

Reviewer's report

Title: Sending Money Home. A Mixed Methods Study of Remittances sent by Migrant Nurses in Ireland

Version: 1 **Date:** 7 May 2009

Reviewer: James Buchan

Reviewer's report:

An interesting paper that makes a contribution to a little researched area.

Key points:

Methods-

- the respondents were contacted via INO- this is a the major union, but leads to three possible issues that should be identified in terms of study limitations- firstly, membership of a union will probably rule out short term stayers in Ireland?; second there may be cultural/ national differences in attitude to being a union member?; third, any indication of what overall % of working nurses are in union?

-the response rate for postal survey is low at 19%; perhaps not surprising given the sample and methods available for distribution of the questionnaire. However it was an international population drawn from different countries and cultures- was the questionnaire piloted for cultural sensitivities, understanding of English language, and if so, with whom, and with what results? Was the postal survey built on data/ information obtained from the interviews or was it a parallel but unconnected exercise?

-Given that the in depth interviews were conducted in 2007 and the survey in 2009 is the title of the paper correct in stating a "mixed methods study"?- is it actually different studies? and was remittances the only focus of the interviews and/ or survey, or is this paper just one of several that have been/ will be published on other issues?

Details should be given of nationality and/ or previous country of location of the sample and respondents to enable the reader to ascertain what was the overall patterns of responses, how many countries, how many from each etc.

p7, reference to one paper on nurses remitting- in Pacific- more could be made with study on international nurses in London which has data on level of remitting and variation in remitting by source country- Buchan et al, HRH 2006

<http://www.human-resources-health.com/content/pdf/1478-4491-4-14.pdf>

p7, lower section could be edited down as it is partially repeated later in paper

p8 point about pressure to remit curtailing career choices- evidence from UK- RCN annual membership surveys- www.rcn.org.uk - has shown that international

nurses work longer hours, choose to work overtime and extra shifts and as such work longer average hours than UK educated nurses- and also are less likely to apply for, or be promoted

p 9 "The following section details the difference..." this section does not follow, but come s further down the text

p9 data on how much is remitted- unclear if/ when the discussion is about gross pay or net pay (after tax etc) in terms of proportion being remitted- I assume it is net- needs clarity

p10 points about different levels of remittance being related to where family is , etc- also highlighted in Buchan et al, 2006, and could be better presented there in terms of distribution, and in a table?

p17 in 2008 2000 verifications were sought - a little more background for readers unfamiliar with "verifications"- also what is annual trend- if 2000 in 2008, what was the number in earlier years?

p18 space in text to be filled; point about loss leading to serious implications- is there not an argument that politics dictate that in short term priority will be given to finding jobs for the 1880 Irish trained nurses coming onto market every year

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.