress on a daily basis) may be considered damaging to the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs. Hence, findings show that the prevalence and frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland may be damaging to their mental health and wellbeing.

However, under current legislation (Section 1.10) the Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, employees are protected against such occurrences. Part 2, Section 8 of the Act, states that employers have a general duty of care to take all

reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and welfare of their employees. This includes protecting against personal injury to the mental health of employees arising from job stress. The Act also details the functions and role of the Health and Safety Authority and, provides enforcement measures stipulating penalties that may be applied for any breach of occupational health and safety (Health and Safety Executive, 2005). Hence, to be compliant with the 2005 Act, the Department of Education and Skills must:

- **Identify the hazards in the workplace**
- **Assess the risks**
- **Choose control measures**
- **Write a safety statement**
- **Record and review the statement on a regular basis.**

(Employment Rights Ireland, 2015)

4.2.2: Summary of Findings - Objective I.

Objective 1. To assess the prevalence of occupational stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland?

Table 4.4:

The Prevalence & Frequency of Occupational Stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland.

98% of PPTs experience OS at some level.

71% of PPTs experience OS up to 3 times per week.

39% of PPTs experience OS on a daily basis.

Prevalence of OS   Frequency of OS
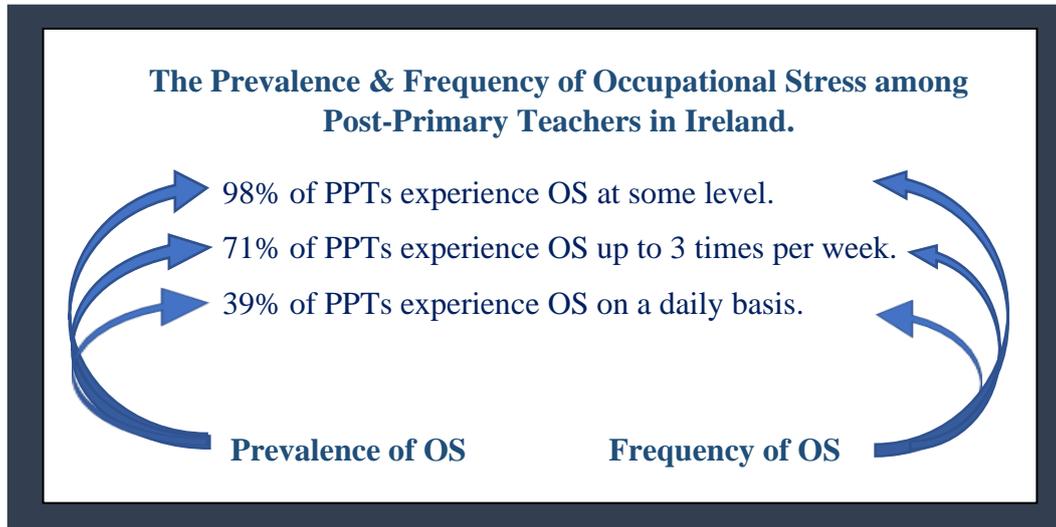
Findings and analysis of data relating to objective 1. demonstrates high levels of OS among PPTs in Ireland (Table 4.2, p.68). According to existing research (Beer, 1992; Chance, 1992; La-Dou, 1997; Mausner-Dorsch, 2000; Meier, 2015), the consistent and prolonged experiences of OS found (negative or motivational) can cause burnout, and depressive symptoms, and therefore may be considered damaging to the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs.

Objective 1. explored the prevalence and frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland, revealing high levels of OS among the profession. Objective 2. will explord possible demographic, environmental and organisational (DEO) predictors of OS, to help establish what is causing such high levels of OS among the profession.

4.3: Objective 2

To explore the main Demographic, Environmental and Organisational predictors that impact on the prevalence & frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland?

Objective 2.1: What are the main **Demographic predictors** that impact on the prevalence & frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland?

Objective 2.1 Explores:

1. Demographic predictors of OS.

2. Environmental predictors of OS.

3. Organisational predictors of OS.

Exploring these variables as possible predictors of OS among the profession, helped prevent assumptions being made, based on the high levels and frequency rates of OS presented from analysis of findings of objective 1 (Table 4.2, p.68).

An adapted version of Bronfenbrenner's & Ceci's (1994) Bioecological Systems Theory was developed (Appendix 1.1) and employed as an overarching theoretical framework (Section 1.8, p.9). The model also guided the analysis of the research findings of objectives 2. by establishing how DEO variables may impact on the high prevalence/frequency rates of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland.

4.3.1: Demographic Predictors of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

4.3.1.1: Gender Type (findings, analysis & discussion)

Table 4.5: Gender Types cross-tabulated against Experiences of OS.

■ = Row percentages   ■ = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	**Female**	Prefer not to say	**Total**
Q14. **How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?**	**Daily**	**58** 22.83% 33.14%	**195** 76.77% 41.31%	1 0.39% 33.33%	**254** 100.00% 39.08%
	2-3 times a week	**55** 26.19% 31.43%	**154** 73.33% 32.63%	1 0.48% 33.33%	**210** 100.00% 32.31%
	Once a week	25 27.17% 14.29%	67 72.83% 14.19%	0 0.00% 0.00%	92 100.00% 14.15%
	Once a fortnight	13 39.39% 7.43%	20 60.61% 4.24%	0 0.00% 0.00%	33 100.00% 5.08%
	Once a month	16 34.78% 9.14%	30 65.22% 6.36%	0 0.00% 0.00%	46 100.00% 7.08%
	Never	8 53.33% 4.57%	6 40.00% 1.27%	1 6.67% 33.33%	15 100.00% 2.31%
	Total	**175** 26.92% 100.00%	**472** 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	**650** 100.00% 100.00%

Regarding the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced across *gender types* (Table 4.5) findings show 64.5% (113 of **175 = total male respondents**) of male teachers experience OS up to 3 times a week with 33% (58 of 175) of those experiencing OS on a daily basis. In comparison, 74% (349 of **472 = total**

female respondents) of female teachers experience OS up to 3 times a week, with 41% (195 of 472) of those experiencing OS on a daily basis.

Discussion on findings - Gender type

Overall findings regarding *gender type*, and the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs show; female PPTs are 9.5% more likely to experience OS up to 3 times a week, and 8% more likely to experience OS on a daily basis compared to their male counterparts (Table 4.5). These findings coincide with existing national and international research (Antoniou et al, 2006; Bolton, 2015; Chaplain, 2008; Klassen, 2010), suggesting that female teachers experience greater OS then their male counterparts. Yet, Reilly et al. (2014) found no significant differences in the levels of perceived stress among male and female teachers (Section 2.3.3, p.21). However, it should be acknowledged that Reilly et al. (2014) conducted their study among primary school teachers from one county in Ireland and not post-primary school teachers on a national scale (Reilly et al., 2014).

Additional analysis explored the prevalence and frequency of OS amongst gender types further (Sections 4.4 and 4.5), to establish if the initial percentage rates, suggesting that female PPTs experience OS more than their male counterparts is reliable (Table 4.5). This was achieved by cross-tabulating gender types against specific environmental (Section 4.4) and organisational predictors (Section 4.5) of OS. Thus, confirming or not, if gender is a positive predictor of OS as a stand-alone variable, or if the level of stress experienced by male and female PPTs is determined by the type of stressor/situation encountered. This was important to investigate as literature suggests while some individuals face stressful situations as a welcome challenge, others may experience excessive pressure while dealing with it (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Hence, it could be presumed from initial findings of the current study (Table 4.5) that while PPTs face some stressful situations as a welcome challenge, 9.5% more female than male teachers experience excessive pressure while dealing with these stressful situations. To avoid such assumptions, the cross-tabulations (Sections 4.4 and 4.5) assessed characteristics of the work environment and organisational structures against gender types, to reveal if initial findings (Table

4.5) are reliable regardless of the situational demands encountered (Sections 4.4 and 4.5).

4.3.1.2: Age Groups (findings, analysis & discussion)

Table 4.6: Different age groups (initial findings)

Answer	Percentage	Count
Under 25	4.15%	27
25-34	26.62%	173
35-44	34.15%	222
45-54	25.08%	163
55 or older	10.00%	65
Total	100%	650

Table 4.7:

Age Groups cross-tabulated with the prevalence/frequency of OS.

■ = Row percentages   ■ = Column percentages

		Q2. What is your age group?					
		Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 or older	Total
	Daily	9 3.54% 33.33%	71 27.95% 41.04%	82 32.28% 36.94%	69 27.17% 42.33%	23 9.06% 35.38%	254 100% 39.08%
	2-3 times a week	11 5.24% 40.74%	58 27.62% 33.53%	72 34.29% 32.43%	48 22.86% 29.45%	21 10.00% 32.31%	210 100% 32.31%
Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	Once a week	5 5.43% 18.52%	28 30.43% 16.18%	27 29.35% 12.16%	24 26.09% 14.72%	8 8.70% 12.31%	92 100% 14.15%
	Once a fortnight	1 3.03% 3.70%	4 12.12% 2.31%	17 51.52% 7.66%	7 21.21% 4.29%	4 12.12% 6.15%	33 100% 5.08%
	Once a month	1 2.17% 3.70%	8 17.39% 4.62%	18 39.13% 8.11%	12 26.09% 7.36%	7 15.22% 10.77%	46 100% 7.08%
	Never	0 0.00% 0.00%	4 26.67% 2.31%	6 40.00% 2.70%	3 20.00% 1.84%	2 13.33% 3.08%	15 100% 2.31%
	Total	27 4.15%	173 26.62%	222 34.15%	163 25.08%	65 10.00%	650 100%

Findings showed minimal variance across the different age groups who experienced OS up to 3 times per week (Table 4.7). Percentage rates ranged from 68% of *55 years and older* to 74.5% of *25-34-year olds,* demonstrating a total variance of 6.5% and an average variance of 1.3%. Findings also revealed minimal variance across various age groups relating to those who experienced OS on a daily basis. Percentage rates here ranged from 33% of those in the *under 25-year-old* category to 42% of those in the *45-55-year-old* category, revealing a total variance of 9% and an average variance of 1.8%.

Discussion on findings – Age groups

Although findings regarding the prevalence/frequency of OS across the *different age groups;* revealed a small average variance of 1.8 (Table 4.7). Significant levels of OS were exposed across all five age categories including; respondents who experienced OS up to 3 times per week (68% to 74%) and those who experience OS on a daily basis (33% to 42%).

However, findings did reveal that, 45 to 55-year olds are 9% more likely to experience OS on a daily basis, compared to their, 25 to 34-year-old counterparts (Table 4.7). These initial finding suggest that older teachers experience OS more frequent than younger teachers, hence, according to initial findings age difference may be a predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs. Schmidt, (2007) explained the possible reasoning for this as; 'the honeymoon period', explaining that younger less experienced teachers strive to achieve high levels of job satisfaction in their early careers, embracing challenges and opportunities that arise in teaching, to experience greater job satisfaction (Schmidt, 2007).

Findings from the current study coincide with, Reilly et al. (2014) study (Section 2.3.3, p.21) suggesting that, less experienced and younger teachers reported higher levels of job satisfaction than more experienced and older teachers (Reilly et al., 2014). Additionally, Buckley et al. (2017) study exploring Irish Teachers' Experiences of Stress (Section, 2.3.2, p.19) found that newly qualified teachers desired to be acknowledged/positively affirmed not only by management, but by their colleagues, as this helped them feel confident in their

teaching practice/ability (Buckley et al., 2017). However, Leiter (1991) suggested that, the combination of overloaded challenges and the low self-efficacy of less experienced teachers to manage job demands may increase their vulnerability to work-related stress (Leiter, 1991). This may help explain the results of the current study that suggest; more experienced and older teachers experience OS more, than less experienced and younger teachers (Table 4.7).

However, Bolton's (2015) findings showed no significant difference across the different age categories and the levels of stress experienced, yet Bolton's (2015) study was not generalisable to the sample population due to the number of participants of her study. However, although the current findings revealed a total variance of 9% between the age groups at the highest and lowest levels of OS experienced, the total average variance across all five age categories is 1.8%. Suggesting that, on average different age categories may not be predictors in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs, once the average rates of OS across all five age categories is taken into account.

4.3.1.3: Years Teaching Experience (findings, analysis & discussion)

Table 4.8: Years Teaching Experience (initial findings)

Answer	Percentage	Count
Less than 2 years	4.62%	30
2-5 years	11.85%	77
5-10 years	18.77%	122
10-15 years	18.77%	122
15-20 years	14.62%	95
20-25 years	12.46%	81
25 years or more	18.92%	123
Total	100%	650

The seven categories relating to *years teaching experience* were cross tabulated with Q14 *how often if ever do you experience work related stress?* (Table 4.9 below). Analysis of data demonstrated minimal variance across the seven categories relating to the amount of years of teaching experience gained and the prevalence/frequency of OS.

Table 4.9:

Years Teaching Experience cross-tabulated with prevalence/frequency of OS.

■ = Row percentages   ■ = Column percentages

		Q5. **How many years have you been teaching?**							
		Less than 2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	15-20 years	20-25 years	25 years or more	Total
Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	Daily	12 4.72% 40.00%	26 10.24% 33.77%	53 20.87% 43.44%	41 16.14% 33.61%	37 14.57% 38.95%	33 12.99% 40.74%	52 20.47% 42.28%	254 39.08%
	2-3 times a week	9 4.29% 30.00%	28 13.33% 36.36%	40 19.05% 32.79%	41 19.52% 33.61%	32 15.24% 33.68%	21 10.00% 25.93%	39 18.57% 31.71%	210 32.31%
	Once a week	5 5.43% 16.67%	14 15.22% 18.18%	18 19.57% 14.75%	16 17.39% 13.11%	10 10.87% 10.53%	17 18.48% 20.99%	12 13.04% 9.76%	92 14.15%
	Once a fortnight	3 9.09% 10.00%	2 6.06% 2.60%	2 6.06% 1.64%	9 27.27% 7.38%	6 18.18% 6.32%	5 15.15% 6.17%	6 18.18% 4.88%	33 5.08%
	Once a month	1 2.17% 3.33%	5 10.87% 6.49%	5 10.87% 4.10%	13 28.26% 10.66%	7 15.22% 7.37%	4 8.70% 4.94%	11 23.91% 8.94%	46 7.08%
	Never	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 13.33% 2.60%	4 26.67% 3.28%	2 13.33% 1.64%	3 20.00% 3.16%	1 6.67% 1.23%	3 20.00% 2.44%	15 2.31%
	Total	30 4.62%	77 11.85%	122 18.77%	122 18.77%	95 14.62%	81 12.46%	123 18.92%	650 100% 100%

The final demographic variable explored was, the *amount of years teaching experience gained* against the prevalence/frequency of OS; Findings show, teachers who experienced OS up to 3 times per week revealed percentage rates across the years of teaching experience from; 67% (20-25 years teaching experience) to 76% (5-10 years teaching experience), demonstrating a total variance of 9% and an average variance of 1.2%. Additionally, teachers who experienced OS on a daily basis, exposed percentage rates across the years of teaching experience, ranging from 34% (10- 15 years teaching experience) to 42% (25-years or more teaching experience). This revealed a total variance of 8% and an average variance of 1.1% (Table 4.9).

Discussion on findings – Amount of years teaching experience

Findings suggest, on average the number of years teaching experience gained, may not be a predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs. Findings coincide with Buckley et al. (2017) study suggesting that work related stress impacted on teacher's mental health and wellbeing irrespective of the years teaching experience gained. However, Reilly et al. (2014) found that, as the amount of years teaching experience increased, job satisfaction deceased (Reilly et al., 2014). Yet, Chaplain 1995 (cited in Hallow, 2010) identified a tendency for less experienced teachers to be more stressed regarding professional concerns than more experienced teachers, and also found, female teachers experience more stress than their male counterparts. Additionally, Bolton, (2015) found, those with 11 to 15 years teaching practice, experienced greater levels of professional investment stress then those with 11 years or less teaching experience.

Hence, from the findings and existing literature it may be presumed that although the prevalence and frequency of OS is significant across all seven categories explored (Table 4.9) the impact that the amount of years teaching experience has on the prevalence and frequency of OS, may be better measured against the manifestations of OS rather than the prevalence/frequency of OS. For example; do the amount of years teaching experience impact on occupational satisfaction, professional concerns, thoughts of leaving the profession, anger, depression, anxiety and so on. Analysis of such may reveal

variances across, the amount of years teaching experience gained and different age groups, depending on the manifestation of stress experienced. This may also be considered for further research.

Overall findings of the current study regarding possible demographic predictors of OS among PPTs demonstrated; an average minimal variance across the different age categories and years teaching experience gained. Findings suggest that, the amount of years teaching experience and age difference may not be predominant causal factors in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland. However, further research cross-tabulating age difference and years teaching experience, against the manifestations of OS may reveal variances across the different years teaching experience and age categories depending on the manifestation of stress experienced. Nevertheless, initial findings did suggest that female teachers experience OS up to 3 times per week 9.5% more than their male counterparts and 8% more on a daily basis (Table 4.5). Thus, suggesting gender type may be a causal factor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession.

The next section of objective 1. presents further analysis of the prevalence/frequency of OS against possible environmental predictors of stress. This may also help establish if initial finding regarding the different levels of OS among gender types (Table 4.5) remained unchanged when correlated with certain environmental and organisational situational demands.

4.4: Objective 2.2: Environmental Predictors of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

4.4.1: Geographical Location of School by County

4.4.2: Different School Types

4.4.3: General Ethos of your school

4.4.4: Time Management

4.4.5: Impact of staff shortages

4.4.6: Class disruption

Although there is substantial research on occupational stress, much is focused on psychosocial aspects of the organisation and the social context of the work environment (Cooper & Cartwright, 1999). However, there is limited research examining the association between the OS and the physical work environment. The current study explored the physical work environment of PPTs, to help reveal predominant environmental predictors of OS among the profession.

Graph 4.1: Geographical Location and number of Respondents by County
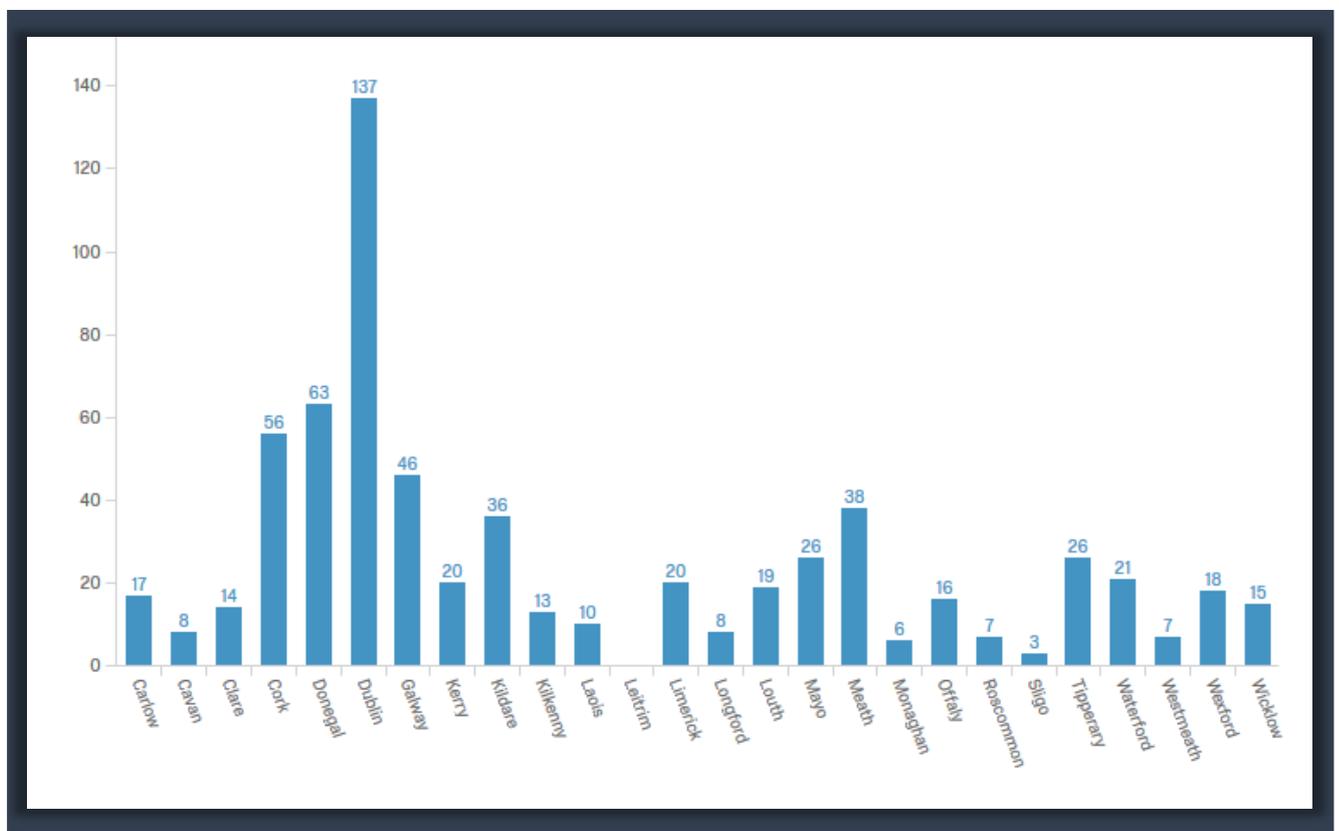
Table 4.10: Geographical Location of Respondents and Prevalence/Frequency of Occupational Stress Experienced.

Q4. County of Employ-ment	Q14. OS on a daily basis	Q14. OS 2-3 times a week	Q14. Experiences of OS **daily & 2-3 times a week - combined**	Q4. County of Employ-ment	Q14. OS on a daily basis	Q14. OS 2-3 times a week	Q14. Experiences of OS **daily & 2-3 times a week - combined**
Carlow	3 17.65%	9 52.94%	12 70.59%	Longford	1 12.50%	6 75.00%	7 87.5%
Cavan	3 37.50%	0 0.00%	3 37.50%	Louth	12 63.16%	3 15.79%	15 78.95%
Clare	2 14.29%	9 64.29%	11 78.58%	Mayo	11 42.31%	6 23.08%	17 65.39%
Cork	18 32.14%	20 35.71%	38 67.85%	Meath	19 50.00%	8 21.05%	27 71.05%
Donegal	24 38.10%	19 30.16%	43 68.26%	Offaly	4 25.00%	6 37.50%	10 62.5%
Dublin	60 43.80%	43 31.39%	103 75.19%	Ros-common	2 28.57%	2 28.57%	4 57.14%
Galway	14 30.43%	24 52.17%	38 82.6%	Sligo	2 66.67%	0 0.00%	2 66.67%
Kerry	7 35.00%	9 45.00%	16 80%	Tipperary	10 38.46%	5 19.23%	15 57.69%
Kildare	23 63.89%	9 25.00%	32 88.89%	Waterford	11 52.38%	2 9.52%	13 61.9%
Kilkenny	5 38.46%	3 23.08%	8 61.54%	West-meath	3 42.86%	2 28.57%	5 71.43%
Laois	2 20.00%	4 40.00%	6 60%	Wexford	3 16.67%	7 38.89%	10 55.56%
Leitrim	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	Monaghan	4 66.67%	1 16.67%	5 83.34%
Limerick	6 30.00%	7 35.00%	13 65%	Wicklow	5 33.33%	6 40.00%	11 73.33%
Total					**Teachers who experience OS on a daily basis 254 39.08%**	**Teachers who experience OS up to 3 times per week 210 32.31%**	**Teachers who experience OS up to 3 times per week 464 of 650 71.39%**

Experiences of OS up to 3 times per week by county of employment are displayed (Table 4.10), as these were the most prominent findings however, a full breakdown of findings may be accessed in Appendix 4.1.   Highlighted sections represent experiences of OS of 50% or more.

Discussion on findings – Geographical location

Data analysis regarding the *geographical location of the respondents (county of employment)* had minimal impact on the prevalence/frequency of occupational stress, considering the total average variance of 1.3% -2.2% (Table 4.10). However, it should be noted that some Counties, such as Cavan, exposed the lowest levels of OS experienced up to 3 times per week - 37.5%, compared to County Kildare, revealing the highest levels of OS experienced at 89% up to 3 times per week. These findings exposed a variance of 51.5% between counties experiencing the highest and lowest levels of OS, however taking all results from each county into account the total average variance is 1.9%.   Additionally, County Longford exposed the lowest level of OS experienced on a daily basis - 12.5%, compared to Counties Sligo and Monaghan, who experience the highest level of OS experienced on a daily basis - 67% (Table 4.10). These results show a significant difference of 54% between counties regarding the lowest and highest levels of OS experienced on a daily basis, however the total average variance across all counties is 2%.

Findings demonstrated, on average the geographical location of post-primary schools (by county) had minimal impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS. However, a significant difference was revealed among counties with the highest and lowest levels of OS experienced up to 3 times per week (Cavan 37% - Kildare 89%); and between counties reporting experiences of OS on a daily basis (Longford 12.5% - Sligo and Monaghan 67%).

No existing literature regarding the geographical location of PPS and the prevalence/frequency of OS by county was found. Additionally, the current study did not explore variances in the prevalence of OS among rural and urban schools hence, no comparisons from the current study regarding these factors is possible.

4.4.2: Different School Types

Table 4.11: Different Irish Post-Primary School Types

What type of school do you work in?	Percentage	Count
Voluntary Secondary School	45.23%	294
ETB/Community College	30.31%	197
Community/Comprehensive Schools	19.38%	126
Gaelcholáiste	3.85%	25
Educate Together	1.23%	8
Total	100%	650

Table 4.12: School Type cross-tabulated against Experiences of OS.

■ = Row percentages   ■ = Column percentages

		Q3. What type of school do you work in?					
		Voluntary Secondary School	ETB/ Community College	Community/ Comprehen-sive Schools	Gaelcholáiste	Educate Together	Total
Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	**Daily**	121 47.64% 41.16%	86 33.86% 43.65%	33 12.99% 26.19%	10 3.94% 40.00%	4 1.57% 50.00%	254 100% 39.08%
	2-3 times a week	82 39.05% 27.89%	61 29.05% 30.96%	57 27.14% 45.24%	8 3.81% 32.00%	2 0.95% 25.00%	210 100% 32.31%
	Total	294 **45.23%** 100%	197 **30.31%** 100%	126 19.38% 100%	25 3.85% 100%	8 1.23% 100%	650 100% 100%

Different school types teachers were explored as possible predictors of OS. Results demonstrated (Table 4.12), 69% of teachers working in Voluntary Secondary Schools to 75% of teachers who work in ETBs/Community Colleges experience OS up to 3 times per week. These percentage rates exposed a total variance of 6% among these two school types from the higher and lower end of the scale; and an average variance across all five school types of 1.2%.

Percentage rates regarding teachers who experienced OS on a daily basis across the five different school types, ranged from 26% of teachers working in Community/Comprehensive Schools to 50% of teachers who work in Educate Together Schools. Revealing a total variance of 24% between these two school types from the higher and lower end of the scale; and an average variance across all five school types of 4.8%.

These findings suggest on average, different school types have minimal impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland up to three times per week. However, findings did reveal that teachers working in Educate Together Schools reported experiences of OS, 24% more than teachers of Community/Comprehensive Schools. Yet the total average variance across all five school types is 4.8%. Additionally, it should be noted that overall, findings represent significant levels of OS across all five different school types. The literature review did not reveal any studies relating to different school types and the impact they may have on the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession. Hence, it is recommended that further studies be conducted in this area regarding different post-primary school types in Ireland, based on the significant levels of OS revealed across all school types and the variances in the levels of OS experienced among the different school types.

4.4.3: **General Ethos of Post-Primary Schools in Ireland (findings, analysis & discussion)**

Table 4.13: Sections 1-7

	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	All staff contribute fully to the promotion of a caring and welcoming environment within the school.	125 19.23%	**221** 34.00%	183 28.15%	13 2.00%	46 7.38%	48 7.38%	14 2.15%
2	Respectful relationships are fostered between staff	120 18.46%	**246** 37.85%	163 25.08%	26 4.00%	59 9.08%	24 2.69%	12 1.85%
3	I feel a sense of belonging and self-worth	123 18.92%	**225** 34.62%	162 24.92%	30 4.62%	52 8.00%	33 5.08%	25 3.85%
4	I can rely on work colleagues for emotional support	149 22.92%	**205** 31.54%	177 27.23%	40 6.15%	39 6.00%	28 4.31%	12 1.85%
5	The mental health and well-being of staff is prioritised and promoted in the school.	36 5.54%	86 13.23%	**141** 21.69%	60 9.23%	103 15.85%	127 19.54%	97 14.92%
6	The mental health and well-being of staff is prioritised and promoted in the staffroom	28 4.31%	104 16.00%	**140** 21.54%	89 13.69%	106 16.31%	105 16.15%	78 12.00%
7	Adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in your school (See comments)	22 3.38%	57 8.77%	92 14.15%	84 12.92%	94 14.46%	**165** 25.38%	**136** 20.92%

*Text responses from sample group relating to section 7 available in Appendix 4.2:

Disagree/Strongly Disagree
301 - 46.3%

General Ethos: Findings

Finding from data analysis revealed the 'General Ethos' of post-primary schools in Ireland is positive (non-predictors of OS) regarding *some aspects* - sections 1-4 (Table 4.13).

1. All staff contribute fully to the promotion of a caring and welcoming environment within the school – 53% (346 of 650) agree/strongly agree compared to 9.5% (62) disagree/strongly disagree.

2. Respectful relationships are fostered between staff - 56% (366 of 650) agree/strongly agree compared to 4.5% (36) disagree/strongly disagree.

3. I feel a sense of belonging and self-worth 53.5% (348 of 650) agree/strongly agree compared to 9% (58) disagree/strongly disagree.

4. I can rely on work colleagues for emotional support 54% (354 of 650) agree/strongly agree compared to 6% (40) disagree/strongly disagree.

   Additional findings regarding; 'general ethos' of the schools, exposed the following as possible predictors/contributing factors to the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland (Table 4.10).

5. The mental health and wellbeing of staff *is prioritised and promoted* in the school – 34% (224) disagree/strongly disagree compared to 19% (122) agree/strongly agree.

6. The mental health and wellbeing of staff *is prioritised and promoted* in the staff-room – 28% (183) disagree/strongly disagree compared to 20% (132) agree/strongly agree.

7. Adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in the schools – 46% (301) disagree/strongly disagree compared to 12% (79) agree/strongly agree.

Findings regarding the general ethos of post-primary schools in Ireland revealed; the lack of prioritising and promoting teacher's mental health and wellbeing, both in the schools and in school staffrooms is concerning. Additionally, findings show the lack of adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress as inadequate and, may be classed as a predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs (Table 4.13). The table below (4.14) displays results from this particular finding regarding; adequate supports cross tabulated against each of the five different school types. This will help establish if the lack of adequate supports is a concerning factor across all five school types or specific school types.

Table 4.14: Cross-Tabulation of 'General Ethos section 7' against different school types.

		Adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in the school							
		Strongly agree	Agree	Some-what agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some-what disagree	Dis-agree	Strongly disagree	Total
What type of school do you work in?	**Voluntary Secondary School**	9 3.06%	25 8.50%	41 13.95%	36 12.24%	48 16.33%	68 23.13%	67 22.79%	294 100.00% 45.23%
	ETB/ Community College	11 5.58%	17 8.63%	26 13.20%	26 13.20%	27 13.71%	53 26.90%	37 18.78%	197 100.00% 30.31%
	Community/ Comprehensive Schools	1 0.79%	13 10.32%	24 19.05%	16 12.70%	15 11.90%	32 25.40%	25 19.84%	126 100.00% 19.38%
	Gaelcholáiste	1 4.00%	2 8.00%	1 4.00%	5 20.00%	3 12.00%	9 36.00%	4 16.00%	25 100.00% 3.85%
	Educate Together	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	0 0.00%	1 12.50%	1 12.50%	3 37.50%	3 37.50%	8 100.00% 1.23%
	Total	22 3.38%	57 8.77%	92 14.15% 100.00%	84 12.92% 100.00%	94 14.46% 100.00%	165 25.38%	136 20.92%	650 100.00% 100.00%

79 12.15% 100%		301 46.30% 100%

Findings below show the percentage of teachers by school type, who **disagree/strongly disagree** that adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in their schools (Table 4.14).

75% of teachers from Educate Together

52% of teachers from Gaelcholáiste teachers

46% of teachers from Voluntary Secondary Schools.

45% of teachers from Community/Comprehensive Schools teachers

36% of teachers from ETB/Community College Schools

All disagree/strongly disagree that adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in their schools.

Findings regarding the **General Ethos** of the schools (Table 4.13) raised concerns relating to:

1. The prioritising and promotion of teacher's mental health and wellbeing in the schools.

   Findings show 34% disagree/strongly disagree that, the mental health and wellbeing of staff *is prioritised and promoted in the school*, compared to 19% who agree/strongly agree.

2. The prioritising and promotion of teacher's mental health and wellbeing in the staff rooms.

   Findings show, 28% disagree/strongly disagree that, the mental health and wellbeing of staff *is prioritised and promoted in the staffroom*, compared to 20% who agree/strongly agree.

3. The lack of adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress within the schools.

   Findings show, 46% of the respondents disagree/strongly disagree that, adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in the schools, compared to 12% who agree/strongly agree.

Discussion on findings – General Ethos

The lack of supports in the work environment to safeguard the teacher's mental health and wellbeing, can impact on the teacher's job satisfaction and self-esteem. As discussed in the literature review Pierce & Gardiner's (2004) suggested that, an individuals' self-esteem is formed around work and organisational experiences, and play an important role in shaping job satisfaction, and establishing a relationship between job satisfaction and self-efficacy (Pierce & Gardiner's, 2004). Furthermore, Reilly et al. (2014) study found, teachers who experienced moderate stress, showed high levels of self-esteem, moderate self-efficacy and, were highly satisfied with their jobs and experiences (Reilly et al., 2014). While Buckley et al. (2017) study found, relationships with colleagues in the work environment appeared to have a significant impact on the reduction of stress among teachers. With participants stating that, negative relationships among colleagues contributed to the experiences of work-related stress (Buckley et al., 2017).

Hence, risk assessments regarding the dynamics among school staff should be conducted. This may help identify problem areas and implement strategies to help tackle OS and improve the mental health and wellbeing of teachers. Additionally, adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related issues should be available to all teaching staff when required and necessary. The lack of necessary supports to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for teachers in their work environment, may be directly linked to inadequate risk assessments and managerial and organisational factors. Although many policies and legislative reforms have been introduced to protect the mental health and wellbeing of employees (Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005) legislation and policies are only guidelines unless implemented.

Additionally, the literature review discussed a study conducted by the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE, 2011). This study identified stressors that directly affected teachers' daily work and noted that most of these stressors were directly related to school management and organisational factors. The study concluded that school management should be involved in assessing risk factors, such as findings exposed in the current study regarding the general

ethos of schools (Tables, 4.13; 4.14). Emphasising the importance of involving all employers in tackling work related stress among teachers. The ETUCE (2011) suggested that employers accept their obligations to identify, prevent and reduce problems regarding the issue, not only because employers are legally required to do so, but because of the social and economic benefits of having a healthy and motivated workforce (ETUCE, 2011).

Below are some additional comments from respondents regarding the general ethos of their schools:

> *'Mental health wouldn't have to be promoted if the system worked properly. The fact that something like that has to be considered or discussed shows what a dysfunctional system it is. Not necessarily management's or colleague's fault. Top down reforms, poorly planned and mostly a box ticking exercise to waste teachers time is part of the problem. Read or try to read the new JC specification and you will see what I mean…the NCCA isn't even doing its job properly. Supports are not needed to resolve work related stress…the nature of the work itself needs to change.'*

> *'Schools have no facilities to support staff. We support each other but management and the ETB keep piling on work …'*

> *'We have no voice! (New) senior management have done away with staff meetings; year head meetings etc. Communication is by email; it is totally alien and extremely stressful.'*

4.4.4: **Time Management Sections 1-8 (findings, analysis & discussion)**

Table 4.15:

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	I often over commit myself	**315** 48.46%	**256** 39.38%	54 8.31%	23 3.54%	2 0.31%	650 100%
2	There is not enough time to complete daily tasks	**348** 53.54%	**236** 36.31%	36 5.54%	27 4.15%	3 0.46%	650 100%
3	I have to rush lessons during class to keep up with the curriculum	**257** 39.54%	**230** 35.38%	106 16.31%	50 7.69%	7 1.08%	650 100%
4	I try doing more than one thing at a time	**299** 46.00%	**283** 43.54%	41 6.31%	24 3.69%	3 0.46%	650 100%
5	I must take work home to get it done	**444** 68.31%	**169** 26.00%	25 3.85%	10 1.54%	2 0.31%	650 100%
6	I have little time to relax on a daily basis	**339** 52.15%	**204** 31.38%	61 9.38%	43 6.62%	3 0.46%	650 100%
7	School self-evaluation procedures adds to administrative duties	**423** 65.08%	**161** 24.77%	52 8.00%	10 1.54%	4 0.62%	650 100%
8	CPD training takes up teaching time	**239** 36.77%	**195** 30.00%	126 19.38%	69 10.62%	21 3.23%	650 100%

Time Management: Findings

Findings from data analysis regarding 'Time Management'- (Table 4.15) exposed: sections 1-8 as possible predictors in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

1. *I often over commit myself* - 88% (571 of 650) agree/strongly agree.

2. *There is not enough time to complete daily tasks* - 90% (584 of 650) agree/strongly.

3. *I must rush lessons during class to keep up with the curriculum* - 75% (487 of 650) agreed/strongly agree.

4. *I try doing more than one thing at a time* - 90% (582 of 650) agree/strongly agreed.

5. *I must take work home to get it done* - 4% (613 of 650) agree to strongly agree with the statement.

6. *I have little time to relax on a daily basis* –53.5% (543 of 650) of respondents agree/strongly agree.

7. *School self-evaluation procedures adds to administrative duties* - 90% (584 of 650) of respondents agree/strongly agree.

8. *CPD training takes up teaching time* - 67% (434 of 650) of respondents agree/strongly agree.

Time Management

Findings relating to time management show the following issues as possible contributing factors to the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland (Table 4.15); over commitment from the teacher; not enough time to complete daily tasks; rushing lessons to keep up with the curriculum; doing more than one thing at time; taking work home to get it done; having little time to relax; school self-evaluation procedures adding to administrative duties, and CPD training taking up teaching time. Time constraints to complete tasks may lead to demotivation and compromise the teachers sense of control at work.

Discussion on findings – Time Management

Findings relating to time management and its impact on OS among PPTs is concerning (Table 4.15). Yet when time management issues are discussed it

may be assumed that the individual's professional skills in managing their time effectively and efficiently is inadequate. However, an over prescriptive workload is not always manageable, regardless of the individual's time management skills. Additionally, no employee should be expected to complete excessive workloads in their personal time. Hence, managerial and organisational factors/policies may need to be addressed. The International Labour Organisations policy (1975) suggested that, work should respect employees' lives and health and leave them free time for rest and leisure. The policy also states that it is the responsibility of organisations and management to identify hazards and gaps within the education systems and implement positive supports to address issues of concern (International Labour Organisations policy, 1975).

Findings coincide with the ASTI (2018) study that showed, teachers were unable to complete their professional tasks throughout the normal school-working hours, and therefore had to work an additional average of 20.07 hours per week to fully discharge their professional duties. Time constraints to complete tasks led to reduced levels of job satisfaction among PPTs, as it produced high levels of demotivation and stress while compromising their sense of control regarding their work (ASTI, 2018). Buckley et al. (2017) study also found, the lack of control experienced by teachers significantly contributed to their overall stress levels. The Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) (2017) also conducted a study exploring the workload of post-primary teachers in Ireland. Findings showed that extra workload placed on teachers is impacting on their personal time. Findings from the study confirmed that teachers were experiencing significant increases in their workload but lacked resources to complete daily tasks (TUI, 2017).

Below are some additional comments from respondents regarding 'time management' that may uncover issues or give insights to improving time management structures within schools.

'CPD training has largely focused on explaining the need for an area (e.g. Team Teaching), rather than just showing us methods of DOING IT. Frustrating and feels like a waste of time as a result.'

'More and more demands on my time are the most stressful part…Management has no choice but to foist this claptrap on us but most of the reforms have been counter-productive. They are misguided at best and they feel very disrespected.'

'whole day in service on wellbeing, where is the wellbeing in that for teachers? Paperwork and what is expected for our plans are increasing. Unpacking learning outcomes is a joke!'

The new junior cycle is a nightmare: no syllabus; no direction. We are 'left' to figure it out. Hugely stressful.'

4.4.5: The Impact of Staff Shortages (findings, analysis & discussion)

Table 4.16: The impact of Staff Shortages (sections 1-5)

#	Question	**Always**	**Sometimes**	Never	Total
1	Additional administrative duties	208 32.00%	**329** 50.62%	113 17.38%	650
2	Additional extra-curricular duties	216 33.23%	**314** 48.31%	120 18.46%	650
3	Teaching extra classes	160 24.62%	**330** 50.77%	160 24.62%	650
4	Teaching classes other than my specialised subjects	116 17.85%	**276** 42.46%	258 39.69%	650
5	Have staff shortages impacted on you since September 2018?	168 25.85%	**334** 51.38%	148 22.77%	650

Findings disclosed that staff shortages do impact on PPTs workload (Table 4.16 sections 1-5) and are therefore a possible predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland. Below is a breakdown of the results by section.

1. Section 1: 82% (537 of 650) of respondents always/sometimes, experience *additional administrative duties* due to staff shortages, with 32% (208 of 650) of those revealing that, staff shortages 'always' lead to additional administrative duties.

2. Section 2: shows, 81% (530 of 650) of respondents always/sometimes' experience *additional extra-curricular duties* due to staff shortages, with 33% (216 of 650) revealing staff shortages 'always' lead to additional extra-curricular duties.

3. Section 3: 75% (490 of 650) of respondents 'always/sometimes' experience *teaching extra classes* due to staff shortages, with 25% (160 of 650) revealing, staff shortages 'always' lead to teaching extra classes.

4. Section 4**:** 60% (392 of 650) 'always/sometimes' experience *teaching classes other than their specialised subjects* due to staff shortages, with 18% (116 of 650) revealing staff shortages 'always' lead to teaching classes other than their specialised subjects.

5. Section 5 shows, 77% (502 of 650) respondents agreed that 'staff shortages have impacted on them since September 2018' (survey disseminated 20th November 2018 to 18th December 2018).

   One of the most concerning results revealed is that 60% PPTs are teaching classes other than their specialised subject due to staff shortages (Table 4.16).

   Discussion on findings - Staff Shortages
   Analysis of data also show that, staff shortages impacts on PPTs workload including; additional administrative duties; additional extra-curricular duties; teaching extra classes and teaching classes other than their specialised subjects

(Table 4.16: sections 1-5). Hence, staff shortages may be considered an environmental predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland. Moreover, one of the most concerning finding is that, PPTs in Ireland are teaching classes other than their specialised subject due to staff shortages. These findings coincided with the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS, 2017) study revealing that some schools reverted to engaging unqualified personnel to teach certain subject specialisms due to staff shortages. School management found it increasingly difficult to find subject-specific substitute teachers that were available for casual substitution. Consequently, according to the ACCS (2017), state examinations are impacted by the absence of subject-specific substitutes to provide adequate cover for the Practical and Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations.

The literature review also explored the undersupply of PPTs in Ireland and found; The Irish Times Abroad (2017) conducted a study among Irish teacher who had left the country to teach in the United Kingdom. Findings showed, one third of the respondents left the Irish teaching profession by choice, but 'felt they had to'. Reasons cited for their involuntary departure to the UK were; lack of full-time work, poor wages, insecure contracts, poor benefits and the two-tier salary scale (Kenny, 2017). Findings of the current study show the impact of staff shortages on the profession, having a knock-on effect regarding, additional workload, time management, extra-curricular activities, job satisfaction, low self-esteem etc. Although findings show staff-shortages lead to; additional administrative duties; additional extra-curricular duties; teaching extra classes and teaching classes other than their specialised subjects (Table 4.16). It also has a cascading effect on other variables such as, workload, teacher retention (absenteeism due to sickness) recruitment, occupational satisfaction, autonomy, etc. Hence, the overarching (adapted) theoretical perspective employed for the current study; **Bioecological Social Systems Theory** (Fig. 4.2 below) displays how one predictor of OS from any demographic, environmental or organisational (DEO) system, may not only directly impact negatively on the individual, but may also impact on other predictors of OS, from any DEO system, forming groups or 'high risk factors' that together may cause significant experiences of OS for the teacher.

Fig. 4.2

Bioecological Social Systems of Occupational Stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland
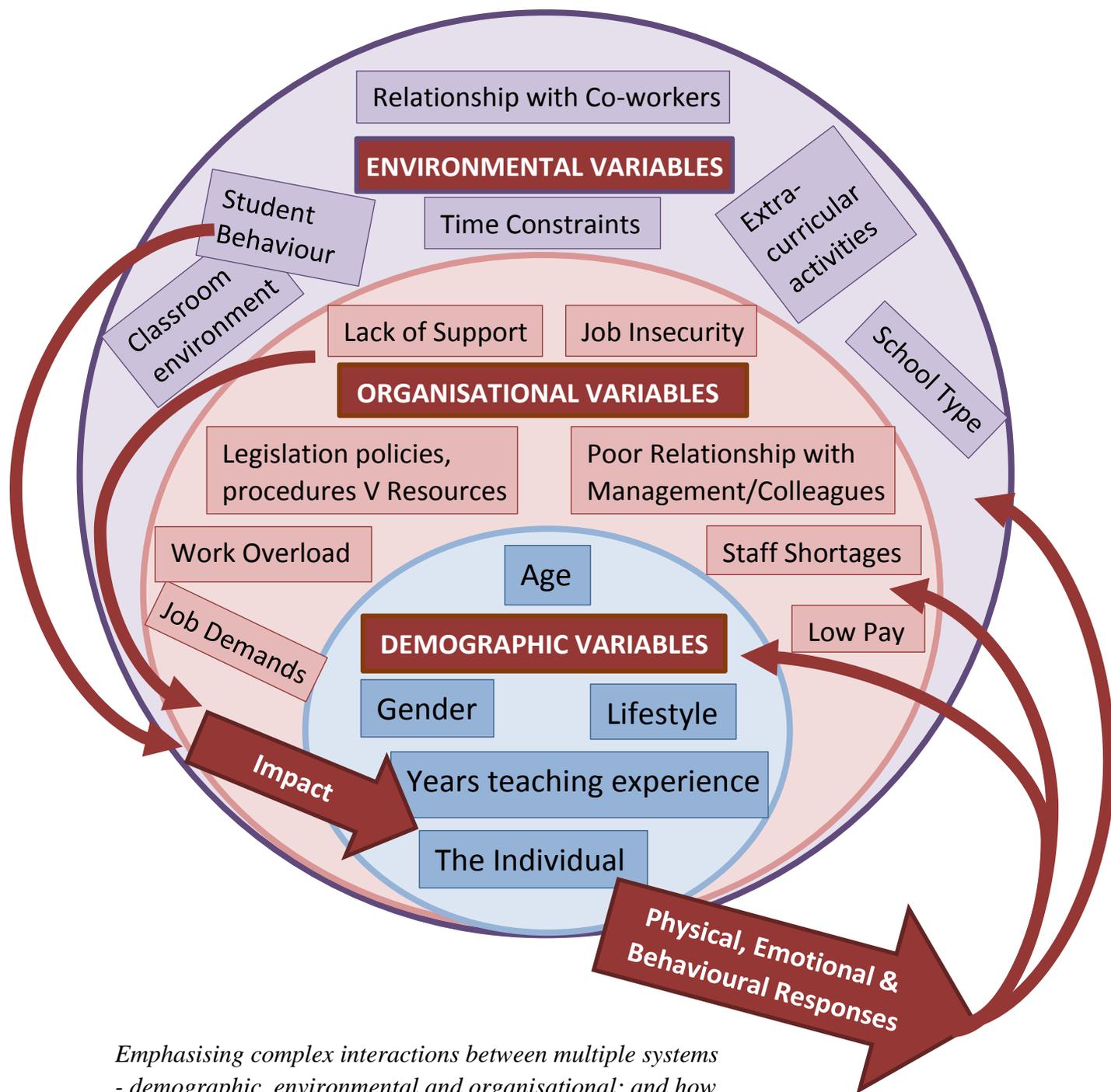
Emphasising complex interactions between multiple systems - demographic, environmental and organisational; and how their predictors of occupational stress can impact on the prevalence & frequency of stress experienced by teachers.

Adapted from Bronfenbrenner's & Ceci's (1994) Bioecological Systems Theory

Below are some of the comments from PPTs regarding how staff shortages impact on them both personally and professionally:

'I am the head of a department and not qualified in that subject because we are unable to source a qualified teacher.'

'I am regularly timetabled to teach subjects outside of my training. This causes a huge amount of stress for me as I do not know what to do and I do not want to teach other subjects.'

'This would be more enjoyable if the department offered more options to give CPD training for teachers to have additional subjects like Maths and Irish.'

'...because of staff shortages – staff are stretched to their very limit and are getting sick. It's a NIGHTMARE.'

'I withdrew from S&S as soon as I could as the system was being abused and used incorrectly by my former Principal. It is the best money I spend each month.'

'Can't get qualified staff as they can't afford rent in Dublin.'

'Being available for 3 supervision classes per week and nominating 10 in order of preference each year is a joke, means basically you have to be available all day every day!! Also, if you need a colleague to cover classes to bring your child to hospital appointments, means colleagues are unsure if they will be able to cover the class due to the roster putting teachers under more stress and pressure!!!'

'Yes, as a replacement teacher could not be found for a colleague on maternity leave, my timetable had to be changed to take on some of her classes.'

'School has been short of teachers for months on end. Students are severely missing out. Bureaucracy of LMETB means hiring staff is diabolically slow.'

'Yes. My job-sharing had to be withdrawn when, despite advertising twice for a French teacher, the school could not find a suitable applicant.'

4.4.6: Class Disruption (findings, analysis & discussion)

Table 4.17:

Main Predictors of Class Disruption in Irish Post-Primary Schools.

#	Question	Always	Often	Some-times	Rarely	Never
1	Students talking out of turn	89 13.69%	189 29.08%	232 35.69%	127 19.54%	13 2.00%
2	'Telling off' and reprimanding of students	74 11.38%	159 24.46%	247 38.00%	155 23.85%	15 2.31%
3	Students using mobile phone during class	25 3.85%	50 7.69%	85 13.08%	265 40.77%	225 34.62%
4	Students disengaging from classroom activities	44 6.77%	162 24.92%	319 49.08%	113 17.38%	12 1.85%
5	Students disrupting the flow of the lesson	58 8.92%	137 21.08%	289 44.46%	152 23.38%	14 2.15%
6	Students verbally abusing other students	23 3.54%	73 11.23%	146 22.46%	219 33.69%	189 29.08%
7	Students verbally abusing the teacher	10 1.54%	35 5.38%	104 16.00%	217 33.38%	284 43.69%
8	An emotional atmosphere that is negative and hostile	8 1.23%	26 4.00%	137 21.08%	252 38.77%	227 34.92%
9	Students being aggressive towards other students	10 1.54%	44 6.77%	140 21.54%	245 37.69%	211 32.46%
10	Students being aggressive towards the teacher	8 1.23%	35 5.38%	111 17.08%	234 36.00%	262 40.31%
11	Students being physically disruptive	7 1.08%	25 3.85%	123 18.92%	212 32.62%	283 43.54%
12	Other forms of inappropriate behaviour	15 2.31%	74 11.38%	201 30.92%	234 36.00%	126 19.38%

Findings (Table 4.17) show some of the main predictors for classes to be disrupted.

1. *Students talking out of turn* revealed percentage rates of 43% (278 of 650) in *always – often* categories, with 14% of those in the 'always' category.

2. *Telling off and reprimanding students* exposed rates of 36% (233 of 650) in the *always - often* categories, with 11% of those in the 'always' category.

3. *Students disengaging from classroom activities* exposed rates of 32% (206 of 650) in the *always - often* categories, with 7% of those in the 'always' category.

4. *Students disrupting the flow of the lesson* exposed rates of 30% (195 of 650) in the 'always -often' categories, with 9% of those in the *always* category.

Findings exposed the top four of twelve causes (1-4 above) for classes to be disrupted as; students talking out of turn; telling off and reprimanding students; students disengaging from classroom activities and students disrupting the flow of the lesson. These causes revealed percentage rates of 30% or greater, in the *always – often* categories and may be perceived as environmental predictors of OS due to the frequency of the disruption during class time.

The remaining causes of class disruption (Table 4.17; section 3,6,7,8,9,10,11 & 12) exposed rates of 15% or under in the 'always - often' categories, and under 3.5% in the 'always' category.

3. Students using mobile phones
6. Students verbally abusing other students
7. Students verbally abusing the teacher
8. An emotional atmosphere that is negative and hostile
9. Students being aggressive towards other students
10. Students being aggressive towards the teacher
11. Students being physically disruptive
12. Other forms of inappropriate behaviour (text response)

However, these remaining causes although not as frequent in occurrence, some may be perceived as more serious in nature, and concerning if they manifest during class time (Table 4.17 sections 6-12).

Discussion on findings - Class Disruption

Findings revealed the top four of twelve causes (Table 4.17) for classes to be disrupted as follows: students talking out of turn; telling off and reprimanding students; students disengaging from classroom activities, and students disrupting the flow of the lesson. These findings presented rates of 30% or more, in the *always/often* categories. Therefore, these factors may be perceived as environmental predictors of OS due to the frequency of the disruption caused during class time.

As discussed in the literature review, research has shown that disruptive student behaviour is identified as one of the greatest stressors for teachers, threatening boundaries and challenging their control (Boyle et al., 1995; Hallow, 2010; Justin et al, 2010; Richards, 2012; Tolker and Feitler, 1986). These studies identified the heavy workload of teachers and disruptive behaviour of students as key stressors for post primary teachers. However, a study by Hallow (2010), revealed that Australian teachers' experiences of occupational stress mainly resulted from verbal abuse, threats of physical abuse, dealing with consequences of neglect or abuse of students, refusal to work by a student and dealing with abusive and aggressive parents (Hallow, 2010). Yet, the current study did not report instances of abuse as much as, class disruption, the telling off of students and students disengaging from their work.

Additionally, Justin et al. (2010) identified the main sources of stress experienced by teachers in the United Kingdom as issues relating to student discipline, student motivation and time management (Justin et al., 2010), these findings are more in line with findings from the current study. While Romano et al (2010) identified five major stressful factors for teachers, and student demands were among the five factors listed (Romano et al., 2010). However, the current study identified student issues as a factor in the prevalence/frequency

of OS, after time management issues, workload and administrative duties (Section 4.17, p.178).

Below are some of the comments from the respondents regarding what they perceive as the main predictors of class disruption.

'Outside issues such as family rows, community rows, on-line bullying etc, etc, all fall to the school to solve as it spills into the classroom. The boundary of what is the responsibility of parents, school, the HSE is ever blurred with schools being the usual fall guy for all the wrongs of society.'

'Students who behave like this are often replicating behaviour they see at home. Sometimes they are not aware of what is/is-not appropriate. ... As an ETB school where we MUST take in any student that applies, we often get the students who are removed from other schools, therefore, urban DEIS post primary schools become even more ghettoised.... No wonder there is both a staff shortage in CDETB schools and a drop in numbers attending. The staff who remain are increasingly stressed along with accompanying educational change imperatives and mandates……..The inspectorate come in then with their clipboards to thick their boxes and tear strips off staff regarding coping in extremely challenging circumstances and then scuttle off to the safety of their offices. They often do not offer solutions to the problems they expose...'

'Many of my colleagues have to deal with all of these issues daily from an increasing number of students – particularly male students whom have become increasingly hostile and aggressive in recent years particularly towards female teachers.'

4.5: **Objective 2.3: Organisational Predictors of OS among PPTs in Ireland.**

The third and final section of objective two, explored the following possible organisational predictors of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

There are a range of organisational factors that affect teachers and determine the quality of teaching such as, work conditions, salary scale, retention and recruitment, the status of teaching in society and, the attractiveness of a teaching career for new undergraduate student's (Duff, 2018). However, these factors, can also add to the prevalence and frequency of OS among the profession.

     4.5.1: Type of Teaching Contract held.

     4.5.2: Satisfaction with pay and conditions

     4.5.3: Extra-curricular activities including non-paid working hours.

     4.5.4: Commenced teaching on or after the 1st January 2011?

4.5.1: Type of Teaching Contract Held.

Table 4.18: Breakdown of Teaching Contracts held by PPTs in Ireland.

Answer	%	Count
Permanent full time	69.08%	449
Pro-rata contract/fixed term contract	16.46%	107
Regular part-time contracted teacher (formerly known as pro-rata contracted)	4.31%	28
Temporary whole-time teacher	2.62%	17
Non-casual part-time teacher	0.31%	2
Casual part-time teacher	0.46%	3
Unqualified casual part-time teacher	0.62%	4
Other (please specify) -See table 11.	6.15%	40
Total	100%	650

The cross tabulation (Table 4.19 below) exposed *how often if ever, PPTs experience work related stress*, against the *type of teaching contract held.* This helped establish if the type of teaching contract held, impacted on the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs.

Table 4.19: Teaching Contract cross-tabulated against the Frequency of Occupational Stress Experienced.

🟥 = Row percentages　🟦 = Column percentages

		Q6. What teaching contract do you have?								
		Regular part-time contracted teacher (pro-rata contracted)	Temporary whole-time teacher	Non-casual part-time teacher	Casual part-time teacher	Unqualified casual part-time teacher	Pro-rata contract/fixed term contract	Perman-ent full time	Other (please specify)	Total
Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	**Daily**	**12** 4.72% 42.86%	**2** 0.79% 11.76%	**1** 0.39% 50.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	**2** 0.79% 50.00%	**37** 14.57% 34.58%	**186** 73.23% 41.43%	**14** 5.51% 35.00%	254 100.00% 39.08%
	2-3 times a week	**7** 3.33% 25.00%	**7** 3.33% 41.18%	0 0.00% 0.00%	**1** 0.48% 33.33%	0 0.00% 0.00%	**40** 19.05% 37.38%	**142** 67.62% 31.63%	**13** 6.19% 32.50%	210 100.00% 32.31%
	Once a week	7 7.61% 25.00%	6 6.52% 35.29%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 1.09% 33.33%	1 1.09% 25.00%	14 15.22% 13.08%	56 60.87% 12.47%	7 7.61% 17.50%	92 100.00% 14.15%
	Once a fort-night	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 3.03% 5.88%	1 3.03% 50.00%	1 3.03% 33.33%	0 0.00% 0.00%	5 15.15% 4.67%	23 69.70% 5.12%	2 6.06% 5.00%	33 100.00% 5.08%
	Once a month	1 2.17% 3.57%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 2.17% 25.00%	9 19.57% 8.41%	32 69.57% 7.13%	3 6.52% 7.50%	46 100.00% 7.08%
	Never	1 6.67% 3.57%	1 6.67% 5.88%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 13.33% 1.87%	10 66.67% 2.23%	1 6.67% 2.50%	15 100.00% 2.31%
	Total	28 4.31%	17 2.62%	2 0.31%	3 0.46%	4 0.62%	107 16.46%	**449** 69.08% 100.00%	40 6.15%	650 100.00% 100.00%

Findings - Teaching Contract

Teachers who experienced OS up to 3 times per week exposed percentage rates across the various contract types, from 53% (temporary whole-time contract) to 74% (permanent full-time contract). This exposed a total variance of 21% and a total average variance of 4.2%.

Additionally, teachers who experienced OS on a daily basis revealed percentage rates across the different contract types, ranging from 12% (temporary whole-time contract) to 43% (regular part-time contract). This exposed a total variance of 31% and a total average variance of 6.2% (Table 4.19).

Discussion on findings – Teaching Contract

It should be noted that those on a temporary whole-time contract, experience OS less than any other contract type regarding daily experiences of OS and experiences of OS up to three times per week. Figures show, the occurrence of OS on a daily basis for those on a temporary whole-time contract is 31% lower than those on a regular part-time contract (Table 4.19). The review of literature did not reveal existing research regarding the comparisons between the prevalence of OS and the type of teaching contract held. Therefore, it is recommended that further research be conducted in this area regarding the levels of OS exposed that are associated with certain contract types held (Table 4.19).

Additionally, according to findings, those on a temporary whole-time contract, experience OS less than any other contract type regarding daily experiences of OS and experiences of OS up to three times per week. Figures show, the occurrence of OS on a daily basis for those on a temporary whole-time contract is 31% lower than those on a regular part-time contract (Table 4.19).

4.5.2: **Satisfaction with pay and conditions.**

As discussed in the literature review, Murray (2012) commenting on a report compiled by the European Commission (2011) stated that; in 2011 the salary of Irish teachers was among the worst hit by cutbacks across 34 countries (European Commission, 2011, cited in Murray, 2012). Teachers who commenced work on or after 1st January 2011 started on 13% less than their working colleagues, while those appointed since February 2012 faced an additional drop of 20% due to the suspension of the qualification allowance. Hence the respondents were asked if they were satisfied with their pay and conditions.

Graph 4.2: Are you satisfied with pay & conditions?
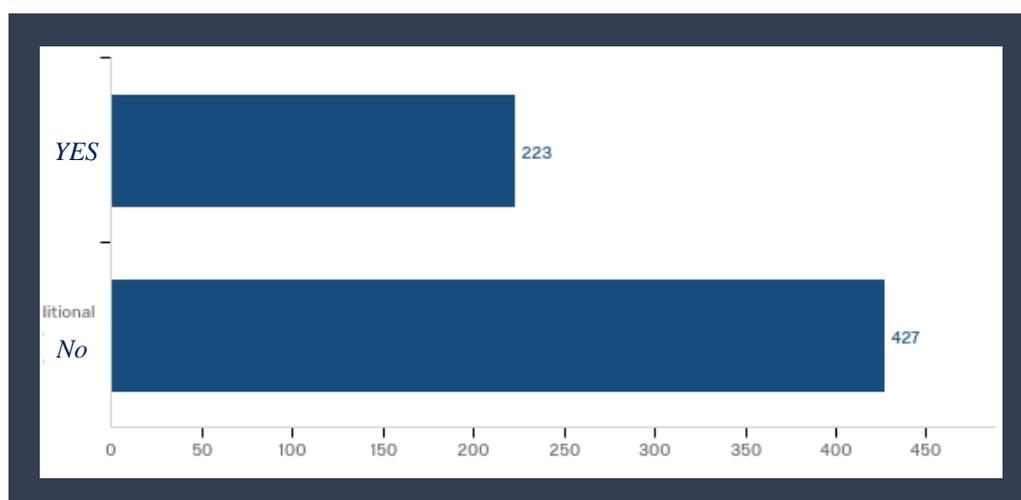
Findings show, 34% (223 of 650) of teachers are satisfied with their pay and conditions whereas 66% (427 of 650) are not (Graph 4.2). A cross tabulation (Table 4.20 below) of findings revealed how often if ever, PPTs experience work related stress, against gender type and satisfaction with pay and conditions. This helped establish if there is a correlation between the three variables.

The cross-tabulation (Table 20) revealed; of the 34% (223 of 650) of teachers who are satisfied with their pay and conditions - 35% of those (223) are female and 32% are male. Of the 66% (427 of 650) who are not satisfied with their pay and conditions – 65% of those (427) are female and 68% are male. Findings show a small variance between gender types regarding satisfaction with pay and conditions, suggesting – a difference in gender type do not impact on a teacher's level of satisfaction with pay and conditions.

Table 4.20: Satisfaction with Pay and Conditions cross-tabulated against the Frequency of Occupational Stress Experienced.

■ = Row percentages   ■ = Column percentage

		Q1. What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						
		Male	**Female**	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
Q8. **Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions?**	Yes	56 25.11% 32.00%	167 74.89% 35.38%	**223** 100% 34.31%	66 29.60% 25.98%	69 30.94% 32.86%	36 16.14% 39.13%	18 8.07% 54.55%	26 11.66% 56.52%	8 3.59% 53.33%	223 100% 34.31%
	No	**119** 27.87% 68.00%	**305** 71.43% 64.62%	**427** 100% 65.69%	**188** 44.03% 74.02%	**141** 33.02% 67.14%	56 13.11% 60.87%	15 3.51% 45.45%	20 4.68% 43.48%	7 1.64% 46.67%	427 100% 65.69%
	Total	**175** 26.92%	**472** 72.62%	650 100%	254 39.08%	210 32.31%	92 14.15%	33 5.08%	46 7.08%	15 2.31%	650 100%

Additionally, 77% (329 of 427) of those who *are not satisfied with their pay and conditions*, experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 44% of those (188 of 427) revealing they experience OS on a daily basis. However, 61% (135 of 223) of PPTs *who are satisfied with their pay and conditions*, experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 30% of those (66 of 223) experiencing OS on a daily basis. Therefore, those who *are not satisfied with their pay and condi*tions are 16%

more likely to experience OS up to 3 times per week, and 14% more likely to experience OS on a daily basis.

Discussion on findings – Satisfaction with pay and conditions

Findings established an association between those who are not satisfied with pay and conditions and the prevalence/frequency OS experienced up to 3 times per week (Table 4.20). Thus suggesting 'pay and conditions' as a possible predictor for PPTs in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland. Findings show a small variance among gender types regarding satisfaction with pay and conditions, suggesting – a difference in gender type do not impact on a teacher's level of satisfaction with pay and conditions.

Findings coincided with the ASTI (2018) study showing that, the most recurrent dominant theme for younger teachers was their dissatisfaction regarding unequal pay scales. They expressed disillusionment, anger and were clear regarding the financial difficulties they were experiencing, with many fearing they would never own their own home or be able to live an independent life. Pre-2010 teachers also expressed their concerns regarding the impact that low pay had on the status of the teaching profession (ASTI, 2018). Duff's (2018) study also found; in Ireland the introduction of pay cuts led to a retention and recruitment crisis within the teaching profession, leading to a decline in the quality of teaching that innovative and excellent education requires (Duff, 2018). These connections and similarities of the current study and existing literature may be associated with, the (adapted) Bioecological Social Systems Theory, that was employed as an overarching theoretical perspective for the current study (Fig. 4.2). This framework illustrates how predictors of OS from different social systems can impact on each other.

The adapted theory suggests that; any one predictor of OS may impact of other systems (DEO) and their stressors, forming groups/high risk factors of OS. An example is pay inequality, this factor may have knock-on effects on many other DEO predictors of OS explored in the current study; staff shortages, workload, additional extra-curricular activities teacher retention and recruitment etc. Once connected, these high-risk cluster groups may need to be explored further to

measure the true extent of their effects on the physical and also the psychosocial aspects of the profession. An example of such connections was found in TUI (2018) showing; 95% of participants from the study agreed that pay inequality had a 'negative or very negative' effect on staff morale within their schools, and when asked if they would advise a younger relative to pursue a career in teaching 52% said no, 36% were not sure and only 12% said yes. Additionally, findings confirmed that almost half of post primary teachers who commenced teaching after 1st January 2011, stated that it was unlikely or very unlikely that they would still be working in the profession in ten years' time. However, if pay equality was reinstated, 94% stated that it was very likely or likely, that they would remain in the profession (TUI, 2018). Findings demonstrate how different systems can impact on each other, organisational (salary scale) and environmental (staff morale) and may lead to damaging outcomes – teachers leaving the profession (personal – demographic).

Respondents to the current study also had the opportunity to present optional text responses regarding *their satisfaction or not, with their pay and conditions.* Below is a sample - 7 of 188, of the responses collected (Additional comments - Appendix 4.3).

> *'…. the educational standard of students coming in from Primary is abysmal and plummeting fast. WE ARE NOT MIRACLE WORKERS. And more and more we are expected to take on a parenting/wellbeing role. THIS IS NOT OUR JOB.'*

> *'Although some argue the pay issue does not fall under discrimination, I feel it is clearly discrimination. We do the same job but because of the circumstances of the country at the time we qualified as teachers (which we had absolutely nothing to do with as we were not in a position to borrow second mortgages from the bank or buy several houses) we are victimised by being paid less. It is outrageous.'*

> *'No, very unsatisfied. I need to work a second job to have enough to live on. My pay is 350 nett a week from a 22hour contract.'*

> *'We do not get paid enough for the work we do. Three months holidays is a myth. I spend my summer supervising exams and correcting to supplement my wages. During the year I work above and beyond the mythical 22 hours.'*

'...1. I think the Croke park hours are counterproductive regarding teacher's professional time and trust. Croke Park hours underpins a theme of not trusting teachers by the powers-that-be… the inspectorate are answerable to no-one but themselves and the minister. they have absolute power and can do much harm (as well as good). there should be an independent body to whom they are answerable…the new curricular changes for junior cycle are largely welcome but many elements are not thought through. 40 minutes per week of professional time for each individual teacher regardless of the number of JC subjects that you teach or the assessments you are involved in and the timing of such assessments is poorly thought through and badly planned. the transfer of these JC students to the tyranny of the LC (The university entrance exam) is criminal. They go from a student-centred assessment to a subject, exam centred system.'

'I am astonished at the fact that the situation has not been resolved yet and that we are STILL being discriminated against it is an absolutely appalling situation.'

The table below (Table 4.21) presents a thematic analysis representing the 188 additional narrative responses collected from the respondents, showing some reasons why teachers are not satisfied with their pay and conditions.

Table 4.21: Thematic table displaying top 12 responses regarding satisfaction with pay and conditions.

#	Additional Comments from respondents 'Not happy with their pay & conditions'.	Count
1.	Croke Park hours, Administration add considerably to my workload	54
2.	Disheartened by pay inequality	36
3.	Hours worked/qualifications do not equate to my salary	35
4.	Pay inequality is discrimination	28
5.	Conditions & Expectations have changed immeasurably over the years	27
6.	Conditions are tough	14
7.	Extra-curricular hours on a regular basis	14
8.	Cannot meet living costs	10

9.	Never got pay restoration	10
10.	Pay inequality causing division within school	9
11.	Pension scheme is less than satisfactory compared to those who started before 2013	9
12.	Victimised by pay inequality	8

4.5.3: Extra-curricular activities including non-paid working hours.

On average, how many non-paid hours do you work per week on extra-curricular activities, class preparation, supervision, grading work etc?

Table 4.22: Additional hours worked by PPTs per week.

Answer	Percentage	Count
10-15	33.23%	216
5-10	29.85%	194
15-20	21.23%	138
More than 20 (additional comment optional)	11.38%	74
Under 5	4.31%	28
Total	100%	650

The table above (4.22) illustrates how many non-contracted extra-curricular hours PPTs work per week.

The cross tabulation below (Table 4.23) represents how often if ever, PPTs experience work related stress against - the amount of non-paid working hours they complete per week. This will establish if there is a link between the frequency of OS experienced by PPTs and the amount of non-paid extra-curricular hours PPTs work.

Table 4.23: Hours per week on extra-curricular activities, against - the frequency of occupational stress experienced

🟥 = Row percentages   🟦 = Column percentages

		Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						
		Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
Q9. On average, how many non-paid hours do you work per week on extra-curricular activities, class prep & corrections	Under 5	5 17.86% 1.97%	9 32.14% 4.29%	4 14.29% 4.35%	4 14.29% 12.12%	5 17.86% 10.87%	1 3.57% 6.67%	28 100% 4.31%
	5-10	53 27.32% 20.87%	68 35.05% 32.38%	34 17.53% 36.96%	12 6.19% 36.36%	21 10.82% 45.65%	6 3.09% 40.00%	194 100% 29.85%
	10-15	83 38.43% 32.68%	77 35.65% 36.67%	31 14.35% 33.70%	9 4.17% 27.27%	11 5.09% 23.91%	5 2.31% 33.33%	216 100% 33.23%
	15-20	68 49.28% 26.77%	40 28.99% 19.05%	17 12.32% 18.48%	4 2.90% 12.12%	8 5.80% 17.39%	1 0.72% 6.67%	138 100% 21.23%
	More than 20	45 60.81% 17.72%	16 21.62% 7.62%	6 8.11% 6.52%	4 5.41% 12.12%	1 1.35% 2.17%	2 2.70% 13.33%	74 100% 11.38%
	Total	254 39.08%	210 32.31%	92 14.15%	33 5.08%	46 7.08%	15 2.31%	650 100% 100%

Extra-Curricular & Non-Paid working hours.

Findings suggest: as the amount of non-paid extra-curricular working hours increased (from 5 hours or less to 20 hours or more per week), so too did the frequency of OS among the profession. The frequency of OS experienced, increased steadily among PPTs, from 50% at the minimum level of 'extra non-paid hours worked (*5 hours or less*) to 81%, representing the top level of extra non-paid hours worked (*20 hours or more*). Thus, revealing that; working non-paid extra-curricular hours, is a predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland - as the amount of non-paid working hours increases, so too will the frequency of OS experienced by the profession (Table 4.23).

Discussion on findings – Extra-curricular non-paid working hours

As discussed in the literature review, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2016) found that; post-primary teachers in Ireland teach 735 hours per annum, compared to the OECDs average of 669 hours and the European average of 642 hours. Additionally, the 935 hours allocated for instruction time per secondary school student in Ireland, is far greater than the OECD average of 915 hours, and the European average of 895 hours (TUI, 2016). Findings from the current study suggests that working extra-curricular non-paid working hours may be directly linked to the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession (Table 4.23).

Additionally, findings regarding the amount of additional hour work by the respondents of the current study, coincide with the ASTI (2018) study that revealed; 92% of participants teach full-time – 21.20 hours per week comprising of 32 class sessions of 40 minutes per class. However, the typical working week of a full-time post-primary teacher extends beyond 21 hours per week as teachers on average spend 20.07 hours per week engaging in non-teaching activities. The additional 20.07 hours are spent engaging in non-teaching duties including: preparation, lesson planning, and assignment/homework marking, providing feedback, completing pastoral care duties and attending school meetings. Additionally, a significant 89% of respondents, stated that they could not complete their non-teaching duties during the school day, with 15% stating that they had an acceptable workload with just 1 in 4 suggesting that they had a good work-life balance. Lacking in energy, feeling tired and frustration were some of the classic symptoms of occupational stress that caused discontentment within the profession (ASTI, 2018).

The current study also coincided with finding from the TUI (2018) study that found; 91.5% of respondents were involved in unpaid, extra-curricular activities outside of timetabled hours, such as drama, sports, musicals, debating; with 35% putting in an extra 2 hours a week, 39.5% up to four extra hours a week and 25.5% in excess of four extra hours a week. Additionally, 93% of respondents agreed with the statement that, the morale of teachers had fallen in recent years (TUI, 2018).

Below are some of the additional Comments from the respondents relating to Extra-curricular and non-paid hours.

'Depending on time of year. I put in the school drama and fund raiser for it. Normally I spend the midterm and one week at Easter working, not counting evenings and weekends. I also offer seniors a free yoga class.'

'I arrive at school early, stay late and spend any free lessons either supervising, preparing for work or grading. A large portion of my grading work has to be completed at the weekend or in the evenings as there just isn't sufficient time during school time.'

'I feel the amount of bureaucracy on top of preparation and corrects is most unsustainable. Workload at the moment is most unsustainable. There is a lot of paperwork interfering with what the job should be about.'

'I job share so teach 10 hours and 40 mins- however I work an extra 20-25 hours a week on top of that - planning, class preparation and correcting.'

'I teach English and correction time is consuming. I run three hours of extra English each week and spend at least 3 hours per evening preparing work. I run two clubs during lunch time and revision courses each midterm and school holiday.'

'Three hours every evening, sometimes more. Another six at least over the weekend. Have gone full terms without a day away from schoolwork. I did 17 hours working on debates material last weekend due to poor spacing out of debates by the organisation running the competition, only a week between two debates.'

'Huge volumes of extra bureaucracy with recording data, planning, school self-assessment, ridiculous new junior cert learning outcome planning and paperwork.'

'Teacher of English all grades up to LC HL- large class sizes - spend 3 hours per night marking before other class preparation- usually spend most if not all of Sunday preparing work.'

'I am a Deputy Principal so 30-40 hrs on top of the 22hr. IE 50-70 hr week.'

4.5.4: Q7. Did you enter the profession before/after 1st Jan 2011?

The cross tabulation (Table 4.24) below displays how often if ever, PPTs experience work related stress, against the year they entered the teaching profession; to establish whether different pay scales that were introduced in January 2011 is a predictor in the prevalence of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland.

Table 4.24: Did you enter the teaching profession on or after the 1st January 2011? *(Full analysis – Appendix 4.4)*

🟥 = *Row percentages*   🟦 = *Column percentages*

		Q1. What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times per week
Q7. Did you enter the teaching profession on or after the 1st January 2011?	After the 1st of January 2011	55 30.90% 31.43%	121 67.98% 25.64%	178 100% 27.38%	66 37.08% 25.98%	63 35.39% 30.00%
	Before 1st January 2011	120 25.42% 68.57%	351 74.36% 74.36%	472 100% 72.62%	188 39.83% 74.02%	147 31.14% 70.00%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%	254 39.08% 100%	210 32.31% 100%

Overall findings revealed (Table 4.24) 71% (335 of 650) who commenced work *before* January 2011 experienced OS up to 3 times per week, with 40% of those (188 of 472) experiencing OS on a daily basis. Compared to 72% (129 of 178) who commenced work *after* January 2011, who experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 37% of those (66 of 178) experiencing OS on a daily basis. Hence, no association was found between the commencement of work date (regarding pay cuts introduced in January 2011 for new teaching employees) and the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced. However, high levels of OS were exposed regardless of commencement date of employment.

Manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland

4.6: **Objective 3 - What are the predominant manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland?**

    4.6.1: Lack emotional resources to cope with your working environment:

    4.6.2: Lack motivation at work.

    4.6.3: Lack of accomplishment from your work

4.7: **How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress? (Sections 1-14).**

    4.7.1: Loss of concentration, tiredness, anger.

    4.7.2: Disturbed sleep, Forgetfulness, Low self-esteem.

    4.7.3: Headaches, Home/Family life upset, Thoughts of early retirement/leaving the profession.

    4.7.4: Deterioration in work, Low motivation, Loss of energy, Depression.

    4.7.5: Summary of Findings Objective 3.2: Sections 1-1

4.8: **Occupational Satisfaction summary of findings:**

4.9: **Thoughts of changing career**

4.10: **Discussion on the predominant manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland.**

4.6: Objective 3: How often do you experience the following? (Sections 1-3).

4.6.1: *Lack emotional resources to cope with your work environment:*

Table:4.25: Main findings: Lack emotional resources to cope with work environment. *(Full cross-tabulation of findings - Appendix 4.4)*

🟥 = Row percentages   🟦 = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week
Q18.1 How often do you experience the following? **Lack emotional resources to cope with your work environment**	**Always**	14 31.11% 8.00%	31 68.89% 6.57%	45 100% 6.92%	37 82.22% 14.57%	7 15.56% 3.33%
	Often	37 22.29% 21.14%	128 77.11% 27.12%	166 100% 25.54%	95 57.23% 37.40%	50 30.12% 23.81%
	Sometimes	58 25.00% 33.14%	173 74.57% 36.65%	232 100% 35.69%	81 34.91% 31.89%	103 44.40% 49.05%
	Total	**175 Male respondents**	**472 Female respondents**			

#	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
1	Lack emotional resources to cope with your work environment	45 6.92%	166 25.54%	232 35.69%	175 26.92%	32 4.92%	650

The cross-tabulation (Table 4.25) presents findings on how often PPTs *lack emotional resources to cope with their work environment* against - *gender type* and *how often they experience work related stress*. This will help establish if, the *lack of emotional resources* is a predictor and/or manifestation (emotional strain) of OS among PPTs in Ireland, and if there is a correlation among the different factors. Additionally, any variance among gender types are shown.

The cross-tabulation exposed: 32% (211 of 650) of respondents 'often/always' *lack emotional resources* to cope with their work environment; including 29% (51 of 175) of male respondents and 34% (159 of 472) female respondents. These findings exposed that female PPTs are 6% more likely to *lack emotional resources* in the always/often category, compared to their male counterparts. Of the 32% who lacked emotional resources to cope with their work environment, 93% (189 of 211) of those revealed that they experience OS up to 3 times per week; with 52% (132 of 254) experiencing OS on a daily basis (Table 4.25).

Cross tabulation also revealed that, 36% of respondents 'sometimes' *lack emotional resources* to cope with their work environment; including 33% (58 of 175) of the male respondents and 36% (173 of 472) of the female respondents. Of those 79% (184 of 232) experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 32% of those (81 of 232) experiencing OS on a daily basis.

Findings exposed an association between the 'lack of emotional resources to cope with the work environment' and the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs. Hence, the prevalence of OS among the profession, may cause emotional strain – *a manifestation of OS* among the profession. However, the lack of emotional resources can also be a predictor in the prevalence of OS among the profession; consequently, the prevalence of OS may also be a manifestation of the lack of emotional resources to cope with the work environment.

Additionally, female PPTs are 6% more likely - 'often/always' to *lack emotional resources* compared to their male counterparts.

Below are some of the comments from PPTs regarding their experiences of lacking emotional resources to cope at work.

'I have trained myself and been to therapy to develop a skillset to deal with my emotions of stress and anxiety. This is my personal decision, but I feel some others may not know how to handle it and don't know where to turn.'

'I have been through a very acrimonious separation and have been going to counselling the last few years to help me get through this. This has really helped me with stress from work as well.'

'I actually don't know what an "emotional resource" is but tbh I instinctively dislike the sound of it. It's part of what I dislike about the mountains of bullshit I have to wade through in syllabus descriptions now.....if it's a person to talk to or reading/multimedia material then why not say that....if it's not them I'm at a loss.'

'No social events provided for teachers provided. Team building days that are not CPD would nice.'

'There are people to whom one can talk if needed, but they are not going to write up my lesson pans and reinvent the wheel which is what is required of late.'

4.6.2: **Lack motivation at work.**

Table:4.26: Main findings: *Lack motivation at work'* **to cope with your**

working environment. *(Full cross-tabulation of findings - Appendix 4.5)*

🟥 = Row percentages   🟦 = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week
Q18.2 How often do you experience the following? **Lack of motivation at work**	Always	**9** 50.00% 5.14%	**9** 50.00% 1.91%	**18** 100.00% 2.77%	14 77.78% 5.51%	3 16.67% 1.43%
	Often	**38** 31.67% 21.71%	**82** 68.33% 17.37%	**120** 100.00% 18.46%	63 52.50% 24.80%	42 35.00% 20.00%
	Some-times	**72** 24.32% 41.14%	**222** 75.00% 47.03%	**296** 100.00% 45.54%	116 39.19% 45.67%	96 32.43% 45.71%
	Total	175 Male Respondents	472 Female Respondents			

#	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
2	Lack of motivation at work	18 2.77%	12 18.46%	296 45.54%	176 27.08%	40 6.15%	40 6.15%

The cross-tabulation (Table 4.26) above present's findings on how often PPTs
lack motivation at work against *gender type* and *how often they experience work
related stress.* This will help establish if, the *lack of motivation* is manifestation

of OS among PPTs, and if there is a correlation among the different factors. Additionally, any variance among gender types are presented.

The cross-tabulation revealed: 21% of respondents 'often/always' *lack motivation at work* up to 3 times per week: including 27% (47 of 175) of male respondents and 19% (91 of 472) female respondents: Suggesting that - male PPTs are 8% more likely to experience 'lack of motivation at work' than their female counterparts.

Of the 21% who 'often/always' lacked motivation at work, 52% (122 of 210), experience OS up to 3 times per week; with 7% (17 of 254) of those experiencing OS on a daily basis.

The cross-tabulation also showed – 46% of respondents 'sometimes' *lacked motivation at work,* including 41% (72 of 175) of male respondents and 47% (222 of 472) of female respondents. Of those 71% (212 of 296) experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 39% (116 of 296) of those experiencing OS on a daily basis.

Findings show a correlation between the lack of motivation at work - and the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs. Hence, the lack of motivation at work may be considered a manifestation of OS among the profession. Additionally, male PPTs are 8% more likely to experience *lack of motivation at work than their* female counterparts.

Hence, initial findings revealing, female teachers are 9.5% more likely to experience OS up to 3 times per week (Table 4.5), is contradicted by these findings, suggesting that male teachers are 8% more likely to experience OS due to lack of motivation, compared to their female counterparts. Data analysis also shows, a correlation between lack of motivation at work and the prevalence/frequency of OS (Table 26). Hence, male PPTs are 8% more likely to experience, lack of motivation at work due to the prevalence of OS than their female counterparts.

Below are some of the comments from PPTs regarding their experiences of lacking motivation at work.

> *'Put a lot of energy in when I started the job and felt at times my efforts were overlooked or unappreciated. The lack of job satisfaction and the dramatic increase in paperwork has drained my motivation'.*

> *'When I'm particularly tired or have had a difficult class where students were disengaged and difficult and I feel helpless.'*

> *'It's hard to get motivated when you have such a long list of things to do.'*

> *'I love my job, it's not lack of motivation, just sometimes I feel I can't keep up with/manage my workload which means I end up being overwhelmed and either taking a step back, or putting things on hold until I can get myself back in order'.*

> *'Up until last year it would have been rarely/never, now it is more frequent.'*

4.6.3: *Lack accomplishment from your work.*

Table:4.27: Main findings: *Lack of accomplishment from your work. (Full cross-tabulation of findings - Appendix 4.6)*

🟥 = Row percentages 🟦 = Column percentages

| | | Q1. What is your gender? | | | Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress? | |
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week
Q18.3 How often do you experience the following? **Lack of accomplishment from your work**	Always	12 33.33% 6.86%	24 66.67% 5.08%	36 100.00% 5.54%	29 80.56% 11.42%	5 13.89% 2.38%
	Often	46 33.09% 26.29%	92 66.19% 19.49%	139 100.00% 21.38%	79 56.83% 31.10%	45 32.37% 21.43%
	Some-times	57 22.44% 32.57%	196 77.17% 41.53%	254 100.00% 39.08%	100 39.37% 39.37%	95 37.40% 45.24%
	Total	**175 Male respondents**	**472 Female respondents**			

#	Question	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
3	Lack of accomplishment from your work	36 5.54%	13 21.38%	254 39.08%	167 25.69%	54 8.31%	650

The cross-tabulation (Table 4.27) above shows how often PPTs *'Lack of accomplishment from their work'* against 'gender type' and 'how often they experience work related stress'. This will help establish if the *'Lack of accomplishment from one's work'* is a predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs, and if there is a correlation among the different factors. Additionally, any variance among gender types will be exposed.

The cross-tabulation displays: 27% of the respondents 'often/always' *lacked accomplishment from their work:* including 34% (58 of 175) of male respondents and 25% (116 of 472) of female respondents. Revealing that, female PPTs are 7% more likely to experience 'lack of accomplishment from their work' than their male counterparts. Of the 27% (175 of 650) who 'often/always' *'lacked accomplishment from their work'* 92% (158 of 175) revealed they experience OS up to 3 times per week; with 14% revealing experiences of OS on a daily basis. Findings also revealed – 39% of the respondents 'sometimes' *lacked accomplishment from their work*, including 33% (57 of 175) of male respondents, and 42% (196 of 472) of female respondents. Of those, 45% (95 of 210) experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 39% (100 of 254) of those experiencing OS on a daily basis (Table 4.27).

Findings show a correlation between *'lack of accomplishment from your work'* and the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs. Hence, the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession, may cause a lack of accomplishment from ones' work, for PPTs and therefore may be considered a manifestation of the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession.

Summary of findings from sections 1.2 & 3 – Manifestations of OS.
PPTs experience *emotional Strain* due to lack of emotional resources to cope with OS. Female PPTs are 6% more likely to experience emotional stress compared to their male counterparts (Table 4.25).

PPTs *Lack motivation* due to OS. Male PPTs are 8% more likely to lack motivation compared to their female counterparts (Table 4.26).

PPTs *Lack accomplishment* from work. Female PPTs are 7% more likely to experience the lack of accomplishment from their work compared to their male counterparts (Table 4.27).

Table 4.28: Objective 3

How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress?

Section 4.7.1 - Loss of concentration, tiredness, anger.

		Q1. What is your gender?		
		Male	Female	Total
Q20.1 Loss of concentration	Always	96 26.02% 54.86%	271 73.44% 57.42%	369 100% 56.77%
	Some-times	61 28.64% 34.86%	152 71.36% 32.20%	213 100% 32.77%
	Never	18 26.47% 10.29%	49 72.06% 10.38%	68 100% 10.46%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%
Q20.2 Tearfulness	Always	36 12.08% 20.57%	261 87.58% 55.30%	298 100% 45.85%
	Some-times	34 21.66% 19.43%	122 77.71% 25.85%	157 100% 24.15%
	Never	105 53.85% 60.00%	89 45.64% 18.86%	195 100% 30.00%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%
Q20.3 Anger	Always	101 26.23% 57.71%	283 73.51% 59.96%	385 100% 59.23%
	Some times	56 28.43% 32.00%	141 71.57% 29.87%	197 100% 30.31%
	Never	18 26.47% 10.29%	48 70.59% 10.17%	68 100% 10.46%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%

█ = Row percentages

█ = Column percentage

Q20.1: Findings show; 57% (369 of 650) respondents *'always'* experience *'loss of concentration'* due to OS, with 33% (213) revealing they *'sometimes'* experience *'loss of concentration'* due to OS. Minimal variance was exposed across gender types.

Q20.2: Findings revealed; 46% of PPTs 'always' experience *'tearfulness'* due to OS, with 35% more female PPTs experience *'tearfulness'* compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, 24% of PPTs 'sometimes' experience *'tearfulness'* with 6% more female PPTs experiencing *'tearfulness'* compared to their male counterparts.

Q20.3: Findings displayed; 59% of PPTs 'always' experience 'anger' due to OS, with 30% of PPTs experiencing 'anger' *sometimes,* due to OS. Minimal variance was exposed across gender types

Table 4.29: - Objective 3

Q20. How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress?

Section 4.7.2: - *Disturbed sleep, forgetfulness, low self-esteem.*

🟥 = Row percentages

🟦 = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?		
		Male	Female	Total
Q20.4 Disturbed sleep	Always	98 / 23.90% / 56.00%	311 / 75.85% / 65.89%	410 / 100% / 63.08%
	Some-times	58 / 32.95% / 33.14%	117 / 66.48% / 24.79%	176 / 100% / 27.08%
	Never	19 / 29.69% / 10.86%	44 / 68.75% / 9.32%	64 / 100% / 9.85%
	Total	175 / 26.92% / 100%	472 / 72.62% / 100%	650 / 100% / 100%
Q20.5 Forgetfulness	Always	72 / 23.61% / 41.14%	232 / 76.07% / 49.15%	305 / 100% / 46.92%
	Some-times	71 / 30.08% / 40.57%	164 / 69.49% / 34.75%	236 / 100.00% / 36.31%
	Never	32 / 29.36% / 18.29%	76 / 69.72% / 16.10%	109 / 100.00% / 16.77%
	Total	175 / 26.92% / 100%	472 / 72.62% / 100%	650 / 100.00% / 100%
Q20.6 Low self esteem	Always	62 / 24.12% / 35.43%	194 / 75.49% / 41.10%	257 / 100% / 39.54%
	Some-times	65 / 25.39% / 37.14%	190 / 74.22% / 40.25%	256 / 100% / 39.38%
	Never	48 / 35.04% / 27.43%	88 / 64.23% / 18.64%	137 / 100% / 21.08%
	Total	175 / 26.92% / 100%	472 / 72.62% / 100%	650 / 100% / 100%

Q20.4: Findings revealed; 63% (410) PPTs 'always' experience 'disturbed sleep' due to OS, with female PPTs experiencing 'disturbed sleep' 10% more than their male counterparts. Additionally, 27% of PPTs experience 'disturbed sleep' *sometimes* due to OS, with male PPTs experiencing 'disturbed sleep' 8% more than their female counterparts in the 'sometimes' category.

Q20.5: Findings exposed – 47% of PPTs 'always' experience 'forgetfulness' due to OS, with female PPTs experiencing 'forgetfulness' 8% more than male PPTs. Additionally, 36% of PPTs revealed they experience 'forgetfulness' sometimes due to OS, with male PPTs experiencing 'forgetfulness' 6% more than female PPTs – '*sometimes'* category.

Q20.6: Findings, show – 40% of PPTs 'always' experience *'low self-esteem'* due to workplace stress. Additionally, 39% of PPTs experience 'low self-esteem' *sometimes* due to OS. Minimal variance was found across gender types in this category.

Table 4.30: - Objective 3
Q20. How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress?
Section - 4.7.3 - headaches, home/family life upset, thoughts of retirement/leaving the profession.

		Q1. What is your gender?		
		Male	Female	Total
Q20.7 Headaches	Always	59 20.77% 33.71%	223 78.52% 47.25%	284 100% 43.69%
	Some-times	56 32.18% 32.00%	118 67.82% 25.00%	174 100% 26.77%
	Never	60 31.25% 34.29%	131 68.23% 27.75%	192 100% 29.54%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%
Q20.8 Home/ Family life upset	Always	65 24.16% 37.14%	204 75.84% 43.22%	269 100% 41.38%
	Some-times	56 26.42% 32.00%	156 73.58% 33.05%	212 100% 32.62%
	Never	54 31.95% 30.86%	112 66.27% 23.73%	169 100% 26.00%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%
Q20.9 Thoughts of early retirement/ or leaving the profession	Always	86 26.30% 49.14%	241 73.70% 51.06%	327 100% 50.31%
	Some-times	41 25.00% 23.43%	121 73.78% 25.64%	164 100% 25.23%
	Never	48 30.19% 27.43%	110 69.18% 23.31%	159 100% 24.46%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%

Q20.7: Findings revealed - 44% of PPTs 'always' experience *'headaches'* due to OS, with female PPTs experiencing 'headaches' 13.5% more than male PPTs. Additionally, 27% of PPTs experience *'headaches'* 'sometimes' due to OS, with male PPTs experiencing *'headaches'* 7% more than female PPTs – 'sometimes' category.

Q20.8: Findings revealed - 41% of PPTs 'always' experience *'home/family life upset'* with female PPTs experiencing *'home family life upset'* due to OS, 6% more than male PPTs. Additionally, 33% of PPTs revealed they experience *'home/family life upset'* due to OS' *'sometimes'* with minimal variance exposed among gender types.

Q20.9: Findings exposed – 50% of PPTs *'always'* experienced *'thoughts of early retirement or leaving the profession'.* Additionally, 25% of PPTs revealed they 'sometimes' experienced these thoughts. Minimal variance was exposed across gender types.

Table 4.31: - Objective 3
Q20. How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress?
Section 4.7.4: *Deterioration of work; Low motivation; Loss of energy; Depression.*

		Q1. What is your gender?		
		Male	Female	Total
Q20.10 Deterioration in work	Always	59 29.50% 33.71%	141 70.50% 29.87%	200 100% 30.77%
	Some-times	67 25.38% 38.29%	196 74.24% 41.53%	264 100% 40.62%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	650 100% 100%
Q20.11 Low motivation	Always	65 26.75% 37.14%	178 73.25% 37.71%	243 100% 37.38%
	Some-times	80 26.85% 45.71%	216 72.48% 45.76%	298 100% 45.85%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%
Q20.12 Loss of energy	Always	81 24.62% 46.29%	248 75.38% 52.54%	329 100% 50.62%
	Some-times	71 27.31% 40.57%	187 71.92% 39.62%	260 100% 40.00%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%
Q20.13 Depression	Always	43 27.92% 24.57%	110 71.43% 23.31%	154 100% 23.69%
	Some-times	36 22.50% 20.57%	124 77.50% 26.27%	160 100% 24.62%
	Total	175 26.92% 100%	472 72.62% 100%	650 100% 100%

Q20.10: findings revealed - 31% of PPTs 'always' *experience 'deterioration in their work'* due to OS; with male PPTs 4% more likely to 'always' experience *'deterioration in their work '*due *to OS,* compared to their female counterparts. 41% of PPTs revealed they 'sometimes' experience 'deterioration in their work' due to OS, with minimal variance exposed across gender types.

Q20.12: findings revealed 37% of PPTs 'always' experienced 'low motivation' due to OS; with 46% of PPTs experiencing 'low motivation' *'sometimes'*. Minimal variance was shown across gender types.

Q20.13: findings revealed - 51% of PPTs 'always' experienced '*loss of energy'* due to OS. With female PPTs *always* experiencing 'loss of energy 6% more than their male counterparts. 40% of PPTs experiencing 'loss of energy' *'sometimes'*, with minimal variance was shown across gender types.

Q20.14: findings revealed 24% of PPTs 'always' experience '*depression'* due to OS; with minimal variance across gender types. 25% of PPTs experience 'depression' *'sometimes'* due to OS, with female PPTs 6% more likely to experience 'depression' sometimes. Compared to their male counterparts.

4.7.5: Summary of findings – Objective 3 Sections 1-13:

The following levels of conditions were exposed as possible manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

- 57% of PPTs *always* experience *Loss of concentration,* due to occupational stress - minimal variance was revealed across gender types.

- 46% Of PPTs *always* experience *tearfulness,* due to occupational stress, with 35% more female PPTs experience 'tearfulness' compared to their male counterparts.

- 59% Of PPTs *always* experience *anger,* due to occupational stress, minimal variance was displayed across gender types (Table 4.28)

- 63% Of PPTs *always* experience *disturbed sleep,* due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing 'disturbed sleep' 10% more than their male counterparts.

- 47% Of PPTs *always* experience *forgetfulness,* due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing 'forgetfulness' 8% more than their male counterparts.

- 40% Of PPTs *always* experience *Low self-esteem'*, due to occupational stress, minimal variance was shown across gender types in this category (Table 4.29)

- 44% Of PPTs *always* experience 'headaches', due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing 'headaches' 13.5% more than their male counterparts.

- 41% Of PPTs *always* experience *home/family life upset*, due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing *'home family life upset'* due to OS, 6% more than their male counterparts.

- 50% Of PPTs *always* experience *thoughts of early retirement or leaving the profession*, due to occupational stress, minimal variance was shown across gender types (Table 4.30).

- 31% Of PPTs *always* experience *deterioration in work,* due to occupational stress, with minimal variance revealed across gender types.
- 37% Of PPTs *always* experience *low motivation*, due to occupational stress, with minimal variance exposed across gender types.
- 51% Of PPTs *always* experience *Loss of energy*, due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing '*loss of energy'* 6% more than their male counterparts.
- 24% Of PPTs *always* experience *depression* due to occupational stress, minimal variance was shown across gender types (Table 4.31).

Respondents were given the opportunity to present a text response regarding; what manifestations of OS they have experienced: 92 responses in total were collected revealing some additional manifestations for PPTs in Ireland. Table 4.32 below presents a thematic presentation of these findings:

Table 4.32: Thematic table of narrative responses from respondents re: Additional manifestations of OS experienced by PPTs.

What Irish PPTs have experience as a result of occupational stress.	Percentage
Anxiety, burnout, frustration, helplessness, exasperation, fatigue, hurt, anger & isolation.	31%
Physical pain, muscle pain, depression, illness, physical & mental exhaustion.	16%
Undervalued by management.	10%
Workload, overloaded, administration.	8%
Poor management, bullied by management & staff.	8%
Considering early retirement, career break, job-share.	4.5%
Gender inequality & salary.	2%
Multiple roles, new initiatives.	2%
No work-life balance.	2%
Parents behaving in an aggressive/threatening manner.	2%
Weight gain.	2%
Should be retirement options like the defence forces/Gardaí.	2%
Soul destroying/suicidal.	2%
Would not recommend the profession to my children.	2%

4.8: **Objective 3.3: Occupational Satisfaction.**

Table 4.33: Q23. Occupational Satisfaction – Sections 1 -6.

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	In most ways my job is close to my ideal	94 14.46%	249 38.31%	165 25.38%	121 18.62%	21 3.23%	650
2	The conditions of my job are excellent	36 5.54%	136 20.92%	198 30.46%	217 33.38%	63 9.69%	650
3	I am satisfied with my job	71 10.92%	290 44.62%	153 23.54%	120 18.46%	16 2.46%	650
4	I am happy with my professional progress	78 12.00%	273 42.00%	123 18.92%	133 20.46%	43 6.62%	650
5	If I was only choosing my profession now it would not be teaching	105 16.15%	132 20.31%	145 22.31%	161 24.77%	107 16.46%	650
6	I would recommend teaching as a satisfying career	59 9.08%	194 29.85%	183 28.15%	140 21.54%	74 11.38%	650

Occupational Satisfaction summary of findings:

Findings reveal the various levels of 'Occupational Satisfaction' according to certain variables/factors (Table 4.33: sections 1-6 above).

Q24.1: - 53% (343 of 650) respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that *'in most ways their job is close to their ideal'* compared to 22% (142 of 650) who 'disagree/strongly disagree with the statement.

Q24.2: - 26% (172 of 650) respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that *'the conditions of my job are excellent'* compared to 43% (280 of 650) who disagree/strongly disagree' with the statement.

Q24.3: - 55% (361 of 650) respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that *'I am satisfied with my job'* compared to 21% (136 of 650) who 'disagree/strongly disagree with the statement.

Q24.4: - 54% (351 of 650) respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that *'I am happy with my professional progress'* compared to 33% (176 of 650) who disagree/strongly disagree' with the statement.

Q24.5: - 36% (137 of 650) respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that '*If I was only choosing my profession now it would not be teaching'* compared to 41% (168 of 650) who 'disagree/strongly disagree with the statement.

Q24.6: - 40% (253 of 650) respondents 'agree/strongly agree' that *'I would recommend teaching as a satisfying career'* compared to 33% (214 of 650) who disagree/strongly disagree' with the statement.

Findings showed that overall, PPTs are satisfied with their work, however 43% did reveal that the conditions of their job are not ideal.

Respondents had the option of leaving a text response to Q24.6: 'I would recommend teaching as a satisfying career'. The table below (4.34) displays some of their responses:

Table 4.34: Text responses – Occupational Satisfaction:

Would you recommend teaching as a career choice? (& overall job satisfaction among PPTs in Ireland).	
Not Anymore	45
Extra work & administrative duties make teaching a lot less satisfying	10
I love teaching but too much administrative duties now.	5
Pay inequality	5
Teaching is too stressful	4
Bureaucratic nonsense	3
It is satisfying in helping others	3
Contract issues	2
No sense of professional development	2
Tough thankless job	2
Expensive oversubscribed 'training'	1
I wish I had done something else	1
I'd feel bad and disingenuous were I to recommend teaching to anyone	1
No job satisfaction	1
Too many meetings about meetings	1
Recommend teaching - would need their head examined.	1

4.9: **Thoughts of changing career.**

Table 4.35: Have you ever thought of changing career?

Answer	%	Count
Yes (comment optional)	65.38%	425
No (comment optional)	34.62%	225
Total	100%	650

Analysis of findings show that 65% of PPTs have thought of changing career in comparison to 35% who have not.

Table 4.36: Cross-tabulation: Have you ever thought of changing career?

■ = Row percentages   ■ = Column percentages

		Q1 What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week
Q23. Have you ever thought of changing career?	Yes	**121** 28.47% 69.14%	**302** 71.06% 63.98%	**425** 100% 65.38%	**204** 48.00% 80.31%	**136** 32.00% 64.76%
	No	**54** 24.00% 30.86%	**170** 75.56% 36.02%	225 100% 34.62%	50 22.22% 19.69%	74 32.89% 35.24%
	Total	**175** Male Respondents	**472** Female Respondents			

Analysis/cross-tabulation displays (Table 4.36): 65% of the sample group (425 of 650) have thought about changing career, of those - 69% (121 of 175) are male PPTs, compared to 64% (302 of 472) of female PPTs. Revealing that male PPTs are 5% more likely to think about changing career, compared to their female counterparts.

Findings also show that of those who think about changing career, 80% (340 of 425) experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 48% (204 of 425) experiencing OS on a daily basis. In comparison those who do not think of changing career, 55% experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 20% of those experiencing OS on a daily basis. Hence, the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs is correlated with, PPTs who think about leaving the profession and therefore, may be considered as a manifestation of OS among the profession.

Respondents had the opportunity to present a text response to Q23: *Have you ever thought of changing career?* 185 responses in total were collected. This qualitative/narrative data revealed some of the reasons, why PPTs think about changing career. Table 4.37: below displays a thematic analysis of the text responses collected.

Table 4.37: Additional text responses relating to: Q23: *Have you ever thought of changing career?*

#	Answer	Count
1.	Yes, I have thought about leaving the profession	128
2.	Due to policy changes/initiatives	29
3.	Frustrated with escalating pressure of work	27
4.	Workload/administration	24
5.	I am undervalued/workplace is horrid	17
6.	Pay conditions	16
7.	I am stuck	15
8.	To avoid extra-curricular hours	14
9.	Too stressful	14
10.	Yes, but I want to make a difference	12
11.	Yes, but I love working with students	9
12.	Time demands	9
13.	Yes, I have thought about taking early retirement	9

14.	I have lost my confidence	7
15.	Lack of resources	7
16.	Don't have the funds to re-qualify	6
17.	Too intrusive on family life	5
18.	Too late in life for me to change career	5
19.	Little or no promotional prospects	5
20.	Student discipline	4
21.	For a better work-life balance	2
22.	Poor management	2
23.	I did leave the profession and went back	1
24.	Total	380

Discussion on the predominant manifestations of OS experienced by PPTs across Ireland.

The literature review discussed individual experiences of work-related stress can alter the way individuals think, feel and behave producing changes in their physiological, psychological and behavioural functions (TUI, 2018; Reilly et al., 2014). Many of these manifestations can simply represent, a modest dysfunction and some associated discomfort. However, when stress reaches the optimum level, an individual's performance will subside (Ivanchevich & Matterson, 1980), or decrease with increasing levels of stress (Jamal, 1984; Motowidlo et al., 1986). The repercussions on PPTs due to the prevalence of consistent and/or excessive experiences of OS, can manifests in many forms and may impact greatly on their mental health and wellbeing and professional performance. The current study explored the manifestations of OS among Irish PPTs, and analysis of data exposed the following results:

Due to the prevalence/frequency of OS, PPTs experience:

1. *Emotional Strain,* due to lack of emotional resources to cope with OS. Findings show female PPTs are 6% more likely to experience emotional stress compared to their male counterparts (Table 4.25).

2. *Lack motivation* due to the prevalence of OS and male PPTs are 8% more likely to lack motivation compared to their female counterparts (Table 4.26).

3. *Lack accomplishment* from work. Female PPTs are 7% more likely to experience the lack of accomplishment from their work compared to their male counterparts (Table 4.27).

Additionally, according to the current study PPTs *always* experience the following due to OS.

1. 57% always experience *Loss of concentration* - minimal variance was revealed across gender types.
2. 46% always experience *tearfulness*, with 35% more female PPTs experience 'tearfulness' compared to their male counterparts.
3. 59% always experience *anger,* minimal variance was displayed across gender types (Table 4.28).

4. 63% always experience *disturbed sleep,* with female PPTs experiencing 'disturbed sleep' 10% more than their male counterparts.
5. 47% always experience *forgetfulness,* with female PPTs experiencing 'forgetfulness' 8% more than their male counterparts.
6. 40% always experience *Low self-esteem*, minimal variance was shown across gender types in this category (Table 4.29)

7. 44% always experience *headaches* with female PPTs experiencing headaches 13.5% more than their male counterparts.
8. 41% always experience *home/family life upset*, with female PPTs experiencing *home family life upset,* 6% more than their male counterparts.
9. 50% always experience *thoughts of early retirement or leaving the profession*, minimal variance was shown across gender types (Table 4.30).

10. 31% always experience *deterioration in work,* with minimal variance revealed across gender types.

11. 37% always experience *low motivation*, with minimal variance exposed across gender types.

12. 51% always experience *Loss of energy*, with female PPTs experiencing '*loss of energy'* 6% more than their male counterparts.

13. 24% always experience *depression*, minimal variance was shown across gender types (Table 4.31).

Findings of the current study coincide with some of the classic symptoms discussed in the literature review; lacking energy, feeling tired and frustrated, reduced job satisfaction and motivation, disillusionment, anger, fear, anxiety and unable to complete professional tasks throughout the normal school-working hours (ASTI, 2018; Kerr, et al., 2011; Reilly et al., 2014; TUI, 2018). The current study also found that 65% of the sample group thought about changing career, of those - 69% are male PPTs, compared to 64% female PPTs. Revealing that male PPTs are 5% more likely to think about changing career, compared to their female counterparts. Findings also show that 80% of those who think about changing career, experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 48% experiencing OS on a daily basis. In comparison, of those who do not think of changing career - 55% experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 20% of those experiencing OS on a daily basis. Hence, the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs is associated with, PPTs who think about leaving the profession and therefore, may be considered as a manifestation of OS among for PPTs (Table 4.36).

One possible predictor of OS that may lead to teachers leaving the profession was discussed in Duff (2018) study suggested that; in Ireland the introduction of pay cuts led to a retention and recruitment crisis within the teaching profession, leading to a decline in the quality of teaching that innovative and excellent education requires. With almost half of post primary teachers who commenced teaching after 1st January 2011, stating that it was unlikely or very unlikely that they would still be working in the profession in ten years' time. However, if pay equality was reinstated, 94% stated that it was very likely or

likely, that they would remain in the profession (Duff, 2018). However, due to the increasing workload within the profession, teachers are among those with the highest levels of OS and the consistent impact of many stressors may demotivate teachers, reducing their job satisfaction, sense of control and self-efficacy.

Hence, existing support structures that are in place to help prevent the occurrence of OS among PPTs in Ireland were explored. Additionally, coping strategies used by the profession were investigated to establish the most common and effective interventions used. The following section presents the findings and analysis of objective 4. Available support systems and interventions used by PPTs to alleviate OS in Ireland.

4.11: Objective 4: What support systems are available/used
by PPTs to alleviate OS?

4.11.1: Staff in School Supports – (Sections 1-7)

4.11.2: Do you think voicing concerns regarding your experience of OS may compromise your position/status as a teacher?

4.11.3: There is sufficient training in place to help you implement legislation & policies regarding child protection issues.

4.11.4: In-school supports are available to help teachers debrief and cope with sensitive issues regarding child protection matters.

4.11.5: Are you satisfied with available supports to help alleviate workplace stress? (Sections 1-3)

4.11.6: Discussion on Support Systems/Interventions for PPTs in Ireland**.**

4.11.1: **Staff in School Supports – (Sections 1-7)**

Table 4.38: Q19. Sections 1-7:

Question 19	Definitely Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Definitely Disagree	Total
19.1: Management assist staff to work collectively so that trust, respect and confidence are evident throughout the school.	72 11.08%	230 35.38%	174 26.77%	124 19.08%	50 7.69%	650 100%
19.2: I feel that my views are listened to and taken seriously among other staff members	81 12.46%	298 45.85%	161 24.77%	82 12.62%	28 4.31%	650
19.3: I feel that I receive recognition and support from management (vocally and/or written)	80 12.31%	229 35.23%	148 22.77%	121 18.62%	72 11.08%	650
19.4: I feel that my efforts and abilities are noted and rewarded and that my work is worthwhile and successful.	64 9.85%	216 33.23%	162 24.92%	139 21.38%	69 10.62%	650 100%
19.5: Bullying among teachers **is not evident** in the school or staffroom	152 23.38%	185 28.46%	103 15.85%	155 23.85%	55 8.46%	650 100%
19.6: Bullying among teachers **is not tolerated** in the school or staffroom	169 26.00%	175 26.92%	147 22.62%	126 19.38%	33 5.08%	650
19.7: I am aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide.	103 15.85%	155 23.85%	94 14.46%	149 22.92%	149 22.92%	650 100%
	258 40%			298 46%		

Analysis of data collection regarding: Staff in School Supports (Table 4.38: sections 1-7)

Q19.1: - 46% (302 of 650) of respondents 'agreed/definitely agreed' *that 'management assist staff to work collectively so that trust, respect and confidence are evident throughout the school'*; compared to 27% (174 of 650) who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Some of the text responses from PPTs relating to Q19.1:

'They try, but with staff shortages, this constrains severely these types of initiatives. Management are often fire brigading to keep the ship afloat and functioning minimally. Talk about Maslow - the self-actualisation element of this is far away and some of us are in the bottom survival level'.

'They may want to do that but it's getting increasingly difficult with the mounds of nonsense heaped on our collective shoulders by the Department etc on an almost daily basis'.

'A contrived collective culture exists. Yes, we are organised into teams, but it is everyone for herself/himself. This is particularly evident among staff who are seeking promotions'.

Q19.2: - 58% (379 of 650) 'agreed/definitely agreed' that *'I feel my views are listened to and taken seriously among other staff members'*; compared to 17% (110 of 650) who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Some of the text responses from PPTs relating to Q19.2:

'There is a Queen Bee and she will openly mock anything you say if you're a newer member of staff'

'It depends – close colleagues yes but overall no.'

'This is true amongst members of my own department, but not on a wider scale.'

Q19.3: - 47.5% (309 of 650) 'agreed/definitely agreed' that *'I feel that I receive recognition and support from management – vocally and/or written'*; compared to 30% (193 of 650) who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Some of the text responses from PPTs relating to Q19.3:

'I am in Management and Staff do not understand the amount of work and the efforts made to mind and care for staff at the expense of one's own personal wellbeing'.

'Management would like to support but there is never the time.'

'Sometimes but not regularly, often taken for granted and expected to do more than my fair share.'

Q19.4: - 43% (280 of 650) 'agree/definitely agreed' that *'I feel my efforts and abilities are noted and rewarded/my work is worthwhile and successful'*; compared to 32% (208 of 650) who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Some of the text responses from PPTs relating to Q19.4:

'Not noticed until there is something I haven't gotten to yet. The things I do are rarely noticed - but I don't do it for that reason, and I don't believe people should do a good job or work hard just for recognition. Once you know you are doing the right thing - that should be enough of a reason to do it'.

'I feel that my work under the new JC syllabus has been devalued and is less effective. It also makes the classroom a more stressful place for me to be in. Perhaps it is a better place for the students (at least short term) but I wonder if it will have negative consequences down the road in terms of self-discipline, educational attainment. Jury is out on that one I suppose. I suspect not due to the frankly terrible implementation but perhaps they will improve things over time'.

'Since we had a change of management, I feel that my efforts are being acknowledged. This has only occurred in the last few years. Before that it really upset me as no one in management ever said anything encouraging despite the workload'.

Q19.5: - 52% (337 of 650) PPTs 'agreed/definitely agreed that *'bullying among teachers is not evident in the school or staffroom'*; compared to 32% (210 of 650) who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Some of the text responses from PPTs relating to Q19.5:

'Teachers put pressure on each other to conform to certain practices.'

'There is an element of bullying and intimidation. With the removal of the moratorium on promotions, many teachers who would have had no opportunity for promotion for many years, are all now competing for the same. Resentments and frustrations with the system are boiling over and is turning friends into foes.'

'Awareness around this is very important. It's crucial to have difficult discussions when needed to stop things from escalating.'

Q19.6: - 53% (344 of 650) PPTs 'agreed/definitely agreed that *'Bullying among teachers is not tolerated in the school or staff-room'*; compared to 24% (159 of 65) of respondents who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Some of the text responses from PPTs relating to Q19.6:

'It is discouraged but it is a hard cycle to break. Bullying of Management is more common.'

'But it is often unavoidable as bullying is complex and often very subtle.'

'On the surface, it would appear that the answer is 'Agree' but bullying exists in the form of passive aggression and isolation.'

Q19.7: - 40% (258 of 650) PPTs 'agreed/definitely agreed' that – *'I am aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide';* compared to 46% (298 of 650) who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Some of the text responses from PPTs relating to Q19.7:

'..but I am weary again that it's over the phone, I cannot see the person. A face-to-face meeting would be far more ideal'.
'I am aware there is such a thing, but I've never felt I needed it. Unless they can bring about fundamental change in my work environment for the better (not just questionable reform for the sake of reform) which makes it a much less stressful place to work in what use are they to me. Why should the job be such a nightmare you need counselling etc because you do it'?

'I have used this once, I didn't find them good, I filled out a form and she just suggested at the end of the session that I go to someone else'.

'We would be better off with adequate pay and resources to be honest and I feel this is a joke. It is paying lip-service to the issue and no more'

Findings show (Table 4.38 Sections 1-7) some concerning percentage rates regarding 'Staff in school supports', with only 3 sections (19.2; 19.5 & 19.6) exposing positive percentage rates - over 50% in the 'agree/definitely agree' categories; however, 4 sections (19.1; 19.3; 19.4 & 19.7) revealed percentage rates below 50%. Additionally, findings from section 19.7 are concerning as 46% of PPTs stated that they *'are not aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide'.*

Sections 1-7 (Table 4.38) may all be predictors of OS among PPTs, however some prove more concerning than others, not based on percentage rates, but the potential severity of the consequences of each individual section.

4.11.2: - Q15: Do you think voicing concerns regarding your experience of OS may compromise your position/status as a teacher?

Graph 4.3: Voicing concerns – compromises position/status as a PPTs.
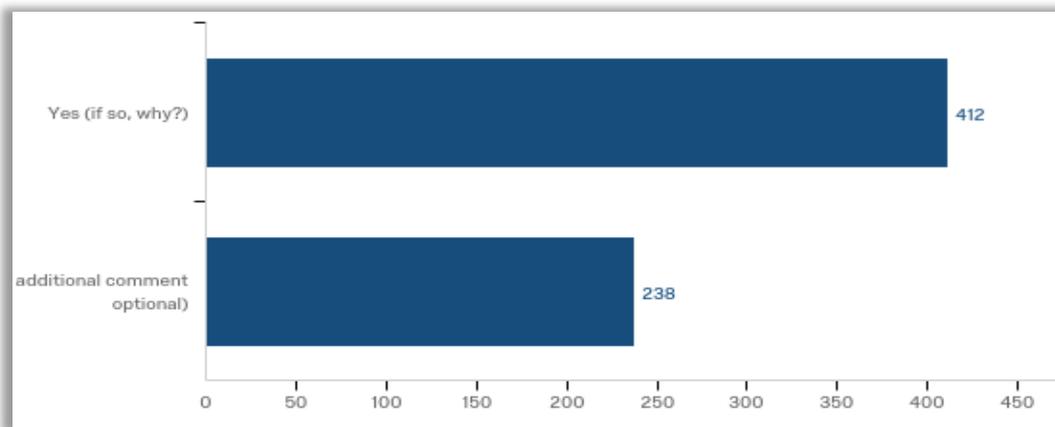
Analysis of findings exposed that 63% (412 of 650) of PPTs think voicing concerns regarding their experiences of OS may compromise their position/status as a teacher (Graph 4.3).

Table 4.39: Analysis of percentage rates and count:

#	Answer	%	Count
1.	Yes (if so, why?)	63.38%	412
2.	No (additional comment optional)	36.62%	238
3.	Total	100%	650

Additional, narrative data from the respondents provided explanations for their responses. The top 5 reasons the respondents gave regarding this answer choice are:

1). Sign of weakness/not managing/not being able to cope.

2). Impedes future promotion/permanent contract/no job security.

3). Expected to do your job and just cope.

4). Management think you're not able for the job/non-supportive.

5). Stigmatism.

Findings exposed that PPTs feel; *voicing concerns regarding their experience of OS may compromise their position/status as a teacher*, and may therefore need to be addressed, as an area that is lacking in support for teachers to voice their concerns when necessary.

310 additional optional responses were received from the respondents regarding: Voicing concerns – compromises position/status as a PPTs:
Ten responses were randomly picked from the 310 received and are displayed below.

'Yes. Unfortunately, there is still a stigma attached, especially for a male teacher.'

'Yes. Afraid to be stigmatised for speaking out.'

'You feel like you are painting a target on your back. Look at Garda McCabe etc. One suspects the whole thing is loaded against the teacher. The reforms are such nonsense and they were rammed through with token/lip service to teacher consultation. The inspectorate is like a bogey man you have to be scared of despite doing your best, it's an objectively silly process. Those vague reports they make still have consequences and always serve to ramp up the pressure always demanding more and more and never referencing the difficult working environment, lack of resources, time pressure, frankly ridiculous pupil-teacher ratios etc......it's all one way traffic and when they have left you have even more things to do . The trouble with nearly all of the "reforms" is they have added to an already high workload on the majority of occasions....'

'As a new and young teacher, I feel there would be negative viewpoints or being patronised for stress.'

'Yes, autocratic, micro-managing principal is the cause of 90% of staff stress.'

'Yes. Already in my school AP1 and AP2 post have been given too much, younger and less experienced teachers who say 'nothing' when significant school issues arise. On the other hand, some well-intentioned, caring and thoughtful teachers who raised genuine points of concern at staff meeting are 'passed' over now for any promotional posts.'

'Wouldn't be kept on, extremely difficult to find security. Even when you know you aren't the only one feeling this way. Schools exploit new

staff with extra-curricular not being an option but an obligation. Always asked in interviews.'

'I'm seen as being weak and not able to cope. I feel demoralised on a daily basis. Reaching breaking point.'

'Yes, I have said it many times recently. I am a Principal Teacher and the amount of extra work is unrealistic - no one can do what I am expected to do and remember on a daily basis. Burnout and stress are my daily companions.'

'I don't think it's acceptable now that schools are being run like corporate businesses.'

Table 4.41: Thematic analysis of additional text responses received

#	Answer	Count
1.	Sign of weakness/not managing/not being able to cope	149
2.	Impedes future promotion/permanent contract/no job security	56
3.	Expected to do your job/cope	45
4.	Management think you're not able for the job/non-supportive	37
5.	Stigmatised	29
6.	I need the job/seen as a moaner	20
7.	No opportunity to voice concerns	5
8.	Presumed that holidays make up for the stressful job	5

4.11.3: **There is sufficient CPD training in place to help you implement legislation & policies regarding child protection issues.**

Graph 4.4:
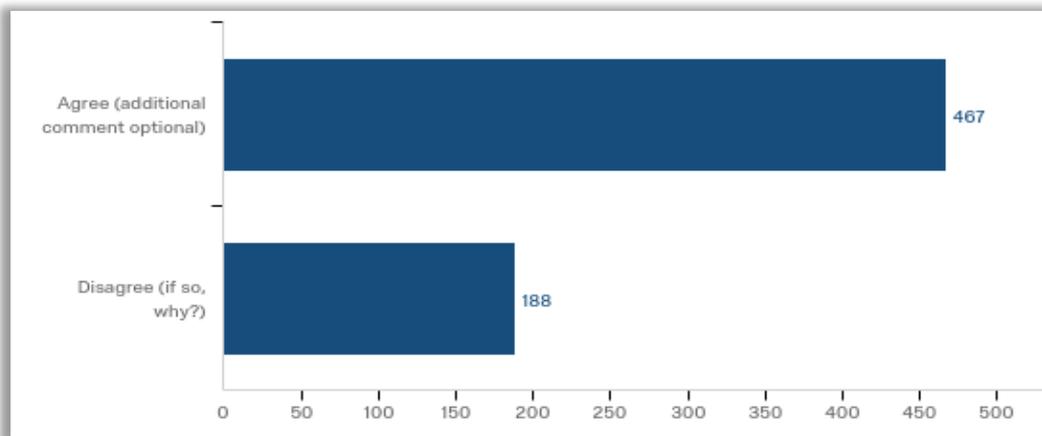
Findings from analysis of revealed; 71% (467 of 650) of PPTs agreed with the statement, compared 29% (188 of 650) who disagreed (Graph 4.4).

Table 4.41:

Answer	Percentage	Count
Disagree (if so, why?)	28.70%	188
Agree (additional comment optional)	71.30%	467
Total	100%	655

Additional comments from the respondents contained information regarding CPD in general. Although findings show 71% agreed that there is sufficient CPD training in place, comments from the respondents presented the following top five concerns:

1). Not enough CPD to help implement policies and procedures/don't know anything about CPD regarding child protection;

2). Box ticking/totally insufficient/rushed participation;

3). No time for CPD with workload;

4). One or two on-line courses only the tip of the iceberg;

5). New Junior Certificate causing problems.

4.11.4: **In-school supports are available to help teachers debrief and cope with sensitive issues encountered regarding child protection matters.**

Graph 4.5:
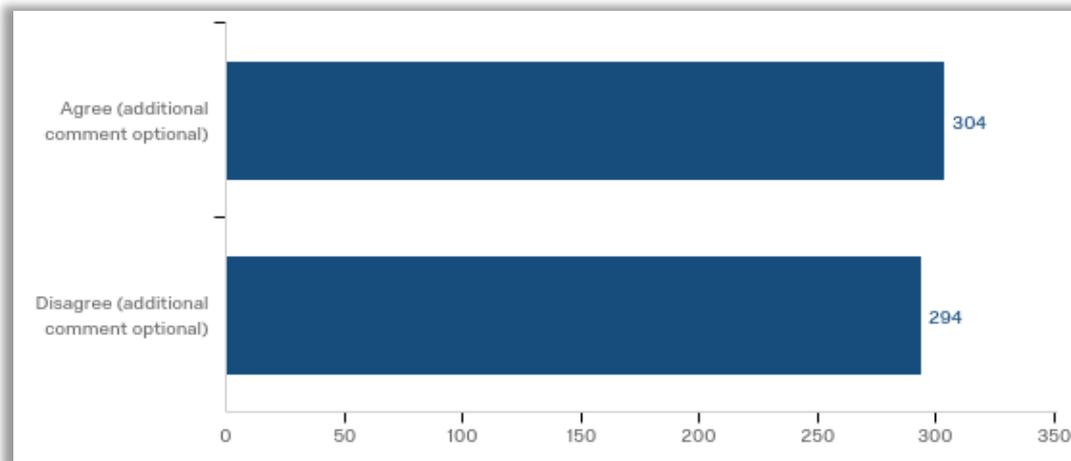
Analysis of data revealed 51% (304 of 650) of PPTs *agreed* that in-school supports are available to help teachers debrief, and cope with sensitive issues encountered regarding child protection matters. 49% (294 of 650) *did not agree* with the statement (Graph 4.5).

Table 4.42:

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Agree (additional comment optional)	50.84%	304
2	Disagree (additional comment optional)	49.16%	294
	Total	100%	598

105 additional optional responses were collected from the respondents, ten of these comments are displayed below and were selected randomly from the 105 responses received regarding: In-school supports are available to help teachers debrief and cope with sensitive issues encountered regarding child protection matters.

'I wasn't even told that one of my students tried to kill herself last year'.

No school support after a student collapsed in class one day and later died. The staff involved including PE teacher and first aiders struggled and were not offered any support in school'.

'Unfortunately, I have reported numerous child protection concerns. I have never been offered any support for myself in relation to these concerns.'

'We are not trained counsellors and we have to bring home all that stress and horror we hear, and no-one cares.'

'We have no procedures, and in my experience, I have referred a child protection issue, I have had to directly go to the DLP and ask on the update of the case. I was completely left out of the situation.'

'We had a critical incident and it was simply never discussed again.'

'Not enough, we don't know how to deal with these things, not enough training given.'

'There is not time nor human resources for it. Guidance Counsellors are to the pin of their collars with supporting students. The current EAS is meant to be quite impersonal.'

'I'm a guidance counsellor so deal with these issues on a daily basis. There are no in school supports.'

'I deal with these issues always and have had no debriefing.'

4.12: Q21. Are you satisfied with available supports to help alleviate workplace stress?

Supports Explored

1. *The Employee Assistance Programme.*

2. *In School supports.*

3. *Online supports available to help alleviate OS.*

4.12.1: Satisfaction with: The Employee Assistance Programme.
Graph 4.6:
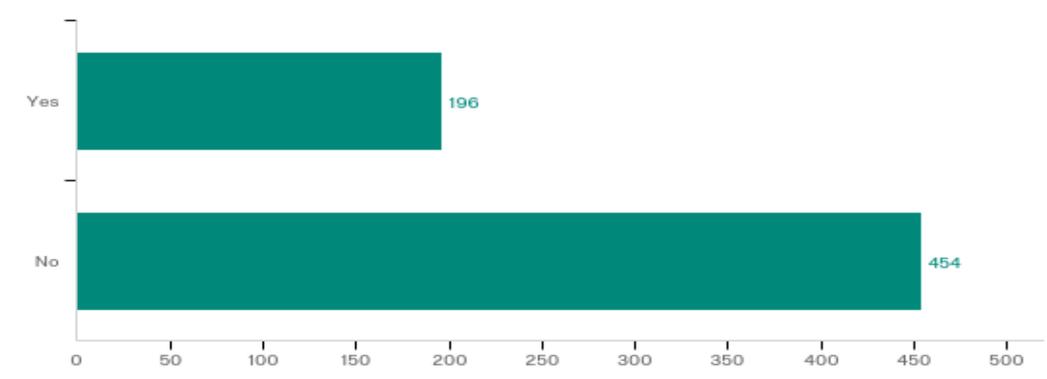
Table 4.43:

#	Question	Yes	No	Total
1	Employee Assistance and Well-being programme	169 30.15%	454 69.85%	650 100.00%

Findings show (Table 4.43) 30% of PPTs are satisfied with the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme, while 70% are not.

Table 4.45: below presents 65 narrative responses received from the respondents regarding; satisfaction with *the employee assistance programme.*

Table 4.44: Thematic analysis of narrative responses: Satisfaction with the Employee Assistance Programme.

#	Answer	Count
1.	Don't know about the programme/never heard of it	39
2.	Sessions availability poor	7
3.	Aware it exists	4
4.	no comment	3
5.	Never used it	2
6.	Limited for extreme circumstances	2
7.	Needs to be internal not an external agency	2
8.	Sessions should be compulsory	1
9.	Student well-being promoted more so	1
10.	Is this the ASTI 3 session counselling support?	1
11.	Phone help not adequate	1
12.	More formal structure needed	1
13.	Not allowed continue with the same counsellor	1
14.	No confidential during access	1
15.	Teacher wellbeing neglected	1
16.	No encouragement to use this	1
17.	Need better pay	1
18.	Only recent wellbeing session done	1
19.	Too much talk about well-being	1
20.	Not used	1
21.	Supervision needs to be timetabled each week/fortnight.	1
22.	Greater awareness of supports needed	1

4.12.2: Satisfaction with: In School Supports

Graph 4.7:
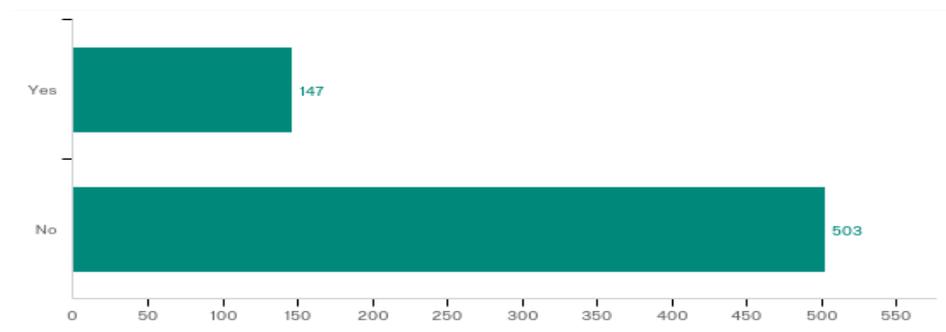
Table 4.45:

#	Question	Yes	No	Total
2	In school supports (Please give examples)	147 22.62%	503 77.38%	650 100.00%

Findings show that 23% of PPTs are satisfied with: In School Supports, while 77% are not.

Below are some additional comments from responding PPTs.

'Stress is caused by increased workload not by student's behaviour. Unless time is given or some of the extra responsibilities are removed, I don't see how the school can support.'

'The best supports that could be provided would be a reduction in class contact time and pupil teacher ratios, properly thought out reforms that actually work and, take into account the environment we work in and not moronic change for the sake of change to justify high salaries for mandarins that wouldn't last pissing time in mainstream class if they had to achieve something. Proper resourcing in terms of equipment, ICT etc. etc. would be good too.'

'Schools are not provided with appropriate supports for disruptive pupils. DEIS schools like mine bear a disproportionate burden of

Special Needs students. Occasionally these can be highly disruptive, even violent. Other children should not have to tolerate having their education disrupted just because they attend a DEIS school. "Special needs" gives some people an image a sweet child who has difficulty reading but the reality can be very different. Neurological disorders like ADHD cannot always be safely accommodated in a classroom.'

4.12.3: Satisfaction with: On-line Supports

3: Graph 4.8:
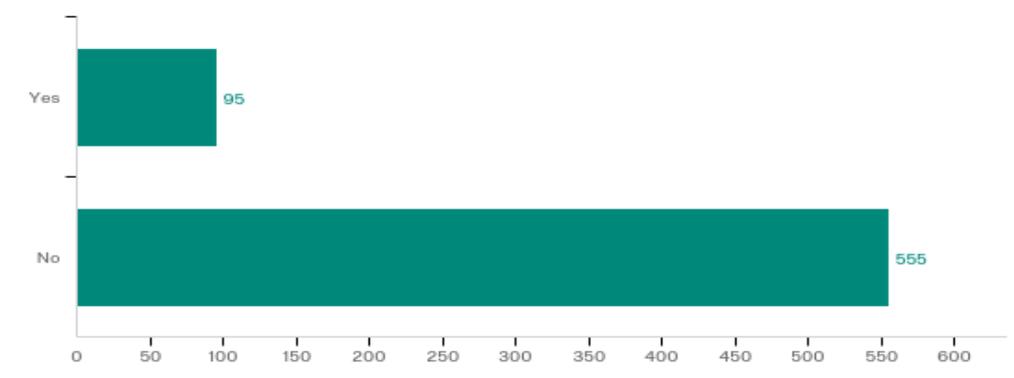
Table 4.47:

#	Question	Yes	No	Total
3	Online supports (please give examples)	95 14.62%	555 85.38%	650 100.00%

Findings show that 85% of responding PPTs are not satisfied with on-line supports compared to 15% who are satisfied.

Additional comments from the respondents include:

'I am sure they exist but again I am not aware of them. They should be brought to our attention through a professional staff wellbeing body.'

'What online supports? Sending us an email is a not a sufficient promotion.'

An additional 65 comments from the respondents regarding *Online Supports,* exposed the following top five top themes:

1. Not aware of any

2. Voice for teachers on Facebook

3. Union (ASTI)

4. Meditation/general wellbeing resources

5. Sending an email is not sufficient promotion

4.13: Discussion on Available Support Systems for PPTs to help alleviate/prevent OS.

Findings show (Table 4.38 Sections 1-7) some concerning percentage rates regarding 'Staff in school supports' including findings from section 19.7 showing that; 46% of the responding PPTs *'are not aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide'.* Analysis of findings also exposed that 63% (412 of 650) of PPTs think voicing concerns regarding their experiences of OS may compromise their position/status as a teacher (Graph 4.3). The top 5 reasons the respondents gave regarding this answer choice are:

1). Sign of weakness/not managing/not being able to cope.

2). Impedes future promotion/permanent contract/no job security.

3). Expected to do your job and just cope.

4). Management think you're not able for the job/non-supportive.

5). Stigmatism.

Findings exposed that PPTs feel; *voicing concerns regarding their experience of OS may compromise their position/status as a teacher*, and may therefore need to be addressed, as an area that is lacking in support for teachers to voice their concerns when necessary. This may lead to avoidance/not dealing or coping with work related stress. However, as discussed in the literature review Chan (1998) examined coping strategies used to alleviate stress among teachers in Hong Kong and found that the types of coping techniques used, mediated the effects of OS on their emotional wellbeing. Adding that, teachers who avoided

issues and problems they encountered at work exacerbated the prevalence of distress (Chan, 1998).

Respondents were asked if sufficient CPD training was in place regarding child protection issues. Findings from revealed; 71% (467 of 650) of PPTs agreed with the statement, compared 29% (188 of 650) who disagreed (Table 4.41).

Additional comments from the respondents contained information regarding CPD in general. Although findings show 71% agreed that there is sufficient CPD training in place, comments from the respondents presented the following top five concerns:

1). Not enough CPD to help implement policies and procedures/don't know anything about CPD regarding child protection;
2). Box ticking/totally insufficient/rushed participation;
3). No time for CPD with workload;
4). One or two on-line courses only the tip of the iceberg;
5). New Junior Certificate causing problems.

Analysis of data also revealed 51% (304 of 650) of PPTs *agreed* that in-school supports are available to help teachers debrief, and cope with sensitive issues encountered regarding child protection matters. 49% (294 of 650) of respondents *did not agree* with the statement. Table 4.43. Findings coincided with Kerr et al. (2011) where 12 of 15 participants alleged that, student issues were a major concern for teachers, who feel untrained and uncomfortable when confronted with sensitive matters such as relationships, family issues or mental health. Adding that, the only support intervention for the teacher or the student was, a legal warning about not being alone with a pupil. This too caused difficulties for some teachers when trying to deal with student issues/problems.

Findings of the current study also showed that (Table 4.43) 30% of PPTs are satisfied with the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme, while **70% are not**. 23% of PPTs are satisfied with, in school supports, while **77% are not**

and 15% of responding PPTs are satisfied with on-line supports compared to **85% who are not** satisfied.

Overall the available supports for PPTs in Ireland to help prevent OS, is not (according to findings of the current study) fit for purpose or utilised by the profession and therefore, could be damaging to the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs. However, this may be due to, teachers not knowing about the services that are available, or fear stigma when discussing problems related to OS and mental health issues. Additionally, voicing concerns regarding experiences of OS, may compromise the teachers' position/status within the profession. Or teacher training/courses may lack content and/or consistency and therefore, adequate training support. These are some of the factors brought forward by the respondents of the current study and are therefore credible explanations as to why, it may be assumed that available supports to help teachers cope with OS are not fit for purpose or used by the profession.

As discussed in the literature review education is fast paced and teachers often get wrapped up in workload, administration, extra-curricular activities (ASTI, 2018; Bolton, 2015; Duff, 2018; Kerr et al., 2011; Reilly et al., 2015). However, as a result a teacher may unintentionally disregard their own basic needs and not seek support when necessary. This can add to the prevalence and frequency of OS experienced. If a teacher is to be available to teach, their own basic needs must be met, from both their home environment and their working environment.

The importance of self-care and utilising adequate support interventions when necessary, needs to be updated as a prerequisite of higher needs for teachers. This will empower teachers to be the best they can, as educators and models of our upcoming society. Therefore, interventions to help alleviate/prevent OS among teachers, should be based on the teachers' needs. Once a teacher is not working in excess of their own optimal level of coping, effective teaching and learning can occur. This can have a cascading effect, ensuring a positive educational learning experience for the student and positive educational outcomes for the Irish education system. The illustration below, adapted for the purpose of the current study displays, five motivational core components that

may assist in the development of effective mental health and wellbeing for teachers.

Fig 4.8: Hierarchy of Teacher Needs
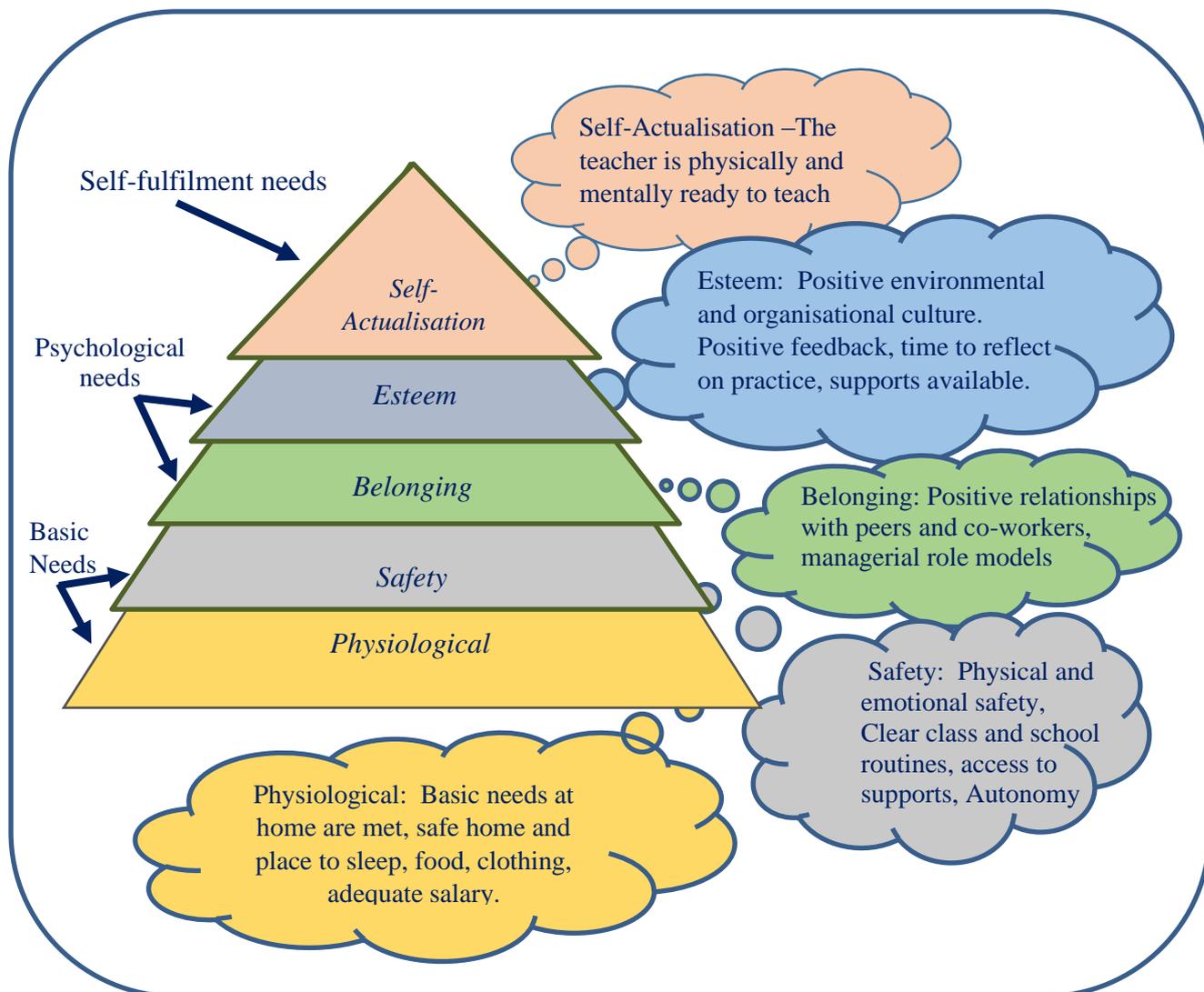
(Adapted, by Ennis, 2019 from Guditus, 2013)

However, for teachers to achieve these core components, adequate support structures need to be available to discuss and offload work related stress, within their place of work. As discussed in the literature review Atkins and Rodger (Atkins and Rodger, 2016). This theme was also evident in Rodger et al. (2014) study suggesting that, it is the responsibility of the teacher education programs

to provide teachers in training with adequate knowledge, tools and the resources necessary for self-care to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing (Rodger et al., 2014).

Additionally, the OECD (2003) recommended that, to achieve heightened expectations of schools, consideration must be given to what actually counts for effective education, looking beyond academic achievement to include, student engagement, self-concept and participation, and community social capital (attention to areas that have greater validity for life experiences and successes) (OECD, 2003). This coincided with the International Labour Organisations policy (1975) – (a specialised agency of the UN promoting social and economic progress to improve labour conditions). Suggesting that work should not only respect workers' lives and health and leave them free time for rest and leisure, but also serve society and achieve self-fulfilment by developing their personal capabilities. It is the responsibility of organisations and management to identify hazards and gaps within the education system and implement positive supports to address issues of concern (International Labour Organisations policy, 1975). There are also national obligations (Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005) placed on employers to risk assess all known hazards including psychosocial hazards, which may lead to workplace stress.

The first European work-related stress survey conducted by the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE, 2011) identified five main stressors that directly affected teachers' daily work, and interestingly most of them related to school management and organisational factors. These five factors include; work intensity/workload, increased class size, role overload, lack of support from school management and unacceptable student behaviour. The study concluded that school management should be involved in assessing risk factors regarding work related stress.

4.14: Objective 4 Coping Strategies utilised by PPTs to alleviate OS

Table 4.47: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 1 - Relaxation.

🟥 = Row percentages   🟦 = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.1 **Relaxation**	Always	22 23.16% 12.57%	72 75.79% 15.25%	1 1.05% 33.33%	95 100.00% 14.62%
	Quite Often	49 27.53% 28.00%	128 71.91% 27.12%	1 0.56% 33.33%	178 100.00% 27.38%
	Some-times	58 23.97% 33.14%	184 76.03% 38.98%	0 0.00% 0.00%	242 100.00% 37.23%
	Rarely	30 31.25% 17.14%	65 67.71% 13.77%	1 1.04% 33.33%	96 100.00% 14.77%
	Never	16 41.03% 9.14%	23 58.97% 4.87%	0 0.00% 0.00%	39 100.00% 6.00%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Some-times	Rarely	Never	Total
1	Relaxation	95 14.62%	178 27.38%	242 37.23%	96 14.77%	39 6.00%	650

Q22.1 – (Table 4.47) Cross-analysis exposed – 42% (273 of 650) of respondents use *relaxation* to alleviate OS *always-quite often*, while 21% (136) of the respondents use relaxation 'rarely to never' to alleviate OS.

Table 4.48: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 2 - Exercise.

◼ = Row percentages   ◼ = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.2 **Exercise**	Always	46 27.71% 26.29%	120 72.29% 25.42%	0 0.00% 0.00%	166 100.00% 25.54%
	Quite Often	60 28.85% 34.29%	147 70.67% 31.14%	1 0.48% 33.33%	208 100.00% 32.00%
	Some-times	50 26.04% 28.57%	141 73.44% 29.87%	1 0.52% 33.33%	192 100.00% 29.54%
	Rarely	14 20.59% 8.00%	53 77.94% 11.23%	1 1.47% 33.33%	68 100.00% 10.46%
	Never	5 31.25% 2.86%	11 68.75% 2.33%	0 0.00% 0.00%	16 100.00% 2.46%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Som-etimes	Rarely	Never	Total
2	Exercise	166 25.54%	208 32.00%	192 29.54%	98 10.46%	16 2.46%	650

Q22.2: (Table 4.48) – Cross-analysis exposed – 57.5% (374 of 650) of respondents use *exercise* to alleviate OS *always to quite often,* while 13% (84) *rarely to never* use *exercise* to alleviate OS.

Table 4.49: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 3 – Seek support from a work colleague.

🟥 = Row percentages 🟦 = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.3 **Seek support from a work colleague**	Always	8 7.55% 4.57%	98 92.45% 20.76%	0 0.00% 0.00%	106 100.00% 16.31%
	Quite Often	37 18.78% 21.14%	159 80.71% 33.69%	1 0.51% 33.33%	197 100.00% 30.31%
	Some-times	70 31.67% 40.00%	151 68.33% 31.99%	0 0.00% 0.00%	221 100.00% 34.00%
	Rarely	41 45.05% 23.43%	49 53.85% 10.38%	1 1.10% 33.33%	91 100.00% 14.00%
	Never	19 54.29% 10.86%	15 42.86% 3.18%	1 2.86% 33.33%	35 100.00% 5.38%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Some-times	Rarely	Never	Total
3	Seek support from a work colleague	106 16.31%	197 30.31%	221 34.00%	91 14.00%	35 5.38%	650

Q22.3: – (Table 4.49) Cross-analysis exposed – 47% (303 of 650) respondents *seek support from a work colleague* to alleviate OS *always to quite often*, while 19% (126 of 650) *rarely to never* seek support from a work colleague to alleviate OS.

Table 4.50: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 4 – Seek Professional Help.

🟥 = Row percentages 🟦 = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.4 **Seek professional help**	Always	3 30.00% 1.71%	7 70.00% 1.48%	0 0.00% 0.00%	10 100.00% 1.54%
	Quite Often	5 16.13% 2.86%	26 83.87% 5.51%	0 0.00% 0.00%	31 100.00% 4.77%
	Some-times	19 22.09% 10.86%	67 77.91% 14.19%	0 0.00% 0.00%	86 100.00% 13.23%
	Rarely	23 28.05% 13.14%	59 71.95% 12.50%	0 0.00% 0.00%	82 100.00% 12.62%
	Never	125 28.34% 71.43%	313 70.98% 66.31%	3 0.68% 100.00%	441 100.00% 67.85%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
4	Seek professional help	10 1.54%	31 4.77%	86 13.23%	82 12.62%	441 67.85%	650

Q22.4: (Table 4.50) – Cross-analysis exposed – 6% (41 of 650) *seek professional help* to alleviate OS *always to quite often* while 80% (523 of 650) *rarely to never* seek professional help to alleviate OS – 68% (441 of 650) never seek professional help.

Table 4.51: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 5 – Seek Support from a School Counsellor.

🟥 = Row percentages   🟦 = Column percentages

| | | Q1. What is your gender? | | | |
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.5 **Seek support from a school counsellor**	Always	0 0.00% 0.00%	4 100.00% 0.85%	0 0.00% 0.00%	4 100.00% 0.62%
	Quite Often	6 28.57% 3.43%	15 71.43% 3.18%	0 0.00% 0.00%	21 100.00% 3.23%
	Some-times	6 16.22% 3.43%	31 83.78% 6.57%	0 0.00% 0.00%	37 100.00% 5.69%
	Rarely	28 31.82% 16.00%	60 68.18% 12.71%	0 0.00% 0.00%	88 100.00% 13.54%
	Never	135 27.00% 77.14%	362 72.40% 76.69%	3 0.60% 100.00%	500 100.00% 76.92%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
5	Seek support from a school counsellor	4 0.62%	21 3.23%	37 5.69%	88 13.54%	500 76.92%	650

Q22.5: (Table 4.51) – Cross-analysis exposed – 4% (26 of 650) of respondents *seek support from a school counsellor* to alleviate OS *always to quite often,* while 91% (588 of 650) respondents 'rarely to never' seek support from a school counsellor – 78% (500 of 650) of those never seeking support from a school counsellor to alleviate OS.

Table 4.52: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 6 – Use Prescribed Medication.

[red] = Row percentages　[blue] = Column percentage

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.6 **Use prescribed medication**	Always	5 35.71% 2.86%	9 64.29% 1.91%	0 0.00% 0.00%	14 100.00% 2.15%
	Quite Often	5 41.67% 2.86%	7 58.33% 1.48%	0 0.00% 0.00%	12 100.00% 1.85%
	Some-times	8 24.24% 4.57%	25 75.76% 5.30%	0 0.00% 0.00%	33 100.00% 5.08%
	Rarely	13 26.53% 7.43%	36 73.47% 7.63%	0 0.00% 0.00%	49 100.00% 7.54%
	Never	144 26.57% 82.29%	395 72.88% 83.69%	3 0.55% 100.00%	542 100.00% 83.38%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
6	Use prescribed medication	14 2.15%	12 1.85%	33 5.08%	49 7.54%	542 83.38%	650

Q22.6: (Table 4.52) – Cross-analysis exposed – 4% (26 of 650) of respondents *use prescribed medication* to alleviate OS *always to quite often* while 91% (591 of 650) respondents *rarely to never* use prescribed medication to alleviate OS – 83% (542 of 650) of those never use prescribed medication to alleviate OS.

Table 4.53: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 7 – Use Non-Prescribed Medication.

🟥 = Row percentages 🟦 = Column percentage

Q22.7 Use non-prescribed medication		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
	Always	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	5 / 100.00% / 1.06%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	5 / 100.00% / 0.77%
	Quite Often	7 / 43.75% / 4.00%	9 / 56.25% / 1.91%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	16 / 100.00% / 2.46%
	Sometimes	6 / 15.00% / 3.43%	34 / 85.00% / 7.20%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	40 / 100.00% / 6.15%
	Rarely	13 / 25.49% / 7.43%	37 / 72.55% / 7.84%	1 / 1.96% / 33.33%	51 / 100.00% / 7.85%
	Never	149 / 27.70% / 85.14%	387 / 71.93% / 81.99%	2 / 0.37% / 66.67%	538 / 100.00% / 82.77%
	Total	175 / 26.92% / 100.00%	472 / 72.62% / 100.00%	3 / 0.46% / 100.00%	650 / 100.00% / 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
7	Use non-prescribed medication	5 / 0.77%	16 / 2.46%	40 / 6.15%	51 / 7.85%	538 / 82.77%	650

Q22.7: (Table 4.53) – Cross-analysis exposed – 3% (21) of respondents *use non-prescribed medication* to alleviate OS *always to quite often,* while 91% (589 of 650) of respondents *rarely to never* use non-prescribed medication to alleviate OS – 83% (538 of 650) of those never use non-prescribed medication to alleviate OS.

Table 4.54: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 8 – Consume Alcohol.

🟥 = Row percentages   🟦 = Column percentage

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.8 Consume Alcohol	Always	5 41.67% 2.86%	7 58.33% 1.48%	0 0.00% 0.00%	12 100.00% 1.85%
	Quite Often	19 44.19% 10.86%	24 55.81% 5.08%	0 0.00% 0.00%	43 100.00% 6.62%
	Some-times	43 27.22% 24.57%	114 72.15% 24.15%	1 0.63% 33.33%	158 100.00% 24.31%
	Rarely	38 28.57% 21.71%	95 71.43% 20.13%	0 0.00% 0.00%	133 100.00% 20.46%
	Never	70 23.03% 40.00%	232 76.32% 49.15%	2 0.66% 66.67%	304 100.00% 46.77%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
8	Alcohol	12 1.85%	43 6.62%	158 24.31%	133 20.46%	304 46.77%	650

Q22.8: (Table 4.54) – Cross-analysis exposed – 8% (55 of 650) of respondents *use alcohol* to alleviate OS *always to quite often* while 67% (437 of 650) respondents *rarely to never* use alcohol to alleviate OS – and 47% never use alcohol to alleviate OS.

Table 4.55: Do you the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress? 9 – On-line Supports.

[red box] = Row percentages   [blue box] = Column percentage

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.9 **Online supports (Please list below)**	Always	2 33.33% 1.14%	4 66.67% 0.85%	0 0.00% 0.00%	6 100.00% 0.92%
	Quite Often	3 30.00% 1.71%	6 60.00% 1.27%	1 10.00% 33.33%	10 100.00% 1.54%
	Sometimes	5 16.67% 2.86%	25 83.33% 5.30%	0 0.00% 0.00%	30 100.00% 4.62%
	Rarely	15 35.71% 8.57%	27 64.29% 5.72%	0 0.00% 0.00%	42 100.00% 6.46%
	Never	150 26.69% 85.71%	410 72.95% 86.86%	2 0.36% 66.67%	562 100.00% 86.46%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
9	Online supports	6 0.92%	10 1.54%	30 4.62%	42 6.46%	562 86.46%	650

Q22.9: (Table 4.55) – Cross-analysis exposed – 2% (16 of 650) of respondents use *online supports* to alleviate OS *always to quite often*, while 93% (604 of 650) of respondents *rarely to never* use online supports to alleviate OS – 86% (562 of 650) never use online supports to alleviate OS.

Table 4.56: Narrative responses to **Q22.9** – Online Supports used by PPTs in Ireland to alleviate OS.

#	Answer	Count
1.	Meditation, general wellbeing resources	9
2.	Unaware of any	4
3.	Headspace	3
4.	Don't avail of these	2
5.	Google Search	2
6.	Articles/Ted Talks/Forums	1
7.	Boards.ie teaching forum	1
8.	Calm app	1
9.	Curious re. sending personal details and hardship to a stranger online	1
10.	Family	1
11.	Friends	1
12.	Instagram	1
13.	Online Yoga	1
14.	Peer groups on social media	1
15.	Self-help websites	1
16.	TESEO	1
17.	TUI services	1
18.	Voices for teachers (Facebook)	1

Table 4.57: The number of teachers who use other support interventions to alleviate OS.

🟥 = Row percentages 🟦 = Column percentage

		Q1. What is your gender?			
		Male	Female	Other	Total
Q22.10 **Other (please list)**	Always	7 30.43% 4.00%	16 69.57% 3.39%	0 0.00% 0.00%	23 100.00% 3.54%
	Quite Often	2 11.76% 1.14%	15 88.24% 3.18%	0 0.00% 0.00%	17 100.00% 2.62%
	Sometimes	12 32.43% 6.86%	25 67.57% 5.30%	0 0.00% 0.00%	37 100.00% 5.69%
	Rarely	8 36.36% 4.57%	14 63.64% 2.97%	0 0.00% 0.00%	22 100.00% 3.38%
	Never	146 26.50% 83.43%	402 72.96% 85.17%	3 0.54% 100.00%	551 100.00% 84.77%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

#	Question	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
10	Other	23 3.54%	17 2.62%	37 5.69%	22 3.38%	551 84.77%	650

Q22.10: (Table 4.57) – Cross-analysis exposed – 6% (40 of 650) of respondents use *other forms of support* to alleviate OS *always to often,* while 88% (573 of 650) of respondents *rarely to never* use *other forms of support* to alleviate OS, and 85% (551 of 650) of those never use *other forms of support* to alleviate OS.

Table 4.58: Thematic table of the top ten coping strategies used by PPTs in Ireland.

#	Answer	Count
1.	Sport/hobby/Yoga	21
2.	Support from partner/family/friends	14
3.	Mindfulness	9
4.	Colleague support	5
5.	Prayer	2
6.	No time to engage in coping strategies	2
7.	Principal forum	1
8.	surveys/feedback sheets	1
9.	Don't know any	1

4.15: Discussion on coping strategies used by PPTs in Ireland.

As discussed in the literature review, coping relates to the way individuals through behaviour and cognition manage environmental demands in their lives (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). The cross-analysis of data of the current study helped establish the predominant *coping strategies used* by PPTs in Ireland to alleviate OS.

Exercise is the most popular coping strategy among Irish PPTs, with 57.5% of respondents revealing that they always to quite often *exercise* to alleviate OS (Table 4.48). 47% of PPTs always to quite often *seek support from work colleagues* to alleviate OS (Table 4.49), while 42% of PPTs always to quite often, use *relaxation* to alleviate the symptoms of OS (Table 4.47).

Findings also exposed that 78% of PPTs *never seek support from a school counsellor* (Table 4.51) and 68% of respondents *never seek professional help* to alleviate the symptoms of OS (Table 4.50).

Below is a summary of coping strategies used in the **always–quite often** category to help alleviate OS among PPTs.

57.5% use *exercise* to alleviate OS.

47% *seek support from work colleagues* to alleviate OS.

42% use *relaxation* to alleviate OS.

8% consume *alcohol* to alleviate OS.

6% *seek professional help* to alleviate OS.

6% *use other forms of support* to alleviate OS.

4% *use prescribed medication* to alleviate OS.

4% *seek support from a school counsellor* to alleviate OS.

3% *use non-prescribed medication* to alleviate OS.

2% *use online supports* to alleviate OS.

However, from the optional text responses collected, the respondents listed the following activities as top choice to help alleviate OS. Sport, yoga, seek support from a partner, family member and/or friends and mindfulness. Coping techniques used by teachers to alleviate stress, may also enhance their emotional mental health and wellbeing. As discussed in the literature review, Chan (1998) examined coping strategies used to alleviate stress among teachers in Hong Kong and found that the types of coping techniques used, mediated the effects of OS on their emotional wellbeing. Adding that, teachers who avoided issues and problems they encountered at work exacerbated the prevalence of distress (Chan, 1998).

Findings from the current study coincides with Kerr et al. (2011) and Bolton (2015) study stated that, teaching colleagues are a main means of support with teachers turning to colleagues with stressful issues. While it was clear that most teachers looked to other teachers when feeling stressed no participants from Kerr et al. (2011) study felt comfortable admitting to the principal that they had

difficulties with stressful situation, but did list friends, family and outside school activities as helpful in supporting stressful occurrences (Kerr et al., 2011). Additionally, Buckley et al. (2017) study found, relationships with colleagues appeared to have a significant impact on the reduction of stress among teachers. While newly qualified teachers desired to be acknowledged/positively affirmed not only by management, but by their colleagues. This helped them feel confident in their teaching practice and ability. However, the participants stated that negative relationships among colleagues contributed to the experiences of work-related stress (Buckley et al., 2017). However, Rodger et al. (2014) study suggested that, it is the responsibility of the teacher education programs to provide teachers in training with adequate knowledge, tools and the resources necessary for self-care to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing (Rodger et al., 2014).

Recreational activities seem to be the most prominent source of coping for respondents of the current study including, exercise, sport, hobbies, yoga and mindfulness as well as seeking support from work colleagues and relaxation to alleviate OS. Findings from Bolton's (2015) study also found respondents engaged in action planning quite often, with exercise being the second most popular coping strategy used. Additionally, relaxation, hobbies and advice and support were other popular coping strategies use. However, the support intervention used the least was, seeking professional help, with 82% of participants never using this intervention to alleviate work related stress (Bolton, 2015). This also coincided with finding from the current study that showed only 6% of respondents sought professional help to alleviate experiences of OS.

It is worth noting that recreational activities and seeking advice from work colleagues are the preferred interventions of choice used by teachers to alleviate OS. These interventions may be incorporated into the development of external and in-school support structures for teachers to help alleviate/prevent OS among the profession.

4.16:

The survey disseminated among PPTs, stated that they would have a voice and their comments and opinions would be documented for review by any interested party. Optional responses collected to many of the questions asked, were in the hundreds. However, the last two questions on the survey (Section's 4.13; 4.14) asked respondents to complete an optional text response. The amount of text responses collected for Q25 and Q26 was phenomenal and the only means to display the teachers' voices was to present them in thematic tables. However, a full review of all answers are available in appendices 4.10 and 4.11.

Listen to the Teachers Voices: *What aspects of your job are most demanding?*

(**601** optional text responses from 650 respondents = 92.46% response rate).

Table 4.59:

#	Answer	Percentage	Count
1.	Time Management/planning classes/curriculum changes/meetings	63%	380
2.	Workload & Administration	49%	295
3.	Student discipline/behaviour, management expectations & conflict issues from parents	31%	187
4.	Policy/Dept. planning/Initiatives/support	27%	163
5.	Expectations from management/DES conflict & support issues with school management & DES.	24%	143
6.	Stress from lack of resources, working conditions, classroom management	20%	119
7.	Extra-Curricular activities, working hours, unclear/varied roles & responsibilities	15%	89
8.	Pay Inequality	2%	10

Organisational/Environmental Demands = 1386 related comments from PPTs exposing the most demanding aspects of their job.

4.17:

Listen to the Teachers Voices: *What would you suggest, to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general? (Appendix 4.11).*

(**540** optional text responses from 650 participants = 83.07% response rate).

Table 4.60:

#	Answer	Percentage	Count
1.	Policy change/contract/CPD/curriculum	51%	274
2.	Improve management/staff collaboration/communication & support	40%	214
3.	Workload Issues including administration	32.5%	176
4.	Well-being/stress reduction	32%	172
5.	Improved resources, behaviour strategy, class size/staff	30%	163
6.	Time management & time allocation for correction/prep	29%	157
7.	Pay equality, review extra-curricular activities, course work, meetings.	19%	101
8.	Acknowledgement of job performance	12%	65

Organisational & Environmental Stressors = 1342 related suggestions from post primary school teachers that may help improve the work environment and supports structures for.

Chapter Five

Conclusion & Recommendations

Concise Summary of Findings

Limitations of the Research Study

Recommendations

Conclusion

Chapter 5: Conclusion & Recommendations

5.1: Concise Summary of Findings

Findings relating to objectives 1.

The prevalence/frequent of occupational stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland.

98% of PPTs experience OS at some level.

71% of PPTs experience OS up to 3 times per week.

39% of PPTs experience OS on a daily basis.

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Findings relating to objective 2:

The main demographic, environmental and organisational predictors of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

Demographic Predictors of OS.

Initial findings did suggest that female teachers experience OS up to 3 times per week - 9.5% more than their male counterparts; and 8% more on a daily basis.

Findings regarding different age groups and the amount of years teaching experience demonstrated, an average minimal variance across the different categories when cross-tabulated against the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession. Therefore, suggesting that age difference and the amount of years teaching experience gained, has little impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland. However significant levels of OS were found across all age groups and the amount of years teaching experienced.

Environmental Predictors of OS:

The main environmental predictors of OS regarding *the General Ethos of the Schools:*

The lack of promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing for PPTs across all five school types.

The lack of promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing for PPTs in the staffrooms.

The lack of provision of adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress across all five school types.

The predominant environmental predictors of OS regarding *Time Management*

Over commitment from the teacher.

Not enough time to complete daily tasks.

Rushing lessons to keep up with the curriculum.

Doing more than one thing at time.

Taking work home to get it done.

Have little time to relax.

School self-evaluation procedures adding to administrative duties.

CPD training taking up teaching time

Impact of Staff Shortages on the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs.

Additional administrative duties.

Additional extra-curricular duties.

Teaching extra classes.

Have to teach classes other than my specialised subjects.

Class Disruption (top four issues)

Students talking out of turn.

Telling off and reprimanding students.

Students disengaging from classroom activities.

Students disrupting the flow of the lesson.

Organisational Predictors of OS

Type of Teaching contract held.

PPTs on a regular part-time contract, experience OS 31% more than those on a temporary whole-time contract - lowest and highest ends of the scale.

Pay and conditions.

Findings show, 66% of PPTs are not satisfied with their pay/conditions and are 16% more likely to experience OS up to 3 times per week, and 14% more likely to experience OS on a daily basis. Findings established an association between those who are not satisfied with pay and conditions and the prevalence/frequency OS experienced up to 3 times per week. Thus suggesting 'pay and conditions' as a possible predictor for some PPTs in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland. However, gender type had no significant impact on the findings regarding *satisfaction with pay and conditions*

Extra-curricular activities including non-paid working hours.

As the amount of non-paid extra-curricular working hours increased for PPTs (from 5 hours or less to 20 hours or more per week), so too did the frequency of OS among the profession; from 50% at the minimum level of 'extra non-paid hours worked - *5 hours or less* to 81%, representing the top level of extra non-paid hours worked - *20 hours or more.*

Thus, revealing that; the amount of extra-curricular/nonpaid hours worked, will increase the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced. Findings show, as the amount of extra-curricular/non-paid working hours increases, so too will the frequency of OS experienced by the profession.

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Findings relating to objective 3:

The predominant manifestations of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

Emotional Strain due to lack of emotional resources to cope with OS. Female PPTs are 6% more likely to experience emotional stress compared to their male counterparts.

Lack motivation due to OS. Male PPTs are 8% more likely to lack motivation compared to their female counterparts.

Lack accomplishment from work. Female PPTs are 7% more likely to experience the lack of accomplishment from their work compared to their male counterparts.

57% of PPTs *always* experience *Loss of concentration,* due to occupational stress - minimal variance was revealed across gender types.

46% Of PPTs *always* experience *tearfulness,* due to occupational stress, with 35% more female PPTs experience 'tearfulness' compared to their male counterparts.

59% Of PPTs *always* experience *anger,* due to occupational stress, minimal variance was displayed across gender types.

63% Of PPTs *always* experience *disturbed sleep,* due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing 'disturbed sleep' 10% more than their male counterparts.

47% Of PPTs *always* experience *forgetfulness,* due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing 'forgetfulness' 8% more than their male counterparts.

40% Of PPTs *always* experience *Low self-esteem'*, due to occupational stress, minimal variance was shown across gender types in this category.

44% Of PPTs *always* experience 'headaches', due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing 'headaches' 13.5% more than their male counterparts.

41% Of PPTs *always* experience *home/family life upset*, due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing *'home family life upset'* due to OS, 6% more than their male counterparts.

50% Of PPTs *always* experience *thoughts of early retirement or leaving the profession*, due to occupational stress, minimal variance was shown across gender types

31% Of PPTs *always* experience *deterioration in work,* due to occupational stress, with minimal variance revealed across gender types.

37% Of PPTs *always* experience *low motivation*, due to occupational stress, with minimal variance exposed across gender types.

51% Of PPTs *always* experience *Loss of energy*, due to occupational stress, with female PPTs experiencing *'loss of energy'* 6% more than their male counterparts.

24% Of PPTs *always* experience *depression* due to occupational stress, minimal variance was shown across gender types

Thoughts of changing career

65% of the sample group thought about changing career, of those - 69% are male PPTs, compared to 64% female PPTs. Revealing that male PPTs are 5% more likely to think about changing career, compared to their female counterparts. Findings also show that 80% of those who think about changing career, experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 48% experiencing OS on a daily basis. In comparison those who do not think of changing career - 55% experience OS up to 3 times per week, with 20% of those experiencing OS on a daily basis. Hence, the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs is correlated with, PPTs who think about leaving the profession and therefore, may be considered as a manifestation of OS among the profession

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Findings relating to objective 4:

Existing support systems that are available/used by PPTs in Ireland to alleviate occupational stress.

Staff in School Supports – Sections 1-7

46% of PPTs stated that they *'are not aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide'.*

58% 'agreed/definitely agreed' that *'I feel my views are listened to and taken seriously among other staff members'*;

- 52% PPTs 'agreed/definitely agreed that *'bullying among teachers is not evident or tolerated in the school or staffroom'.*

Q19.1: - 46% of respondents 'agreed/definitely agreed' *that 'management assist staff to work collectively so that trust, respect and confidence are evident throughout the school'*; compared to 27% who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Q19.2: - 58% 'agreed/definitely agreed' that *'I feel my views are listened to and taken seriously among other staff members'*; compared to 17% who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Q19.3: - 47.5% 'agreed/definitely agreed' that *'I feel that I receive recognition and support from management – vocally and/or written'*; compared to 30% who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Q19.4: - 43% 'agree/definitely agreed' that *'I feel my efforts and abilities are noted and rewarded/my work is worthwhile and successful'*; compared to 32% who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Q19.5: - 52% PPTs 'agreed/definitely agreed that *'bullying among teachers is not evident in the school or staffroom'*; compared to 32% who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Q19.6: - 53% PPTs 'agreed/definitely agreed that *'Bullying among teachers is not tolerated in the school or staff-room'*; compared to 24% of respondents who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Q19.7: - 40% (258 of 650) PPTs 'agreed/definitely agreed' that – *'I am aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide';* compared to 46% (298 of 650) who 'disagreed/definitely disagreed' with the statement.

Findings show some concerning percentage rates regarding 'Staff in school supports', with only 3 sections (19.2; 19.5 & 19.6) exposing positive percentage rates - over 50% in the 'agree/definitely agree' categories; however, 4 sections (19.1; 19.3; 19.4 & 19.7) revealed percentage rates below 50%. Additionally, findings from section 19.7 are concerning as 46% of PPTs stated that they *'are not aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide'.*

Sections 1-7 above may all be predictors of OS among PPTs, however some prove more concerning than others, not based on percentage rates alone, but the severity/occurrences and possible consequences of each individual section.

Teachers' perceptions of compromising their position/status as a teacher if they voice concerns regarding their experiences of OS.

63% of PPTs think voicing concerns regarding their experiences of OS may compromise their position/status as a teacher.

Additional, narrative data from the respondents provided explanations why they thought voicing concerns regarding their experiences of OS may compromise their position/status as a teacher are:

1). Sign of weakness/not managing/not being able to cope.

2). Impedes future promotion/permanent contract/no job security.

3). Expected to do your job and just cope.

4). Management think you're not able for the job/non-supportive.

5). Stigmatism.

Findings exposed that PPTs feel; *voicing concerns regarding their experience of OS may compromise their position/status as a teacher*, and may therefore need to be addressed, as an area that is lacking in support for teachers - to voice their concerns when necessary.

There is sufficient CPD training in place to help you implement legislation & policies regarding child protection issues

Findings from analysis revealed; 71% of PPTs agreed that there is sufficient training in place to help implement legislation and policies regarding child protection issues, compared to 29% who disagreed.

Additional comments from the respondents contained information regarding CPD in general. Although findings show 71% agreed that there is sufficient CPD training in place, comments from the respondents presented the following top five concerns:

1). Not enough CPD to help implement policies and procedures/don't know anything about CPD regarding child protection;

2). Box ticking/totally insufficient/rushed participation;

3). No time for CPD with workload;

4). One or two on-line courses only the tip of the iceberg;

5). New Junior Certificate causing problems.

In-school supports are available to help teachers debrief and cope with sensitive issues regarding child protection matters.

Analysis of data revealed 51% of PPTs *agreed* that in-school supports are available to help teachers debrief, and cope with sensitive issues encountered regarding child protection matters. 49% *did not agree* with the statement.

Satisfaction with available supports to help alleviate workplace stress. (Sections 1-3).

- Findings show (Table 4.44) 30% of PPTs are satisfied with the ***Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme,*** while 70% are not.
- Findings show (Table 4.46) that 23% of PPTs are satisfied with: ***In School Supports,*** while 77% are not.
- Findings show that 85% of responding PPTs are not satisfied ***with on-line supports*** compared to 15% who are satisfied.

An additional 65 comments from the respondents regarding *Online Supports,* exposed the following top five top themes:

- Not aware of any (online supports)
- Voice for teachers on Facebook
- Union (ASTI)
- Meditation/general wellbeing resources
- Sending an email is not sufficient promotion.

Coping Strategies utilised by Irish PPTs to alleviate Occupational Stress.

Findings below show the coping strategies used, *always/quite often* by the respondents to help them cope with their experiences of OS

57.5% use *exercise* to alleviate OS.

47% *seek support from work colleagues* to alleviate OS.

42% use *relaxation* to alleviate OS.

8% use *alcohol* to alleviate OS.

6% *seek professional help* to alleviate OS.

6% *use other forms of support* to alleviate OS.

4% *use prescribed medication* to alleviate OS.

4% *seek support from a school counsellor* to alleviate OS.

3% *use non-prescribed medication* to alleviate OS.

2% *use online supports* to alleviate OS.

Additionally, text responses revealed the following as popular coping strategies to help alleviate the prevalence of OS among PPTs; sport, hobbies, yoga, mindfulness and support from partner, family, friends.

The final two Questions are direct insights into what teachers perceive as the most demanding aspects of their job, and what they recommend to improve the current situation and support structures for PPTs across Ireland.

Listen to the Teachers Voices: Q25: *What aspects of your job are most demanding?*

(**601** optional text responses from 650 respondents = 92.46% response rate).

#	Answer	Percentage	Count
1.	Time Management/planning classes/curriculum changes/meetings	63%	380
2.	Workload & Administration	49%	295
3.	Student discipline/behaviour, management expectations & conflict issues from parents	31%	187
4.	Policy/Dept. planning/Initiatives/support	27%	163
5.	Expectations from management/DES conflict & support issues with school management & DES.	24%	143
6.	Stress from lack of resources, working conditions, classroom management	20%	119
7.	Extra-Curricular activities, working hours, unclear/varied roles & responsibilities	15%	89
8.	Pay Inequality	2%	10

Organisational/Environmental Demands = 1386 related comments from PPTs exposing the most demanding aspects of their job.

Listen to the Teachers Voices: Q26: *What would you suggest, to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general? (Appendix 4.11).*

(**540** optional text responses from 650 participants = 83.07% response rate).

#	Answer	Percentage	Count
1.	Policy change/contract/CPD/curriculum	51%	274
2.	Improve management/staff collaboration/communication & support	40%	214
3.	Workload Issues including administration	32.5%	176
4.	Well-being/stress reduction	32%	172
5.	Improved resources, behaviour strategy, class size/staff	30%	163
6.	Time management & time allocation for correction/prep	29%	157
7.	Pay equality, review extra-curricular activities, course work, meetings.	19%	101
8.	Acknowledgement of job performance	12%	65

Organisational & Environmental Stressors = 1342 related suggestions from post primary school teachers that may help improve the work environment and supports structures for.

5.2: Limitations of the Research Study:

1. Limitations of the research inquiry include the cross-sectional design of the survey i.e. information regarding the main predictors of OS, and the manifestations of OS is collected on the one survey, at the same time. This may insight inferring causal relationship for the respondent. Due to the cross-sectional nature of data, long-term health implications of OS are not analysed in this study. Yet, the link between the manifestations of stress and long-term health consequences is well founded in literature. Throughout the study all other possible limitations were noted at source, which may be of consequence for the conclusions drawn and recommendations presented.

2. Qualitative data responses may be critiqued as having some statistical problems, for example: some academics state that individuals who self-report via surveys often, over or underestimate their behaviours, experiences and themselves. However, self-reporting is classed as a valid and reliable form of measurement, despite the limited amount of studies suggesting, the over and under estimation of the self when completing such surveys (Croucher et al, 2013).

3. A large volume of comments/narrative responses were received from the participants. However, due to time constraints and the word count of the current thesis, it was not possible to analyse further the volume of qualitative data received. Yet, a deeper exploration of the qualitative responses may have uncovered additional insights regarding the experiences and views of PPT on the prevalence, predictors and manifestations of OS in their workplace.

4. Although, quantitative data is classified as, a scientific value free approach, questions were constructed and gearing towards the objectives of the study. Consequently, the approach is not completely value-free and therefore may affect the objectivity of the claims presented in the findings. However, by omitting bias, personal emotions and preferences as much as possible; and combining the different paradigms, theoretical approaches and methodologies, the objectivity of the study was strengthened.

5. Random sampling was employed to ensure all secondary schools in Ireland would have the opportunity to participate in the study. Permission was sought from the school Principals to conduct the survey in their school and, requested them to disseminate the survey (via email) among their teaching staff. Hence, the circulation of the survey to all teaching staff depended on each school Principal. Therefore, it is not possible to confirm if all PPTs were aware of, or had the same opportunity to participate in the research inquiry. However, the response rate exceeded the total amount of respondents required (Table 3.5. p.59) allowing for the generalisability of the research findings to the sample population.

5.3: Recommendations

Full and detailed consideration was given to the issues presented in this study. Recommendations brought forward may insight constructive change to help alleviate the high levels of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland, while encouraging future research to maintain updated knowledge in the field of study. The following recommendations are brought forward for consideration by any interested parties.

1. The first recommendation is to investigate further the findings of the current study. This may assist in the development of constructive planning for support structures to help prevent/alleviate OS among PPTs in Ireland. Further research may include, breaking down the key points of the findings to conduct a more in-depth analysis of these factors. External personal traits and circumstances of PPTs should be explored, (e.g. lifestyle, variances among rural/urban schools, social solidarity/isolation, diet, exercise, sleep pattern, family etc.) particularly given the high levels of OS presented among, gender (Table 4.5, p.74), age (Table 4.7, p.76), years teaching experience (Table 4.9, p.79) and county of employment (Table 4.10, p.83). This may help identify common personal characteristics/stressors that may lead to ill health/stress that is exacerbated by the prevalence of OS. Such findings may assist the development and

implementation of future support systems/prevention strategies to protect PPTs against the onset of unhealthy OS in Ireland.

2. Although findings exposed, that on average the geographical location of post-primary schools (by county) had minimal impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS. A significant difference was revealed across certain counties (Table 4.10, p.83) e.g. the highest and lowest levels of OS experienced up to 3 times per week (Cavan 37% - Kildare 89%); and among counties reporting experiences of OS on a daily basis (Longford 12.5% - Sligo and Monaghan 67%). It is therefore recommended that additional research be conducted to establish possible reasons for the variances in the prevalence of OS among the highest and lowest levels of OS experienced by county. Further research may consider the rural/urban location of schools as a possible contributing factor to the prevalence of OS. This was not explored in the current study and therefore limited the evaluation of a more in-depth analysis of variances of OS across urban and rural post-primary schools in Ireland.

3. Findings show 77% of respondents are not satisfied with in school supports to help alleviate OS (Table 4.45. p.156). Therefore, it is recommended that adequate support interventions be developed and implemented and, the positive mental health and wellbeing of teacher's is promoted and prioritised in the schools. Interventions should include amenities for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress/issues, without the fear of being stigmatised. This is important as teachers do not only facilitate students learning and learning outcomes, they also influence the students emotional and social development. Therefore, the prevalence of OS among teachers and the lack of supportive interventions may also impact on the students learning outcomes and their social and emotional wellbeing. This in turn impacts on the status of Irish post-primary schools both nationally and internationally and consequently, the Departments of Education and Skills 'Action Plan' - for the Irish education system to become the best in Europe by 2026 (Action Plan, 2016-2026).

4. It is important that the predominant environmental and organisational predictors of OS presented in the findings be brought to the attention of management and

relevant departmental bodies. Therefore, it is recommended that the root causes of the significant levels of OS experienced (Table 4.5, p.74) be brought to the attention of, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Health. The predominant predictors of OS exposed by PPTs in the current study include, the general ethos of the schools (Table 4.14, p.98); Time management issues (Table 4.15); Staff shortages (Table 4.16, p.96); Pay inequality and the extra-curricular non-paid working hours that teachers engage in. Additionally, findings show teachers do not have enough time to complete daily tasks hence, rush lessons to keep up with the curriculum, take additional work home to get it done and having little time to relax on a daily basis (Table 4.15, p.93). Yet, the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997, (sections 11 to 23) lays down minimum provisions for, leave from work and maximum limits on hours of work, to ensuring that workers are not subjected to excessive work demands and have adequate rest periods. Therefore, it is recommended that the Department examine the roles and responsibilities of PPTs to establish if they are both achievable and realistic once equated to their hours of employment. The monitoring and controlling of such issues and the development and implementation of effective change/supports, may help reduce the significant levels of OS experienced by PPTs across Ireland (Table 4.5). Such action may also ensure compliance with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing at Work Act 2005 and the Organisation of Working Time Act 1997.

5. Additionally, many reforms on education have been brought forward that involves extra workload for teachers. This issue needs to be investigated further to ensure appropriate resources and safeguards are available to implement these reforms, without compromising the mental health and wellbeing of the teachers. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, sets out the roles and responsibilities of employers to help prevent mental and physical ill health among employees. Part 2, Section 8 of the Act, states that employers have a general duty of care to take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health and welfare of their employees. This includes protecting against personal injury to the mental health of employees arising from job stress. The Act also details the functions and role of the Health and Safety Authority that provides enforcement measures specifying penalties that may be applied for any breach

of occupational health and safety (Health and Safety Executive, 2005). Hence, it is recommended that Irish governing departments ensure adequate policies/supports are in place to address the significant levels of workplace stress that were exposed in this study. This will help protect the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and ensure compliance with current legislation (Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005).

6. The problem of staff shortages in post-primary schools across Ireland impacts greatly on a teacher's workload including, additional administrative duties and extra-curricular duties (Table 4.16, p.96). However, one of the most concerning findings is that teachers often have to teach classes other than their specialised subject due to staff shortages. This practice causes additional stress for the teacher and impacts on the students' learning and educational outcomes. Therefore, it is recommended that further research be conducted regarding the impact staff shortages have on PPTs' mental health and wellbeing and their students' learning outcomes. An inquiry should include both surveys and interviews with undergraduates, teachers and school principals; using both methods may help encourage true and accurate insights into the problem of staff shortages. Furthermore, involving undergraduates in the sample group may reveal unknown truths regarding the perceived status of teaching as a career choice from their perspective.

7. Whilst it is recognised that certain levels of stress are inevitable and necessary in motivating individuals to deliver daily tasks. Stress that exceeds an individual's optimal level is classed as unhealthy stress that can lead to anxiety, OS and burnout. Although some resources are available for teachers, e.g. The Employee Assistance Programme, findings show that 46% of respondents are not aware of the programme or the supports it provides. Hence, any intervention or policy, unless promoted and initiated are only intentions that serve no purpose. Therefore, it is recommended that all PPTs are notified of the supports and resources available to them. Creating awareness will also help alleviate the stigma attached to, teachers voicing their concerns regarding their experiences of OS (Table 4.39, p.148).

8. Although 71% of respondents agreed that there is sufficient CPD training in place (Table 4.41, p.151), the content and consistency of the training was questioned. With some teachers stating they had only completed two online courses. CPD training should ensure, the professional's capabilities are kept up to date with current standards and that they maintain and enhance the knowledge and skills necessary to deliver the educational curriculum. The importance of CPD should not be underestimated and it is therefore recommended that further research exploring the content and consistency of CPD training across the country be investigated, from the perspective of the teachers and training staff. This may help establish why inconsistencies in CPD training was found, and if deemed necessary appropriate changes should be made to CPD programmes.

9. Many international laws are also in force to protect the human rights of employees in the workplace. Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights include (but are not limited to) the following; conditions of work must be just and favourable; employees have the right to equal pay for equal work without discrimination; are worthy of human dignity, and favourable remuneration ensuring an existence worthy of human dignity (UN General Assembly, 1948). Hence, a further recommendation of the current study is that, equal pay be reinstated for teachers. The two-tier salary scale has teachers feeling disheartened and undervalued, especially those who commenced employment after 1st January 2011. Teachers starting salary from this date was 13% less than those already employed in the profession. Findings show, 66% of respondents are not satisfied with their pay and conditions, with some teachers feeling discriminated against by pay inequality (Table 4.21, p.112).

10. Furthermore, the state provides a compensatory social insurance for injuries and illness incurred by employees due to work. Occupational Injury Benefit is available to employees suffering from physical injuries that occur in the workplace or from disease contracted at work, however no equivalent payment is available for illnesses arising from OS – depression or anxiety. In this instance the employee must claim Illness Benefit, a payment for all kinds of illnesses, regardless if they are a result of workplace harm. Therefore, it is not possible to track the cost of OS to the exchequer. Hence, it is recommended that

this issue be amended, so that true and valid accounts of the cost of OS to the exchequer is readily available. This may insight positive change as financial implications, due to the absenteeism of teachers as a result of OS, may prove more costly than implementing adequate interventions to prevent/alleviate OS among the profession – prevention is better than cure.

11. Finally, it is apparent from the findings that the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs in Ireland is compromised by their work. This is due to the extreme levels of OS experienced by PPTs up to three times per week and on a daily basis (Table 4.4, p.72). However, the significance of a healthy teaching workforce has been recognised as a major contributing factor to ensure the effective provision and delivery of education. Therefore, a culture that values and promotes the mental health and well-being of teachers by reducing the prevalence of work-related stress must be assured. Additionally, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, places and onus on employers to ensure that the safety, health and welfare of employees is not compromised by their work. This duty of care extends to the mental health and wellbeing of employees (HSE 2005). Hence, employers must accept their obligations to identify, prevent and reduce problems related to OS; not only because employers are legally required to do so, but because of the social and economic benefits of having a healthy and motivated workforce (ETUCE, 2011). Therefore, it is recommended that a specific model of professional supervision for PPTs (an administrative, educational and supportive intervention) be developed and implemented. This may help safeguard and promote positive mental health and wellbeing among PPTs across Ireland. The intervention would act as a parallel process, benefiting both the teachers' and students' educational and organisational outcomes. Furthermore, the practice of consistent, professional supervision to help teacher's alleviate OS would help ensure employer compliance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 by:

1). Identifying hazards in the workplace

2). Assessing risks

3). Choosing control measures

4). Writing safety statements

5). Recording and reviewing statements on a regular basis

(Employment Rights Ireland, 2015).

Many policies and judicial reforms have been introduced to protect the mental health and wellbeing of employee's however, legislation and policies are only guidelines unless implemented.

5.4: Conclusion:

The aim of this study was to establish the prevalence of OS among post-primary teachers (PPTs) in Ireland, while identifying the main predictors and manifestations of OS experienced within their working environment. Demographic, environmental and organisational predictors of OS were explored and cross-tabulated, to reveal high risk factors/cluster groups that impact on the prevalence/frequency of OS among the profession. The study also explored existing safeguards/support structures that are in place to alleviate/prevent the occurrence of OS and protect the mental health and wellbeing of PPTs. Hence, a risk assessment of the main predictors and manifestations of OS was produced, while establishing if available supports are utilised by the profession, fit for purpose and in line with, The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Most importantly PPTs were asked two open ended questions 1. What they perceived as the most demanding aspects of their job (Table 4.59, p.177) and 2. What teachers suggest to improve working conditions and support structures for the profession and the Irish education system (Table 4.60, p.178). This gave the respondents an opportunity to voice, their concerns, opinions and/or recommendations. These two questions alone provided an abundance of valuable information from the front-line workers of our Irish education system. If taken on board this information may assist in the planning and construction

of interventions that may be introduced to help prevent or alleviate the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland.

Both national and international Health and Safety legislation places and onus on employers to ensure that, the safety, health and welfare of employees is not compromised by their work. This duty of care extends to the mental health and wellbeing of employees. The significance of a healthy teaching workforce has been recognised as major contributing factor to ensure the effective provision and delivery of education, therefore, a culture that values and promotes the mental health and well-being of teachers by reducing the prevalence of work-related stress must be assured (HSE 2005). This would act as a 'parallel process' benefiting not only teacher's but students also, through the effective provision and delivery of education.

Although the Irish Government is ambitious regarding the Irish education system becoming the best in Europe by 2026; (Action Plan, 2016-2026), the prevalence and frequency of OS among Irish post-primary school teachers may prevent the Government achieving their goal. The teacher retention/recruitment issue alone could prevent the allocation of teachers necessary to sustain a productive and high achieving education system. Additionally, the two-tier pay scale is a dominant factor in depersonalising the profession, with many teachers feeling overworked, underpaid and discriminated against. The workload teachers try to endure is causing untold stress among the profession, due to extra-curricular activities and administration work that teachers often have to do from home. Therefore, the government will need to take decisive steps to improve many areas of the education system if they are to realise their ambitions.

Findings from the research inquiry, may add to the body of Irish literature regarding the prevalence of work-related stress among PPTs in Ireland. Results and recommendations that evolved from the study will be made available to schools, agencies and governing departments, affiliated with the Irish post-primary education system. This may help create awareness of the prevalence of occupational stress among the profession and the significance of promoting

positive mental health and wellbeing. Interventions or policy change to help alleviate the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs in Ireland, should be closely correlated with sustaining a quality administrative, educational and supportive experience. This would act as a 'parallel process' benefiting not only teachers but students also, through the effective provision and delivery of education. Additionally, findings and recommendations may enhance or encourage further research in the field of study.

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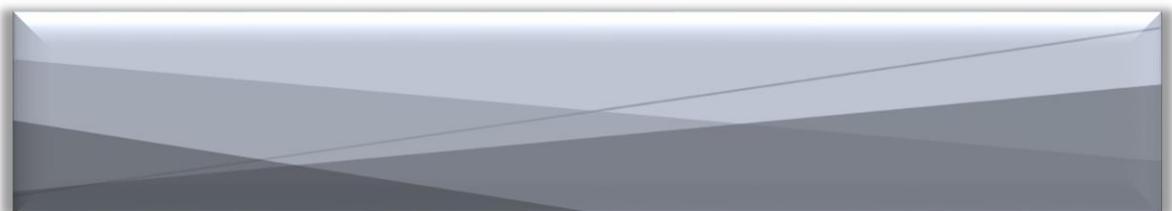
Appendix Section

Appendix 1.1

Fig 1.1 - Theoretical Perspective Employed

Bioecological Social Systems of Occupational Stress among Post-Primary Teachers in Ireland

Relationship with Co-workers

ENVIRONMENTAL VARIABLES

Student Behaviour

Time Constraints

Classroom environment

Location of school

Lack of Support

Job Insecurity

ORGANISATIONAL VARIABLES

School Type

Legislation policies, procedures V Resources

Poor Relationship with Management/Colleagues

Work Overload

Job Demands

Age

Conflict

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Low Pay

Gender

Lifestyle

Impact

Years teaching experience

Family

Physical, Emotional & Behavioural Responses

Emphasises complex interactions between multiple systems of influence on an individuals' development. Ranging from individual, environmental & organisational (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

Adapted from Bronfenbrenner's & Ceci's (1994) Bioecological Systems Theory

Appendix Section 1.2

Fig 1.2 - Theoretical Perspective Employed:

Hierarchy of Teacher Needs

Self-Actualisation –The teacher is physically and mentally ready to teach

Esteem: Positive environmental and organisational culture. Positive feedback, time to reflect on practice, supports available.

Belonging: Positive relationships with peers and co-workers, managerial role models

Safety: Physical and emotional safety, Clear class and school routines, access to supports, Autonomy

Physiological: Basic needs at home are met, safe home and place to sleep, food, clothing, adequate salary.

Self-fulfilment needs

Psychological needs

Basic Needs

Self-Actualisation
Esteem
Belonging
Safety
Physiological

Five motivational needs- core components for effective employee wellbeing (Valvano, 2016).

(Adapted, 2019 from Guditus, 2013)

Appendix Section 1.3

The Job Demands-Resources Model
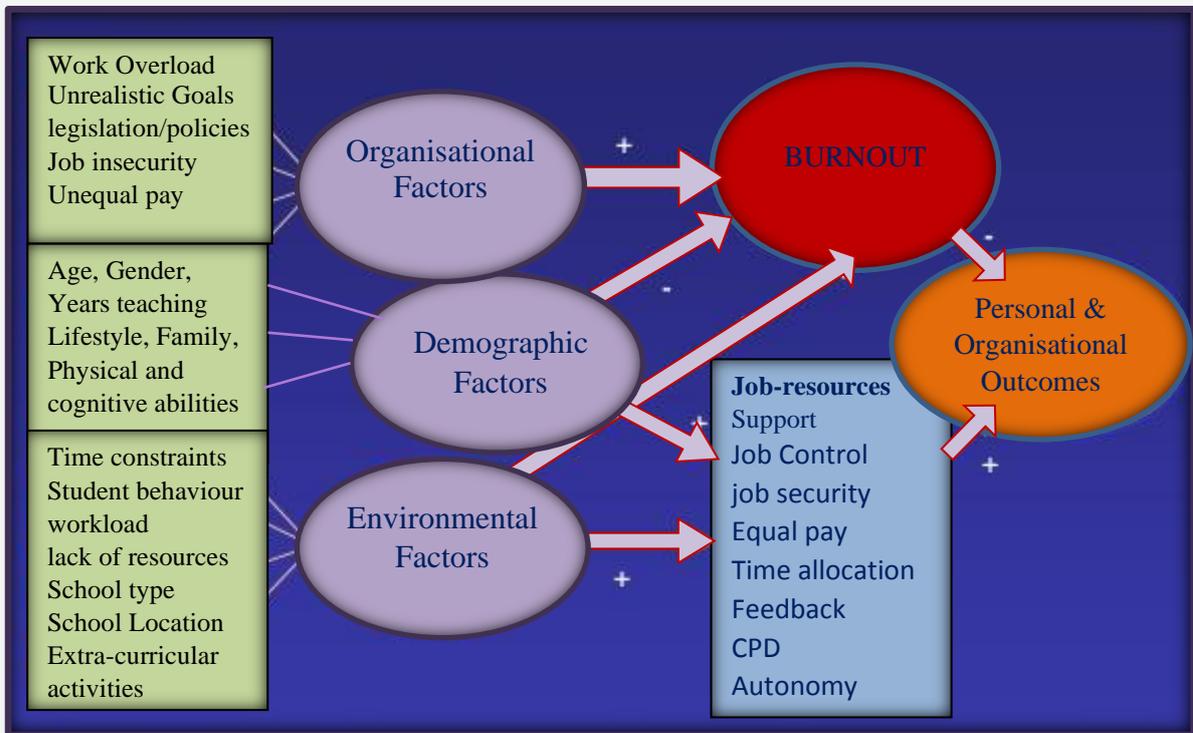
(Adapted 2018; from, Bakker & Demerouti, 2006)

Job resources may reduce the impact of job demands on stress-reactions – job resources are motivational when job demands are high (Bakker, 2015).

Appendix Section 1.4

The principles of Yerkes-Dodson's Law are depicted in the Human Performance Curve.
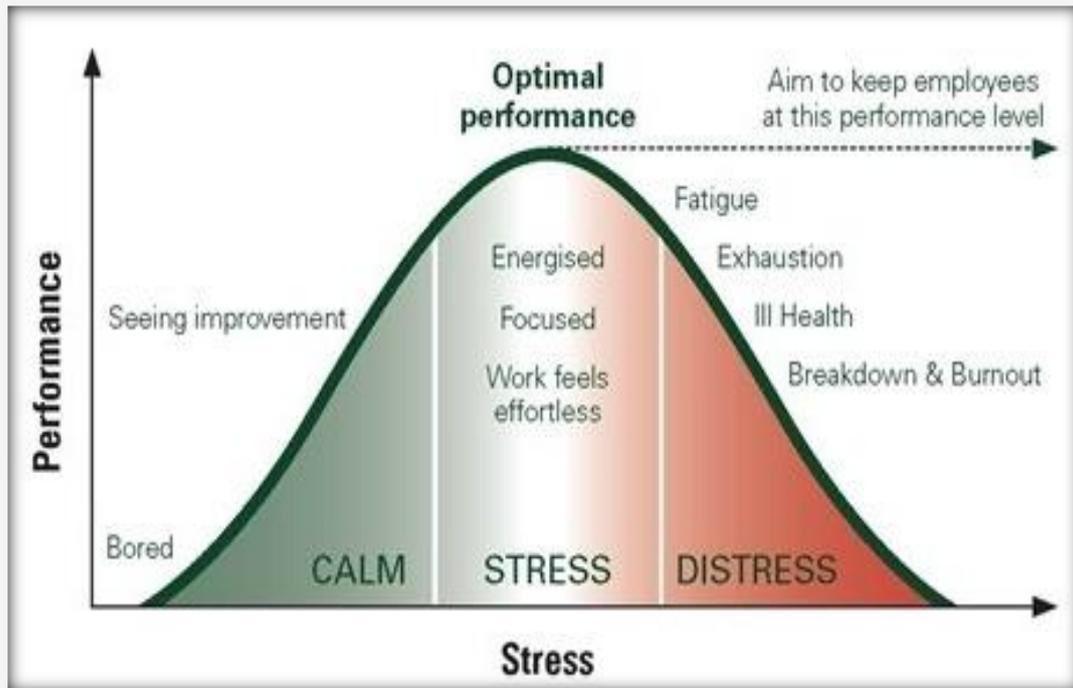
(Chaby 2015)

Good stress & bad stress - Finding the balance: Stress will motivate and sustain performance: Too much stress will degrade performance, compensating for decreasing performance, will create more stress, further decreasing performance (Meier, 2015).

Appendix Section 1.5

The effort-reward imbalance model

- **High effort**
  - High workload
  - Time pressure
  - Responsibilities
  - Overtime
  - Interruptions and disturbances

- **Low reward**
  - Inadequate salary
  - Lack of esteem from colleagues/management
  - Low promotion aspects
  - Job insecurity
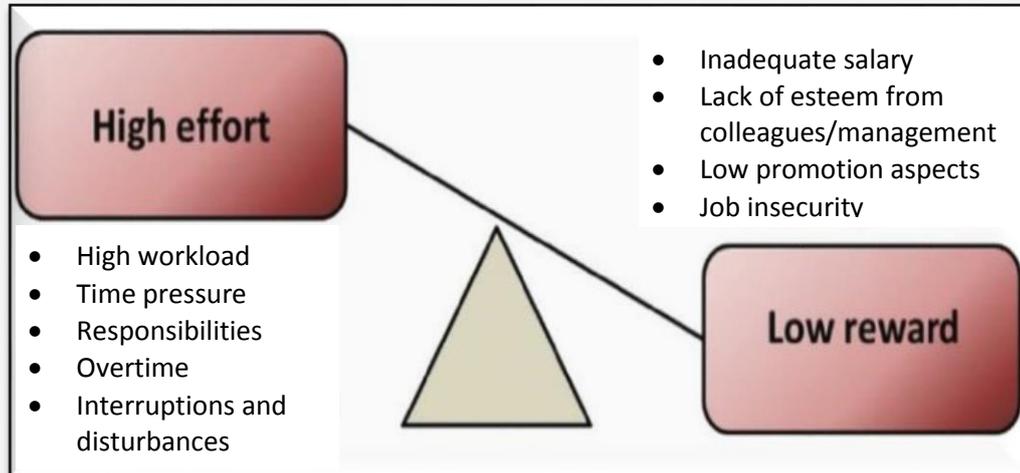
(Siegrist, 2017)

Failed reciprocity between high efforts at work and low rewards elicits negative emotions and stress reactions with adverse long-term effects on health (Siegrist, 2017).

APPENDIX 2.1

The new salary rates from 1st October 2018 for Irish Post-Primary Teachers as of 1st October 2018 are:

Salary rates for pre-January 1st 2011 entrants to post primary teaching with effect from 1st October 2018

Category Post-Primary	New Ongoing Rate from 1st Oct 2018	Value of Statutory Annual Leave Accumulated per hour worked from 1/10/2018
Hourly casual qualified	€44.41	€6.06
Hourly unqualified	€39.30	5.36

Table 2.1   (ASTI, 2018)

Salary rates for post-primary teachers who entered teaching **on or after 1st January 2011**

Category Post-Primary	New ongoing rate from 1st Oct 2018	Value of Statutory Annual Leave Accumulated per hour worked from 1/10/2018
Hourly casual qualified	€39.84	€ 5.43
Hourly unqualified	€35.37	€4.82

Table 2.2   (ASTI, 2018)

APPENDIX 3.1
(Research Information sheet and consent form)

The Prevalence of Occupational Stress among Irish Post-Primary School Teachers and the availability and significance of Support Interventions.

Let your voice be heard!

You are invited to participate in this research study conducted by Sally Ann Ennis, who is a research learner attached to the Department of Humanities at Institute of Technology Carlow. I am conducting this study for my Masters dissertation, Dr. Veronica Kelly is the Principal Supervisor for this project.

The research inquiry will investigate the prevalence of occupational stress and burnout among post-primary school teachers in Ireland. The possible causes of stress and the availability of adequate interventions of support to help alleviate or prevent the onset of workplace stress will also be investigated. The levels of workplace stress exposed will be equated to the coping strategies and supports available to alleviate the problem. The accessibility and significance of these supports will be investigated to establish if they are fit for purpose, and in line with national and international legislation on the health and safety at work for employees. There is an obligation on employers to risk assess all known hazards including psychosocial hazards, which might lead to workplace stress. Hence, significant findings and recommendations from data analysis will be compiled and presented to the relevant governing bodies and representatives of the Irish education system. Therefore, your knowledge and expertise is invaluable to this research and your participation will enhance the findings and analysis of the study. Text boxes are available within the survey for you to make additional comments, if you so wish. A thematic analysis of qualitative data will be conducted and also presented in report findings and recommendations.

 The survey should take approximately 5/10 minutes to complete, by clicking the consent option below you agree to participate in the online survey and acknowledge your participation is voluntary and you are over 18 years of age. You have the right to withdraw at any point, for any reason and without prejudice, before clicking the submit button at the end of the survey. If you would like to contact the principal investigator in the study to discuss this research, please e-mail sallyann.ennis@itcarlow.ie or contact IT Carlow (Wexford Campus) - 053 9185800

Please be assured this survey is anonymous to ensure confidentiality

○   I consent, begin the study (1)

○   I do not consent, I do not wish to participate (2)

APPENDIX 3.2

Survey Questions

Q1 What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Other (or prefer not to say) _____

Q2 What is your age group?

○ Under 25

○ 25-34

○ 35-44

○ 45-54

○ 55 or older

Q3 What type of school do you work in?

○ Voluntary Secondary School

○ ETB/Community College

○ Community/Comprehensive Schools

○ Gaelcholáiste

○ Educate Together

Q4 What county do you work in?

▼ Carlow ... Wicklow

Q5 How many years have you been teaching?

○ Less than 2 years

○ 2-5 years

○ 5-10 years

○ 10-15 years

○ 15-20 years

○ 20-25 years

○ 25 years or more

Q6 What teaching contract do you have?

○ Permanent full time

○ Pro-rata contract/fixed term contract

○ Regular part-time contracted teacher (formerly known as pro-rata contracted)

○ Temporary whole-time teacher

○ Non-casual part-time teacher

○ Casual part-time teacher

○ Unqualified casual part-time teacher

○ Other (please specify) _____

Q7 Did you enter the teaching profession on or after the 1st January 2011?

○ Yes (I commenced after the 1st of January 2011)

○ No (I commenced before 1st January 2011)

Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions?

○ Yes

○ No, *(additional comment optional)* _____

Q9 On average, how many non-paid hours do you work per week on extra-curricular activities, class preparation, supervision, grading work etc?

○ Under 5

○ 5-10

○ 10-15

○ 15-20

○ More than 20 (additional comment optional) _____

Q10 General Ethos of your School

(text entry in the comment box is optional & can relate to any of the statements)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
All staff contribute fully to the promotion of a caring and welcoming environment within the school.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Respectful relationships are fostered between staff	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel a sense of belonging and self-worth	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I can rely on work colleagues for emotional support	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The mental health and well-being of staff is prioritised and promoted in the school	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The mental health and well-being of staff is prioritised and promoted in the staff-room	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in the school	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q11
Time Management in School
(text entry in the comment box is optional & can relate to any of the statements)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I often over commit myself	○	○	○	○	○
There is not enough time to complete daily tasks	○	○	○	○	○
I have to rush lessons during class to keep up with the curriculum	○	○	○	○	○
I try doing more than one thing at a time	○	○	○	○	○
I have to take work home to get it done	○	○	○	○	○
I have little time to relax on a daily basis	○	○	○	○	○
School self-evaluation procedures adds to administrative duties	○	○	○	○	○
CPD training takes up teaching time	○	○	○	○	○

Q12
Do staff shortages impact on your workload?
(additional comments optional)

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Additional administrative duties	○	○	○
Additional extra-curricular duties	○	○	○
Teaching extra classes	○	○	○
Teaching classes other than my specialised subjects	○	○	○
Have staff shortages impacted on you since September 2018?	○	○	○

Q13
Classroom lessons are disrupted by...
(additional comments optional)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Students talking out of turn	○	○	○	○	○
'Telling off' and reprimanding of students	○	○	○	○	○
Students using mobile phone during class	○	○	○	○	○
Students disengaging from classroom activities	○	○	○	○	○
Students disrupting the flow of the lesson	○	○	○	○	○
Students verbally abusing other students	○	○	○	○	○
Students verbally abusing the teacher	○	○	○	○	○
An emotional atmosphere that is negative and hostile	○	○	○	○	○
Students being aggressive towards other students	○	○	○	○	○
Students being aggressive towards the teacher	○	○	○	○	○
Students being physically disruptive	○	○	○	○	○
Other forms of inappropriate behaviour	○	○	○	○	○

Q14 How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?

○　Daily

○　2-3 times a week

○　Once a week

○　Once a fortnight

○　Once a month

○　Never

Q15 Do you think voicing concerns regarding your experience of occupational stress/burnout may compromise your position/status as a teacher?

○　Yes (if so, why?) _____

○　No (additional comment optional) _____

Q16 There is sufficient CPD training in place to help you implement legislation & policies regarding child protection issues.

☐　Agree (additional comment optional) _____

☐　Disagree (if so, why?) _____

Q17
In-school supports are available to help teachers debrief and cope with sensitive issues encountered regarding child protection matters.

○   Agree (additional comment optional) _____

○   Disagree (additional comment _____

Q18
How often do you experience the following?
(additional comments optional)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Lack of motivation at work	○	○	○	○	○
Lack emotional resources to cope with your work environment	○	○	○	○	○
Lack of accomplishment from your work	○	○	○	○	○

Q19
Staff Support in School
(additional comments optional)

	Definitely Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Definitely Disagree
Management assist staff to work collectively so that trust, respect and confidence are evident throughout the school.	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that my views are listened to and taken seriously among other staff members	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that I receive recognition and support from management (vocally and/or written)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that my efforts and abilities are noted and rewarded and that my work is worthwhile and successful.	○	○	○	○	○
Bullying among teachers is not evident in the school or staffroom	○	○	○	○	○
Bullying among teachers is not tolerated in the school or staff-room	○	○	○	○	○
I am aware of the Employee Assistance Services and the supports they provide.	○	○	○	○	○

Q20
Have you ever experienced any of the following due to workplace stress?

	Yes	Sometimes	Never
Loss of concentration	○	○	○
Tearfulness	○	○	○
Anger	○	○	○
Disturbed sleep	○	○	○
Forgetfulness	○	○	○
Low self esteem	○	○	○
Headaches	○	○	○
Home/Family life upset	○	○	○
Thoughts of retirement/or leaving the profession	○	○	○
Deterioration in work	○	○	○
Low motivation	○	○	○
Loss of energy	○	○	○
Depression	○	○	○
Other (if 'Yes' please elaborate)	○	○	○

Q21
Are you satisfied with available supports to help alleviate workplace stress?
(additional comments optional)

	Yes	No
Employee Assistance and Well-being programme	○	○
In school supports (Please give examples)	○	○
Online supports (please give examples)	○	○

Q22
Do you use any of the following as coping strategies to alleviate occupational stress?

	Always	Quite Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Relaxation	○	○	○	○	○
Exercise	○	○	○	○	○
Seek support from a work colleague	○	○	○	○	○
Seek support from a school counsellor	○	○	○	○	○
Seek professional help	○	○	○	○	○
Alcohol	○	○	○	○	○
Use prescribed medication	○	○	○	○	○
Use non-prescribed medication	○	○	○	○	○
Online supports (Please name below)	○	○	○	○	○
Other (please list)	○	○	○	○	○

Q23 Have you ever thought of changing career?

○   Yes (comment optional) _____

○   No (comment optional) _____

Q24
Occupational Satisfaction
(text entry in the comment box is optional & can relate to any of the statements)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In most ways my job is close to my ideal	○	○	○	○	○
The conditions of my job are excellent	○	○	○	○	○
I am satisfied with my job	○	○	○	○	○
I am happy with my professional progress	○	○	○	○	○
If I was only choosing my profession now it would not be teaching	○	○	○	○	○
I would recommend teaching as a satisfying career	○	○	○	○	○

Q25 What areas of your job are most demanding?

○ Comment _____

Q26 What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?

○ Comment/Recommendation _____

Thank you for participating, your knowledge and expertise is invaluable to this research and your contribution will enhance the overall findings and analysis of the study. On completion of this study, a report of the findings will be sent to all participating schools for circulation among teaching staff.
Please be assured that your responses are anonymous to ensure confidentiality.

Appendix 3.3 Ethical Approval

INSTITUTE *of*
TECHNOLOGY
CARLOW

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Cheatharlach

ETHICS IN RESEARCH COMMITTEE EVALUATION REPORT

Faculty/Campus:	Wexford
Department:	Humanities
Research Proposer:	Sally Ann Ennis
Ethical Application Number:	196
Project Title:	Would the Irish Post Primary Education System benefit from the implementation of a 'Staff Supervision Policy'?
Thesis Adviser:	Dr Veronica Kelly, Ms Susan Barnes
Medical Consultant:	None

Evaluation Date: 7th December 2017

1. Procedures have been followed according to those laid down by the Institute   Yes ☑   No ☐

2. Ethical approval granted   Yes ☑   No ☐

3. Referred for resubmission   Yes ☐   No ☑

Reason for resubmission
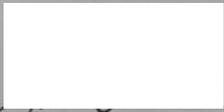
Signed: _____   Date: 12/2/2018
Ivan Sheeran
Chairperson

Appendix 3.4

Bryman's 2006) Rationales for combining quantitative and qualitative research:

1) *Triangulation* or greater validity – refers to the traditional view that quantitative and qualitative research might be combined to triangulate findings in order that they may be mutually corroborated. If the term was used as a synonym for integrating quantitative and qualitative research, it was not coded as triangulation.

2) *Offset* – refers to the suggestion that the research methods associated with both quantitative and qualitative research have their own strengths and weaknesses so that combining them allows the researcher to offset their weaknesses to draw on the strengths of both.

3) *Completeness* – refers to the notion that the researcher can bring together a more comprehensive account of the area of enquiry in which he or she is interested if both quantitative and qualitative research are employed.

4) *Process* – quantitative research provides an account of structures in social life, but qualitative research provides sense of process.

5) *Different research questions* – this is the argument that quantitative and qualitative research can each answer different research questions, but this item was coded only if authors explicitly stated that they were doing this.

6) *Explanation* – one is used to help explain findings generated by the other.

7) *Unexpected results* – refers to the suggestion that quantitative and qualitative research can be fruitfully combined when one generates surprising results that can be understood by employing the other.

8) *Instrument development* – refers to contexts in which qualitative research is employed to develop questionnaire and scale items – for example, so that better wording or more comprehensive closed answers can be generated.

9) *Sampling* – refers to situations in which one approach is used to facilitate the sampling of respondents or cases.

10) *Credibility* – refer s to suggestions that employing both approaches enhances the integrity of findings.

11) *Context* – refers to cases in which the combination is rationalized in terms of qualitative research providing contextual understanding coupled with either generalizable, externally valid findings or broad relationships among variables uncovered through a survey.

12) *Illustration* – refers to the use of qualitative data to illustrate quantitative findings, often referred to as putting "meat on the bones" of "dry" quantitative findings.

13) *Utility* or improving the usefulness of findings – refers to a suggestion, which is more likely to be prominent among articles with an applied focus, that combining the two approaches will be more useful to practitioners and others.

14) *Confirm and discover* – this entails using qualitative data to generate hypotheses and using quantitative research to test them within a single project.

15) *Diversity of views* – this includes two slightly different rationales – namely, combining researchers' and participants' perspectives through quantitative and qualitative research respectively, and uncovering relationships between variables through quantitative research while also revealing meanings among research participants through qualitative research.

16) *Enhancement* or building upon quantitative/qualitative findings – this entails a reference to making more of or augmenting either quantitative or qualitative findings by gathering data using a qualitative or quantitative research approach.

APPENDIX 4.1

(Experiences of OS of PPTs, by county of employment)

		How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						
		Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
What County do you work in?	Carlow	3 17.65% 1.18%	9 52.94% 4.29%	3 17.65% 3.26%	1 5.88% 3.03%	1 5.88% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	17 100.00% 2.62%
	Cavan	3 37.50% 1.18%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 25.00% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 25.00% 4.35%	1 12.50% 6.67%	8 100.00% 1.23%
	Clare	2 14.29% 0.79%	9 64.29% 4.29%	1 7.14% 1.09%	2 14.29% 6.06%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	14 100.00% 2.15%
	Cork	18 32.14% 7.09%	20 35.71% 9.52%	10 17.86% 10.87%	4 7.14% 12.12%	3 5.36% 6.52%	1 1.79% 6.67%	56 100.00% 8.62%
	Donegal	24 38.10% 9.45%	19 30.16% 9.05%	8 12.70% 8.70%	5 7.94% 15.15%	7 11.11% 15.22%	0 0.00% 0.00%	63 100.00% 9.69%
	Dublin	60 43.80% 23.62%	43 31.39% 20.48%	16 11.68% 17.39%	6 4.38% 18.18%	8 5.84% 17.39%	4 2.92% 26.67%	137 100.00% 21.08%
	Galway	14 30.43% 5.51%	24 52.17% 11.43%	3 6.52% 3.26%	2 4.35% 6.06%	3 6.52% 6.52%	0 0.00% 0.00%	46 100.00% 7.08%
	Kerry	7 35.00% 2.76%	9 45.00% 4.29%	1 5.00% 1.09%	1 5.00% 3.03%	2 10.00% 4.35%	0 0.00% 0.00%	20 100.00% 3.08%
	Kildare	23 63.89% 9.06%	9 25.00% 4.29%	1 2.78% 1.09%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 5.56% 4.35%	1 2.78% 6.67%	36 100.00% 5.54%
	Kilkenny	5 38.46% 1.97%	3 23.08% 1.43%	3 23.08% 3.26%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 15.38% 4.35%	0 0.00% 0.00%	13 100.00% 2.00%
	Laois	2 20.00% 0.79%	4 40.00% 1.90%	2 20.00% 2.17%	1 10.00% 3.03%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 10.00% 6.67%	10 100.00% 1.54%
	Leitrim	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 100.00% 0.00%
	Limerick	6 30.00% 2.36%	7 35.00% 3.33%	2 10.00% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	4 20.00% 8.70%	1 5.00% 6.67%	20 100.00% 3.08%

APPENDIX 4.1 - Contd.

(Experiences of OS of PPTs, by county of

		How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						Total
		Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	
What County do you work in?	Longford	1 12.50% 0.39%	6 75.00% 2.86%	1 12.50% 1.09%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	8 100.00% 1.23%
	Louth	12 63.16% 4.72%	3 15.79% 1.43%	2 10.53% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 10.53% 4.35%	0 0.00% 0.00%	19 100.00% 2.92%
	Mayo	11 42.31% 4.33%	6 23.08% 2.86%	3 11.54% 3.26%	4 15.38% 12.12%	1 3.85% 2.17%	1 3.85% 6.67%	26 100.00% 4.00%
	Meath	19 50.00% 7.48%	8 21.05% 3.81%	6 15.79% 6.52%	1 2.63% 3.03%	3 7.89% 6.52%	1 2.63% 6.67%	38 100.00% 5.85%
	Monaghan	4 66.67% 1.57%	1 16.67% 0.48%	1 16.67% 1.09%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	6 100.00% 0.92%
	Offaly	4 25.00% 1.57%	6 37.50% 2.86%	4 25.00% 4.35%	1 6.25% 3.03%	1 6.25% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	16 100.00% 2.46%
	Roscommon	2 28.57% 0.79%	2 28.57% 0.95%	2 28.57% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 14.29% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	7 100.00% 1.08%
	Sligo	2 66.67% 0.79%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 33.33% 1.09%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	3 100.00% 0.46%
	Tipperary	10 38.46% 3.94%	5 19.23% 2.38%	6 23.08% 6.52%	2 7.69% 6.06%	2 7.69% 4.35%	1 3.85% 6.67%	26 100.00% 4.00%
	Waterford	11 52.38% 4.33%	2 9.52% 0.95%	7 33.33% 7.61%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 4.76% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	21 100.00% 3.23%
	Westmeath	3 42.86% 1.18%	2 28.57% 0.95%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 28.57% 13.33%	7 100.00% 1.08%
	Wexford	3 16.67% 1.18%	7 38.89% 3.33%	6 33.33% 6.52%	2 11.11% 6.06%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	6 100.00% 0.92%
	Wicklow	5 33.33% 1.97%	6 40.00% 2.86%	1 6.67% 1.09%	1 6.67% 3.03%	1 6.67% 2.17%	1 6.67% 6.67%	15 100.00% 2.31%

APPENDIX 4.2

Cross tabulation Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?

& Q6. **What teaching contract do you have?**

🟥 = *Row percentages*   🟦 = *Column percentages*

		Q6. What teaching contract do you have?								
		Regular part-time contracted teacher (pro-rata contracted)	Temporary whole-time teacher	Non-casual part-time teacher	Casual part-time teacher	Unqualified casual part-time teacher	Pro-rata contract/fixed term contract	Permanent full time	Other (please specify)	Total
Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?	Daily	12 / 4.72% / 42.86%	2 / 0.79% / 11.76%	1 / 0.39% / 50.00%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	2 / 0.79% / 50.00%	37 / 14.57% / 34.58%	186 / 73.23% / 41.43%	14 / 5.51% / 35.00%	254 / 100.00% / 39.08%
	2-3 times a week	7 / 3.33% / 25.00%	7 / 3.33% / 41.18%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	1 / 0.48% / 33.33%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	40 / 19.05% / 37.38%	142 / 67.62% / 31.63%	13 / 6.19% / 32.50%	210 / 100.00% / 32.31%
	Once a week	7 / 7.61% / 25.00%	6 / 6.52% / 35.29%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	1 / 1.09% / 33.33%	1 / 1.09% / 25.00%	14 / 15.22% / 13.08%	56 / 60.87% / 12.47%	7 / 7.61% / 17.50%	92 / 100.00% / 14.15%
	Once a fortnight	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	1 / 3.03% / 5.88%	1 / 3.03% / 50.00%	1 / 3.03% / 33.33%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	5 / 15.15% / 4.67%	23 / 69.70% / 5.12%	2 / 6.06% / 5.00%	33 / 100.00% / 5.08%
	Once a month	1 / 2.17% / 3.57%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	1 / 2.17% / 25.00%	9 / 19.57% / 8.41%	32 / 69.57% / 7.13%	3 / 6.52% / 7.50%	46 / 100.00% / 7.08%
	Never	1 / 6.67% / 3.57%	1 / 6.67% / 5.88%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	0 / 0.00% / 0.00%	2 / 13.33% / 1.87%	10 / 66.67% / 2.23%	1 / 6.67% / 2.50%	15 / 100.00% / 2.31%
	Total	28 / 4.31% / 100.00%	17 / 2.62% / 100.00%	2 / 0.31% / 100.00%	3 / 0.46% / 100.00%	4 / 0.62% / 100.00%	107 / 16.46% / 100.00%	449 / 69.08% / 100.00%	40 / 6.15% / 100.00%	650 / 100.00% / 100.00%

Q6. What teaching contract do you have?

The cross tabulation above displays how often if ever, PPTs experience work related stress, against the type of teaching contract held. This helped establish if there is a link between the prevalence/frequency of OS experienced by PPTs and the type of contract held by the teacher.

APPENDIX 4.2.1

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q10 General Ethos – Section 7)
'Adequate supports for teachers to discuss and resolve work related stress is available in your school' (Below- 14 of 20 responses)

No mention is made of discussing stress. It's just discussed between friendly colleagues when the situation arises.

Not discussed.

There is no system in place for staff at all.

There is simply no time for this.

A female principal and female deputy in a Deis school. Deputy is doing her best but under a lot of stress with disruptive pupils.

There is a helpline number posted on noticeboard. I feel management promote it in a compulsory manner rather than as a genuine focus and priority.

Mental health wouldn't have to be promoted if the system worked properly. The fact that something like that has to be considered or discussed shows what a dysfunctional system it is. Not necessarily management's or colleague's fault. Top down reforms poorly planned and mostly a box ticking exercise to waste teachers time part of the problem. Read or try to read the new JC specification and you will see what I mean...the NCCA isn't even doing its job properly. Supports are not needed to resolve work related stress... the nature of the work itself needs to change.

There should be more time set aside for mental health initiatives as it is mostly done informally

Schools have no facilities to support staff. We support each other but management and the ETB keep piling on the work. An example 5 ap2 posts available in our school since April last year are still not filled due to etb delays and an ap1 available since sept and again not filled.

Not at all

Teacher shortages within some subject and SEN areas are causing the remaining teachers in that SEN / subject area to have to take on even more work. They have no one to delegate the work to.

More to do but good awareness and discussion.

Free counselling service.

We have no voice! (New) senior management have done away with staff meetings; year head meetings etc. Communication is by email. It is totally alien and extremely stressful.

APPENDIX 4.3 (188 text responses)

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions

I have lost €28,000 to date... that was my 1st year teaching salary...I have worked for a full year FOC compared to other staff.

Conditions & expectations have changes immeasurably over the last few years. Croke Park hours, paperwork all add to workload

Pay is fine, but the educational standard of students coming in from Primary is abysmal and plummeting fast. WE ARE NOT MIRACLE WORKERS. And more and more we are expected to take on a parenting/wellbeing role. THIS IS NOT OUR JOB.

Pay inequality causing division within school

It's just not fair, especially in a world that shouts equality so much anymore.

All the extra taxes and deductions since the downturn make it hard to exist, if you have Holstein and pay childcare. I am also a single parent of 3 children 13, 10 & 6, my childcare is €800 a month, also paying a mortgage of almost 900€ since 2003

Disheartened by pay inequality and lack of progress and action by colleagues and unions in get pay inequality.

Although some argue the pay issue does not fall under discrimination, I feel it is clearly discrimination. We do the same job but because of the circumstances of the country at the time we qualified as teachers (which we had absolutely nothing to do with as we were not in a position to borrow second mortgages from the bank or buy several houses) we are victimised by being paid less. It is outrageous.

Pay cuts and increment freezes means that I am living on an overdraft

Croke park hours, extra-curricular, planning, phone calls home, all too much on top of full-time teaching

Pay does not match the extra volume of work and extra hours done by teachers on a regular basis especially in my subject area of Music

Pay cuts have not been reversed. We are still overworked and have additional Croke Park hours. We are penalised if we opt out of supervision

Conditions are too intense; I work in the area of Special Education Needs and there are not enough trained teachers in the area. A huge amount of work comes my direction

Lower pay, no allowances for my two degrees & masters and the DES refuse to assess my incremental credit application for 2 years teaching GCSE's and A-Levels in my subject full-time in a boarding school in Switzerland.

Very little opportunities for promotion; I began in September 2011 so am in the middle.

APPENDIX 4.3 (188 text responses)

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions

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Constant pressure from DES to implement new policy without training beforehand
Extra work without extra pay expected, reduction in pay, extra contribution to pension is not going to pension at all but into general taxation and Serious concerned about having a decent pension when I retire.

Working amongst other teachers who are getting paid more than me for the same work is extremely disheartening.

There have been years where I would have made more on the dole.

Our workload has increased exponentially in recent years and our pay in no way reflects this.

I am in Senior Management and work 7 days a week for on average 70 hrs per week

As I get older I find its very frustrating to be on the same points of the salary scales for a few tranches of my career i.e. from point 17 to 20 (5 years?) there is NO pay increase in the increment.

Our pay does not correspond to the qualifications attained or does it correspond with the workload.

1. I think the Croke park hours are counterproductive regarding teacher's professional time and trust. Croke Park hours underpins a theme of not trusting teachers by the powers-that-be. 2. The inspectorate are answerable to no-one but themselves and the minister. They have absolute power and can do much harm (as well as good). There should be an independent body to whom they are answerable 3. Along with other public servants, teachers took a substantial hit after the economic crash. Pay has not been restored and certainly what has been done by way of pay has been divisive amongst professionals 4. The new curricular changes for junior cycle are largely welcome but many elements are not thought through. 40 minutes per week of professional time for each individual teacher regardless of the number of JC subjects that you teach or the assessments you are involved in and the timing of such assessments is poorly thought through and badly planned. The transfer of these JC students to the tyranny of the LC (The university entrance exam) is criminal. They go from students centred assessment to a subject, exam centred system.

The conditions of employment are not clear to me. I seem to be getting busier and busier every year and there is pressure to do more all the time. I feel that sometimes no matter what I do it's never enough.

Lack of promotion opportunities and no reward for hard work. Croke Park hours do not are heavily timetabled so any additional hours after school are another load

We only get two 15-minute breaks as well as working every class from 8.30am to 15.30pm. Our pay is nothing comparing to teachers and our conditions are far worse.

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APPENDIX 4.3 Cond.

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions

Absolutely not. I'm an LPT on part time hours having to commute 1.5 hours to work and then 1.5 hours home in a county that has no public transport.

Unhappy that others doing the same job are being paid more, particularly when I had a 2 year pme and induction programme to do, more cost only to enter into a profession with less pay that my colleagues who didn't have as many hoops to jump through and excessive costs to pay!

No, very unsatisfied. I need to work a second job to have enough to live on. My pay is 350 nett a week from a 22hour contract.

I am VERY dissatisfied. In my 6th year teaching, this is my first year on full hours. Very disheartening.

We do not get paid enough for the work we do. Three months holidays is a myth. I spend my summer supervising exams and correcting to supplement my wages. During the year I work above and beyond the mythical 22 hours.

My pay does not reflect the amount of work i do. Because i am in middle management my workload is enormous and I do not get the monetary recognition for this.

While the starting salary is attractive, we are not remunerated appropriately after 15/20 year. There are few professions where the increase in salary would be so minimal considering the experience gained by that time. Deductions introduced during the recession (pension etc) have penalised civil servants disproportionately when years in college, change to working conditions are taken into account.

Conditions for job sharing are poor...and getting worse forcing a lot of people back to full time hours!

As a Principal Teacher I feel that we are not adequately paid for the hours and responsibilities that go with our job

Dissatisfied with the unequal pay coupled with the fact that a large section of the population do not value the work teachers do but rather believe that have too many holidays. For every class we teach the preparation time must be done outside the class time. No allowances also mean no incentive to further educate ourselves professionally. Every needed a teacher to get their education- why do people dismiss this profession?

I was seconded to the European Schools for 10 years. Finally, I was paid properly for the amount of work that I always do. On my return to Ireland, my salary and entitlements were slashed, and I've been struggling financially since.

AS I was teaching in UK for 5 years, I have to submit a lot of paperwork for that service to be recognised. There is a 20-week backlog in the Dept. Also, would rather have more hours. The Dips in the school sometimes get hours when I am free.

APPENDIX 4.3 Cond.

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions

Pay is only ok compared to what I could get in other occupations or could have acquired. Conditions and the steady deterioration in same are my bugbear.

I began in 2012 with friends who qualified on the same day as me receiving more pay because they did subbing work during their TP

Free time has been completely eroded. P/T meetings at, after school planning meetings, lunchtime meetings have all made working life much more difficult. Rarely time in school now to talk to colleagues socially rather than professionally.

I don't have a problem with the pay, but I do with the conditions of work, i.e. the disconnect between the perceived length of my working week and the actual numbers of hours it takes to do the job to a high standard.

Increasingly, the work of a teacher is going on into late in the evening. I probably work a 60-hour week. My pay does not cover that.

As privately employed I earn significantly less than the salary scale would offer, despite experience. No payment over school holidays (18 weeks per year) and no entitlements/ increments.

I am satisfied with the rate of pay but I feel I have very little job security. It seems as if it by pure chance that I may be in a school which would lead to a CID. I would like to get a mortgage at some point but that's not possible on a fixed term contract.

Pay cuts during recession in particular the extra contribution to pension has not been reversed. I am particularly unhappy about the sick leave arrangements and maternity leave for teachers.

Pay cuts during recession in particular the extra contribution to pension has not been reversed. I am particularly unhappy about the sick leave arrangements and maternity leave for teachers.

I find it hard to swallow that other people doing the same job with less dedication are on a higher scale. I resent it, especially given that I did my dip in 2011, the school I was working in shafted me, so I wasn't paid until after the deadline and just fell into the lower paid scale. My cid has only come through in the last week & since I've qualified I've been watching permanent teacher being paid more but giving less to the job because I've been on probation since I qualified in 2012.

All meetings staff and PTMs should be inside school hours. It's one of the few professions where conditions are worse than 20 years ago when everything was within the school day.

There should be a Dublin city allowance. Croke Park hours & other extra confusing I would prefer a 9-5 1/2 days a week - more regular arrangement.

Pay is OK I suppose but conditions need to improve. The school environment is far too stressful due mainly to the workload on teachers.

APPENDIX 4.3 Cond.

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions

My pay is fine but in recent years our conditions have been eroded drastically sick pay, maternity pay, croke park hours etc etc

USC is a double taxation, pay cuts from the recession dealt with in a completely unfair manner when compared to elected officials

Pay for basic teaching job is fine but for AP1 position not even nearly sufficient (less than min wages for hours put in). Conditions have deteriorated in the last no. of years with CP hours and extra paperwork (often box-ticking exercises) that is required.

While I commenced my teacher career in 2009, i worked in NI until 2013 and am currently on the lower pay scale which I find extremely frustrating.

As a teacher working in a DEIS school, I feel that we go above and beyond our job description as teachers, we work with students who come from home situations where there is great social disadvantage and problems. Teachers who work in DEIS schools have to deal with some students who have emotional and behavioural issues. Often we have a limited amount of training and knowledge as to how to cope with these students. I don't think that the pay reflects the conditions we work in as we no longer are expected to just assume the role of teacher. We are expected to be social workers and psychologists as well.

I am very eager to progress and have taken on additional responsibilities. However, within an ETB context, there are still points given towards seniority and therefore I am at a disadvantage at interview level.

I'm a lesser paid teacher. I do not get qualification allowances. I am not paid the same as my colleagues.

The Expectations have grown enormously and have not been resourced with training or time.

I feel like my deductions have increased disproportionately relative to the increases in my wages. Now I hear in the news that flat rate expenses for teachers will be cut by revenue leading to a further pay cut.

Pay is poor - even for those who entered pre-2011. More importantly, the workload / paperwork / expected extras and demands stretch far beyond what would be deemed acceptable.

I am astonished at the fact that the situation has not been resolved yet and that we are STILL being discriminated against it is an absolutely appalling situation.

Croke Park Hours add extra stress and pressure to teaching and are often just used to tick boxes and fill folders

Not competitive pay when compared to other professionals with similar qualifications and more and more work expected outside teaching hours

APPENDIX 4.3 Cond (Short responses combined)

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions

Parity is an issue - Conditions are deteriorating constantly in recent years - Those doing the same job should be paid the same amount - Cannot afford to live on my own - Difference in pay scales - Unfair for younger teachers - Too much admin not enough teaching time - I don't agree with Croke Park Hours - Because I'm post 2004 my pension has been affected - Too many cuts and extra demands - Conditions are being eroded, too much paperwork - Don't have allowances for qualifications gained after 2011 - I receive less than my peers - Pay cuts and USC reduced wages - Lack of promotion - Where do I start??? - No, as I have a master and dip and do not receive either allowance - No permanent work available - Pay should be equal - Far too much paperwork - Not enough time off to upskill - Lesser Paid teacher by 6 months - Satisfied with pay but not with conditions - Croke Park meetings & extra assessments - Workload has increased massively in recent years - Pay is okay. I am not happy with my working conditions - Under paid and undervalued - It is harder to follow the rise of living cost - It's unfair that I'm on a lower scale - Furious with FEMPI - No security, on first pay grade - Conditions are much tougher - The hours that are put in do not equate well to my salary - Croke park hours!!! - My pay is ok, but my conditions have gone to hell - Pay fine but Croke park stuff unfair - Far too much paperwork expected. Complete overload - Taught in UK for years but still on pay scale for post January 2011 - For the amount of changes that have been introduced the pay is not reflected - The cut backs during the recession were very severe and we never got full restoration - We should be on higher salaries - Pay parity does not exist - Croke park hours are a waste of time - There is a severe pay gap between myself and my colleagues - I feel pay restoration for all needs to happen - Yes if so much wasn't taken off in tax - Work so many extra hours for no extra pay - The extra Croke Park hours have added a lot of strain and tension - Pay restoration. Pension related tax reduction higher than pension tax - We are too heavily taxed – Pay yes conditions keep being piled on. Everything getting hugely busy and pressurised - Conditions have deteriorated to a large degree: much more stressful job than decades ago - Unequal pay for the same work - For the amount of work I do I should be paid more - But the teachers who joined after 2011 are not paid fairly - I am not paid equally to my peers - Not enough time to prepare classes in last 10 years - Too much responsibility and work for my salary - Conditions are a big issue - I think S&S pay should be restored - I am earning less than I did in 2006 - Not on equal pay- Unequal pay is unfair and demoralising.

APPENDIX 4.3 Cond – (Short responses combined)

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q8 Are you satisfied with your pay and conditions

Taken the heart out of teaching - Qualification Allowance for MA removed - USC needs to go and pension conditions have been decimated - Too much income tax paid. The work has got harder and more time taken up in evenings - I think it's disgraceful that some of my colleagues are on a much lower salary - I want equality - So unfair that I am paid less than other teachers who are qualified to the same extent as myself - If everyone was on the same pay scale I would be happy-no pre 2011 or after 2011.Much lower pay than older co-workers for the same work completed - Experience doesn't transfer between public and private system - Have a PhD and do not receive my allowance for it - Work load is worse than ever - Being on a different pay scale is highly demotivating - A lot or extra admin work being demanded. Pension levy is unfair - I am in senior management and I think is grossly underpaid relevant to the workload - I want more - Pay yes, but I'm overworked - I have been teaching for twenty years and still don't have a permanent job - Working 22hrs but only contracted for 13. Therefore sick benefits of part time employee - I can no longer afford to live and work in Dublin due to pay inequality - Croke Park Hours ask too much of already stretched goodwill - There are too many deductions: PRD, USC, Tax, PRSI, and Pension - Continual erosion of my free time with new initiatives and few remuneration opportunities - Equal pay for equal work - USC and pension levy mean that I now take home less than 10 years ago - My pay and working conditions are complete unfair. We are in a two tier system - I am satisfied except for the Pension related deduction - Scale for Subbing/Mat leave contracts needs looking at - I cannot afford anything - I would like my work to be valued more - Does not correlate to the amount of rent that I have to pay - Not paid during holidays - I'm satisfied with my working conditions but not with the lack of pay restoration - No supervision pay/opt out option -Equal pay needed -I find working conditions far less favourable than in a lot of other civil service jobs - - Why would I be satisfied with less pay? -Extra hours after school unpredictable and unnecessary - Pay and pension too low - Pension related deduction is ridiculous - No other job expects us to act in so many roles without proper training -Our increment should be restored straight away -Pay is not fine - Pension is not fine. Conditions are not fine - FEMPI should be withdrawn - Not satisfied with conditions - My pay is satisfactory, but my conditions are dis-improving on a regular basis.

Appendix 4.4:

4.2.3.3: Q7. Did you enter the profession before/after 1st Jan 2011?

The cross tabulation below displays how often if ever, PPTs experience work related stress, against the year they entered the teaching profession; to establish whether different pay scales that were introduced in January 2011 is a predictor in the prevalence of OS experienced by PPTs in Ireland.

Table 4.18: Did you enter the teaching profession on or after the 1st January 2011?

▬ = Row percentages   ▬ = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
Q7. Did you enter the teaching profession on or after the 1st January 2011?	After the 1st of January 2011	55 / 30.90% / 31.43%	121 / 67.98% / 25.64%	178 / 100% / 27.38%	66 / 37.08% / 25.98%	63 / 35.39% / 30.00%	31 / 17.42% / 33.70%	7 / 3.93% / 21.21%	8 / 4.49% / 17.39%	3 / 1.69% / 20.00%	178 / 100% / 27.38%
	Before 1st January 2011	120 / 25.42% / 68.57%	351 / 74.36% / 74.36%	472 / 100% / 72.62%	188 / 39.83% / 74.02%	147 / 31.14% / 70.00%	61 / 12.92% / 66.30%	26 / 5.51% / 78.79%	38 / 8.05% / 82.61%	12 / 2.54% / 80.00%	472 / 100% / 72.62%
	Total	175 / 26.92% / 100%	472 / 72.62% / 100%	650 / 100% / 100%	254 / 39.08% / 100%	210 / 32.31% / 100%	92 / 14.15% / 100%	33 / 5.08% / 100%	46 / 7.08% / 100%	15 / 2.31% / 100%	650 / 100% / 100%

Appendix 4.5

4.6.1: How often do you experience the following?

Lack emotional resources to cope with your working environment:

■ = Row percentages   ■ = Column percentages

		Q1. What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
Q18.1 How often do you experience the following? Lack emotional resources to cope with your work environment	**Always**	**14** 31.11% 8.00%	**31** 68.89% 6.57%	**45** 100% 6.92%	**37** 82.22% 14.57%	**7** 15.56% 3.33%	1 2.22% 1.09%	0	0	0	45 6.92%
	Often	**37** 22.29% 21.14%	**128** 77.11% 27.12%	**166** 100% 25.54%	**95** 57.23% 37.40%	**50** 30.12% 23.81%	18 10.84% 19.57%	2 1.20% 6.06%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 0.60% 6.67%	166 25.54%
	Some-times	**58** 25.00% 33.14%	**173** 74.57% 36.65%	**232** 100% 35.69%	**81** 34.91% 31.89%	**103** 44.40% 49.05%	30 12.93% 32.61%	7 3.02% 21.21%	11 4.74% 23.91%	0	232 100% 35.69%
	Rarely	50 28.57% 28.57%	125 71.43% 26.48%	175 100% 26.92%	39 22.29% 15.35%	43 24.57% 20.48%	40 22.86% 43.48%	18 10.29% 54.55%	26 14.86% 56.52%	9 5.14% 60.00%	175 26.92%
	Never	16 50.00% 9.14%	15 46.88% 3.18%	32 100% 4.92%	2 6.25% 0.79%	7 21.88% 3.33%	3 9.38% 3.26%	6 18.75% 18.18%	9 28.13% 19.57%	5 15.63% 33.33%	32 4.92%
	Total	175 26.92%	472 72.62%	650 100%	254 39.08%	210 32.31%	92 14.15%	33 5.08%	46 7.08%	15 2.31%	650 100%

Appendix 4.6:

4.6.1: Objective 3.1: How often do you experience the following? (Sections 1-3).

4.6.1.2: Section 2. *Lack motivation at work.*

Table:4.20: Main findings: *Lack motivation at work'* **to cope with your working environment.**

		Q1. What is your gender?				Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						
		Male	Female	Other	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
Q18.2 How often do you experience the following: Lack of motivation at work	Always	9 50.00% 5.14%	9 50.00% 1.91%	0 0.00% 0.00%	18 100.00% 2.77%	14 77.78% 5.51%	3 16.67% 1.43%	0 0.00% 0.00%	1 5.56% 3.03%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	18 100.00% 2.77%
	Often	38 31.67% 21.71%	82 68.33% 17.37%	0 0.00% 0.00%	120 100.00% 18.46%	63 52.50% 24.80%	42 35.00% 20.00%	12 10.00% 13.04%	0 0.00% 0.00%	2 1.67% 4.35%	1 0.83% 6.67%	120 100.00% 18.46%
	Some-times	72 24.32% 41.14%	222 75.00% 47.03%	2 0.68% 66.67%	296 100.00% 45.54%	116 39.19% 45.67%	96 32.43% 45.71%	49 16.55% 53.26%	13 4.39% 39.39%	18 6.08% 39.13%	4 1.35% 26.67%	296 100.00% 45.54%
	Rarely	44 25.00% 25.14%	132 75.00% 27.97%	0 0.00% 0.00%	176 100.00% 27.08%	52 29.55% 20.47%	60 34.09% 28.57%	26 14.77% 28.26%	13 7.39% 39.39%	18 10.23% 39.13%	7 3.98% 46.67%	176 100.00% 27.08%
	Never	12 30.00% 6.86%	27 67.50% 5.72%	1 2.50% 33.33%	40 100.00% 6.15%	9 22.50% 3.54%	9 22.50% 4.29%	5 12.50% 5.43%	6 15.00% 18.18%	8 20.00% 17.39%	3 7.50% 20.00%	40 100.00% 6.15%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%	254 39.08% 100.00%	210 32.31% 100.00%	92 14.15% 100.00%	33 5.08% 100.00%	46 7.08% 100.00%	15 2.31% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

The cross-tabulation (Table 4.20) above present's findings on how often PPTs *lack motivation at work* against *gender type* and *how often they experience work related stress.* This will help establish if, the *lack of motivation* is manifestation of the prevalence of OS among PPTs, and if there is a correlation among the different factors. Additionally, any variance among gender types are presented.

Appendix 4.7:

4.6.1: Objective 3.1: How often do you experience the following? (Sections 1-3).

4.6.1.2: Section 2. *Lack accomplishment from your work.*

Table:4.21: Main findings: *Lack of accomplishment from your work.*

		Q1. What is your gender?			Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress?						
		Male	Female	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
Q18.3 How often do you experience the following? Lack of accomplishment from your work	Always	12 33.33% 6.86%	24 66.67% 5.08%	36 100.00% 5.54%	29 80.56% 11.42%	5 13.89% 2.38%	2 5.56% 2.17%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	0 0.00% 0.00%	36 100.00% 5.54%
	Often	46 33.09% 26.29%	92 66.19% 19.49%	139 100.00% 21.38%	79 56.83% 31.10%	45 32.37% 21.43%	11 7.91% 11.96%	2 1.44% 6.06%	1 0.72% 2.17%	1 0.72% 6.67%	139 100.00% 21.38%
	Some-times	57 22.44% 32.57%	196 77.17% 41.53%	254 100.00% 39.08%	100 39.37% 39.37%	95 37.40% 45.24%	33 12.99% 35.87%	10 3.94% 30.30%	14 5.51% 30.43%	2 0.79% 13.33%	254 100.00% 39.08%
	Rarely	46 27.54% 26.29%	121 72.46% 25.64%	167 100.00% 25.69%	37 22.16% 14.57%	52 31.14% 24.76%	37 22.16% 40.22%	13 7.78% 39.39%	20 11.98% 43.48%	8 4.79% 53.33%	167 100.00% 25.69%
	Never	14 25.93% 8.00%	39 72.22% 8.26%	54 100.00% 8.31%	9 16.67% 3.54%	13 24.07% 6.19%	9 16.67% 9.78%	8 14.81% 24.24%	11 20.37% 23.91%	4 7.41% 26.67%	54 100.00% 8.31%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%	254 39.08% 100.00%	210 32.31% 100.00%	92 14.15% 100.00%	33 5.08% 100.00%	46 7.08% 100.00%	15 2.31% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

The cross-tabulation (Table 4.18) above shows how often PPTs *'Lack of accomplishment from their work'* against 'gender type' and 'how often they experience work related stress'. This will help establish if the *'Lack of accomplishment from one's work'* might be a manifestation or predictor in the prevalence/frequency of OS among PPTs, and if there is a correlation between the different factors. Additionally, any variance among gender types are exposed.

Appendix 4.8

Table 4.49: Cross-tabulation: Have you ever thought of changing career?

🟥 = *Row percentages*   🟦 = *Column percentages*

| | | Q1 What is your gender? | | | | Q14. How often if ever, do you experience work related stress? | | | | | | |
		Male	Female	Other	Total	Daily	2-3 times a week	Once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Never	Total
Q23. Have you ever thought of changing career?	Yes	121 28.47% 69.14%	302 71.06% 63.98%	2 0.47% 66.67%	425 100.00% 65.38%	204 48.00% 80.31%	136 32.00% 64.76%	52 12.24% 56.52%	17 4.00% 51.52%	12 2.82% 26.09%	4 0.94% 26.67%	425 100.00% 65.38%
	No	54 24.00% 30.86%	170 75.56% 36.02%	1 0.44% 33.33%	225 100.00% 34.62%	50 22.22% 19.69%	74 32.89% 35.24%	40 17.78% 43.48%	16 7.11% 48.48%	34 15.11% 73.91%	11 4.89% 73.33%	225 100.00% 34.62%
	Total	175 26.92% 100.00%	472 72.62% 100.00%	3 0.46% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%	254 39.08% 100.00%	210 32.31% 100.00%	92 14.15% 100.00%	33 5.08% 100.00%	46 7.08% 100.00%	15 2.31% 100.00%	650 100.00% 100.00%

APPENDIX 4.9

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q20 - How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress? - 'Other' –optional text response:

I don't believe the current education system is not serving the students very well and leads to dull, passive learners who are unmotivated due to compulsory subjects and studying too many subjects. Their educational experience is a stressful slog through mountains of quite irrelevant information. Choice, enthusiasm, creativity and some sort of student autonomy should be the centre of any decent education system. My motivation for teaching in the way I am forced to by the current leaving cert/new junior cert systems can be quite low at times because I don't personally believe in their educational effectiveness.

I enjoy my work with students but feel undervalued by management on the basis of being female!

Frustration at multiple roles given that colleagues in large schools have 2 or 3 deputies and don't teach

Depends on the events of the day. If I was stressed my sleep and time at home would be disrupted. Due to the pay difference, I have thought about leaving the profession as I feel it's more work we are getting landed with for less pay and I feel more senior staff are getting away with doing less work and are getting more pay.

Feeling of unable to cope with all the changes and admin. the job has changed so much in 11yrs.

Poor management which turned a blind eye to many bullies and allowed/facilitated the poor behaviours

Isolation. At my age (50's) I would like to be able to retire after 30 years full service (just like the Defence Forces, An Gardaí, etc. It is 'cruel' to expect some nearing up to 60 years of age to be mentally, emotionally and physically fit to cope with up to seven classes of teenagers per day, as a person in their 20's.

Prior to working part time all of the above in bucket-loads.
Self-preservation through energy healing has helped me cope and I now feel that I can handle all stresses.

Really considering a move from teaching. All the new initiatives are complicated and appear to me to be for the sake of it, not for a justified and well thought out reason. Too many, too quick and too thoughtlessly.

All of the above. I have not ticked 'depression' as I have not gone to my doctor specifically with these work-related issues - perhaps because of shame that I feel I sometimes could not cope. I did however access quality CPD through a wonderful community of practice of professionals across the sectoral boundaries that included teacher educators, academics, teachers, and a CPD facilitator. It helped me survive and eventually thrive. This was NOT funded or recognised by the DES

Most of my experiences are more as a result of my general anxiety rather than stress

APPENDIX 4.9 contd.

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q20 - How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress? - 'Other' –optional text response:

I regularly think about retiring. Then I shake myself and tell myself that I enjoy this. I enjoy teaching, teh paperwork now along with it is fruitless. I have not experienced depression, but I have certainly been very down about things. I would not encourage my children to go into this profession.

Huge frustration - all the time. I used to 'live' for teaching and now I am counting the days until the weekend/holidays etc

With the ever-increasing paperwork I feel that I won't be teaching in 10 years' time as the extra work to be fitted in the course of a teaching week is getting too much

I feel that I am very undervalued as a teacher. I am in the 5th year of my teacher career and while I love my job and the impact I have on my students. At times I feel that I would be better off working in the back in the private sector. Both financially and in terms of work life balance. Yes, I would work longer hours but by day would finish when I left the office.

Anxiety. Looks bad! Have worked through a lot of work-related issues in recent years...all aspects of my life have improved as a result

Stress for not being able to express my opinions, it is assumed we all think the same way Is it not part of our work life now? We don't seem to have a work life balance at all.

I have experienced very clear indications from the Principal and the Board of management over many years that my work (and I) is not valued.

Feel helpless and worthless. Can't change the apathetic attitude of my students. Can't improve my class results or stats because some management decisions have negatively impacted on my subjects

Thoughts on retirement are mainly about trying to make correct provisions now for the future
Stress caused by aggressive parents behaving in a threatening manner

I tend to push myself too hard and my body allows itself to be sick over the holidays
Management changed and things have greatly improved since.

Frustration at promotion procedures/opportunities

Soul destroying lack of any appreciation from Mgt. Also, I've been bullied by Mgt.

Anxiety, a fear of not getting work completed

APPENDIX 4.9 contd.

Text Responses from Sample Group re: Q20 - How often do you experience any of the following due to workplace stress? - 'Other' –optional text response:

Developed Trigeminal Neuralgia due to work related stress in 2012

Lack of sense of achievement due to lower pay scale

I have felt this while teaching in the UK

Burn out. Lack of initiative to come up with new ideas.

Feeling of being in over your head with management, parent judging and ridiculing you.

Workload "over and above" teaching

Physical pain, muscle pain, costochondritis, neck pain, painful ears

Diagnosed with anxiety but before I qualified

Fear of not being good enough

Anxiety Disorder caused by management decisions.

Especially after my father died, felt little support

Just over worked, managing students and teachers

Sometimes because of the workload and intensity of the job I consider early retirement

Too many	Exhaustion & burnout
Crippling anxiety	Overwhelmed
Had to attend GP for depression	Affecting my health
Weight gain	Feel completely overloaded
Neck and back pain	Breakdown
Anxiety/panic attacks	I have been bullied
Illness yearly	Trembling
G I problems	Feeling of inadequacy
Suicidal	Exasperation
Anxiety	Panic attack
Fatigue	Weight increase
Anxiety	Illness
Walkout	Fatigue
Sadness at inability to effect change	Chest infections due to dust
Disinterest in my students	Anxiety about coming to work
Always thinking about planning etc.	Physical and mental exhaustion
Hurt, Anger, Anxiety	Have had to go on job share
Frustration and helplessness	All principal related
Never seem to get the to do list finished	Palpations, high blood pressure, anxiety
Suffered medical problem due to stress.	Illness
Feel physically exhausted often	I took a career break.

APPENDIX 4.10

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Dealing with incompetent, passive aggressive senior management who are threatened and defensive by staff doing a good job

Implementing curriculum changes weighed down by the mountains of information needed to be taught. The basic mistake of the new curriculum changes has been to double the amount of material when really, we should have done less so as to open up thinking time - sprinting through fragments of literary texts is not conducive to understanding or independent thinking skills - a major mistake. Also, the LC English text choices that change every year is a ludicrous system. It should be the same for 4 years before a change to allow teachers to grow into their chosen texts.

Too many subjects, too much to do in not enough time, teachers expected to be 'all things to all people', lack of fairness in treatment of male and female staff.

Student challenging behavioural difficulties, class control constant battle even as an experienced teacher, exam results, lack of motivation from students, lack of parental support, lack of staff room support as teachers are all so stressed out, dreading work on Monday.

In sensor role the level of admin to be completed in hours contracted is unmanageable

Paperwork, beaurocracy, planning, posts of responsibility on full timetable, trying to get the course covered

Classroom management when there are disruptive students. The introduction of the new junior cert and trying to get time to plan for this. Preparing lessons suitable should an inspector arrive.

Engaging in a negative staff room, the pressures heaped on a young teacher e.g additional work outside of the classroom

Paperwork. Classroom management. New JCT. planning time. SEN requirements

Paperwork...discipline aggression management sees only a need to protect kids but not staff

Too much expected each week. Too many initiatives and cod now encroaching in family life with being expected to do webinars and weekend cpd

All my duties outside of the classroom. Dealing with the principal

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Teaching subjects I am not qualified to teach. Having to write schemes of work. The department should provide us with them instead of waiting our precious teaching time.

Time...not enough to cover courses, complete paperwork, have life balance during term time

Planning classes, administration e.g. schemes of work, JUNIOR CYCLE, anxiety about inspections

Dealing with conflict

Paperwork & traceability. The well-being brought a enormous extra weight on teachers, who are doing more than teaching. It can be overwhelming. Also, students and parents are quick to complain, and teachers don't receive the same respect as before. We have to be so careful in every way, that itself puts pressure on us

Trying to please everyone from parents to staff to Principal. Union discreet causes issues on my staff and teacher relationships cause issues

Administration, extracurricular, burden of student wellbeing and taking on their problems both at school and home.

dealing with conflict situations, difficult arising from behaviour from students

The lack of government allocation of hours to adequately meet the needs of my students
Subject areas English and French due to amount of corrections

Too many demands to organize TY activities and not enough time off

The pressure to conform to management autocracy and the pressure to constantly implement new policies and initiatives

Working with management and year heads

Coping with parental expectations

All the extra work given at short notice. Feeling overwhelmed & never on top of things even when you're working very long hours at school & home.

emails / multiple subjects and meetings and Inservice

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Pressure of time. Class sizes too big. Sense that you're not teaching well due to being overwhelmed with very little time to focus in or support individual students. Teaching groups of 28-30 pupils for 33class periods per week means that even corrections take a lot of time and no student is actually getting enough of your time and expertise. I feel very strongly that this is denying children their rights and places them at a disadvantage. Unless a child has knowledgeable, supportive and comfortably off parents they are losing out in the system as it stands. Resources, both physical and personnel, are inadequate. For example, in one group of 28 first years I have three students with ASD

Teaching subjects I am not qualified for and not teaching those I am.

The never-ending threat of inspection, CPD, the new JC, the obsession with points and results, the whittling down of learning to a few sheets of notes to be learned off, the huge classes, the mix of ability that we are meant to deal with effortlessly, the lack of incentive.

Dealing with demands from management, coping with new Junior Cert, demands from parents.

Lack of promotion, disruptive, aggressive and rude students. Students who try and use their mobile phones in class and become very aggressive when asked to turn them off and put them away.

Dealing with changes in teaching and learning. Focus on team teaching is very difficult

Planning. Correcting exams. Shortage of equipment. Class size. Workload. Disruptive
unrealistic expectations from parents, also having to prepare that evening for following day means it is difficult to switch off from work

When difficulties arise with a student because of a breakdown in communication and where I have felt blamed by either management or parents this has been very stressful Fortunately, this has only happened twice in my career, but it was most stressful.

Finding time to give individual attention to students in classes of 30

Corrections - I teach mainly at Senior Cycle and I always have English and French in 5th and 6th. Couldn't sustain the quality of my work working full time and still have time and energy for my family.

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Emotional support and the wellbeing of students. I also constantly feel like I'm behind on paperwork like schemes, lesson plans, referrals and so on.

The paperwork and the lack of support from senior management particularly principal

The new changes to the Junior Cert. curriculum. They are eroding the very basic material that we should be teaching and making students less resilient. They will be unable to cope with failure in the future.

Unrealistic academic expectations, parental scrutiny, Pressure of WSE etc no time in the school day for prep, corrections
The constant change of new policies, curricular changes, paperwork, GDRP plus, colleagues can be difficult and there is no mechanism for dealing with that.

Inadequate CPD on changes to curriculum, Expectations from Department of Education, changes to policies that require more data analysis etc, increase paperwork, student behaviour and lack of support with issues from management

Challenging student behaviour, in particular low-level ongoing disruption in class. Also being expected to have differentiation in ever

Behaviour management, emotional help for students

All the extra time and paperwork and supervision and trying to do the best for the students in all of that.

Effective time management, working with staff who impact on my job who I do not line manage

Poor communication from management leading to unclear expectations

New curriculum and left to your own devices to implement

Dealing with student issues - Keeping up with current CPD programmes - no time for well-being for staff

Teaching Leaving Cert English where the single text, comparative texts & modes and poetry changes every year. This is an unnecessary workload on English teachers, and it results in huge amounts of stress every year, regarding selection of texts, reading of texts and making out notes that will never be used again. This is massively time consuming, not to mention the huge amount of corrections that go hand in hand with teaching leaving cert English

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Time management, prioritising, getting things completed, never ending demands placed upon me by department, mgmt., students and curriculum.

Coping with the Machiavellian behaviour of the Principal and the total, unquestioning support he receives from the BOM.

Differentiated learning in each class places great demands on teachers. Large class sizes are difficult as it is hard to monitor each child's personal learning

Too many to mention!

In the current school, parents expectations and pressure from management to ignore the lower end of the class and teach only to the top level students which leads to the inability to accept questions from students and forcing students to drop level when, if they were given time and opportunity to ask questions they could excel at higher level.

Workload - there is too much to prepare for classes, too many students in classes to cope with corrections and too many meetings which take away from planning. In my particular school, I spend far too much time dealing with behaviour issues; this means signing journals, reasoning with students, assigning detentions that I have to supervise during my lunchtimes, calling parents and speaking to tutors and year heads. This takes up a considerable amount of time every day. I also have to log negative comments on a computer system so that there is a record of negative behaviours (I do not mind doing all of these things as actions require consequences, however, it is another example of time pressure!)

Keeping up with course content, assessment, marking assessment, expectation of getting involved in extra curricular

Managing planning, teaching, assessment, behaviour, multitasking, extra responsibilities

Time management, pressure on results, making myself available to everyone, new courses/curricula being introduced

Administrative duties and classroom discipline also general workload and juggling family life (lack of understanding for teachers with young families)

Class planning, meetings, paperwork, corrections, parent-teacher meetings, demanding parents and students

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Not enough time to get everything done. As a guidance counsellor the emotional toll of personal counselling relationship with colleagues and school ethos being catholic so afraid to express my opinions, always

Time management to cope with the workload

Time spent trying to give feedback on every written piece of work- that's what we are being asked to do and while it appears a small request, and indeed one I think it important, it takes up a lot of time and you still have yet to prepare classes, organise resources, etc.

Dealing with difficult students and not receiving support. Also implementing new changes to the curriculum is overwhelming.

I really enjoy the teaching. The extras however are not enjoyable. ie the Croke park hours, the new junior cert programme is really the dumbing down of important subjects like maths and the introduction of things like "wellbeing", something which we (or most of teachers) were doing since the teaching profession started!! the hours of maths are being cut t possibly to 4 periods a week!!!

Dealing with a constant barrage of "initiatives" and box ticking planning motivated by everyone from the top down trying to cover their ass coupled with declining behaviour standards and less and less authority and autonomy.

high achieving students & parents, management that expects more than teaching 22 hours what extras are we doing for the school

Moving from classroom to classroom every lesson, last minute admin tasks from management, marking exams

New courses. Paperwork. Students doing extracurricular activities in school time

There are no set hours, you have to correct and plan after school and/or the weekend. Students are quick to complain if you're slow with correcting I find which can be difficult.

Level of documentation required. The constant fear of inspections. The demands on teachers to be more than teachers and to rectify society's ills in the classroom. The dealing with policies etc. would be much less demanding if we could just be allowed to teach!

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Too much to do and not enough time to do it! Also ageism as younger teachers are invested in over older members of staff who still have much to contribute
Learning and delivering new courses, dealing with parents and their expectations, covering for poorly motivated staff

Stuff that is not really part of your role, but the previous person did it. It really should be a post of responsibility in itself as it eats into the time I have for my central role.

Dealing with bullying: interactions with demanding parents: keeping on top of corrections and workload
Lack of support from some management with regard to discipline

Correcting, assessing, new Junior Cycle, all extra activities attached to my two sub cats.

Unnecessary box ticking and excessive administrative work; no respite during the school days; correction of exams and homework without any acknowledgment by the department of the myriad of hours it takes.

Dealing with disruptive students, paperwork, pointless Croke park hours, curricular changes

The number of completely unnecessary meetings to "use up" Croke park hours is a joke. The new junior cycle is also a source of huge annoyance. It's poorly thought out, poorly rolled out and I fundamentally disagree with the entire notion of it.

Parents and unmotivated students. Constant corrections, inability to remove yourself from school i.e. constantly thinking about what you'll do with a particular class, feeling like you're not good at your job.

Preparation, corrections, and planning (paperwork)-it's not clear what exactly we have to do, and I never feel I have done enough

Time pressure and trying to keep up to date with strategies, techniques & changes to the curriculum.

Paperwork. I used to love my job but find it has become overwhelming

The lack of vision and direction from management and the department of Education

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Inadequate support for new JCT, neither dept. or inspectors want to hear or listen to those teaching in the classroom everyday what their concerns are, new teaching methodologies, planning, corrections, inspections

Paperwork. I'm an SEN Teacher and the ever-increasing paperwork is just ridiculous! It really doesn't improve the quality of teaching I would go as far to say that it's taking away from valuable class preparation. It's just a tick the box exercise for the Dept. and inspectorate. Waste of time!

Workload, bringing work home in the evenings

Administrative tasks. contacting parents. chasing students for poor performance/poor behaviour (Year Head duties)

Behaviour problem within classes and on corridors. Parental attitudes. Lack of respect from certain learners and issues not dealt with by senior management - tolerance expected and different approaches used by mangt. for different students - same few all the time causing the disruptions

Dealing with management. They really haven't got a clue what happens on a daily basis in the classroom as none of them have ever taught in the school. They are full of theory but have little productive input to offer either me, the students or the school

Planning and correcting. As a science teacher a lot of pre lesson preparation is required (making solutions etc) and a lot of time needed to clean up after. Rarely get lunch on practical days!

Parents of students that have not the ability or work rate that their parents think they have.

Trying to get fixtures played and catching up on missed classes

Time management, task delegation, year head disciplining of students, liaising with management effectively to have cohesive approach to student and staff issues arising (often on different pages)

I find the added time demands of Croke park hours unhelpful during the course of the year. The increased paperwork demands are onerous.

Workload associated with planning, corrections, feedback, meeting requirements of new JCT, lack of CPD, late arrival of JCT sample materials, extra additional hours

Managing parents, colleagues. Being dictated to by JCT, DES, unions and inspectorate. Students in a DEIS school

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Continuous assessment, after school meetings and activities, constant departments of education changes and expectations, "begging" for adequate department resourcing of schools never mind adequate pay! Supervision's and substitution time, sitting on committees etc.

Teachers here are constantly exposed to abuse and nothing is done. Lack of materials. No positive reinforcement from Mgt. Dreadful working conditions - cold, flooding, smell from boy's toilet next door
Dealing with the workload especially with what we are asked to do in relation to planning. It is really unfair.

Providing extra-curricular activities. Dealing with parents. Preparing materials for courses which are constantly changing e.g. Leaving Cert English course changes every year, and the new Junior Cycle English is now a prescribed course which will also change annually.
Administrative work, work I do for extracurricular activities

Marking (English teacher); planning new units of work; staying on top of new JC; reading new texts to teach (this has to be done during holidays)

Planning & preparing resources for practical subjects - lack of time, especially regarding new Junior Cert. Teaching too many subjects due to shortages of teachers - 4 Senior and 2 Junior subjects, it is difficult to master them all.

The workload and trying to find a work life balance. I need to work a second job as I am teaching and living in Dublin. I am unable to provide for myself on an NQT wage. Property prices do not allow for this. I have friends teaching outside of Dublin and this is not an issue for them.

Admin/corrections/ the homework mentality (i.e. no need for it!) The leaving cert structure, (Continuous assessment needed) Uniforms - unnecessary. Age and ability streaming - vertical forms required. Victorian model generally.

Dealing with substandard curricula and pointless 'initiatives'. CBA and project work. Dealing with parents.

Constant teaching, planning, and correcting. Expectation to constantly give detailed feedback on all work and cater to needs of all students, while also being expected to volunteer for various teams/ committees in the school.

Lack of time. SO many demands and poorly organised deadlines from the department... massive workload on teachers and no understanding / respect for what we do

APPENDIX 4.10 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q25: What areas of your job are most demanding?

Planning and compliance with a seemingly infinite and bamboozling set of ever-changing standards
Preparation for class, planning good and meaningful activities, classroom management

Time management, lack of support, stress related to performance/results from students, making up for lack of student motivation
With the new JCT I'm finding paperwork overwhelming i.e. planning etc. I am finding that actually teaching is taking a backseat. Also, afterschool Croke Park hours are time consuming. I'd love to use these hours for planning.

The workload especially with leaving cert classes. Furthermore, the lack of support for teachers these days the students always the one in the right!

Meeting the needs of all students- ensuring all students meet the success criteria.... and how to get there- lesson planning, activity setting and prep work

Travel and department planning and preparation. So much extra paperwork now takes the good out of everything.

Trying to achieve the goals that we must, lack of time in day for planning, for the human elements of the job

Dealing with staff and management, getting caught for supervision several times a week because management refuse to use the system properly, curriculum changes and increasing workload not having a classroom due to planning failures and school building closed,

Constantly dealing with misbehaviour. Following up on notes/ contacting year head. paperwork that is outside of 'teaching' itself.

Fitting jobs in around classes and other jobs. Administration, Additional documentation. Time management. Fitting everything in during day. Meeting curriculum needs .....

Junior cycle/ SSE and other inspections/ policies and general bureaucratic demands

Management decisions made without consultation, Assessment/Corrections, Parental/management expectations, Student behaviour - no support for teachers
Preparation and correction time, unpaid work hours take longer than the paid hours!

Staying on top of curriculum changes.

APPENDIX 4.11
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to help improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

A mindfulness group before or after school once or twice a week. Or having a time when we know the chaplain/deputy/principal/senior year heads will be available to hear our issues.

Transparent promotion structure that can be appealed to get the right into management positions instead of yes men/women.

A weekly review of teaching & learning by all staff incl none teaching staff. Where management can implement changes or simply just give support as needed

Complete rethink of current curricula; increased wages; promotion of teaching as a respected profession; changing the CAO system with its obsession with points so that students are genuinely interested in the subject not only the exam; smaller class sizes. Systematic/year-round wellbeing reviews for staff conducted by third party organisations.

Stop introducing more and more changes and ridiculous box ticking exercises as well as more support from inspectors rather than them looking for faults when they themselves opted out of teaching

DES needs to address gender inequality in schools so that schools can become good role models for students and female teachers feel more valued and supported.

Standardised school day for all with inbuilt professional time for planning, meetings, building professional relationships

Educate parents on the difficulties of teachers working in DEIS schools and other challenging settings

A BAN on having to take work home. Recognition of the incredible hours that most teachers have to put in.

Regular time in the school calendar for planning in school with no students and left to work with your own department colleagues. A chance to input into the changes that are happening and a chance to discuss with the inspectorate re the subject and teaching rather than it been one way.

Teacher equality, everyone participating in the workload and it not being heaped on younger teachers

One on one meetings to ascertain the best timetable for each teacher to ensure fairness and work/life balance

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

More people to get paid posts in new schools from day 1. More people to have paid posts so that the busy duties of the day can be spread out among staff. A new school is extremely busy and there are not enough posts given out in time. It is an extreme burden on a small number of people.

Reduced need for paperwork. More structured/hierarchic approach to classroom management where teachers can remove students immediately rather than dealing with them for the class period and dealing with them after class when all relevant personnel are available. More planning time. Reduced s and s classes.

That the department would stop introducing initiatives that put further pressure on teachers which gives a teacher less time to teach.

Management need a lot more management training. Wellbeing needs to be prioritised. Proactive around the area of SEN.

More support from Management esp regarding parents' unrealistic expectations for their children which cause undue stress on those children

Let the teachers focus and specialise in what they do best/excel at...teaching. Remove/reduce non-essential teaching activities. Management should be directed not to offload work on to junior members of staff. Unfair balance of work spread across many staff rooms.

Reduce the class contact time to OECD average of 657 hours per year. Increase pay and conditions and give back the Masters Allowance. I started teaching in 1999 and spent the first 8 years on PT contracts time reducing each year then 2 years on probation as I changed jobs and the past 8 years on CID (which is not a permanent contract) and fighting for my hours since the cutbacks in 2009.

Create more posts of responsibility for all the work teachers have to do "over and above" teaching

Equal pay, provision of face to face counselling service, s and s opt out, reduction in admin duties

Remove Croke Park Hours, equal pay and better curriculum planning that constructively aligns with the time frame of the school year

Paying for masters, getting pay as recognition for completing a masters.
additional supports like technicians as setting up for classes is now even more demanding on time.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Yet again this state fails those whose families are not in a position to compensate for inadequacies in the educational system. Nov 28, 2018 4:26 PM

Better CPD with a focus on changing curriculums instead of 1 or 2 CPD day's which I find are heavily based on theory

Smaller class numbers. Timetabled hours for planning increased. Space in class for SNAs to help vulnerable students. Simply talking and giving counselling does not address any of the very real challenges which cause such stress to teachers and ensure that every year thousands of Irish children leave school without the necessary education to engage meaningfully with future standards. A possible title for a study of such children would be Doomed from Birth.

I think that class sizes need to be reduced, especially for those of us teaching core curriculum with 30 students in each class. We need to sort out the 'differentiation' myth and properly teach according to ability level and stop pretending that everyone is equal. We need to have a further reduction in class contact time in order to deal properly with the new JC reforms, which are only serving to cause further stress for teachers. We need pay restoration and a pay rise in order to adequately reflect our profession. The whole shambles is unbearably sad for a profession as important as teaching. Education has been corporatised and commodified, and it's not working.

Empathy is a thing of the past. Schools are run like businesses. Staff need to be looked after. Tension between staff and management is not advisable.
Cut out the paperwork, no one but management and inspectors read them, let teachers get on with what they have a natural talent for i.e. teaching!

Fairer division of the timetable, some do very little, while solid workers who have good discipline get the tougher workload. one job sharer in our school has five hours timetabled only.

Redeployment for all closer to their homes, with Croke park hours it would make life easier for many

The department should provide us with schemes of work. More time allocated to academic subjects and less to SPHE and wellbeing which stresses teachers and is seen as a waste of time by most students.

Acknowledge the nature of the classroom and the many skills and the knowledge necessary for the profession. It is an important job and for a the very large part performed by professionals who are highly qualified and work to the highest standard

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Nothing can be done unless stigma is reduced among staff- stress and burnout are not discussed

Investment in equipment in general. Smaller class sizes. Disruptive students dealt with properly. Recreation for teachers

Look at teacher wellbeing and eliminate Croke Park hours as it erodes the good nature of so many staff who go above and beyond with no recognition and then have to complete compulsory hours which does not promote the wellbeing of staff.

More time for planning and meeting as subject dept meetings. Incorporate staff wellbeing days as well as cpd days.
Smaller class sizes, extra special needs hours and supports, team teaching with difficult groups, more wellbeing sports and less academic focus for students, wellbeing and stress reduction for teachers, more younger teachers joining the profession it is no longer considered a good job unfair pay for levels of stress involved, lack of support and understanding given in wider society as holidays are plentiful attitude seems to be begrudging to teachers good enough for ye stressed out with all the holidays you have, bizarre Irish attitude that is unsupportive and alienating

Greatly improve student indiscipline. Greatly improve pay. Teachers with ten-year service should have an AP11 post and those with twenty years should have an AP1 post. Christ, where else can someone spend their whole professional career and not get a promotion after years of hard work etc?

Reduced teaching hours, more continuous assessment, less terminal formal assessment, more

More investment meaning more teachers and smaller class sizes. An average of 30 in the class is not workable with the expectations of teachers today.

Invest in resources (equipment's and more teachers) , cut the workload, proper training during school time not on Saturdays or in the evening

A HR person should be in place from all schools, not just the ETB sector. Community school Principals and their complicit BOMs seem to be totally unaccountable for their actions.
Less subjects, more resources, and for management to realise the challenges we face and to accommodate us where possible.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:

Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Better follow up by management and introduction of policies to tackle disruption to classes in the school. This would also give me more time for marking

Team Teaching, Smaller class sizes, stricter consequences for students who are incredibly disruptive and hinder the learning of others

Introduce course days for post-primary school teachers so that we can take personal days during the school year if necessary

Smaller pupil teacher ratio; increased school funding for resources and improving school classrooms

Time - to de stress and just to breathe! To allow for reflection and focus on teaching and learning again.

Complete review at workload, demands on teachers and structure of school environment.

More planning time during the day. Sufficient pay for work being done and educational qualifications obtained

A radical overhaul nationally that reinstates teaching and learning as a core task and not as a policy driven initiative.

Improved behavioural management strategies on a whole school level, CPD that actually informs the teacher about how to teach the new JC, better work and pay conditions

Students who constantly disrupt learning should be removed from the classroom and have other avenues available to them.

More time devoted to help teachers ease work outside school (e.g. subject planning), less on not very useful CPD

Less working hours, and less initiatives being introduced. More management positions being introduced. Recognition of extra-curricular work done.
Smaller classes. Less S&S time to allow teachers to take breaks to eat, as well as use gaps in timetable to correct and prepare. Most of my daytime breaks are taken up with other matters so I have no choice but to bring work home every day as I cannot manage my workload during school hours.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Being able to use more Croke park hours for subject department meetings; not having to be on call for 3 classes every week; have personal days to take; more ongoing professional support during the school day!!!

More training on how to deal with these students who are like snowflakes- emotionally falling apart. Training in what the hell well-being is supposed to be and how to implement the course!

Remove the extra paperwork and hours are that required to fill it put and tick the 'required boxes'

I was bullied by a colleague for 5 years before he retired 18 months ago. The principal handled the situation appallingly even though he knew what my colleague was doing. He witnessed irrational and threatening behaviours but was not strong enough to take action.

Less irrelevant paperwork such as working on policies which the ETB have already written and had ratified by a legal team. Our contribution to these policies are pointless!

Better communication from senior management, removal of working restrictions by management, removal of Croke Park hours

Less class contact hours or less administration duties, less new initiatives overall so we can get to grips with the already overwhelming amount of change taking place

Assessment of management and board of governors, a split of higher-level classes based on ability rather than mixed ability higher level groups. Board of governors and board of management need to meet the teachers and discuss before making decisions which often have a negative effect on the school and put added pressure on teachers!

Less stupid curricular change and less admin. (Note that curricular change is good - stupid curricular change such as we've seen is not

I feel the Dept. of Ed need to step up and offer a full-time wellness role in all schools. They have introduced a wellbeing curriculum for the students which is vital .I feel that they have put the cart before the horse however .All staff need to know how to mind their mental and emotional wellbeing first in order to impart this to our students.

Begin collaborative policy, begin a culture of expressing opinions without being afraid of speaking.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:

Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Change of the priorities of second level education away from education for the sake of education and transform it into a life skills-based education to equip students with the knowledge, understanding and skills to be successful in the world.

Allow teachers to concentrate on Teaching and Learning - stop overloading them with administrative work
Longer periods. Less periods per day. More organised planning meetings timetabled. Better in school practical training. Most CPD is completely abstract or unworkable.

Access to more counselling. Wellbeing days for teachers.

Am strongly considering job sharing in order to alleviate stress. Like the classroom and feel that I still have a lot to give. Not ready to retire!

Scheduled time for correcting and planning. Less pressure for deadlines. More clarity regarding new curricula. Increase of wages.
More detailed curriculum and available resources

Protection for teachers against parents and abusive students. Reduction in class hours for middle management.

Supportive management, general acknowledgement that teaching is a very demanding job, acknowledgement of hard work being done, general sense of appreciation for what we do

More awareness from the Department regarding the timing and number of new initiatives/circulars that are imposed from above. Enough funding to run the school without relying on parents' contributions for necessities like heat.

Time ON THE TIMETABLE for preparation of your own classes/corrections. Bonuses...although couldn't suggest a fair way of organising that!

We are looking at more collaborative approaches to planning, I find asking my fellow teachers for advice on areas I struggle with and help and useful advice is always given. School leaders are very approachable and helpful which adds to the lovely atmosphere in the school I am teaching in.

More time to teach and less unnecessary paperwork. Stop making unnecessary and poorly planned curriculum changes

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:

Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Reduce pupil teacher ratio, reduce class contact time, provide resources, stop attacking terms and conditions, if there's going to be reform make sure it's actually reform and not more attempts to heap even more questionable nonsense on the shoulders of those actually working in the system. etc

smaller class sizes so students would have more time, less admin stop changing expectations e.g. new JC the refusal to give a sample 3-year structure trying to pull together units of learning takes so much time

Equal pay for lower-paid teachers. Support of management when dealing with difficult students. Practical support for implementing New Junior Cycle reforms.

Don't dumb down the subjects. . Making them optional would be better. Then the enjoyment would stay in teaching.

Pay restoration, more chance of promotion, counselling service for teachers and resilience training

Class and curriculum planning should be part of our 22 hours. Lab assistants, more speciality rooms e.g. Kitchens so teachers and students are not under such pressure to complete exam preparation. Stop giving us more work to do which we have to use free time to complete e.g. Correct C.B.A.s

A reduction in substitution and supervision periods. It has impacted negatively on teacher's ability to cover each other for family occasions such as confirmations, weddings etc.

LCA is pointless and different schools should be established to allow pupils follow a path suited to their skills

Some sense that the NCCA recognised the pressures on teachers as we try to implement new specifications. More specific guidance that acknowledges it is a difficult process to get this new system up and going

We need a strong leader who is not afraid to confront situations which need to be righted. The department/jct/ncca/sec need to communicate at a level which places not only the students at the centre of teaching and learning, but to take cognisance that when teachers are treated as workhouses on whom new initiatives can be hurled without thinking the consequences through fully. They do not take concerns on board but pay lip service to them. Many of my colleagues are complaining of being burnt out this year - both young and old, new to the profession and long-serving members.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Paperwork needs to be shelved. Policy developments / schemes of work are well above the acceptable level that should be tolerated. New initiatives from the DES are being rolled out before they are fully evaluated. I am not against change and welcome the ideas but, the actual implications are not being realised by the DES. Teachers are on initiative overload and the stress from this is unreal. CPD regarding new courses is extremely poor and not helpful at all. The whole new Junior Cycle while welcome has not been thought out fully and its full implication I don't think are realised by the NCCA / SEC / DES. Pressure on teachers is unhelpful and unwelcome. I do believe JCT / Inspectorate should and could formulate plans that schools can adapt to suits their needs.

Less paperwork at home, more time in the classroom (longer class periods but fewer classes in each day), smaller class sizes, permission to have kick disruptive students out of class (a right to an education should not mean a right to sit in my class).

More effective CPD / put a stop to all new initiatives until current initiatives have become embedded into school practice

Remove the unnecessary paperwork that has no impact on one's ability to teach,

A syllabus that can be easily covered in the time period allowed. A move away from the huge push on gimmicky teaching strategies. Kahoot is not a teaching strategy!

Greater communication and collaboration between management and staff

More emphasis on teacher well being

More whole school supports put in place for teacher in the school setting...where they can share and discuss and work on school-based issues

A more realistic timetable of teaching contact hours to enable proper prep and time for corrections.

Wellbeing for teachers. In school or local support in order to debrief after dealing with sensitive situations. Upgrade of physical environment, it is dirty, my classroom is cleaned twice a week, the school is cold, and the staff toilets are regularly blocked and out of use! I would suggest a mentoring programme for new teachers within the school, ie. link each one to a specific member of staff who wishes to be involved. Improved value for teachers in community and nationally, maybe the Minister regularly informing the general public of the importance of the job and the high standards that are being achieved.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

More collaboration, less involvement of parents in teachers' practice, reduced testing, complete overhaul of the Leaving Certificate which is largely regarded as a limited way of assessment

To have my own classroom and the building of the school to be completed. We are still working in a prefabricated building which is in a very poor state and not fit for occupation.

In meetings and exchanges within schools, people should have to observe a code of conduct and respect.

Get rid of Croke Park hours
Balance wellbeing of students with that of teachers - they are interconnected. Demands are being placed on teachers and all focus is on student wellbeing

Place more trust in teachers because we are hardworking and dedicated. Allow more time for teachers to complete tasks. We are going to become like the UK if this situation continues. I would retire today if I could and I actually love teaching but not everything else that goes with it. Paperwork is ridiculous and I don't believe this survey will change it, working nights and weekends correcting and preparing is constant and public opinion of teachers is poor.

Lower the tax paid, less administrative planning, stop changing curriculum to suit fads and trends, respect from children and co-workers.

More time given for subject department meetings for planning, especially with regard to the new Junior Cycle

Too much change, take stock. Put HSCL coordinators into schools that lost them. DES need to put in school supports back in place for travellers. They got rid of visiting teacher for travellers this needs to be looked at again. Traveller students and families need this and so do schools.

Provide timetabling that allows work to be done. Allocate time on the timetable to have SLAR meetings. Re-evaluate how the new JCT is actually going to work.

More time to prep for class and try new teaching strategies. Better training on new curriculum.

Recognition of the importance of teacher Wellbeing and proper in school support for work related issues.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

More collaborate planning time for subject departments to be integrated into the school day rather than having to use up evenings, weekends and holidays. A weekly staff meditation class for teachers to alleviate stress in a positive way.

Get rid of evening/weekend work and go back to having CPD in school time and all meetings inside school hours.

My own classroom, improved staff rom facilities. Less "initiatives" frame DEB bureaucrats who know nothing about schools and how they work

More support from management, more recognition and promotion

I think appreciation and praise from management is important (it's rare). Clarity on what exactly should be done for planning. Sample yearly plans on websites such as JCT and PDST. Same assessment rubrics on these websites too.

Year heads should have reduced timetables. Teachers should be paid for extracurricular via having a post to do it.

If contracts could be more secure it would help, wouldn't feel like you have to do everything to please your principal & would feel more comfortable saying no when you have to. Making more full-time hours available, it's the subbing hours when your part time that are used like a bargaining chip which is hard to say no to. More openness / information about the employee assistance program & encouragement / recognition that feels genuine & not "tick the box".

Employing principals and deputy principals that can actually do their job properly and not candidates that can talk the talk, full of educational jargon when in reality they do not have the capacity to relate to the pupils or staff in any meaningful or honest way. Basically, all talk but with no substance behind it!

Croke Park hours which are just about staff stress/de-stress and time given to teachers to catch up on ancillary jobs, it is expected that classrooms look amazing, schemes have everything in them, student work is displayed, and all equipment is labelled and organised... This takes so much time... Much of it at the weekend during precious family time or squeezed into a free class... A designated day for just class work where you can choose yourself what to do would be amazing. Mandatory Pmds from managers to staff in middle management twice a year, how is it going, you are doing great, here are some targets for next term, you have surpassed this, and this note focus here, what isn't working? Middle managers are blamed for everything and rarely have support required. I often think about giving back my year head role as staff or SMT don't think it's worth much.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

More supports for staff and less extracurricular activities

Inclusion is not an effective means of adequately teaching all students. Classes need to be smaller and streamed

I feel we are suffering from initiative overload, each week on the calendar features some event or initiative. This leads to school feeling constantly frantic and teachers feeling like they are constantly trying to catch up with themselves, this impacts on teacher wellbeing.
A bigger staff room, somewhere to work in a free class, someone to clean the staffroom, classrooms that are not overcrowded, cleaner toilets, less non administrative hours, extra Croke Park hours that are more productive,

It's hard to know We work in a DEIS school but there is good camaraderie with staff and that keeps us going We need to be consistent with discipline but it's very draining of energy because you're dealing with negative issues all the time and I'd love to get more time for the good kids

Less pressure from inspectors re teaching methods, something to deal with disruptive students, lessen our workloads

Poor CPD on dealing with difficult behavioural issues and more staff collaboration, e.g. team teaching

More time needs to be allocated to Year Heads in larger schools. The time should be allocated on the number of students in the year group and on the needs of the students.

Formal acknowledgement of the role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator with a specific recommendation for coordination time

Changing the contracts (fixed term/pro-rata) causes huge stress to teachers every year, particularly from May to September. More collaborative planning and sharing of resources and department documentation. Collaboration not only within schools but across schools in the same area/ethos to share best practice on a whole school level.

Make teachers more aware of the support systems that are in place and ensure they are being widely used in schools

Discipline - too much emphasis on stats stating that mixed ability teaching the way to go... not in a school where discipline is ineffectively managed...

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

More supports for teacher wellbeing from the Department of Education right down to individual school management. Admin to be cut. More trust in teacher's professional judgement.

Trust us as qualified professionals, anyone who has done a degree in the last ten years doesn't need to spend an hour after school doing 'CPD' on how to log into the staff email. It's not 'continuing 'development when there's no recognition of previous development. I feel being asked to spend an hour planning a fun lesson would be more beneficial to my actual profession

More rationalisation of teaching activities, more autonomy for teachers in the classroom, less political interference and unnecessary evaluation

Management to give teachers time and flexibility if under stress. Don't police teachers....trust their professionalism.

Fewer classes and supervision/substitution has to be modified. Takes up too much of the non-teaching classes.

One assessment worth more, two assessments that are worth nothing as the measly 10% is for writing about their experience is just stupid

I am not in favour of the changes regarding the introduction of continuous assessment, all it does is puts more pressure and work on the teacher.

Teacher wellbeing courses. Quiet space for us. Less paperwork. More digital resources in schools to help us teach the students instead of arguing over 70 devices for 500 kids! No more curricula changes. Been through project maths and now junior cycle science and maths again. STOP !!

Greater support from all staff members, especially year heads, when dealing with classroom management issues

Reduce class sizes to max 15 students. 1-hour class periods. 30 min small break. 1-hour lunch break. Lab technicians in science.

Proper training for management in terms of how-to man-manage, a focus on recruitment of school managers with intrapersonal and interpersonal skills as the top priority

More transparency in decision making! Less cherry picking. More acknowledgment for work done inside the classroom and through extra time spent helping students both academically and emotionally.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Teaching and Learning should be the number one priority. Stop overloading teachers with admin work. Make better use of Croke Park hours for the benefit of teachers.

More trust & autonomy, less emphasis on timetabled wellbeing, more time allocated to subjects

There should be a day a year where staff focus on their own mindfulness. Pay the young teachers properly.

A clear and structured behaviour and consequence system that is supported by management

More time for planning. Maybe a team of teachers being paid to make plans for all teachers and letting teachers adapt those plans to suit their class.

To reduce administrative duties. Have teachers WANTING to volunteer for extracurricular again. Teachers are sick and tired of giving every inch of free time for administrative purposes. The camaraderie is gone from the staff room. Get rid of CP hours that are not meaningful (not talking about PT meetings) Get rid of the useless bureaucracy, bring things back to the basics and give teachers back their professional autonomy. Increase rewards systems, opportunities for advancement that involve a realistic workload when given a promotion. Stop treating schools like factories or business organisations, stats and numbers and data do not make a school.

Wait and review the progress or otherwise of a new initiative before implementing another one. Recognise the increasing paperwork on teacher's takes away time from creating class resources and differentiation development.

Reduce and stop changing the curriculum, allow teaching to happen cut out a lot of the extracurricular activities, stop expecting so much of teachers. CPD hours reduced and courses reduced

Too many demands are being placed on teachers, with unrealistic expectations

More staff supports. Wellbeing days and initiatives, better access to SEN requirements and proper strategies to deal with them, equal pay for equal work!

More say from teachers in management decisions about behaviour and sanctions, Pay equality

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Less pointless, enforced hours of CPD, Croke Park hours etc as they are achieving little, and being teachers left to do what they do well, which is teach, not admin work.

Change Leaving cert to continuous assessment, include admin staff to assist teachers to facilitate learning, introduce gamification into education. Use lean and agile approaches, use the heart and the hand as much or more than the head. Cut assessment and homework.

Slow down reform. More teaching staff to nurture team teaching opportunities and better collaboration

More collaboration among teachers of the same subject. Greater focus on teacher wellbeing and the importance of free time to plan and improve your teaching, but also to rest and recuperate, as teaching is an incredibly demanding job.

Less paperwork, more time to focus on effective teaching strategies for teaching classes

Year head teachers need a reduced timetable to cope with the demands of pastoral, curricular needs of students. Also, to phone parents about issues. To talk/resolve bullying/friendship issues with students. I typically deal with a student in tears 4 times a week. This often means I don't get a lunch break, or I have to take more work home to complete. Teachers pay needs to be restored & younger teachers treated & paid equally. JC plans should be designed & dispersed to teachers instead of asking each teacher to design a plan when the curriculum is the same nationwide. All teachers should be scheduled to have counselling 3 times a year which is compulsory to offload stress. Thank you

Nobody can account for individual personalities. I have seen unbelievable improvements since the new Principal arrived and am hopeful.

I would encourage teachers to taking more breathing space....if it's not done today, try again tomorrow. Don't be afraid of change and get to things as you can. Seek support and management need to be resourced properly to provide support. Teacher wellbeing needs to be prioritized and pay equality restored. Union need to work with management instead of the them & us system which is currently in place - Australia seem to have a good system in this regard

Less contact time, to allow us the time and space to generate the interactive lesson plans that the DES seems to want.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.
The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

That we are all treated fairly and are invested and entrusted with better facilities and CPD that is relevant to our working situation

Genuine collegiality rather than a contrived system whereby trust is in short supply. We need to completely change the culture of cronyism that exists in voluntary second level schools. Then we may have an environment where support structures work.

Smaller class sizes parents be more responsible for their child not engaging and their behaviour

If all school management pushed back with the Department and said enough is enough on teachers. In no other job is a huge amount of work done outside contracted hours and the expectations of 'performance' required in class as well as covering curriculum and introducing new methodologies should be taken into consideration etc.

Allow for admin time, decrease teaching hours to allow for marking and all the extras (Ringing parent etc). Give us unpacked learning outcomes!

The department, inspectorate and school management need to stop putting pressure on teachers with regard to planning. The NCCA have a lot to answer for in this regard too as there is far too much material on courses and not enough time to teach them. They need to be more realistic when it comes to the content we are being asked to teach. The NCCA should provide us with the planning and schemes of work and just let us get on with the job of teaching.

More resources from the Department of Education in terms of material and to slow down the number of areas where change is being implemented e.g. School Self Evaluation, Literacy & numeracy, Junior Cycle etc. Cognizance taken of the amount of extra-curricular work done. e.g. I coach athletics twice a week, two basketball teams, and enter several national competitions a year. This is all done in my own time, by choice but insufficient acknowledgement is made of this vital contribution to the holistic education we provide by doing this.

Focus on wellbeing of staff, we always put the kids first and sometimes the teachers are forgotten about.

Remove the cause of the stress. The extra superfluous workload. Allow teachers to focus on teaching instead of documenting every little thing that is to be done.

More senior managers to do admin work for departments, Croke park hour recognition for teachers involved in extracurricular work, more pay due to the extra hours

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:

Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Equalised pay scale. More recognition of extracurricular involvement as part of Croke park hours. Abolition of S&S scheme

20-week backlog in DES to vanish; less bureaucracy within in the DES; better training for course changes (too little too late regarding JCT); more consultation with teachers regarding senior cycle changes; an extra class or two to plan (to be covered externally) when teaching new courses.

Better tiered management structure, more teams, more promotional opportunities, better pay

The DES needs to stop throwing new things at us all the time. We do not get a chance to embed anything properly. Always feeling like I could do something better is not a positive or constructive feeling

Provide an exact plan of what we are to teach a week by week basis over the various year groups. It is not viable to expect teachers to design new plans on top of 22 hours teaching, correcting and planning.

The extra hours after school are very difficult especially when you are trying to balance life in school with home life. I find it very stressful organising childcare for these irregular unpredictable extra hours every week. I have 4 very young children and I'm thinking of taking time out as I don't think I can manage the childcare juggling I have to do for these extra hours. I have also stopped doing extracurricular activities with students as it's all after getting too much. These extra hours have eroded good will and family time for most teachers.

Reasonable time allowed to complete all the additional workload outside of the classroom or remove all the unnecessary paperwork from teaching.

Less policies and more supports for teachers when dealing with irrational parents

The main problem for new teachers is getting a steady job in schools and being able to move their personal life forward, be it buy/build a house, get married and have families. Impossible to do when it is so difficult to secure cid positions.

Staff wellbeing being promoted. Stopping the initiative-overload that seems to be happening at present. JCT has brought CBAs SLARs etc, on top of that, we have been landed with the wellbeing programme to embed in all plans. These ideals should be phased. One completed before another is introduced.

Recruitment for management should be based on proven ability and aptitude not politics and nepotism.

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:

Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

That the Dept are clearer as to what will be tested on the JC. That the amount of time wasted on admin be reduced. Last week a colleague and I spent approx. 5 hours working out one module for second year. I spent a further 4-5 hours over the weekend typing it up and pulling it together into a document. Excessive.

Increase the allocation of teachers and provide adequate provision for guidance and SNS) especially in small schools. Look to introduce change and embed change in a way that does not overwhelm teachers.

Being able to speak to someone about school issues who does not put the blame back on the teacher. Proper use of S&S system, more time allocated for preparing classes and marking, less supervision and substitution,

The main problem for new teachers is getting a steady job in schools and being able to move their personal life forward, be it buy/build a house, get married and have families. Impossible to do when it is so difficult to secure CID positions.

Staff wellbeing being promoted. Stopping the initiative-overload that seems to be happening at present. JCT has brought CBAs SLARs etc, on top of that, we have been landed with the wellbeing programme to embed in all plans. These ideals should be phased. One completed before another is introduced.

Review the whole job identifying everything the teacher must inside and outside classroom. Review posts. Then be realistic about how many hours a teachers are doing and create a structure to suit. Even when a teacher is not in class "we are on duty" and the students see and expect that. Its support is necessary. Secretarial support would be helpful.

Less paperwork and more class time subject hours being cut and more pressure to cover more in shorter space of time

A reduction in class contact hours and the usage of this additional time to be formalised/structured for planning and CPD

Time for planning, to collaborate - create an inset week for depts to plan at the beginning of the year before students return

Administrative jobs could be done by other staff members, more free classes to get work prepared, less competition with other staff and schools

APPENDIX 4.11 contd.

The Teachers Voice – narrative responses from PPTs in Ireland:
Q26: *What would you suggest to improve your current working situation and improve support structures for teachers in general?*

Additional Short Answers to Q26:

Reduced admin and threats of inspections	Equal opportunities based on merit and competency.
Workload -less paperwork Removing CBAs and projects. Making better/higher standard curricula with tougher exams.	More inclusive & collegial atmosphere within the workplace
	An easing off of initiative overload
More support from management and more support for teachers from government.	Rise in pay/ reduction in contact hours and more planning hours!
Shared load in terms of development Better leadership	Reduce working hours, class size
	Equal pay for equal work.
More wellbeing support for teachers, recognition of out of hours work.	Be informed of structures every year
	More professional support
Better pay. Less admin. Respect from Management - consultation.	Better IT. And records and reporting to be made on VS ware
Higher wages gets more staff	More online support
Lower the teacher pupil ratio	Significant time allocations to work on implementation of new JCT subjects
I think I have said it all. Thoroughly disillusioned.	Back to values of education
Time dedicated to planning	Equal pay for a start. Smaller class sizes.
Reduced timetable to carry out post duties	Further in class supports for students with behavioural issues.
More law support, gym at school. More movement between schools. Means for staff to vent frustrations with pupil behaviour	Remove continuously disruptive students
More security in position	Remove large volumes of administrative "tick the box" type work
Mentoring for new teachers. More group team building activities	

Throw out pointless Croke Park hours	Less paperwork. More time given to plan classes.
Change of management; access to counselling for staff	Parents taking more responsibility
More direct information	Ring fence funding. Stick strictly to code of behaviour
Don't know	
Get rid of Croke park hours	Less emphasis on neoliberal agenda, recording of stats and meeting targets
More time and recognition	Actively take stress and mental health concerns seriously
Less Substitution and supervision	More planning time together. Using planning time effectively. Drawing up procedures which are adhered to
CPD for teacher's wellbeing.	
Support from management..... to be listened to. To have an opportunity to have a post!	Governments to stop making changes for the sake of making changes.
Care and support from Management. A bit of appreciation.	Equal Pay and HDip return to one year only
More collaboration, sharing of resources and more support networks for teacher wellbeing	More support and vision from senior management level
	Better management
Less paperwork and recording	Teachers should not be expected to undertake unpaid work not related to their classroom.
Certainty in profession, respect from government.	Less paperwork and more time to focus on curriculum planning and implementation
More time for collaborative department planning	
Building positive relationships with students	Increased pay, less admin work and less teacher bashing in the media and by parents
More time to be made available to enable suitable planning for lessons	Create a panel where second level teachers will get permanency after 5/6 years. Develop more support structures in schools for teachers
Structured confidential counselling	
Communication between all members of staff needs to be improved	More time for admin
Staff well being	More support for discipline
Equal Pay / Dublin allowance	

More time for departmental planning	Pay restoration, more support from management for classroom management issues.
Equal pay, less expectation on homework	Hard to reconcile school rules with moral relativism
Have a mentor in school to get advice from	Time. Understanding/Appreciation of work from management.
More time to carry out the tasks that are expected of us	Smaller class size, ETB to act on knowledge of overworked staff
More clear disciplinary methods that are followed through on.	Encourage teachers to be able to change schools as their life situation changes
Teacher collaboration, team teaching, haring best practice within subject departments	Lay off the paperwork
More in-school supports for staff, an increased emphasis on staff wellbeing	More teachers. Better pay and promotion structures
For teachers to know that they are supported and appreciated by management, staff & students.	Pay equality
Management isn't very approachable or supportive. Management should be made accountable	Time to focus on teaching
	Not sure
Reduced class contact hours. Smaller classes. Plans to be provided by des rather than everyone spending hour on them	Remove cp hours
	More support and recognition from management
Teachers would be allowed to teach rather than tick the boxes that the department wants to see.	A behaviour Support Unit
	Use Croke Park hours for staff wellbeing activities.
More discussion and interaction among staff and management. Prevention would be the best cure.	Fair distribution of work across colleagues
Less focus on paperwork and PR, more focus on creating safe learning environment for kids	Quit post
	More access to counselling services for teachers.
Sharing of ideas and resources between staff members. Team building exercises.	Less exams
	Team teaching should be implemented in all schools

Get Department to review what they are doing as teachers will burn out unnecessarily!	A more supportive and approachable management team and less extra work - let me teach!
More time allotted to prepare classes.	Less demands on teachers to do stuff outside of the classroom / more focus on teaching
Less class contact time	
Better time management	Manage the "innovation overload".
More paid time during the day to plan	Greater supports for Principals in terms of increased post-holders.
Clear guidelines re part- time contractors teachers' retirement age	Classes should be smaller, less content at leaving cert level
Less paperwork and more interaction time	Less class contact time
More time, more support, less pressure	Stop changing curriculum
More preparation or resources made by the department	11-hour timetable for Year Heads / senior management team
Staff wellbeing to be taken into consideration more!	More Deputy Principals
Less Croke Park hours	Increased access to behavioural support where necessary
Less paperwork and better management of schools	Additional time for administration
Less need for so much paperwork	More training days given to JC & LC programmes as the curriculum has totally changed
Fair pay systems, time set aside for teacher wellbeing etc	Management/leadership training for the principal
More time for department meetings	
Equal pay for teacher's post 2011	Improved physical building...satisfactory discipline systems
Focus on teacher wellbeing and supportive measure for a more collaborative staff	
Time allocation to do extra work	There is a strong disconnect between teaching staff and the ETB....
Wellbeing for staff	
Full-time position. I'm a Student Counsellor on 15 hours	All deputies' non-teaching. Stop all new initiatives and let the present multiple one's bed in
More support, knowing that management have your back.	More open communication and better training for post holders

Students who disrupt the learning of others should be removed from the classroom.	Provision of optional free counselling
More wellbeing and support for teacher. Always about the student. Less paperwork	CPD for all schools in teacher well-being
Less paperwork more support and understanding from management	Treat teachers as professionals who know their work.
More post holders so posts are not so onerous/ better division of labour	CPD in how to organise work
	More Auxiliary staff to address Administration
Clearly advertised, easily available counselling.	Appreciation and relaxation/ stress workshops
A new principal	It would be great if supports were put in place or staff felt supported more by management
Cut back on involvement outside of class teaching, on too many committees	Have support network for deputy principals- it exists for principals but not deputies
More paid opportunities for taking up middle management positions.	Reduce the paperwork and let me plan and teach effectively.
Pay teachers accordingly. Make teachers feel that what they do is of some worth.	Reduced class size and time to deal with students that have issues
Better leadership from management and the department	More planning time.
RETURN TO TRADITIONAL METHODS AND VALUES.	Improved collegiality especially from younger members of staff.
The wellbeing of teachers should be just as important as students.	Reduce amount of talk of wellbeing and allow professionals get on with what they do best
More planning and collaboration time built into school day	More planning time.
Formal arrangements around Reflection and peer to peer time.	A more cooperative approach to planning & teaching.
More management support in dealing with discipline procedure, less paperwork	I wish I knew but I do think more support is needed for the profession p
Better/more clearly defined behavioural management policies	Forget the CPD and admin, we need more class contact time
	Less levels in the 1 year

Weekly/monthly meetings - optional attendance to talk through issues	Less paperwork
Wellbeing promotion	Less extracurricular- incorporate it school day not outside the school day
Less meetings and putting a time limit on the meeting.	Wellness for teachers once a week. Pt meetings in school hours (check the absenteeism days after one) Encourage sharing
Reduced contact hours or assistants	
That planning is done by the department not the teachers	Promote support services
	More time to do job!
Stop loading extra layers on teachers. Give us time to plan and prepare rather than catch up all the time.	Get rid of Croke park hours. A hindrance not a help.
Less different classes to teach. More prep time, regular training	More time to prep properly, full support from school authorities
Clearer job descriptions, more structured management of staff.	Some Croke park hours should have to be used to support teachers well being
More trust in teacher's professional knowledge	Better leadership in school. Management are 'managing' / firefighting. There's no real leadership. Restorative practise training
Reduce paperwork outside of the teaching	Stress management. Acknowledgment of a job well done by management.
Timetabled classroom planning/CPD/wellbeing	Stop changing the texts on the leaving cert English course every year
More support from management	
More structured planning time for subject departments	Teacher wellbeing needs to be prioritized. Having equal working breaks between SNA's and teachers.
Better planning structures within the school. Better management of the teaching staff. Smaller classes	Recognition in timetabling and training in pastoral aspect
Fewer teacher contact hours, more time for planning	Pay equality.
	More respect for teachers from parents and general public
Students being reprimanded by management and a tone of no-nonsense set.	Restorative Practice CPD
Support from principal	

More relaxation built into the day/week.	Improved communication from management.
More checking in on each other	Introduce technicians for practical subjects or allow time for this preparation by the teacher.
Reduce timetable and paperwork. More time allocation given to pastoral care	
An extra 13 hours a day?	Peer mentoring
Have management being made more responsible for staff well being	More time for staff bonding. It can be an isolating profession
Young staff require structured support	Forget the implementation of Junior Cycle
More support time for class prep and corrections. Permanent contract to be offered after 1 year	Smaller class sizes, less demands generated by documentation
Less curriculum change Permanent contract	Time to get your activities, assessing done in school.
More recognition from management and more time for planning.	I would like equal pay!
More support from management. More wellbeing strategies implemented for teachers	Removal of excess amounts of paperwork.
Clear communications and supports from ETB	More school initiatives to help teachers with their well-being
Better pay, automatic health cover	More funding and resources to lessen demands
Liaison officer between teacher and parent	Cut down on admin
Resources lesson plans less administrative work Ex-quota guidance	Admin time on timetable. Wellbeing days for staff.
Reduce the paperwork which we are expected to do	Stop initiative overload
	Effective management Cut down on all the new initiatives and let us teach
More teaching assistant posts such as a technician to assist in organising equipment.	Time to process and implement the changes that are being foisted up in me More team-teacher/ co-teaching collaboration
	Less admin, less Croke park hours, less new programs