



**THE EFFECTS OF MANAGING A CULTURALLY DIVERSE  
ORGANIZATION**

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate how cultural diversity is currently addressed in businesses and organizations, and to examine the impact this has on them. The project was tested with people from one small and medium-sized businesses in Ireland and one global business based in the United States, in which a case study was created for each business and organization, and then compared between each other. The international Model of Cultural of Cultural Diversity was chosen as the theoretical context to base the work on, since it investigated multiculturalism in workplaces as well as its pros and cons.

An interpretive research perspective is examined in this study. This is a qualitative investigation with a descriptive research and several case studies method. Interviews and written questionnaires were used to collect qualitative data, the relevant results were subdivided in the following categories: organizational effectiveness, individual outcomes, and climate, based on the model employed. The methods applied for data analysis were codification and pattern correlation. The main limitations were the impossibility of meeting the interviewees in person, and having to use videocalls instead, as well as limited access to more people in the organizations which resulted into relying on only a one or two people for understanding the sentiment of a whole organization, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the data examination shows that cultural diversity has good effects in general.

Regarding businesses and organizations, the investigation adds to a better understanding of diversity in the workplace and how critical is it to recognize the advantages and disadvantages of multiculturalism, to effectively manage it.

## Declaration

I hereby declare that the content I am submitting for the evaluation as completion of the Master of Science in Entrepreneurship, entitled "THE EFFECTS OF MANAGING A CULTURALLY DIVERSE ORGANIZATION", is wholly my personal work and has not been plagiarized.

Signed: .....

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> August 2021

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## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Declaration.....	3
Acknowledgement .....	4
Introduction .....	6
CHAPTER I. Literature review.....	7
CHAPTER II. Research objectives and aims .....	15
CHAPTER III: Research Methodology .....	17
CHAPTER IV: Analysis and findings.....	23
CHAPTER V: Conclusions .....	31
References .....	32
Appendixes.....	34

## Introduction

The technological advancement in interactions is one of the first improvements that can be seen as globalization progresses. Consequently, the world appears to have been reduced to mainly online connections. Also, the large proportion of people relocating had resulted in the creation of new areas to live and work abroad. The transport of goods around the globe has allowed humans to encounter with multiple cultures and, over time, to adapt and accept them more readily. This explains how intercultural interaction is a relatively recent phenomena that does not appear to be decelerating.

As a result of the cultural variety that has emerged from international commercial labor structures, specifically with globalization, companies have come to good and/or unfavorable outcomes as a product of diversity (Seymen, 2006). And, because cultural variety is as numerous as the world's civilizations, it is not unexpected to have good and bad effects, the challenge is how to obtain the maximum benefits. Diversity has value, which may be implemented successfully thru inclusiveness and plurality in the workplace (Cox, 1991). However, since it is relatively recent to the organizational environment, cultural diversity must be comprehended and properly handled to maximize its benefits. Cultural diversity, in fact, poses organizational problems. If the consequences of diversity are not effectively managed, personnel turnover, misunderstandings, and social conflicts may arise, resulting in decreased productivity and, as a result, higher profit, higher market share and other strategic objectives may not be achieved (Cox & Smolinski, 1994). If this phenomena is not well acknowledged, it might increase the risk of failure to any organization.

The purpose of this research is to learn how multiculturalism is treated in organizations and how it affects them. Three different organizations (two Small and Medium Enterprises and one Running Group) were selected for conducting the research, their choosing was determined on their significant level of cultural diversity. To perform the analysis, a theory framework was established to secure a deeper understanding of the matter, including a description of the research objectives. Interviews and written questionnaires were used to gather the primary information, and the data collected was evaluated using a qualitative methodology. Other studies have disputed that cultural diversity is an opportunity to be exploited rather than an issue to be solved (Beard, Hevey & Harquail, 2008). Conversely, it is also claimed that cultural diversity leads to contentions and misunderstandings. This investigation examines the implications of this social phenomenon by assessing multiculturalism in real-life scenarios. Diverse climate, individual outcomes and organizational effectiveness are the main

elements. Based on the model adopted, the purpose of this research is to have a better insight of multicultural contexts in Ireland and the United States and how their management practices impact diversity and hence organizational performance. The significance of this study derives from the case that leaders, managers, and organizations must recognize and include employees or members from all nationalities as a possible benefit. Additionally, cultural diversity may help businesses to engage and retain a broader range of consumers and improve their competitive advantage. Better decision making, marketing, branding creativity, innovation and better solutions are some other beneficial consequences. The literature review, which includes the theoretical support and conceptual frameworks of the subject, is discussed in the following chapters. It provides an overview of management characteristics in a general context, characteristics/issues associated with culturally diverse organizations, various management styles/characteristics associated with managing culturally diverse organizations that have both positive and negative outcomes, and different models are examined to select the best one for the current study's assessment. Moreover, the research methodology chapter follows, which covers the research design and data collection, as well as the empirical findings and argumentations. The final chapter deals with the conclusions.

## CHAPTER I. Literature review

### **(1) 'Management characteristics' in a general context**

An organization is a social structure that allows people to work together. We could say our world functions on managed organisations, some examples are a family, housemates, public organisms such as the postal service, small businesses, big private companies, a voluntary group, etc.

Management is universal and a common human activity, as well as a unique profession. We all manage on a first level, such as organising our lives, maintaining relationships with our family members, or connecting with other people. The second level are the managers of an organization, who deal with employees and customers. Such organizations need to be managed to achieve goals that provide value.

When resources are turned into commodities or services that are worth more than their purchasing and production costs, then they become more valuable.

The action of leading and controlling a group of individuals inside an organisation, for the purpose of achieving common goals or objectives is referred to as management. Management's job is to create

organisations that operate in the sense that they employ resources to produce value. Some examples of how organizations provide value are, businesses give material value, non-profit organisations give knowledge value when teaching people, comfort value when caring for the ill, etc, Theatres or museums give inspirational value, fresh views, and unexpected revelations.

Management is primarily concerned with motivating and coordinating other people, to deal with a wide range of unknown and anticipated issues or challenges.

Managers are expected to have authority, control, and make themselves personally responsible for departmental outcomes, Rosemary Stewart (1967) highlights, the reality is that they rely on their subordinates far more than the other way around, and they are judged based on the outputs of others, rather than their own.

There is a distinction between managerial and non-managerial jobs, a managerial job would emerge when there is a private owner or government entity has control over a work process, they usually take the decisions rather than do the actual work. Some owners start doing both managerial and functional work at the same time, but as the organization grows, they end up focusing more on management.

An organization is influenced by both internal and external environments.

The internal environment

The external environment

Management involves many tasks and functions; there main four ones are described below:

### Planning

The general direction of the task to be done is dealt within planning. It involves forecasting future trends, analysing resources, and defining performance targets, are all part of the planning process. It invariably entails making judgments about which areas of work to pursue and how to allocate resources. Managers spend time and effort building a sense of direction for the organization or for their department, which they express in a set of goals.

### Organizing

It is the process of bringing abstract ideas closer to realization, by determining how to devote time and effort. It includes establishing an organization's structure, developing HRM policies, and determining what equipment employees require.

### Leading

Motivating individuals and teams is part of leading, which is the action of creating committed effort. The challenge of obtaining commitment and action becomes more difficult as organizations grow and get complex. People have free will, and managers cannot always expect people to act in the way they want. The act of setting goals is an important element of being a leader.

### Controlling

Control entails keeping track of progress, comparing it to the plan, and taking corrective actions if necessary. Managers, for example, create a budget and ensure that the system is in place to gather information on spending on a regular basis in order to guarantee that they stay under the budget. If this is not the case, they will have to figure out how to put real expenses back in line with projected prices.

“Culture is the mechanism through which societies promote and achieve conformity of behavior, dress, language, expectations, and laws.” (Flynn, Simone I., 2019). According to Flynn (2019) generations survive when they succeed passing their “immaterial culture” and “material culture” to the next generation. Immaterial culture refers to rules, values, beliefs, traditions, rituals, language, etc. Material culture is art, objects, establishments, etc. Flynn (2019) also mentions that societies attempt to achieve the approval of their culture to have a harmonious coexistence, decrease social conflicts, increase collaboration, and ensure their culture keeps being replicated along the years.

According to the Queensborough College, “diversity is a reality created by individuals and groups from a broad spectrum of demographic and philosophical differences.” They emphasize it involves acceptance and respect, understanding the uniqueness of a person and recognizing each other's differences.

J. Felix Lozano and Teresa Escrich (2016), refer to “ideology” as a controversial concept, they mention Marx as the one who gave it a modern definition, saying it could have a negative effect in the wrong hands, as it could be used as a tool for domination and control. J. Felix Lozano and Teresa Escrich (2016), quote Villorio's definition of ideology as “a set of statements not objectively justified, where

belief is induced by certain psychological motives (interests, preferences, etc.) despite the lack of any sufficient basis for those statements” (Villorio, 1985). Ideology is a type of cover on the basis of this understanding, through which one social group's interests and desires are masked as common interests and values and thereby become appropriate to all (Lozano & Escrich, 2016). "Ideologies" are a set of statements representing views that serve a dual social role in the form of solidarity between members of a group and dominion over others by one group or class (Lozano & Escrich, 2016). According to this understanding, ideologies might be used to control and exercise cognitive mastery and influence (Lozano & Escrich, 2016), not forcing but “creating a framework within which decisions can be taken and make sense” (Freeden, 2003). Other experts suggest ideologies are created by people, to constitute social meaning and build maps of social realities, ideology is therefore interpreted as a collection of symbols that structure the shared environment at a moment in history and respond to a given society's cognitive and emotional stress, thus establishing national identity. (Lozano & Escrich, 2016). Ideology throughout this use translates to a field in which the social cultural structure can be separated for study and typically includes values, behaviors, psychological arrangements and rituals. Here, ideology is interpreted as a category of values held by different collective representatives, where the components are continuously associated and fundamental to the mental scheme of the agents (Lozano & Escrich, 2016).

Societies use socialization to share their culture, it is necessary to form groups, to shape an individual's belief system, these groups can be friends, families, colleagues, classmates, or any type of community, including online communities, also an individual can be bicultural when socializing in groups of two different cultures at the same time (Romero, et al, 2000).

According to Flynn (2019), experts in sociology agree that the personality of an individual is mainly shaped in their primary social group, which is the family, and there are three main objectives for socialization: “impulse control, role preparation and performance and meaning making” (Flynn, Simone I., 2019).

## (2) Characteristics / issues associated with culturally diverse organizations

An organization that deals with diversity can mean various things that might not be that simple, diversity would involve different cultures, backgrounds, gender, personalities, values, ethnic groups, race, age, religion, education, etc (Rahman, U. H., 2019).

Globalization nowadays has permitted people to work from any part of the world, making different culture interactions more common every day. Technology plays a big part in communications, we see in a daily basis, people working remotely or freelance traveling to any part of the world. Also, commercial trades let move goods from one continent to another. This seems to be leaving people with no choice, but to interact and understand other cultures.

Experts say good leadership in management is necessary nowadays, however discussions around the topic bring two different perspectives about culturally diverse organizations. Firstly, researchers mention organizations might face the risk of a bad performance if they fail on matching values between people in a team, resulting in misunderstandings, miscommunications, and people feeling uncomfortable around their colleagues (Rahman, U. H., 2019). For example, some studies have found that there has to be at least two people from the same nationality in a group, if there is only one, this person most probably separate from the rest of the group, due to the human tendency of getting together with individuals with similar features and characteristics (Rahman, U. H., 2019). On the other hand, other researchers suggest there is a valuable potential for creativity, innovation and productivity in multicultural teams, when there is an inclusive behavior, each member is encouraged to make contributions from their own background and unique expertise, which could add big value if it is correctly managed (Rahman, U. H., 2019).

In handling or dealing within a complex organizational setting, leaders in the new globalized world need to practice outstanding skills for handling diversity. In his paper, R. Roosevelt Thomas Jr (2006), began talking back in 2006 about how potential leaders would have to be involved in these environments and how efforts were needed to build fruitful organizations and secure success.

R. Roosevelt Thomas Jr identified ten patterns for future leaders:

1. "Representation of gender and culture the work office." (Jr., R. R., 2006)
2. "Recognition of the civil human rights." (Jr., R. R., 2006)
3. "Making quality decisions in the midst of differences, similarities, and tensions." (Jr., R. R., 2006)
4. "Recognize that racism is not the only reason for inappropriate behavior" (Jr., R. R., 2006)
5. "They would not recognize difficulty in decision making as a moral offence but as uncertainty" (Jr., R. R., 2006)

6. "Develop skills such as diversity recognition and analysis, determine when actions need to be implemented in mixed groups, ability to appropriately respond with diversity issues." (Jr., R. R., 2006)
7. "Be comfortable with tensions and complications." (Jr., R. R., 2006)
8. "Accept globalization as normal." (Jr., R. R., 2006)
9. "Develop strategic approaches to diversity." (Jr., R. R., 2006)
10. "Apply diversity in their own communities." (Jr., R. R., 2006)

Some past studies recommended diversified groups might have a better performance due to everyone added value; however, recent papers suggest the opposite, saying social identity might create conflict, associating diverse organizations with negative performance outcomes (Richard, O. C., Barnett, T., Dwyer, S., & Chadwick, K. (2004).

Moreover, it might be expected to get broad negative and positive perspectives, the same way there are broad cultures around the world. But this research would focus on trying to obtain the best outcomes. Taylor Cox (1991) mentions "there is a value in diversity", additionally, as Cox and Smolinsky (1994) put it in words, organizations might face low productivity, conflicts, and miscommunication, risking their overall performance. But to obtain value from diversity, multiculturalism would need to be understood in the workplace.

#### **(4) Taylor Cox Model**

As he implies in his works, Taylor Jr. Cox provides a couple of concepts to create and accomplishes circumstances in the organization that lead to "value in diversity." To do this, the company must undergo a transition that results in organizational synergy.

Four subjects were chosen for analysis: organizational kinds, cultural diversity effect model, and multicultural organization creation.

There are six elements that characterize organizations in terms of cultural diversity growth. Figure 2 depicts the framework "Organisational Types," which will be used to examine three tree types: monolithic, pluralistic, and multicultural.

There are six elements that characterize organizations in relation to cultural diversity growth (Cox, 1991). Figure 2 depicts the concept "Organisational Types," which will be used to examine three tree types: monolithic, pluralistic, and multicultural.

<b>Dimension of Integration</b>	<b>Monolithic</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Multicultural</b>
<b>Form of Acculturation</b>	Assimilation	Assimilation	Pluralism
<b>Degree of Structural Integration</b>	Minimal	Partial	Full
<b>Integration into Informal Networks</b>	Virtually none	Limited	Full
<b>Degree of Cultural Bias</b>	Both prejudice and discrimination against minority-culture groups are prevalent	Progress on prejudice and discrimination but both continue to exist; Especially institutional discrimination	Both prejudice and discrimination are eliminated
<b>Levels of Organizational Identification</b>	Large majority - minority gap	Medium to large majority - minority gap	No majority - minority gap
<b>Degree of Inter-group conflict</b>	Low	High	Low

Figure 2. Types of organization (Cox, 1991)

1. Monolithic: There is minimal structural integration in a monolithic organization. These organizations are attributed to lack of multiculturalism, a large percentage of white men, and a limited proportion of women working in non-management positions. As a result of this situation in monolithic organizations, the racioethnic minority, cultural diverse heritage, and females accept the social rules created by the dominant white male (Cox, 1991). Nevertheless, homogeneity plays a significant part in conflictive cultural groups, which is a plus for these types of organizations. Discrimination and prejudgment, lack of human resource utilization, and inadequate social equity are all problems in these organizations.
2. Pluralistic: Plural organizations have a better structural unity than monolithic organizations; they have more diverse populations and are more welcoming of people from different cultural backgrounds. Minority cultural diversity is included into the recruiting and promotion of employment, and their remuneration structure is anti-discriminatory. Equal protection clause, harassment, and the decrease of prejudgment are all equal possibilities for all individuals. Furthermore, there was a downside to this type of organization in the 1990s: intercultural violence was prevalent, since large groups were fearful of racial inequality. Their greatest concern was losing their strong positions. Essentially, these issues revealed a lack of expertise

and proper adaptability to small communities with different cultural backgrounds. This kind of organization, though, continues to be the most common (Cox, 1991).

3. **Multicultural:** Only if the values of the organization incorporate diversity is it considered a real multiple organization. Cox claims that grasping the concept of appreciating and preserving diversity is the road to a multicultural workplace, or that pluralism and multicultural organizations are the way to a heterogeneous team. Managers now work in multiple organizations, according to Cox's research, but they are sure that the multicultural approach is the future. According to this concept, multicultural organizations would tolerate and manage low rates of interpersonal conflicts, resulting in successful organizations.

This theory proposes that diversity poses a number of problems for managers, which, if properly handled, may contribute to a culture of maximum participation and "value in diversity." It is critical to do this through transforming monolithic or multiple organizations into multicultural organizations.

#### **(5) Cultural diversity management dimensions**

1. **Dimension 1: Competitiveness:** The organization that considers cultural diversity as a competitive advantage identified a positive link between good performance and cultural diversity in organizations (Seymen, 2009). 'In building a diverse organization, the primary goal of expanding culture diversity is to prevail pluralism for specific community and ethnocentrism, according to this dimension. Employing culturally diverse personnel would improve the company's long-term competitiveness. In other words, this group claims that when organizational culture and cultural diversity are combined, cultural synchronicity occurs.
2. **Dimension 2: Positive and Negative Aspects:** This dimension examines the good and bad elements of cultural diversity, emphasizing the benefits while downplaying the drawbacks. The sort of diversification, rather than the diversity itself, determines the nature of its influence. As the cultural diversity of the organization grows, inclusion becomes necessary. The distinction between dimension 1 and dimension 2 is that the benefits of cultural diversity need equal consideration to the drawbacks. Cultural diversity must be positively related to performance rather than a problem for businesses.
3. **Dimension 3: Organizational Culture Prevails Over Cultural Diversity:** It is the set of common principles that regulate the intellectual and emotive elements of organizational belonging, as well as the mechanisms through which they are developed and represented (Alvesson, 2002).

Organizational culture is based on the beliefs, values, and behaviors that an organization holds. In this setting, cultures might be influenced to produce a desired dominant culture. This dimension relates to organizations that place a greater emphasis on organizational culture rather than encouraging cultural diversity inside the organization's structure.

## CHAPTER II. Research objectives and aims

### *Research question*

Expanding study on diversity in organizations, notably from the literature review, "The Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity" (IMCD) from Cox & Smolinski (1994) will be specifically applied, since it describes the relationship between managing diversity and organizations, such a model is an appropriate instrument for the research. The investigation will focus on faults or difficulties with multicultural workforce in two speaking English countries: Ireland and the United States, both of which have encourage individuals from different countries to migrate into their territories.

As a reason, the main research question is *how are organizations managing cultural diversity and how are they influenced by it, based on "The Interactional Model of Cultural Diversity" (IMCD) from Cox & Smolinski (1994).*

The next chapter explains the key ideas of research design as well as the chosen organizations. The research objectives listed below give insightful information on how to comply with the investigation.

To support the research to achieve its goals, the topic was subdivided into particular segments as per Cox and Smolinski's framework. As a result, some variables were chosen for investigation from each element presented in the framework mentioned in the Chapter I: Literature review.

### Diversity Climate

- The use of stereotypes
- The use of ethnocentrism

### Individual outcomes

- Loyalty / Commitment
- Staff or employees' rewarding

### Organizational Effectiveness

- Staff or employees' turnover
- Innovativeness and creativeness
- Social interaction and communication

Therefore, the main objectives of study were selected as stated below:

- To define the source or nature of the company's and organization's multicultural environment, to comprehend the level of stereotypes and ethnocentrism used among the members/staff/personnel.
- To analyse individual results in the workplace, to better understand loyalty, commitment and rewarding of people from different nationalities.
- To learn more about how the organizational performance functions in relation to members and employees' turnover, and how do social interaction, innovativeness and creativeness are handled.
- To contrast and examine the chosen companies to have a better insight of how multiculturalism is addressed and how it impacts those businesses.

The organization's diversity climate is assessed in the first objective. As per the model chosen, the focus of this objective is to analyse the behaviour of workgroups from the viewpoint of challenges that may have an influence on employees' performance and hence the organization. The second research objective is to look into individual outcomes in the workplace such as how remuneration for members from different cultural backgrounds tends to work and individual engagement, noticing that these individual results can also have a direct impact on the organizational effectiveness based on the research framework. The organization's organizational effectiveness is the third objective, it investigates the effects of turnover rates on the organization while also evaluating the company's intercultural communication with varied personnel and how do they manage creativity and innovation within a multicultural workplace.

As previously mentioned, the investigation's final objective is to compare and assess the chosen organizations. The organization's comparison provides for an examination of how cultural differences are addressed, controlled and managed, and the effects multiculturalism has in the organization,

which might have an impact on its performance according to Cox and Smolinski. The aforementioned aims incorporate Cox and Smolinski's approach which relates cultural diversity with organizational performance. The application of this approach allows for a deeper examination of the phenomena of multiculturalism in a few organizations Ireland and the USA.

The focus of this paper has been to objectively measure the impact that cultural differences have on organizations. As a result, the research's primary goal is to examine how organizations in Ireland and the United States operate their culturally diverse teams. Diversity poses problems in organizations, as stated in the literature review, and the research uses a methodology that connects cultural diversity and organizational success. Because multiculturalism in companies is a relatively new research subject, it is important to emphasize that managers today must be fully updated on how to handle cultural diversity in their businesses. Additionally, this research provides a perspective on multicultural society in Ireland and the United States, which provides a helpful contribution to the organizations that participated, as well as a benefit to future studies in the subject. The research design and methodology, together with data collection and research sample, are explained in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER III: Research Methodology

This chapter was written to demonstrate how the proper research technique was chosen for the investigation. Starting with the design and process applied, accompany with the data collection in the compilation of observational findings, and hence the sample size established.

### Research philosophy

The 'research onion' of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) helped define the different philosophies for this research. The analysis was conducted using an interpretivist philosophy, considering the nature of the subject '*The effects of managing a culturally diverse organization*'. Interpretivism proposes that the researcher must comprehend distinctions amongst people in our position as members of society (Saunders, 2009). The focus of this study is to look at people's opinions and perspectives on certain scenarios.

In line of the study methodology used, this explanation states to be inductive, with the goal of deeper understanding the situations from the perspective of a culturally diverse organization. This study focuses on the gathering of qualitative descriptive and inferential data, rather than testing theories,

including the essential qualities of an inductive approach, which is a detailed comprehension of the events in question.

### **Research design**

The selected research design was determined to be the most effective in terms of methodologies and assessment for this work. When conducting business analysis, a research design refers to the criteria being adopted (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In line with the research objective, the whole study is explanatory. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) the purpose of explanatory investigations is to establish significant causation. However, a qualitative research is confined to portraying certain people, events, or circumstances. It is important to perform an extensively examination into the scenario, considering the nature of the research. The data collection section will discuss this in further detail.

The project methodology equips the researcher with the necessary resources to address the objectives and questions. As previously discussed, the research question is *“How do businesses and organizations address and respond to cultural diversity and how are they influenced by it?”* As a result, the research method implemented, had to be tightly related to interpretivism. The strategy used is the one proposed by Bryman & Bell (2011), which is a case study, where the researcher intends to offer a deep explanation of it. Saunders (2009) suggests that since a case study offers the possibility of generating questions such as how and why, this strategy works well with an interpretive approach. Additionally, Yin (2009) remarks a case study is an observational investigation that deepens into a current circumstance and pays attention to its real-life context, particularly when there are no clear distinctions between the event and the context. Yet, there are some criticisms that case studies are less suitable than surveys or experimentations, as they are perceived to be less rigorous (Yin, 2009).

The investigation’s study strategy does not consider experimenting or constructing theory; thus, it does not align with testing analysis or scientific method. Also, the researcher must be involved in the group intended to be studied, when conducting an ethnography research methodology. The broad aspects of research designs act as a framework for understanding unique features for case studies. Multiple case studies were studied in this research, due to the fact that it required comparing the relevant findings from individuals in # organizations.

The researcher can compare and differentiate data from each instance using a multiple case study (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This method allows the researcher to comprehend, analyze and contrast the # organizations. According to Yin (2009), each case study is made based on an entire investigation,

seeking that the information from each case compliments each other and findings are gathered. This research used a qualitative primary data technique to gain a deeper knowledge of the complexity of diversity in organizations. Using a multiple case study approach, helps differentiating scenarios to be incorporated into a larger range of information (Yin, 2003). The next point for data collection will explain the interview and questionnaire methods.

#### Data collection

Case studies can rely on six sources for data collection: interviews, participant observation, direct observation, archival records, physical artefacts, and documentation (Yin, 2009). The main data collection for this study was a qualitative research. The fact that qualitative data concentrates its attention into people's personal experiences, it may be inherently well suitable for identifying the meaning people give to things or events (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Interviews, observations, and textual analysis are some of the practical instruments used in qualitative research, as Denzin & Lincoln (2008) put it, this kind of practices can "*make the world visible*". Consequently, according to Deniz & Lincoln (2009), in most qualitative studies, more than one interpretative technique is used. In this case, interviews, written questionnaires and observation techniques, were employed in the research. Written sources are unable to capture information in the same manner as interviews (Silverman, 1986). Interviews have an influence on the respondent, allowing them to discover and evaluate diverse sources such as connection, interaction, comprehension of limitations, nonverbal communication, reflection, or manipulation, these are all things that may be learned through interaction (Silverman, 1986). However, when combining them, it represents a much wider population, broadening the information, and allowing comparison (Bell & Waters 2014).

One-on-one semi-structured interviews were used to obtain data in this research. Saunders (2009) explains semi-structured interviews help the researcher having a selection of subjects and questions, to cover different aspects, however, every interview may be different from the other. Because of the essence of the study technique, it is possible to record or take notes at the time of the session. The goal of a semi structured interview was to let the researcher combine two types of interviews, one for managers and one for members of the organization or employees. To comprehend the complexities of the situation better, the questions will differ from one respondent to another. According to Yin (2009) most case studies are mostly about human society or behaviors phenomena, interviews are a critical data source, such as in this research, which intended to explore behavioral patterns in organizations. For this study, the interview questions were intended to be open so that the respondent could discuss in more depth without any limitations, this permitted the researcher to obtain as much

information as possible. It is also worth noting that the interview is *in-depth*, as a result of the case study approach employed for this investigation, and Yin (2009) suggests the respondent can also propose another source of data collection. Throughout this case, this sort of interview provides an edge when it comes to comparing outcomes between organizations.

Nevertheless, Saunders (2009) mentions the absence of standardization may raise issues regarding accuracy. Yet, Silverman (2000) claims that a research's techniques must be credible and legitimate. The credibility and legitimacy of the research will be described in the next point named research sample.

However, in this research secondary sources of data were also employed. Saunders (2009) mentions some studies that employ documented secondary data frequently do a case study, thus the secondary data is documented and based on other papers, board records, and internal communication emails. One of the secondary data problems, is the challenge in gaining access to it owing to the complexity in obtaining entry to an organization's records. On the other hand, secondary data has the advantage of providing comparison and context, which is quite important in this research due to the number of organizations to be compared, interpreted, and concluded. Non written documented items were utilized as secondary data in this study, which was obtained by video calls recording and notation making. Finally, the written questionnaires were based on the same open questions as the recorded interviews, in order to let the respondent, give as much information as possible, also multiple-choice questions were not considered to avoid predisposing the respondent, and keep away from predictable answers. This information was used to connect the obtained from primary data to build the findings of the research.

### Research Sample

The use of many case samples increases the reliability of the results (Milles & Hubberman, 1994). To gather more relevant data, in this case, a sampling without regard to probability was selected, this kind of sample, named 'convenience sample' in accordance with Saunders (2009), gives a variety of alternate methods for selecting samples depending on your personal preferences. Bryman & Bell (2011) also define it as something that is relatively easy to approach for the investigator. The sample group was convenient for the researcher, because it was perhaps the most reachable and adaptable enough, since it corresponded to a considerable number of foreigners within the structure of the companies or organizations. Aside from that, the individuals were open and willing to participate in the study.

The participants selected belong to organizations based in Dublin (Ireland) and Minnesota (United States):

- Print Solutions, Ltd. – Dublin, Ireland
- Ergotron - Minnesota, United States.

These organizations were also chosen because of their large number of culturally diverse members. This is attributed to the nature of the countries' environment, where young people and students come from all over the world to improve both professional and language skills. Therefore, studying a culturally varied population in Ireland and the United States is such a strong driver. Furthermore, each sample included at least one manager and one member or employee, and all of them were given the same interrogations.

As suggested by Bryman & Bell (2011), a trial interview was led to sense and evaluate the usage of the proposed questionnaires and methods, which enabled the researcher to assess its effectiveness and gain confidence before the actual interview. Someone who was not part of the sample group, served to test the interview, it was documented and helped to determine the estimated timeframe needed. Finally, the open-endedness of the questions was assessed as well as how at ease the participants felt.

#### Development of the interview

The procedure started by requesting each person individually if they would like to participate in a research study. As a result, the interview schedule was devised based on the individual's reply and availability. A modification of Holmgren & Jonsson (2013) semi structured questionnaire was used. Each interview lasted between 15 to 45 minutes depending on the short or long answers from the participants, some of them preferred to explain more, and some others gave only practical details, it is important to remark that nobody was forced to talk more than they wanted, each question was made to let each participant talk as freely as they felt comfortable. As it was not possible to meet people face to face, due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, all the interviews were held from the distance on a videocall on the Google Meets platform. To extract as much information as possible from each topic, the questionnaire had only open questions. Some questions were raised outside the structured interview since they were important to the investigation, this allowed the researcher to investigate further if needed, and observations were recorder throughout each interview of the pertinent material, the extra questions approach was based on the suggestions from Bryman & Bell (2011) where they say, new questions may arise depending on some things said by the respondents.

The sessions began with a presentation of the subject and objectives, as well as a disclaimer that the participation was totally voluntary and optional. Likewise mentioning that the participation may be anonymously conducted, and that the respondent could withdraw at any point. Additionally, the recordings of the interviews were made only under the participant's allowance. The gathered material supported the development of the empirical results and the formulation of the research question.

#### Data analysis

Based on Kawuelich, analysis of data differs from study to study, depending on how the investigator is led by the hypothesis, research question and theory. In this regard, the strategies for analyzing empirical findings were depended on the kind of research design chosen, which was a qualitative research based on multiple cases.

Following each interview, the next stage was to transcribe it. The empirical data that was reviewed to determine the report's objectives, was the collected observations, and taken notes from the recordings and questionnaires. The interview method was a very valuable instrument that benefited the analysis and the whole investigation. Bryman & Bell (2011) remark that qualitative investigators not only focus on the respondents' words, but also on how they express them, including voice tone, corporal, and facial expressions. Therefore, taking notes was an essential piece for analysis and interpretation.

The investigation was divided into two sections: one, the description of each case study, which is the examination of each organization independently, and the second, a comparison between all the organizations. Each situation must also be comprehended in its particular context (Milles & Huberman, 1994); in this scenario, the data collection method utilized was matching patterns. According to Yin (2009) using a matching pattern rationale to analyze case studies is one of the most preferred approaches and it can be highly beneficial for the explanation of each case analysis.

The codification of the literature section was done as advised by Milles & Huberman (1994), who label the codes as essential to categorize and process information. This helps the analyst to better arrange and evaluate the material in the literature section, and it may be related to the new information obtained through interviews and questionnaires. As a result, the empirical findings were exhibited and employed to build specific case studies for each organization. As explained by Milles & Huberman (1994) in data visualization the analyst goes over the material, adding keywords, and then extracts

pieces of information in a visual style that delivers information logically. Consequently, the case study review is simple to write when the material is organized. The second stage of the evaluation and interpretation of each case study. The second stage of the evaluation and interpretation of each case study, that reflects the assessment of observational evidence, included matching the patterns.

### Validity and Reliability

It is critical to consider the difficulties that may be connected with the sort of research being conducted. The researcher should be conscious of the several quality issues related to a qualitative study. In some forms of interviews, standardization absence may raise issues regarding reliability (Saunders, 2012). In this sense, this research has been tailored to the project's objectives, and the methodologies employed appear to be reliable and valid. To avoid biasing the answers, the interviews and questionnaires were conducted without attempting to impose or force any point of view on both the interviewer and the respondent. Standardization was also carefully constructed in all the questions asked. Semi-structured interviews were selected to conduct this research. Moreover, when extensively and semi-structured interviews are performed appropriately a high level of validity can be attained (Saunders, 2012). Also, to analyzing a qualitative research's reliability, validity, and objectivity four categories have been identified by Bryman & Bell (2011) as trustworthy criteria. The current study was meticulously implemented to complete the examination in a legitimate and reliable manner.

## CHAPTER IV: Analysis and findings

The collected data in the preceding chapter is empirically described and analyzed in this section. This chapter contains the following sections: Tables presenting the empirical outcomes with the primary information obtained from the interviews of each organization and divisions of subcategories for the questionnaires' parts called "diverse climate", "individual outcomes" and "organizational effectiveness", in combination with each organization's case study. From that, the results were qualitatively analyzed based on a multiple case study approach, comparing each case to the Cox & Smolinski (1994) model.

### Empirical results

#### Coding

The theoretical framework helped completing the coding for this analysis given in the literature review. This was done to arrange and fulfill the necessary information for the next part.

### Individual case study

The main information was gathered to create a case study for each organization, as stated in the research methodology section. An assessment that connects the empirical information to the theory mentioned in the literature review, is also included in each case study. The tables where the data was presented were a valuable tool on the qualitative technique applied for organizing and summarizing the most important information.

#### Print Solutions, Ltd.

##### **Background**

Print Solutions is located in Dublin, Ireland. The business has more than 70 years of expertise supplying material to Ireland's Print & Signage sector. It is a single distributor which provides the widest selection of unprinted, raw, and virgin materials, they take pride about providing a comprehensive and professional service backed by a devoted and committed team, with unrivaled industry expertise and knowledge. The brand is linked with a wide range of creative goods, and they are well-known for introducing novel materials to the market in Ireland. They continue to diversify their offerings in different industry sectors. (*About, Print Solutions, n.d.*). The researcher was working at this company when developing this paper, therefore access to managerial positions was possible, however the access to the rest of the employees was limited, only one of them agreed to participate as most people were concerned about the level of exposure of their opinion. The business has a medium level of cultural diversity, there were three (3) Irish respondents and one (1) Brazilian.

Name	Position	Nationality
Fergal	E-commerce Manager	Irish
Naue	Marketing Communications Executive	Brazilian
David	Finance Director	Irish
Ian	Managing Director	Irish

Table 1. Interviews personnel, Print Solutions, Ltd.

##### **Diverse Climate**

Print Solution's diverse climate examined stereotyping behavior inside the company. Based on the interviews the employees and management have no inclination for colleagues, nevertheless all the respondents are perfectly comfortable working with foreigners, according to David he does not select employees based on the nationality but based on their skills 'There are pros and cons but I wouldn't

have a distinct preference as, fundamentally, it comes down to the best person for the role at that moment in time', also Ian does not have a preference and he feels there has been diversity over the years in the company 'No and I can say that we have employed highly competent non-native persons'.

Naue as a foreign employee said she prefers working with people from different nationalities and that she would not like to work with people from the same nationality all the time, as she finds it more interesting interacting with people from different countries.

The interviews revealed no prejudices and positive relationships between employees and managers, all the respondents expressed being in a good working environment.

Therefore, Print Solutions falls in the category of plural organization, with a high level of employee inclusion and more people who are welcoming of their different coworkers, as well as a fully open and equitable recruiting process.

### **Individual Outcomes**

As the interviews suggest, the company's individual outcomes indicate there is a high level of commitment among the employees. Managers also mentioned that they have an excellent workforce and that they can sense the organization is committed, *'overall we have a high retention of staff which indicates that the work environment is good'* Ian, *'Yes, and the simple proof of this is that we have limited turnover outside of junior staff in the warehouse and a significant number of team are long standing employees'* David. Poor commitment in cohesive groups has a negative impact in a business performance, in this case this produces a favourable atmosphere for Print Solutions as it is showing a committed team. On the other hand, the compensation process is low due to the size of the company, however David feels they do as much as possible to recognize and compensate employees *'As an SME the company is limited in the wider remuneration/reward schemes it can offer however we try, in as much as we can, to reward our employees for performance and what they deliver to the business. In the past couple of years, we have also been in a position – due to the overall company performance – to offer stronger bonuses across the board and this will continue where we can – within the resource limitations that we have'*. All the interviewees mentioned an annual bonus which they seem to be content with.

### **Organizational Effectiveness**

The processes of communication and feedback between managers and staff seems to be relaxed and informal, yet, both managers and employees expressed to be a successful and effective process, *'I would feel that I am in constant contact with employees, I would speak to them if I have an issue and*

*I support them where I can. Historically I have been in a culture of formal annual / bi-annual reviews'* David. As per the principles mentioned in the literature review, excellent communication within an organization improves social integration and connection between colleagues, as well as trust, therefore workers will feel more comfortable in the job.

All of the people interviewed acknowledged that bringing people from different backgrounds is positive for the organization, Fergal expressed *'I think it has a positive impact on the workplace and brings a greater understanding and appreciation to all. Life is bigger than just us; we have to learn about what is beyond our own borders, we have to expand, welcome people and welcome change'*. As per Cox & Smolinski (1994), innovation experts identify diversity as a vital element in creativity. Print Solutions appear to have a good level of initiative and creativity, and everyone identified good results in the workplace. *'I would promote this in my team – to try new things, explore new tools and process and always endeavour to grow and better oneself'* Fergal. Moreover, globalization has increased the number of job opportunities for people all over the world, for instance, customer behaviour presently requires analysis from multiple perspectives, and cultural diversity can be really helpful to an organization on that, multiple perspectives that can be utilized in various aspects relying on initiative and creativity.

Regarding the employee's turnover, managers expressed the level is low, Fergal said *'Low for most departments due to collaborative work environment and flexible working arrangements'*. Also, due to the character of the company, there are people who have been working there for many years until they become senior employees, they develop a good level of expertise and get to use it in the company over the years, which helps with improvements. Low turnover is found in organizations that have effectively integrated a multicultural staff (Cox & Smolinski, 1994), based on the interviews, in this case Print Solutions has a loyal and permanent personnel that considers they are members of the organization. As per the theory, poorly managed diversity might lead to greater discontent, and as a result, staff turnover and absences might be higher, however this does not appear to be the case of Print Solutions.

#### Ergotron, Inc.

##### **Background**

Ergotron is a multinational corporation dedicating to upgrading the way people work, study, play and attend others. They create solutions that help people flourish in medical, educational, appliance and office ambiances, by utilizing human-centered conceptual designs and movement technologies. Its bespoke solutions department offers cutting-edge product solutions to organizations such as

Amazon, Haworth, GE Healthcare and Cisco. The company has more than 200 registered patents and their award-winning brands portfolio has continued to expand over more than 35 years. It is located at St. Paul, Minnesota, together with offices in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. Their components are designed in the United States and manufactured in both Minnesota and China (About, Ergotron LinkedIn, n.d). Due to the size of the enterprise, it was nearly impossible to interview someone in a managerial position, also due to the fact their facilities and the researcher were in different countries, it made it difficult to access more people who were willing to participate. The business has a high level of cultural diversity, there was only one (1) Mexican respondent.

Name	Position	Nationality
Tania	Inside Sales Development Representative	Mexican

Table 2. Interviews personnel, Ergotron, Inc.

### Diverse Climate

Tania was born in Mexico and lived there almost all her life until a few years ago she moved to Minnesota in the United States, she has now 1 year and 5 months working for Ergotron with multicultural colleagues, and she mentioned the work is comfortable and enjoyable for her. She mentioned the office where she works is not that multicultural but they are working towards that, however Ergotron is a global company, *‘the headquarters in the United States are predominantly Americans, but I can proudly say that the diversity inclusion and equity strategies that are in place right now are taking us to have a more diverse employee baseline’* Tania, there are around 10 people from Latin America and other countries, they are the minority but they are opening more towards that area. Based on the framework, Ergotron falls in the Dimension 1 category which is plural and heterogeneous, even if they do not have a large number of cultural diversities, they aim to increase it and take advantage of its benefits, specially in interactions with different markets around the globe, for them it is important to have people who understand and empathize with their customers. According to research, factors such as stereotypes and nationalism have influence on the varied environment of a company, and hence have an impact on the organization’s effectiveness (Cox & Smolinski, 1994). In this case, Tania replied she has not felt the company has infringed on any of them. According to the information gathered in the interview, their recruitment processes are fair and open to people from different countries.

Tania also expressed she loves working with people from different countries, and she is positive about colleagues doing things in different ways, *'I love to learn from other cultures, so when there is someone that it perhaps is non-Latino but it's from another heritage that is working with us, I will always learn like the way they refer to people, the way they communicate, the way they structure their thoughts and I believe that's a great added value to any team'*.

The staff-manager relationships mentioned during the interview appeared to be in perfect balance. Employees attitudes regarding their jobs are impacted by the relationships they have in a diverse atmosphere. According to the interview, Ergotron is planning to develop one of the primary objectives diversity management in the organization, as outlined by Cox & Smolinski (1994), "creating a climate in which people with fundamental differences in culture (values, preferred work styles, goal priorities, and behavioral norms) can work together with maximum effectiveness."

### **Individual Outcomes**

The primary comments from Tania were that she is highly committed to the company because of her professional development, she feels in order to achieve a better role, she need to put her 200%, *'I put so much time into my daily activities'*, however, she also mentioned she does not receive any compensation apart from money for her work. In this context, the company seems to have no compensation processes, which might lead to minorities discrimination.

Tania expressed he thoughts about diversity as *'I believe cultural diversity is a need more than a privilege now, I believe that it adds perspective to a company, it also makes people feeNo index entries found.I represented and understood'*. However, she also mentioned she want to see more cultures that she can learn from, not only in terms of culture, but diversity in general, *'I think it makes us smarter'* Tania.

Tania also feels part and engaged with the company, she expressed she has a lot of visibility from different departments *'I do believe that I belong and that makes me feel good'*.

### **Organizational Effectiveness**

In this company, the organizational performance was measured by the level of creativity and innovation and employee turnover. Ergotron's communication process had positive remarks and favorable feedback. Tania has two managers, she mentioned she can call, email or chat with them at any time *'I try to be very open and honest to what is going on in one end so we can all be in the same*

*page*'. For an employee, having a connection, being integrated, and holding interpersonal contact, boost their confidence and helps them feel more at ease when performing their work.

As per Tania, the company opens the channel of communication among all their companies and it is not as hierarchical as other companies, comparing it being an American company against Mexican companies where they in fact are more hierarchical, *'the perception and the environment is suitable for everybody to talk to whomever you have to work with'* Tania. Also, she feels the background of a person doesn't interfere with the way they relate to each other in her workplace *'departments are just supposed to coexist'*. The impact of diversity for Ergotron, as expressed by Tania, is that it has more advantage over others, due to the fact it has people who understand the culture and have the language of other countries different from the United States.

The only barrier that Tania encounters when communicating with their colleagues and managers is the lack of understanding of the region, since Americans are not familiar with the way of living in Latin America for example, they need to be told every single detail, but in terms of her language, personality or culture, she doesn't feel any barrier.

As per the interview, Ergotron encourages their employees to take the initiative more than they should, *'they're expecting us to do many things'* Tania, she reckons the advantages of taking the initiative are that employees are more heard, they have more representation, disadvantages are that sometimes what you say it is not exactly what it is being performed and can be a bit frustrating, but she has to adjust to the agenda.

#### Analysis of the empirical data

The two organizations are analyzed and compared in this section based on the IMCD approach by Cox & Smolinski (1994).

#### Comparison and discussion

In this section of the research, each case study was compared based on the International Model of Cultural Diversity (IMCD). This was done to identify differences and similarities that may connect or divide the companies, and therefore whether the model could be initiated or not. This function compares an experimentally grounded pattern to an anticipated one (Yin, 2009). The sections are the same as in each case scenario and interview.

### **Diverse Climate**

In both organizations (Print Solutions and Ergotron), the diverse climate can be defined as plural, in which all answers are oriented to not being stereotyping or ethnocentric. With a diversified staff, these organizations can be open and inclusive, together with an informal integration. In both organizations, all the answers were positive towards the preference of working with people from other countries, they answered they like the interaction. As per the IMC model, in case there were stereotyping and ethnocentric conducts, the effectiveness of the company would be affected, as ethnocentric conduct leads to individuality in goal setting and power inequalities, as well as insights into group cohesion.

There is practically no cultural diversity accommodation in any of the organizations' practices and processes. In this situation, organizations do not demonstrate operational flexibility, which would allow them to modify rules and processes to incorporate a diversified workforce. For instance, in the case of Ergotron there is none since all employees are managed, trained and recruited in the same manner as everyone else. In the case of Print Solutions, as it is an SME, they do not count with a Human Resources department, however, they are aware it is needed and integrate it in its procedures. In the same sense, the lack of these processes and regulations, does not appear to have an impact on both Print Solutions and Ergotron diverse climates, it could be due to the comfortable and stable environment they have created, which provides decent working conditions for foreigners and nationals.

### **Individual Outcomes**

The results in this section showed that both companies have a high level of commitment, meaning employees are satisfied, and feel included, the communication in both is open, however informal. Both fall into the categories of multicultural.

The compensation process is good in Print Solutions, on the other hand Ergotron present a lack of compensation, but it doesn't seem to affect them.

### **Organizational Effectiveness**

In overall both companies have good performance, giving them competitive advantage. The relation between managers and employees is excellent and there are no barriers of communication.

There is low turnover in both, that means employees are comfortable.

## CHAPTER V: Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to learn how companies have dealt with cultural diversity to better understand how it has affected them. According to the findings, cultural diversity has in fact an important influence on how organizations are managed. As a result, there is a significant linkage between diversity climate and organizational effectiveness, as suggested by Cox & Smolinski model (1994).

The information was gathered from two organizations in Dublin and one in Minnesota. Each organization evaluated had a population with a wide range of cultural backgrounds, and each was observed to be handled differently. In this scenario, each case study's findings were in line with the theoretical framework. The literature review's ideas and concepts might well be related to each organization's current circumstances in real life through the examination of their empirical information. Simplified by Cox and Smolinski (1994), organizations face the challenge to regulate in such manner that the positive effects of cultural diversity are maximized while the possible drawbacks are minimized.

Taylor Cox, one of the most often cited authors on the subject, argues that multiculturalism generates synergy in organizations and that the problems it provides may be leveraged by a well-managed staff. In light of this, it can be concluded that cultural diversity is positively portrayed in all companies as a constructive and exciting result that is overlooked by organizational practices but not by daily operations, as the employees stated in the interview sessions and written questionnaires.

From a culturally diverse perspective, the different ways each organization managed its members, played a vital role in the outcomes. The data show that organizations' attitudes toward cultural diversity are positive. In this respect, it is crucial to note that the managerial perspective about cultural diversity has a significant impact on how it is conducted inside the organization.

### **Limitations**

The subject of multiculturalism might be as vast as the range of cultures existing. Nonetheless, this research was limited in order to answer the investigation's research question. Most of the limitations were linked to the data collection. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, in person interviews were impossible to be conducted, as a consequence, many people preferred not to participate. It also was not possible to interview managers in XXXX company, and none of the members in the Clontarf Running Group wanted to participate, only the leader of the group accepted to be interviewed in this

case, which is why it was not feasible to determine a full review of the empirical data for examination. Moreover, owing to a lack of data, some aspects of the model chosen were not able to draw complete conclusions. An additional limitation of the study was that the model appears to require to be implemented for a long period of time in order to uncover any negative effects or the consequences that a poorly managed culturally diverse team can have on the organization's success.

### **Recommendations for further research**

According to the findings of this research, organizations should incorporate cultural diversity into their regulations and standard operating procedures. This will provide a new perspective on the global society, allowing organizations to manage and increase the integration of culturally diverse members while reaping the benefits. Investing in inclusiveness training programs will go a long way toward ensuring that foreigners are quickly integrated into the organization's workforce.

Organizations that are being assessed should be more mindful of the problems and rewards that a culturally diverse team may provide. It will also be critical to hire individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds for managerial roles. This might enrich organizations by providing new opportunities for better progress and achievements. The organizations will likewise be entirely diversified as a result of this. Every firm should develop a better incentive scheme for all types of personnel. From a managerial perspective, more study on the matter of multiculturalism in organizations will be extremely beneficial. Regarding employee turnover, a quantitative analysis technique might be useful. Employee turnover in a multicultural business has financial repercussions and also shows that the mixed team has not been effectively managed. As an outcome, an understanding of the consequences of staff turnover in the company will be gained, which may be quantified in terms of costs. This research provides organizations with an understanding of culturally varied workforces and serves as a catalyst for the development of improved methods to manage multicultural workforces.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix 1: Interview guide

#### Managers interview questions

- This study is about management of multicultural organisations.
- The results would be used academically.
- The participation is 100% optional.
- Is it ok to put your name on the research or do you want to be anonymous?
- Is it ok if we record this interview?

*In this context, cultural diversity means: Native people from the country where the company is based, together with people from other nationalities beside that particular country.*

Multicultural organisation meaning: “The organization’s strategy, work, management, and operational systems, as well as its fundamental values and norms for success are shaped by the variety of information and viewpoints that various groups bring to the table.” (Evangalina Holvino, 2008).

#### Background information questions

- What country are you from?
- Why did you decide to work for this company?
- How long have you worked here?
- What methods or strategies do you utilize to manage your employees or members?
- Have you worked in this position for long time?
- How many people do you have under your supervision?

#### Diversity climate questions

- Do you have any preferences between hiring a native person from this country or someone from another country? Why? Why do you think that is?

- Do you think working with a native local is easier than working with a foreigner? Why? Why do you think that is?
- Are there any countries that have performed exceptionally well in your experience, and are there any that have underperformed?
- What differences in performance have you noticed in your experience working with people from different countries?
- Do you have any preconceived stereotypes (good or bad) about working with people from various cultural backgrounds?
- What policies and processes do you have in place to include cultural diversity into your organization?

#### **Individual outcomes questions**

- How does your company deal with the fact that people from various cultures are accustomed to doing things in different ways?
- Do you think that employees are committed to the company? If not, why do you think that is? If yes, please explain.
- Is your company using any strategies or procedures to train or educate the employees about cultural differences?
- Is there an employee recognition program in place at the company? What is the company's compensation policy for its employees?
- Would there be certain employees that are more naturally committed than others? Why do you think is that?

#### **Organisational effectiveness questions**

- Do you give your employees regular feedback? Can you tell me how your employee communication process is?
- Do you think there are communication barriers among a culturally diverse workforce?
- What are your thoughts on cultural diversity and how does it impact your company?
- What do you think the outcomes of managing a culturally diverse staff have been for your company?
- How do you deal with the good and bad outcomes you mentioned? (if applicable)
- What is the company's level of employee turnover? Could you clarify why you believe it is high/low?
- Is it encouraged for employees to take the initiative?

- What advantages or disadvantages does employee initiative have for the company?

### **Staff interview questions**

- This study is about management of multicultural organisations.
- The results would be used academically.
- The participation is 100% optional.
- Is it ok to put your name on the research or do you want to be anonymous?
- Is it ok if we record this interview?

*In this context, cultural diversity means: Irish people, together with people from other nationalities beside Irish nationality.*

Multicultural organisation meaning: “The organization’s strategy, work, management, and operational systems, as well as its fundamental values and norms for success are shaped by the variety of information and viewpoints that various groups bring to the table.” (Evangelina Holvino, 2008).

### **Background information questions**

- What country are you from?
- Why did you decide to work for this company?
- How long have you worked here?
- Do you think this company has a culturally diverse workforce?
- How do you collaborate with a multicultural workforce?
- How often do you switch jobs and why?

### **Diversity climate questions**

- How do you feel working with culturally diverse colleagues?
- Do you feel somehow restricted at work because you are a foreigner?
- Have you ever been or felt excluded from work/social activities because of being a foreigner?
- Do you think your colleagues have preconceived notions about you? Why? Why not?
- What is your relationship like with your colleagues and direct manager?
- Is there anything you do not like about working with people from different cultural backgrounds?

### **Individual outcomes questions**

- Have the company ever given you any compensation for your efforts apart from money?
- How committed are you to the company? Why?
- How well do you think the company accommodates to a diverse workforce?
- How much do you feel like you are part of the company?

### **Organizational effectiveness questions**

- Please describe the communication process with your manager and colleagues.
- Do you think there are communication obstacles with your manager and colleagues?
- What are your thoughts on cultural diversity and how does it impact your company?
- How do you deal with the good and bad outcomes you mentioned? (if applicable)
- Is it encouraged for employees to take the initiative?
- What advantages or disadvantages does employee initiative have for the company?

## **Appendix 2: Interview guide**

Sample interview: Irish Manager

### **Background information questions**

- What country are you from?
  - Ireland
- Why did you decide to work for this company?
  - My entire career to date was in retail, FMCG or retail related and I was looking for a change of experience
- How long have you worked here?
  - April 2013
- What methods or strategies do you utilize to manage your employees or members? 4
  - In general I like to give my employees space to learn their own way and scope to grow. I don't like to be overly prescriptive in terms of routine as I believe everyone brings their own skill set and you need to embrace these. I would see myself as an approachable manager and someone who has a track record of developing people, driving change and delivering continuous improvement.
- Have you worked in this position for long time?

- Since I started with the company
- How many people do you have under your supervision?
  - 12 direct reports and a number of roles that report in on specific projects. One direct report – Warehouse manager – has 17 reports into him which all come under my wider management

### **Diversity climate questions**

- Do you have any preferences between hiring a native person from this country or someone from another country? Why? Why do you think that is?
  - No. I have had successful and less successful appointments in both. At times the language/cultural barrier (by culture I mean the culture in work place/ways of working) can be an issue but tends to only be a short term problem and is always outweighed by the different perspective, approach brought in from someone outside of the standard way of working. There are pros and cons but I wouldn't have a distinct preference as, fundamentally, it comes down to the best person for the role at that moment in time
- Do you think working with a native local is easier than working with a foreigner? Why? Why do you think that is?
  - Again, the language and culture can bring its own problems but – at times – that can be the case locally as well (in terms of culture) in relation to how someone works/how their peers work
- Are there any people from particular countries that have performed exceptionally well in your experience, and are there any people from particular countries that have underperformed?
  - Throughout my career I have worked with people from – what seems like – more or less every country in the world. I cant say that I have noticed one trend more than another
- What differences in performance have you noticed in your experience working with non-native people?
  - Not to keep coming back to the same point but I think the language and culture is something that appears strongly in the early period but does tend to reduce over a period of time. At times of stress/issues being raised effective communication is so critical. This is a challenge at the best of times so when language maybe limits understanding or culture maybe makes a person react in a different way than is expected by others then it can raise further challenges for all parties

- Do you have any preconceived stereotypes (good or bad) about working with people from various cultural backgrounds?
  - Again, my career to date has let me cross paths from people from every continent/background so it is not something really to the forefront of my mind. I take the person first and foremost
- What policies and processes do you have in place to include cultural diversity into your organization?
  - This is not something that we are very good at as a business. In previous years/businesses we would have taken steps to look to ensure contracts/communications might be in different languages however I think that this is something that – outside of maybe multi-national companies – is not really catered for in the SME business sector as the resources are simply not there.

### **Individual outcomes questions**

- How does your company deal with the fact that people from various cultures are accustomed to doing things in different ways?
  - I think that there are two approaches here. I think the business needs to be open to see what an individual can bring to their business and how their way of working may be of benefit however I also strongly believe that the individual has to adapt to the ways of working in a different country and business. As long as employee rights / respect is adhered to then there should be no issue in this regard
- Do you think that employees are committed to the company? If not, why do you think that is? If yes, please explain.
  - Yes, and the simple proof of this is that we have limited turnover outside of junior staff in the warehouse and a significant number of team are long standing employees. As an SME we cannot provide the best remuneration packages/working conditions/benefits but we adapt as best we can, treat everyone as fairly as we can and our team react to that
- Is your company using any strategies or procedures to train or educate the employees about cultural differences?
  - Again, this is not something that is at the forefront of our business and is difficult within an SME today in terms of resource time however it is something that has been touched on by Naue in Marketing and we are looking at some steps towards this – recognising National Womens Day (not reflective of different countries but not something we did before). In truth I think this is difficult to do if you are not a non-

national as it is hard to appreciate. I think you also have to be careful – in the current world – that any steps that you do take are not to the detriment of anyone else within the business ie – some non-nationals would see themselves as more Irish than the Irish and may not want to be highlighted as different, how do you approach this in a fair way to all non-nationals. Do others raise an issue that they are from the country but working with a team from Dublin. I think it's important to recognise and appreciate our differences – but to be honest I am unsure as to how to fairly do so – but also to understand that building a team and a collective is critically important to a business

- Is there an employee recognition program in place at the company? What is the company's compensation policy for its employees?
  - As an SME the company is limited in the wider remuneration/reward schemes it can offer however we try, in as much as we can, to reward our employees for performance and what they deliver to the business. In the past couple of years we have also been in a position – due to the overall company performance – to offer stronger bonuses across the board and this will continue where we can – within the resource limitations that we have
- Would there be certain employees that are more naturally committed than others? Why do you think is that?
  - I think that is the case but that this is the case in every facet of life. What is important is that everyone puts in a fair amount of work in relation to the role and responsibilities they have.

### **Organisational effectiveness questions**

- Do you give your employees regular feedback? Can you tell me how your employee communication process is?
  - I would feel that I am in constant contact with employees, I would speak to them if I have an issue and I support them where I can. Historically I have been in a culture of formal annual / bi-annual reviews and there are pros and cons to same. We are looking at assessing how we do this moving forward but we want to balance it within our own culture which is very much dynamic and progressive. It is a difficult balancing act at times
- Do you think there are communication barriers among a culturally diverse workforce?
  - Yes – not anything that should be permanent and it just takes individuals to respect and appreciate each other but, as I mentioned above, it should also mean that

individuals respect the business they work for and appreciate their ways (always with the caveat that the company is operating in a true and appropriate manner)

- What are your thoughts on cultural diversity and how does it impact your company?
  - I think all diversity, cultural, experience, skill set, gender is critical to a business. There is no one right way and there is no one person that has all of the answers. Good business is about developing within and looking outwards for opportunities. Tied down to one specific way of working/one specific “type” of person will not deliver long term success
- What do you think the outcomes of managing a culturally diverse staff have been for your company?
  - To my knowledge there have not been any specific issues in relation to cultural diversity. I think we can do more, as is always the case, but I would genuinely feel that we are a relatively balanced, fair, respectful place to work
- How do you deal with the good and bad outcomes you mentioned? (if applicable)
  - Any situation has to be dealt with on the basis of that moment in time. I think the key is that at all times you try to remain open and honest with individuals and – generally – that leads to a more constructive relationship in the longer term
- What is the company’s level of employee turnover? Could you clarify why you believe it is high/low?
  - Minimal outside of the junior warehouse operative team. We treat people fairly, we offer good work/life balance, we are always looking to grow as a business and there are always opportunities there for those who want them but for those who are satisfied with the role they have then we just try to make them the best they can be within that role
- Is it encouraged for employees to take the initiative?
  - This is a fundamental part of our culture
- What advantages or disadvantages does employee initiative have for the company?
  - Like all things in life you want to limit mistakes and not repeat previous ones. A key disadvantage is that mistakes will happen and sometimes those experienced by others will be repeated by someone else. However, the benefits far outweigh the negatives and when a person understands when to ask a question, when/how to take the initiative/how far to go before feeding back in then there is a much stronger % chance of ongoing success for the business

