

**An examination of the experiences of  
managing a diverse workforce within three  
US online firms located in Ireland.**

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## **Abstract:**

Ireland has been a haven for foreign direct investment (FDI) particularly in the last decade as the country has recovered from the economic downturn that occurred in 2007. Many firms that make up the FDI population in Ireland are large US multinational firms who have chosen to locate here due to a large skilled workforce, low corporation tax and lucrative Industrial Development Authority (IDA) grants. Many of the US firms that are located here, are online firms who conduct their business online in sectors such as online market places, social media and online payments. As multinational firms choose Ireland as their European base, they attract employees from all over the world. With more employees moving to Ireland to join these multinational firms, diversity management has become a key practice among these firms as they try to maximise their workforces in order to drive performance and success.

Although the topic of managing diverse workforces has been examined on an international level, there has been very little research on the topic from an Irish perspective. IBEC published a report in 2003 around how diversity management should be practiced in Ireland and how important the topic of diversity management will be in the future. Many of the previous studies have used a quantitative approach to gaining results. In this study, the qualitative research approach was used in the form of semi-structured interviews. Three US online firms were represented in the study by two managers from each firm. By using this technique an in-depth insight into the management of diverse teams was observed. The research question answered in the study is in relation to whether there are more opportunities than challenges in establishing diverse teams in US online firms based in Ireland. In brief, the research findings from the study, indicate that diversity management is actively practiced in US online firms in Ireland and there are more opportunities than challenges in establishing diverse teams. The main opportunities were identified as: large talent pool of employees to choose from, innovation, language skills and competitiveness leading to higher performance. The findings that were gathered in this study are valid as they

provide a valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges of establishing diverse teams from an Irish workforce perspective, something that has not been done previously.

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## **Table of contents**

Abstract: .....	2-3
Declarations: .....	4-5
Acknowledgements: .....	6
<b>Chapter 1- Introduction: .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.1 Introduction: .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.2 History of migration: .....</b>	<b>10-11</b>
<b>1.3 Rationale for this study: .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>1.4 Selected methodology: .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>1.5 Structure of dissertation: .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Chapter 2- Literature review: .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.1 Introduction: .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.2 Historical approach to managing diversity in the workplace: .....</b>	<b>15-16</b>
<b>2.3 Explanation of what diversity really means: .....</b>	<b>17-18</b>
<b>2.4 The role of diverse teams: .....</b>	<b>18-19</b>
<b>2.5 The concept of diversity management: .....</b>	<b>19-20</b>
<b>2.6 Management styles used with diverse teams: .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.7 Previous studies on diverse teams: .....</b>	<b>20-21</b>
<b>2.8 Diversity Management in the US: .....</b>	<b>21-22</b>

<b>2.9 Diversity Management in the UK:</b> .....	22-24
<b>2.10 Diverse workforces in Ireland:</b> .....	24-25
<b>2.11 Conclusion:</b> .....	25-27
<b>2.12 The current study:</b> .....	27-28
<b>Chapter 3: Research aims and objectives:</b> .....	29
<b>Chapter 4: Research methodology:</b> .....	30
<b>4.1 Introduction:</b> .....	30
<b>4.2 Research Approach: Deductive versus Inductive:</b> .....	30
<b>4.3 Research Strategy:</b> .....	31
<b>4.4 Data Collection- Primary and secondary data:</b> .....	31-32
<b>4.5 Quantitative and Qualitative Techniques:</b> .....	32-33
<b>4.6 Considered research technique:</b> .....	33-34
<b>4.7 Selection of Qualitative technique:</b> .....	34
<b>4.8 Research sample:</b> .....	35
<b>4.9 Pilot study:</b> .....	36
<b>4.10 Interview structure:</b> .....	36-37
<b>4.11 Ethical issues:</b> .....	37-38
<b>4.12 Procedure:</b> .....	38
<b>4.13 Analysing qualitative data:</b> .....	38-39
<b>4.14 Conclusion:</b> .....	39



<b>Chapter 5- Analysis and Findings:</b> .....	40
<b>5.1 Introduction:</b> .....	40
<b>5.2 Research findings:</b> .....	40-50
<b>5.3 Conclusion:</b> .....	50
<b>Chapter 6- Discussion:</b> .....	51
<b>6.1 Introduction:</b> .....	51
<b>6.2 Objective 1:</b> .....	51-52
<b>6.3 Objective 2:</b> .....	52-53
<b>6.4 Objective 3:</b> .....	53-54
<b>6.5 Objective 4:</b> .....	54-55
<b>6.6 Conclusion:</b> .....	55-59
<b>6.7 Limitations of the study:</b> .....	59-60
<b>6.8 Recommendation for future study:</b> .....	60
<b>6.9 Recommendations for future study:</b> .....	60-61
<b>7.0 References:</b> .....	62-69
<b>8.0 Appendices:</b> .....	70
<b>8.1 Appendix- Information letter to participants:</b> .....	70-71
<b>8.2 Appendix- Interview questions:</b> .....	72
<b>8.3 Appendix-Informed consent form:</b> .....	73
<b>8.4 Appendix- IBEC email:</b> .....	74

## **Chapter 1- Introduction:**

### **1.1: Introduction:**

“Workplace diversity, in terms of gender, ethnicity, functional background or any other attributes people differ on, is often thought to increase organizational effectiveness” (Guillaume, Dawson, Woods, Sacramento & West, 2013).

This section will begin by giving a background on the history of migration and discussing how the movement of people from all corners of the world has led to a more diverse society with the main emphasis been on Ireland. Secondly, the basis for this study along with the research question will be outlined. Thirdly, the overall structure of the dissertation will be documented including the methodology used in the study.

### **1.2: History of Migration:**

The movement of people all around the world has led to the spread of culture and diversity as native people integrate with non-nationals who become part of their communities. After World War II, the movement of people all around the world increased significantly; in 1960, 73 million people lived abroad (OECD, 2012). The number of international migrants all over the world has grown at an enormous rate over the past fifteen years. In 2015 the number of international migrants based away from their native country was at 244 million people. This was up from 222 million people in 2010 and 173 million people in 2000 (UN, 2015).

According to OCED (2014), in the period between 2004 and 2014, the US workforce consisted of 43% of migrants while in Europe migrants represented 70% of the increase in the workforce. This reflects the huge amount of different cultures spread across European and US workforces. Data released by CSO (2017) in relation to Ireland, demonstrates that the number of Irish residents born outside Ireland stood at 810,406 in 2016, which represented an increase of 43,636 on the published 2011 figures. In April 2016, people born

outside Ireland but actually resident in the country accounted for 17.3% of the total population, up from 17% in 2011. Although the number of people born outside Ireland but are residents in the country has continued to grow, the rate of growth has decreased in contrast to the previous census, which saw the number born outside Ireland rise by 154,141 over the period 2006 to 2011 (CSO, 2017). With migration into Ireland still expanding at a continuous rate, Irish communities are continuing to adapt as new cultures, norms and values are being practiced.

In relation to the employment sector in Ireland, in the last quarter of 2016 there were 316,400 non-Irish employees working in the Irish workforce (EMN, 2017). This is in comparison to 268,180 in 2011 (CSO, 2011). UK and Poland represented the highest proportion of non-Irish employees employed in Ireland in both periods. With most organisations employing people from different nations, diverse workforces have become the norm in most US multinational organisations based in Ireland. The main reason for this is due to EU membership, which encourages the free movement of people between the twenty eight member states. Along with this, the high investment in Ireland from MNC's and smaller firms due to lucrative IDA grants, access to a skilled workforce and favourable corporate tax rates allow for higher inward migration. IDA Ireland have identified the four T's as the main reasons why MNC's firms choose Ireland as their European base: talent, track record, technology and tax (IDA Ireland, 2012). In 2015 foreign companies that worked with the IDA created just under 19,000 jobs bringing the total employment to 187,056 in overseas companies in Ireland (IDA, 2015). In addition to the free movement of people, globalisation has led to huge multinational companies treating the world as one huge global market mainly due to the free access to most market places all over the world.

### **1.3: Rationale for this study:**

According to Kollias & Paleologou (2016) “Globalization is broadly regarded as a process that creates complex, interlinked ties and relations between economies, societies and countries”. Globalisation has led to the need for skills and techniques to be transferrable across global markets, which has resulted in diverse workforces across the world. This statement is very much relevant to Ireland. Although there has been a rise in the amount of studies and literature published on this topic from an international level, it is a relatively new phenomenon in Ireland. Most of the analysis has been on firms based in the US and UK with limited research on the managerial experiences of having a diverse workforce within US multinational firms located in Ireland. IBEC (2003) published a report documenting the changes in Ireland’s workforce and the potential need for a diversity management system in the near future. The management of a diverse workforce is also known as diversity management. This report outlined the need of having a diversity management system in place in Irish workplaces mainly due to the large number of non-nationals working in the employment sector as a result of the economic boom which became known as the Celtic Tiger. From a European perspective, the issues of gender mainstreaming has been highlighted so much that the European Commission (EC) set a 50 billion euro budget for 2010 with many of the projects funded by this donation connected to gender mainstreaming in workplaces operating in the science and technologies sectors (European Commission, 2010). This highlights the ongoing challenges that are associated with diversity in the workplace.

This study will investigate if similar challenges exist along with the opportunities of managing a diverse workforce within US online firms located in Ireland.

#### **1.4: Selected Methodology:**

The qualitative approach was chosen as the selected methodology as it was the most viable technique in order to answer the research question. Semi-structured interviews were chosen as the type of qualitative research as it allowed for a deep understanding to be gained in relation to each manager's experience of managing diverse teams without actually pinning them to specific questions which would be the case if a structured interview style was chosen. Semi-structured interviews typically refers to a conversation in which the interviewer has a number of questions that are in the general structure of an interview but allows the interviewee to freely move the direction of the conversation (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The questions are usually more general in comparison to questions that form part of a structured interview schedule. A key difference between a structured and semi-structured interview is that in a semi-structured interview, the interviewer usually has the freedom to ask further questions in response to the interviewee's answers. For this reason, the semi structured style, while it gives a certain level of structure to ensure quality information is gathered, it also allows the participants the opportunity to openly express their experiences. In addition it allows the interviewer to ask further questions based on the information provided therefore making it a valuable and viable approach for this particular study.

### **1.5: Dissertation Structure:**

The dissertation will contain six main sections. The first section of this dissertation will present a literature review which will review the concept of diversity management from the academic eye. The next section will detail the research question that is tied in with the sub objectives of the study. The third section will focus on the methodology that was used to achieve the aim of the study along with the sub objectives that will be outlined in section two. The fourth section will discuss the findings of the study in relation to the information provided from the participants in the study. Section five will discuss the details of the research findings and provide insight into how the findings either relate or don't relate to the previous literature on the topic of diversity management. The last section will provide a conclusion on the study that has taken place, limitations to the current study and recommendations for any future studies that will be conducted around the research area of diversity management.

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

### **2.1: Introduction:**

In this literature review, the key material in the area of diversity management in business organisations will be discussed. These key area's include:

- A. Historical approach to managing diversity in the workplace.
- B. Explanation of what diversity really means.
- C. The role of diverse teams.
- D. The concept of diversity management.
- E. Management styles used with diverse teams.
- F. Previous studies on diverse teams.
- G. Diversity Management in the US.
- H. Diversity Management in the UK.
- I. Diverse workforces in Ireland:
- J. The current study.

From this, it will be clear as to why the research question mentioned previously is worthy of investigation along with the sub objectives of the study that are stated in the research aims and objectives section that follows.

### **2.2: Historical Approach**

The historical approach to managing diversity in the work place has been predominantly based around trying to adhere to the laws and regulations that have been put in place to promote and protect diversity (Ricucci, 2002). In contrast, there has been many other views from various academics as to why diversity management is practiced and why it is so important. Olsen & Martins (2012) have defined diversity management as “planning and implementing organisational systems and practices to manage people so that the potential advantages are maximised and the potential disadvantages are minimised”. In addition, Armstrong, Flood, Guthrie, Liu, MacCurtain & Mkamwa (2010) agree that by having diversity practices in place such as diversity training, constant recruitment, monitoring and promoting minority groups, it will help the firms

overall performance to improve. In contrast Acar (2010) documents that effective diversity management needs to include retaining talented employees and utilising them fully by putting support structures in place. This is an area that can easily be overlooked in diversity management with a lot of management systems ending the process after attracting and selecting talented employees that make up diverse teams.

As the free movement of people has increased in the last twenty years; firms have recognised the need to establish corporate policies and procedures to manage a diverse workforce in an effective manner. In line with this, there is more focus on diverse teamwork in organisations as the attitude towards work is changing (Weatherley, 2006). From a business organisation's viewpoint, leaders are put in place to put teams together to achieve the firm's objectives therefore this has to be deemed as one of the main responsibilities for managers (Morgeson, Derue & Karam, 2010). In order to achieve these objectives, diverse teams are constructed. A big reason for firms to have diverse teams is to help them deal effectively with local needs and habits while also achieving global coordination within their organisation (Zander & Butler, 2010). The literature on diversity management would indicate that a diversity management programme can play a huge role in the management of diverse teams and in turn potentially provide value to organisations. These views would indicate that there is real value in having a diversity management system in place in organisations as opposed to just having diversity practices in place in order to meet regulations.



### 2.3: Diversity- what does it really mean?

Diversity is a term that is used in a lot of situations in relation to society and also in relation to workforces within organisations. In some cases the term is not used in the correct context and people have different views on what the term actual means. From reviewing the literature, a deeper understanding will be provided.

Diversity is a way in which firms recognise and value the differences such as language, race, beliefs, religion and sex with the aim of higher performance within the organization (Orlando et al 2004, Stead and Ivancevich 1999, Wright et al, 1995). There have been multiple definitions to try to understand what diversity is. Due to their extensive research in this area, Kandola and Rajvinder (1998) define it in the following way: “the basic concept of managing diversity, accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences, which will include factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and workstyle”. According to Carberry and Cross (2013) diversity can be simply defined as “all the ways in which we differ”. Other practitioners such as Marques (2007) have broken down each letter of the word diversity to validate its meaning. He concludes that diversity means **D**oing **I**n **V**alid **E**thical **R**egards **S**omething **I**nvaluable **T**o **Y**ourself. Valid ethical regards can relate to the morally correct practice of promoting diversity in the workplace. Something invaluable to yourself refers to the satisfaction that individuals gain by been involved and exposed to diversity. As with any workforce no matter what culture the employees originate from, there are issues and opportunities to be had. In the case of diverse workforce’s, issues such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical abilities, political beliefs and even gender have to be managed effectively to ensure suitable work relations are maintained.

In terms of levels of diversity, this can be divided into two types. These are surface-level diversity and deep-level diversity. Surface- level diversity refers to how people differ in characteristics such as gender, race, age, disability and ethnicity (Robins & Judge 2015, pp73). These characteristics are clearly visible and in general don’t reflect how people think or feel.

On the other hand, deep-level diversity can be defined as differences in values, personality and work preferences. These traits become more important as people get more familiar with each other, while the demographic characteristics associated with surface-level diversity become less relevant in many cases (Robins & Judge 2015, pp 74). In light of both types of diversity, the question whether or not they are important in relation to the success of teams within the workplace needs to be viewed. Previous research in settings such as organizations would indicate that both types of diversity can make an impact on group outcomes and can potentially impact the role that individuals play within their team (Harrison et al 2002; Miliiken & Martins, 1996). In relation to the best way of managing these types of diversity among teams in the workplace, there is very little evidence to be found in the literature.

#### **2.4: The role of diverse teams:**

A diverse team plays similar roles to a normal team within an organisation but the main goal for a firm to implement a diverse team is to improve the way the team functions and provide more value to the business (Thomas & Ely, 1996). Most of the studies on diverse workforces mainly focus on the benefits of having them as opposed to the challenges. In order to provide a clear view, the literature has been reviewed to highlight both the benefits and challenges of diverse teams. Andre (1995) acknowledged that a company is more flexible to environmental changes if they have a diverse workforce in place. Environmental changes can range from natural disasters to human interference. It seems feasible that a diverse workforce would be more flexible to environmental changes, as some of the team members may have encountered a similar situation previously. Huckman & Staats (2011) acknowledge this. They claim that diversity in team member experiences can help teams to react to change whether it be environmental change or change in the tasks they perform. Diversity within the workforce has been a main reason that has led to positive innovation in firms as people from other social groups and cultures use their experiences to help create new ideas (Nelson, 2014). This would indicate that diverse teams are more valuable to an

organisation than teams consisting of native people as performance, creativity and innovation levels are increased.

In direct contrast there is evidence that diverse teams are not always more valuable to an organisation in comparison to homogeneous team. DeStefano & Maznevski (2000) stated that in terms of solution quality, homogeneous teams outperform diverse teams. This may potentially be an important factor depending on the sector that the firm is operating in. While the literature leans towards the view that diverse teams are more valuable to an organisation, as noted above there is evidence that homogenous teams can out perform diverse teams in some areas. This would make sense as realistically, no team is perfect and in most cases, teams may need to lean on the support of other teams within an organisation to ensure certain tasks are successfully completed.

### **2.5: Diversity Management:**

Diversity management is a relatively new phenomenon from a management and theory perspective. It first came to light in the US in the early 1990's mainly due to significant changes in the demographics of the US population that were going to lead to a more diversified workforce (IBEC, 2003). This shift in US demographics was also clearly identified by Johnston and Packard (1987) in their report Workforce 2000. The report researched that 44% of managers in 34 multicultural firms believed that the main reason why firms would engage in having a diversity program was to gain new customers in diverse markets and not actually about promoting diversity in the workplace. Although the UK and the US agree that the management of diversity is a major managerial challenge, other countries in the Western world are not so familiar with the challenges. These challenges will be pushed up the managerial priority list as demographics continue to change (Bassett-Jones, 2005). In contrast, the concept of diversity management has been a constant challenge but also an opportunity for organisations to use the skills of diverse teams to gain competitive advantage (Egoreva, 2012). The literature would indicate that traditionally, diversity management has been a tick box exercise rather than a

value add task but more recently firms have been using the skills of diverse teams to gain competitive advantage.

### **2.6: Management styles for diverse teams:**

A huge challenge that manager's face when trying to lead diverse teams is that different cultures have different expectations and preferences as to how they should be led (Zander & Butler, 2010). A typical example would be that some team member's prefer a directive style of leadership while other members would prefer a diplomatic style, which involves negotiating and representing interests and policies. In terms of the type of management style that should be used in managing diverse teams, the same approach across the board does not work well. In order to ensure the most suitable managerial style is practiced, Seaton (2012) recommends that a manager should take time to understand the needs, goals, preferences and personalities of all the employees that report to them. Once this is fully completed, the style of management can be determined. This type of review process is called "dyadic management". From reviewing the literature the dyadic management style seems to make the most sense as managers need to fully understand the needs and demands of their employees in order for them to perform successfully. There is limited information on whether or not "dyadic management" is practiced successfully in the workplace.

### **2.7: Previous studies on diverse teams:**

The existing literature has been reviewed to understand previous studies that were undertaken around the area of managing diverse teams in organisations. The complexity of building and maintaining a diverse team has been clearly identified in a study that captured 70 global teams. The study by Govindaran and Gupta (2001) stated that less than one fifth (18%) of teams made up of different cultures were successful while as many as 33% were unsuccessful with the rest of the teams not obtaining all their intended goals. A more recent analysis of 108 studies that included diverse teams consisting of a mix of people from different nations, the outcome concluded that "culture diversity

can potentially lead to process loss” but in turn potentially lead to process gains. Process loss only happens when there is little or no social integration while process gains are achieved when there is a happy workforce and high creativity from all team members (Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt & Jonsen, 2010). Both these studies would indicate that there are many variables that can influence the success or failure of diverse teams. In contrast, from a study conducted in the US, the main reason that firms use diverse workforces is due to the belief that they are better performers than teams that have employees from the same culture; this is most relevant when a vast range of skills and judgement is needed (Early & Mosakowski, 2000). This benefit of diverse teams is backed up by Andre (1995) who suggested that by having a number of different perspectives through the presence of a diverse workforce and less of adhering to normal practices, creativity would be increased. From the studies analysed, there is no direct trend in all cases that states diverse teams are better performing teams.

## **2.8: Diversity Management in the US**

From a US perspective, Dass & Parket (1999) proposed three strategic responses to managing diversity in the workplace. These were: 1. episodic approach, 2. freestanding approach and 3. systemic approach. The episodic approach where managers viewed diversity as a marginal issue and did not recognise it as part of the core activities of the organisation. The freestanding approach was where managers recognised diversity as a big issue. Although formal actions were put in place, they were not integrated fully with the main activities of the business. The systemic approach viewed diversity as a strategic issue and actually put an integrated programme together that was aligned to the activities of the organisation. These systems reflect that diversity was not a huge subject that organisations focused on in the US in the late 1980's. In the early 1990's diversity management started to be recognised more in the US. Organisations in the US and western world acknowledged that leadership was moving towards promoting greater involvement from their employees mainly

through the use of Human Resource Management (Bassett-Jones, 2005). This was a follow on from the work of Hamel & Prahalad (1994) who showed how Japanese firms in the US implemented diversity management techniques to develop new ideas and promote changes in their unique culture.

As predicted by Bassett-Jones (2005), if demographic changes continue and competition for scarce skills increases, the management of diversity can't be avoided by organisations. In agreement with this, Evans (2014) acknowledges that there are more diverse workforces in organisations today due to the shortage of talent in the world but she is quick to acknowledge that the benefits of building a diverse team are still largely unknown mainly due to the focus on gender diversity. This would indicate that it's unclear from the literature if there is any value in managing diversity in the workplace from an US perspective but what can be concluded is that heterogeneous groups i.e. different cultural backgrounds experience more conflict, higher staff attrition rates and less social interaction (Knight et al, 1999, Williams and O'Reilly 1998, O'Reilly et al, 1989).

## **2.9: Diversity Management in the UK**

From a UK viewpoint, Godfrey and Price (2009) conducted a study using a framework to improve the performance and management of a diverse workforce in the construction project management sector. They identified that integration is the main problem of having a diverse team in this industry and also the lack of recognition for cultural complexity from a management perspective, leads to issues with trying to manage it. Other challenges that were identified were cultural differences, national characteristics, ethnic differences and communication issues. These issues can cause conflict and in turn poor performance. Communication can lead to conflicts in diverse workforces as accents/fluency, attitudes towards top management and contrasting decision-making habits can result in knowledge not being shared and processed in the way it is meant to be (Brett, Behfar & Kern, 2007). This is in line with Gudykunst and Kim (1992) who commented that with communication in a diverse workforce, employees do not know how their

counterparts will react to their communication and how they will potentially interpret it. This in turn can lead to conflict within organisations.

From the twenty interviews that were conducted for the study on UK project management teams, it was evident that for a diverse workforce to perform successfully, there must be a clear commitment from all levels of the firm. It was concluded that without the backing and guidance of the leadership team, the employees may engage in their own working culture therefore leading to the issues that were already identified. From the study it was concluded that for the effective management of diverse teams in the project management industry, a framework needs to be used that would outline the different cultural needs for project teams that contains employees from different cultures and also how managers can help diverse teams to perform at an optimum level.

In a separate study conducted in terms of the opportunities and challenges of managing diversity for Northern Ireland hoteliers a number of challenges were identified. The challenges that were identified were in line with ones discussed in the studies mentioned above, but what was interesting was that managers in this sector believed that foreign nationals were only capable of performing low skilled tasks which indicates that discrimination is a challenge with implementing a diverse workforce in this particular sector (Devine, Baum, Hearn & Devine, 2007). The study also found that the employers of diverse teams did not realise the potential capabilities that employees from different cultures can bring to their organisations such as new ideas, skills, initiatives and languages. As a result, these capabilities remained untapped. Within this industry, the fact that the talents of international workers are not recognised and that they are considered as temporary staff, means that the cultural challenges will remain until the talents are recognised from the top level of management downwards. These international employees need to be embraced and included in career development activities allowing them to move positions and gain promotions within the industry.

The recommendation from the study is to increase training to help engage international employees but in truth the capabilities of these employees need to be identified first, otherwise no amount of training will minimise the challenges that they are experiencing in this sector in Northern Ireland. In response to this study, employee integration isn't complete and strong cultural differences remain in organisations (Hofstede 1993). This is very much true regards the challenges with diverse workforces in Northern Ireland's hotel industry. In contrast to this, this sector needs a creative and innovative diverse workforce that can help create new ideas and products therefore leading to competitive advantage (Pless & Maak, 2004). It's clear that there are many challenges with having a diverse workforce in the UK.

#### **2.10: Diverse workforces in Ireland:**

Ireland has become a popular location for international employees to earn and develop their careers with the large number of ecommerce international firms locating here along with the large number of domestic firms that have received international recognition. These online firms include, Ebay, Paypal, Google, Facebook, Airbnb, Yapstone, Amazon and Twitter. In relation to the immigrants who entered Ireland in 2016 versus 2015, there was an increase of 15%, further more reflecting Irelands ability to attract foreign nationals (CSO, 2016). This has led to the development of diversity management in Ireland.

In terms of the literature, there has been little emphasises on diverse workforces from an Irish perspective. In their extensive report titled Ireland's Changing Workforce Harnessing Diversity in the work Place 2002, IBEC outline a diversity management tool to help firm's manage a diversified workforce. The model involves four stages which are: analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The aim of the analysis is to determine how much diversity actually exists within the firm and to examine how the employment process of the firms are used to relate to diversity issues that have occurred in the past. Exit interviews, turnover statistics and performance reviews can be



used in the analysis stage. Stage two involves planning based on the results of the analysis. This involves setting objectives, allocating resources and importantly getting a commitment from senior management. Stage three involves implementing the strategy. This will involve creating new policies and procedures and even amending outdated ones that do not reflect diversity in the workplace. In the implementation stage managers may have to adapt and change their style as managing a diverse workforce involves good people management skills as opposed to business results orientated management. The final stage is monitoring and evaluating the system to ensure the desired results are been obtained. It is clear that the IBEC report has identified a diversity management model for firms operating in Ireland, but the literature does not give any clear indication that this has/can work for firms. In addition, there is no requirement for firms to implement this programme; it is solely up to each individual organisation to do so if they feel the need to and the value of doing so.

### **2.11: Conclusion:**

Overall the literature has brought several areas of diversity management that need further investigation. The areas that need further investigation and form part of this study include:

#### Diversity management system

The literature on diversity management would indicate that a diversity management programme can play a huge role in the management of diverse teams and in turn potentially provide value to organisations. These views would indicate that there is real value in having a diversity management system in place in organisations as opposed to just having diversity practices in place just to meet regulations. The study will try to validate this concept in relation to the three online US firms based in Ireland.

### Surface-level diversity and deep-level diversity

In relation to the best way to manage surface-level diversity and deep-level diversity among diverse teams in the workplace, there is very little evidence to be found in the literature. This study will try to determine if managers are firstly aware of the two types of diversity and in turn investigate if both types of diversity have an impact on how diverse teams are managed.

### Value of diverse teams

While the literature leans towards the view that diverse teams are more valuable to an organisation, as noted in the literature there is evidence that homogenous teams can out perform diverse teams in some areas. These contrasting views would make sense as realistically, no team is perfect and in most cases, teams may need to lean on the support of other teams within an organisation to ensure certain tasks are successfully completed. This study will try to fill this gap in the literature by establishing whether or not diverse teams or homogenous perform better in terms of meeting deadlines, innovation and creativity in the three firms that form part of the study.

### Is diversity management proactively practiced?

The literature would indicate that traditionally, diversity management has been a tick box exercise rather than a value add task but more recently firms have been using the skills of diverse teams to gain competitive advantage. This study will try to understand if diversity management is proactively practiced in the three US firms based in Ireland to gain a competitive edge or firms just feel the need to portray an image that they are engaged in diversity management.

### Dyadic management style

From reviewing the literature the dyadic management style seems to make the most sense as managers need to fully understand the needs and demands of their employees in order for them to perform successfully. But it's fair to say that there is limited information on whether or not it's practiced successfully in the workplace. This study will identify if this type of management style is

used in the three US online firms based in Ireland and if not what styles are used to manage diverse teams successfully.

### Challenges in UK/US found in Irish workforces

It's clear that there are many challenges with having a diverse workforce in the US and UK and this has been clearly stated in the literature. The current study will aim to gain experiences both positive and negative from managers within the three US online firms that form part of the study. The evidence that will be found in the current study will either agree or challenge the experiences that have been evident from the literature in both the US and UK.

#### **2.12: Current Study:**

The current study is based on the management experiences of managing diverse workforces in three US online firms based in Ireland. The three firms that are taking part in this study have been based in Ireland between eight and fourteen years. Their business activities are all based on an online platform which allows them to connect people through shopping, banking and social networking respectively. Each of the firms have a large number of employees with a huge number of nationalities represented. This allows the researcher to gain a deep insight into the experience of managing a diverse workforce within US online firms located in Ireland.

The first US online company that will form part of the study is a firm that acts as an online marketplace that allows individuals and businesses to buy and sell goods from the comfort of their own personal device. The company also has an online auction site feature that allows buyers to bid on goods. The goods that are bought and sold on this platform range from electronic goods, to books to textiles. This firm set up in Ireland in 2004 initially employing 300 people. Currently the firm has approximately 600 employees based in Ireland with its European headquarters (HQ) situated in Dublin. The company has over 50 nationalities represented in its Irish workforce therefore demonstrating its

diverse workforce. The passion for their diverse workforce is evident with each nationality having their own national flag erected in the front of their office space in their European HQ. This firm is one of the market leaders in the online trading sector and in 2017 was ranked at 310 in the Fortune 500 list. The Fortune 500 is a list of the 500 largest US firms which is based on gross income. This firm will be referred to as company one throughout the study.

The second US online company that will form part of the study conducts its business in the financial sector. The firm is an online payments firm that allows customers to transfer money easily and pay for goods bought online. The firm opened its European headquarters in Dublin in 2003 with the majority of roles based in customer service. Over the years the firm has expanded its operations and currently employs over 2300 people in Ireland with operation centres in Dublin and Dundalk Co. Louth. Globally the firm has over 18000 employees consisting of 119 nationalities located in 56 offices in 31 countries. Their workforce in Ireland is represented by 52 nationalities therefore demonstrating the popularity of diverse teams within the company. This firm is the market leader in the digital payments industry and in 2017 was ranked at 264 in the Fortune 500 list. This firm will be referred to as company two throughout the reading.

The third US online company that will form part of the study is an online social media and social networking firm that allows users to communicate with their family and friends while also allowing users to share their experiences with their online friends. It set up its European headquarters in Dublin in 2009 and currently employs over 1500 employees at this operational centre. Within these 1500 employees, 72 nationalities are represented. The firm has recently announced its plan to open a new operational centre in Dublin which will accommodate an extra 1000 employees which will bring their total Irish workforce to over 2500. This firm is a market leader in the social media industry and in 2017 was ranked at 98 in the Fortune 500 list. This firm will be referred to as company three throughout the reading

### **Chapter 3: Research Aims and Objectives:**

In defining a research problem, a researcher must form appropriate concepts that capture the mental image of what the researcher perceives to be the problem (Onen, 2016).

The aim of the research is to examine the experiences of managing a diverse workforce within three US online firms located in Ireland. In order to achieve this aim, the main research question has been identified below which will be supported by a number of sub objectives.

- Are there more opportunities than challenges with establishing diverse teams within US online firms based in Ireland?

In order to answer the proposed research question, the below sub objectives will also be included in the study.

The sub objectives of the research are:

1. To determine if managers are firstly aware of the two types of diversity (surface-level diversity and deep-level diversity) and in turn investigate if both types of diversity are evident in the diverse teams they manage.
2. To understand if diversity management is proactively practiced in the three US firms based in Ireland to gain a competitive edge or are managers only encouraged to portray an image that they are engaged in diversity management.
3. To investigate if managers feel there is real value in terms of performance in establishing diverse teams in comparison to homogeneous teams.
4. To determine if managers use the “dyadic management” style to manage diverse teams and if not what style is most effective to enhance team performance.

## **Chapter 4: Research Methodology:**

### **4.1: Introduction**

The main purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the methods and techniques that were used to gather information that allows the research question to be answered and the objectives to be achieved. The sampling technique, research instrument and the procedure for data collection and analysis will be discussed in detail. The reasons for choosing the qualitative technique is discussed along with the quantitative research technique that was reviewed as a potential technique in the study.

### **4.2: Research Approach: Deductive versus Inductive**

A choice between a deductive and an inductive approach as a method of research had to be chosen. The deductive method involves the process of identifying a broad problem area, defining the problem statement, constructing a hypothesis, determining measures, collecting data and analysing data to interpret the results (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). With this type of research, the researcher will start with a general theory and then apply this theory to a specific case. The literature is used to help the researcher to identify theories and ideas that will be tested using data (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The opposite research method is the inductive approach. This is a process where the researcher will observe specific items/elements and on this basis arrive at a general conclusion (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). An example of the use of the inductive approach would be a researcher observing that the first, second and third man they met walking their dog in a park were all wearing a hat. The repeated observation would indicate that all men that walk their dogs in this area wear a hat. With the use of the inductive approach, theory is the outcome of research which means it is the process of drawing conclusions based on observations (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In general the deductive approach is associated with quantitative research while the inductive approach is associated with qualitative research which is the case in the current study.

### **4.3: Research Strategy**

Robson (2002) referred to the research strategy as the process of turning the research question into a research project. The research question will dictate the type of study that is going to be conducted. The three types of studies that can be used are: exploratory studies, descriptive studies and explanatory studies. An exploratory study seeks to find new insights, a descriptive study is used to provide an accurate profile of events or situations while an explanatory study aims to establish casual relationships between variables (Saunders et al, 2009). For the purpose of this current study, a descriptive study was chosen to be undertaken with the aim of providing an accurate profile of the management of diversity in US online firms based in Ireland from a managerial perspective.

### **4.4: Data Collection: Primary and Secondary data**

In order to attempt to answer the research question and the objectives of the study, the type of data that was going to be used had to be considered. The options available were either primary and secondary data or the use of both types. Secondary data is the use of information that has already been collected for some other purpose while primary data is the activity of collecting new data specifically to answer the research question (Saunders et al, 2009). Secondary data may have been collected by business researchers, companies, government bodies and academics. The main benefits of using secondary data are that it offers access to good quality data without having the cost and time constraints that would be associated if the researcher had to gather the data themselves. Another huge benefit of using secondary data is that many of the databases used to gain secondary information are of a high quality (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The main disadvantage of using secondary data is that the data may not always be of a high quality and the initial purpose of the data may affect how it has been reported and presented. This can potentially mean that the data has been manipulated for the purpose of the original research

(Saunders et al, 2009). Although secondary data was strongly considered, it was concluded that the use of primary data was more suitable to the research topic. In order to incorporate the experiences that managers have encountered in managing diverse teams, primary data was considered the most suitable.

#### **4.5: Quantitative and Qualitative Techniques:**

The aim of the research was to identify if there are there more opportunities than challenges with establishing diverse teams within US online firms based in Ireland. In order to this, a data collection technique had to be used.

There are two types of data collection techniques that can be used to gather information. These are: the quantitative method and qualitative method. The research method used depends on the type of information that is needed to answer the research question and the objectives of the study. Qualitative research is mainly focused on determining the perceptions and/or the interpretations of the participants chosen as part of the study. Qualitative research has the ability to provide a deeper insight to the perceptions, understandings, ideas, feelings and behaviours of individuals. This strategy usually contains words rather than a measurement in the collection and analysis of the data (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The main methods of gaining information through qualitative research are through interviews and focus groups. Interviews tend to be either structured, semi- structured or non-structured. In contrast, quantitative research is the numerical analysis of data. The data is collected through the use of surveys, polls and questionnaires (Blumberg, Donald & Pamela, 2005). The data collected is usually converted into numerical analysis where trends and differences can be clearly displayed. For the purpose of this study, the qualitative research technique was chosen in the form of semi-structured interviews as the topic of managing diverse teams is been measured on the experiences of individuals who have managed diverse teams. By using this type of research technique, the perceptions and



interpretations of the individuals that will take part in the research will be evident which will enable the research question and objectives to be answered.

#### **4.6: Considered research technique:**

Before the type of research technique was chosen for this particular study, previous studies on the subject of diversity were examined to see if other techniques would be more viable. On the subject of diversity within the workforce, one previous study stood out. This was a study by Larkey (1996) which was based on studying interactions in diverse workgroups. In order to carry out this assessment, Larkey established a questionnaire called Workforce Diversity Questionnaire. This questionnaire was built originally from the use of both a qualitative and quantitative approach.

In terms of the quantitative approach, a questionnaire was used. The contents of the questionnaire included a sample of “280 participants from a population of 1083, resulting in a 26% response rate.’ (Larkey, 1996). The qualitative approach to building the questionnaire was based on a number of open ended interviews. These interviews were held with 35 diverse employees with the aim to establish over 30 employees and management perceptions of diversity within the workforce. On the completion of these interviews, as with any research study, the author, Larkey analysed the results. The results were drawn up against and compared with previous research on diverse workforces. Once the analysis was complete, a questionnaire was constructed which Larkey felt covered the main areas associated with diversity. The questionnaire was based on the following areas: inclusion/exclusion, valuing diversity, positive/negative evaluations, and understanding. Within the questionnaire, each respondent had to answer 30 questions that were divided into a number of different sections. A Likert scale was used to measure the participant’s responses in order to gather the results and findings from the data collection technique. A Likert scale is a tool used to represent people’s attitudes towards

a particular topic or subject. The scale on Larkey's questionnaire measured from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. Although this questionnaire has been used in previous diversity research and has a highly respected reputation among academics, it was decided not to use the questionnaire as part of the current study. The fact that the questionnaire was formed over twenty years ago, it was outdated and would not cover all aspects of the current study. Other means of data collection would allow for more insights to be collected as opposed to using a pre-existing questionnaire, as the questions may not fully relate to the research topic and therefore result in non-useful information been gathered.

#### **4.7: Selection of Qualitative technique**

The qualitative approach was chosen as it was the most viable technique in order to try and answer the research question. Semi- structured interviews were chosen as the type of qualitative research as it allowed a deep understanding to be gained of each manager's experience of managing diverse team without actually pinning them to specific questions which would be the case if a structured interview style was chosen. Semi- structured interviews typically refers to a conversation in which the interviewer has a number of questions that are in the general structure of an interview but allows the interviewee to freely move the direction of the conversation (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The questions are usually more general in comparison to questions that form part of a structured interview schedule. A key difference between a structured and semi-structured interview is that in a semi-structured interview, the interviewer usually has the freedom to ask further questions in response to the interviewee's replies. For this reason, the semi structured style, while it gives a certain level of structure to ensure quality information is gathered it also allows the participants the opportunity to openly express their experiences. It also allows the interviewer to ask further questions based on the information provided.

#### **4.8: Research Sample**

The type of sampling technique used was convenience sampling. This type of sampling technique was used as the researcher had access to the participants through connections in the online sector in Ireland. The sample criteria was drawn up by the researcher and an information letter (appendix 8.1) was sent to twelve managers who met the sample criteria. Eight responses were received with six managers willing to participate in the study with two citing work commitments as their reasons for not participating. From the three US companies based in Ireland that were involved in the study, two managers from each firm were interviewed. Each manager was in a middle management position ranging from four to six years in duration and had at least two years' experience in managing teams involving different nationalities, cultures, languages and beliefs in US firms based in Ireland. Three male and three female managers were interviewed. Four of the managers interviewed were of Irish origin, one was of US origin while the remaining manager was of French origin. The two managers from company one, managed teams in the area of customer support where their employees would have direct dealings with the firm's customers. In contrast the two managers from company two, managed teams in the area of analytics while the two managers from company three managed teams that worked in the area of human resource management. The age of the managers ranged between 32 and 40 years of age. The size of the teams that the participants managed ranged from seven to twelve employees each. Of the six participants, each of them held a bachelor's degree but not specifically in a business or management field.

#### **4.9: Pilot study:**

Before the interviews were arranged, a pilot study was undertaken. The pilot study was undertaken with a work colleague who was a middle manager and had experience of managing a diverse workforce. Along with the duration factor, the pilot study allowed the interview guide to be practiced and test whether or not the correct questions were been asked. Bryman & Bell (2015) refer to an interview guide as a list of topics or issues that will be discussed in an interview. These are usually drawn up by the interviewer/ interviewers. Although this was an extra task, the pilot study ensured that the proper interviews were set up to be successful and as controlled as possible. The pilot study ensured that the correct amount of time was allocated for each interview and that the correct amount of time was allocated to each question. The main finding from the pilot study was that the original duration of one hour per interview was not necessary and forty five minutes was sufficient. The pilot study allowed the proper interviews to be undertaken in an efficient and successful manner.

#### **4.10: Interview structure:**

Each interview was conducted in a semi- structured manner. The interview times and venues were arranged with the participants one month in advance. One week before each of the scheduled interviews, the researcher sent a reminder via text message to each participant ensuring they were still available. Each interview took place in a meeting room at the participant's place of work as this was the preference of each participant. This was most suitable location for all parties. The researcher had advised that each interview would have a duration of forty five minutes. The researcher concluded that forty five minutes was sufficient for each interview by running a pilot study with a work colleague who was a middle manager and had experience of managing a diverse workforce. The interview guide was drawn up after identifying the gaps in the literature that were going to be filled by conducting

this study. The interviews were complete over a duration of two weeks. An audio device was used to record the interviews. Once the recordings were completed they were saved in an online storage area which was password protected. The original recordings were permanently deleted off the audio device. Although an interview guide was used, the interviewer used open ended questions and the use of follow up questions to the participant's responses was evident in each interview. The interview guide can be found in the Appendix 8.2. Each interview consisted of nine questions. In the interview guide, questions two, three and four were around the topic of understanding diversity with the main focus on surface-level and deep level diversity. Question five was based on diversity management within organisations. Question six was focused on the value of diverse teams while questions seven and eight were connected to dyadic management. The last question examined the opportunities and challenges of establishing diverse teams in relation to US online firms based in Ireland.

#### **4.11: Ethical Issues**

Ethical guidelines needed to be adhered to throughout the research study. In response to ethical issues that have been evident in business research, Diener & Crandall (1978) broke down these ethical issues in four main areas.

1. Whether there is harm to participants
2. Whether there is lack of informed consent
3. Whether there is an invasion of privacy
4. Whether deception is involved

The AoM (Academy of Management) Code of Ethical Conduct states "that it is the responsibility of the researcher to assess carefully the possibility of harm to research participants, and, to the extent that it can be, the possibility of harm should be minimised (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Throughout the research study, no harm was exerted on the research participants. In relation to the issue of informed consent, Bryman & Bell (2015) state that this is an area within business research ethics that is discussed the most. In order to ensure

that informed consent was granted, the researcher asked all participants to sign a consent form to ensure that each participant was willing to participate freely in the study (Appendix 8.3).

#### **4.12: Procedure**

All participants were guaranteed that all information provided in the interviews, would be used for the research study only and confidentially was guaranteed. Each participant was made aware that each interview would be recorded on an audio device in order for the researcher to be able to play back the interviews so the relevant data could be collected. Once the interviews were transcribed, the audio recordings were permanently deleted as the researcher wanted to keep the confidentiality agreement. In the interviews, specific company information was discussed and in turn this is evident in the interview transcripts. For the reason of the confidentiality agreement, the transcripts have not been included but can be provided upon request. The confidentiality agreement would have been broken if the transcripts were included as each company's name and profile were mentioned numerous times throughout the interviews.

#### **4.13: Analysing qualitative data**

When using the qualitative approach to gather data, it's important that relevant data is been collected and most importantly, that it is been analysed correctly. Unlike quantitative data analysis, with qualitative data analysis there aren't many well-established and accepted ways of analysing this type of data (Bryman & Bell, 2015). According to Miles (1979) qualitative data can be referred to as an "attractive nuisance" because it can be so rich in information but on the other hand, it can be difficult to find analytical paths within the information. With this thought in mind, the researcher was aware that a style of analysis had to be formed.

In order for the data to be analysed thoroughly, the researcher recorded each interview on an audio device. Once each interview was completed, the

interview content was manually transcribed. This allowed the researcher to have a visual of the content of each interview. According to Sanders et al (2009), the researcher should not only be interested in the interview content but also in the manner and tone in which the information has been communicated by the participants. With this in mind, the researcher included the tone of the conversation when transcribing the interviews. Non-verbal communications such as hand gestures and head movements were noted. Once each interview was transcribed, the researcher conducted a data clean up to ensure that the transcripts were free from any errors.

Although there is no standardised method for analysing qualitative data, it is common for researchers to group data into three main groups. These include 1. Summarising of meanings 2. Categorisation of meanings and 3. Structuring of meanings which is also known as ordering (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the researcher opted for the summarising of meanings as a method of analysing the gathered data. This was the best approach as the participants were providing information based on their experiences. The categorisation or structuring of meanings would not have been appropriate and the results would not have been displayed clearly.

#### **4.14: Conclusion**

Overall, the qualitative research approach that was undertaken was suitable as it allowed for in-depth data to be gathered from each of the participants. The pilot study that under taken before conducting the six interviews was vital to the success of the study. The pilot study allowed the interviews questions to be tested and tweaked where necessary to gain full value in the real interviews. It also made certain that the correct duration of the interviews was been allocated. This ensured each of the interviews were fluent and efficient while maximising the voluntary time that each participant provided.

## **Chapter 5: Analysis and Findings**

### **5.1: Introduction**

The research study examined the experiences of managing a diverse workforce within three US online firms located in Ireland. The qualitative research approach was used as a method to gather data in order for the research question and sub objectives of the study to be answered. The type of qualitative research method used was semi- structured interviews.

The research question and sub objectives were built around the gaps that were evident in the literature. The results of each objective will be summarised in this section while also touching on other relevant themes that were evident in each of the interviews. Six participants were interviewed as part of the research. For the purpose of clarity, participants have been labelled and in the below analysis will be referred to as participant A and B from company one, participant C and D from company two, participant E and F from company three.

### **5.2: Research Findings:**

#### **Objective 1:**

*To determine if managers are firstly aware of the two types of diversity (surface-level diversity and deep-level diversity) and in turn investigate if each type of diversity impact how diverse teams are managed.*

The research findings for this objective demonstrated that the majority of participants were aware of both types of diversity. Participant C and D indicated that they had a deep understanding of both types of diversity as both diversity types were the main theme of a five day diversity training that they had to participate in as part of their firms diversity programme. Participant E and F became aware of both types of diversity through documentation that was published through the firm's internal employee website. Each manager who were managing personnel were encouraged to read the documents in order to gain a deeper understanding of diversity within the workplace. Participant A and B were not aware of each term or the meaning of each but once the researcher provided a definition to both participants, they both



acknowledged their understanding of the meaning of each type of diversity. All participants acknowledged that both types of diversity are managed differently. The general trend was that deep-level diversity had to be managed more closely as people's values and personalities can lead to conflict if not managed correctly. All participants agreed that surface level diversity was easier to manage as it was agreed by participants that Ireland is open to welcoming different races and ethnic groups to work in this country. Age was also discussed as not been an issue in terms of surface level diversity as the majority of employees that the participants manage are under 40 years old. Participant B stated:

“80% of employees of whom I manage are under 40 years of age”

All participants agreed that all employee values and views have to be respected provided they aren't breaking any human resource rules and policies. The general agreement was that deep level diversity within teams can lead to higher success than teams that have employees with similar views and personalities. Participant C and D referred to taking a cautious approach to encouraging their employees to express their views and personalities until they had built up a relationship with all team members. Both managers took this approach to ensure conflict didn't arise over differing views and values.

## **Objective 2:**

*To understand if diversity management is proactively practiced in the three US firms based in Ireland to gain a competitive edge or are managers encouraged to portray an image that they are engaged in diversity management.*

Throughout each interview, it was clear that each manager had a passion for diversity management and that it was very much on their mind-set on a daily basis. Participant A and B from company one described how each employee over a certain pay grade had to participate in a two day workshop titled “diversity and inclusion”. The workshop was not tailored specifically to managers but to employees who were titled except staff. The workshop was centred on highlighting diversity issues/challenges in the world, not only in the

workplace but also in other areas such as politics. Both participants confirmed that the company was passionate about promoting diversity in the workplace. Each employee who completed the workshop, was awarded a certificate once they submitted their feedback and learnings from the workshop. Although both participants accepted that the term diversity management is thrown loosely around the business world, they acknowledged that the company believe that by promoting diversity in the way they conduct business, will make them more competitive and lead to higher success.

As soon as the researcher entered the workplace of participant A and B to conduct the interview, it was clear that the company had a clear mission in taking care of their employees with the below statement printed in large print in the lobby area:

“We believe people are basically good”

When the participants from company one were asked what it really meant, each participant explained that no matter where you’re from, what age you are, what beliefs you practice, the company believe you can offer something good to help the company grow. It was also visible that each employee nationality was represented by their national flag flying high in their atrium area where employees and visitors enter the building.

Participants C and D from company two stated that their company was proactively engaged in diversity management. All employees had to engage in diversity training. The length of the training depended on the role of the employee. Training ranged from two hour sessions for entry level employees while any people managers had to participate in a five day training titled “Diversity and Conflict Management”. The researcher was conscious to find out why diversity and conflict management were grouped together as part of the training. Participant C confirmed that the opening three days of the training were based around diversity while the remaining two days were focused on how diversity within teams can lead to conflict between employees and their leadership teams. Participant D provided further insight into the

training by explaining the importance of recognising that people are different was discussed in great length along with the opportunities and challenges of this. It was clear from the details provided of the training, that the firm was actively engaged in diversity management for the good of its business. Before even stepping into the office of company two, there was of signs of diversity recognition with the rainbow flag which is associated with the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) movement flying alongside the Irish and US national flags. When both participants were asked about this, they confirmed that each year, the company take part in the LGBT parade in Dublin and proudly display the company logo during the parade. Participant D explained that national holidays of other countries are celebrated such as Independence Day for US nationals, the Chinese New Year and St George's day for UK nationals. When asked about any material that is available to employees around diversity and diversity management, participant C referred to educational modules that were available to all employees on the company's internal website. It was explained that employees have the opportunity to take these models and build them into their personal development plans.

Participants E and F from company three also indicated that their firm is actively engaged in diversity management and feel that it's important as they grow as a company and continue to be a market leader in the social media sector. Participant E acknowledged that the firm is actively aware of its strong online presence and its feels the need to promote diversity management due to their large scale diverse workforce in Ireland alone. Participant F agreed that the firm believe it the right thing to do in an ethical sense firstly but they also state that the firm value the importance of diversity management in gaining a competitive edge.

"We would not be a market leader today without the diverse workforce we have assembled not only in Ireland but around the world"

Again both participants confirmed that all employees had to participate in a two day diversity workshop within six months of becoming an employee. In addition to this, every six months, employees had to undertake an eLearning

training on diversity topics that were introduced since the original training. The eLearning incorporates any real life diversity stories that were in the public eye so employees could easily relate to diversity topics that are happening all around them and not just in a work environment. In addition, participant F confirmed that all managers hired in their company go through a week long induction workshop. In this workshop new managers are given insight into the culture and values of the firm. Participant F confirmed that the role of diversity is given a central role in this workshop as its one of the main values of the firm. One of the practices that was in place in company three only was one that was called the “buddy programme”. Participant E discussed how each employee in the firm is encouraged to select a manager in the firm who can help them progress in their career within the firm. This is not a compulsory programme but all employees are encouraged to participate. Employees are encouraged to buddy up with managers who come from different backgrounds and who they feel have the skills and characteristics to help them progress. Although the main aim of the programme is to promote internal talent and to ensure internal employees are competitive when competing with external employees for roles within the firm, diversity management is an important element of the programme. Participant F confirmed that it is not compulsory for managers to make themselves available for the buddy programme but they are encouraged to do so. Both participants had made themselves available for the buddy programme and they agreed it was as beneficial for managers as much as it was for employees. The main benefit was that when they had to fill positions within their team, they already had a pipeline of employees who had expressed their interest in the roles previously. The employees had worked on the skills and competencies needed to be successful in the role. This in turn speeded up the recruitment process and provided the manager with quality applicants. Another benefit that was discussed was that the programme offered learnings for the managers along with the employees. Both participants confirmed by participating in this programme, they learned so much in terms of values, cultures and experiences from different nationalities represented across the firm’s workforce.

### **Objective 3:**

*To investigate if managers feel there is real value in terms of performance in establishing diverse teams in comparison to homogeneous teams.*

The objective to investigate if managers feel there is real value in terms of performance in establishing diverse teams in comparison to homogeneous teams was explored as the literature around this area, didn't provide a conclusive answer.

The research findings around this objective found that all six managers agreed that there is real value in terms of performance in establishing diverse teams in comparison to homogeneous teams. Although all six managers agreed there is real value in performance, the level of value depended on the area of the business that each manager was operating in. Participants A and B from company one, who managed teams in customer support roles, stated that without diverse teams, their department would not be successful and would not be able to service their customers successfully. Participant A indicated that they service customers from all over the world therefore the need for language skills was critical. Although language was cited as a major aspect of the diverse teams, the participant briefly spoke about selecting employees who have lived in the same country of the customers they are dealing with and have experienced the cultures that their customers are involved in.

"I would prefer to have a fluent German speaker who has German as a secondary language but has lived in Germany for the majority of their lives rather than a native German speaker who has lived outside Germany for the majority of their lives"

Participant A concluded that the native German speaker who has lived outside Germany for the majority of their lives will still perform but will not offer as much in been able to relate fully to the customer as the German speaker who has lived in Germany for the majority of their lives. Participant A stated that the firm wanted its employees to relate to its customers in as many ways as possible. This illustrates that managers are looking for more than language

skills when establishing diverse teams, with experiences, cultures and values also very much sought after. Participant A was aligned with the comments of participant B mainly due to the fact that they worked in the same area of the business.

Participants C and D from company two, indicated that they had experienced real value in the performance of establishing diverse teams. Participant D alluded to the aspect that their employees were analytical analysts who were expected to analyse data as it was but also use previous experiences in order to interpret the data correctly. Participant D stated that the team was made up of Irish and European employees with higher performance coming from the European employees. The main reason for this was that they could use their previous experiences in other companies and countries to provide extra insight into the interpretation of the data. Participant C referred to the same point but gave an interesting example. A member of the team who was a Swedish native was responsible for drawing up a staffing plan for the Swedish customer support (CS) phone line, for a Bank holiday in Sweden. The Swedish CS team were based in Ireland. When the staffing plan was executed, the team member noticed that all of the CS team wanted to work on the bank holiday and take the next day off instead. Participant C detailed that this was not normal practice as call volumes are lower on bank holidays, employees were encouraged to take the bank holiday off. As the analyst was Swedish, they knew what the reason was for this. The majority of the Swedish CS team requested to take the day off after the bank holiday as Ikea, the Swedish furniture company were having a celebration day in Ireland the day after the bank holiday. The analyst was able to reach out to Ikea and find out the reasons for celebrating the bank holiday the day after it occurred. Participant C confirmed that without having the inside knowledge from their Swedish analyst, the situation may not have been as straight forward. This example represents the real value of establishing diverse teams.

Participants E and F who managed employees in the Human resource management department indicated the importance of having employees from countries all around the world especially when trying to recruit employees with specific language and cultural traits. Participant E stated that having team members who have insight into the values, beliefs and cultures of recruiting talent is vital in the recruitment sector of HR in which they operated. Participant E documented how valuable it is for current team members to have up to date information on benefits and salaries of employees that may potentially move to their company from other firms based in foreign countries. Participant E stressed that this information is available online but it's not always reliable and realistic therefore it's of real value to have diverse team members who have insight into this. In the conversation with participant F, the importance of health insurance for US employees was documented with many US firms based in Ireland offering health insurance as part of their package. Participant F didn't understand the importance of health insurance to US employees until an US native became part of the team and explained the huge cost of medical care in the US. This indicates that having a diverse team can not only provide real value in terms of performance but also in gaining additional information that can lead to better performance.

**Objective 4:**

*To determine if managers use the “dyadic management” style to manage diverse teams and if not what style is most effective to enhance team performance.*

The management style used by managers within firms can depend on a number of factors such as company culture, tenure of team members, employee status and nature of the tasks performed by the team. With the dyadic management style, managers take the time to understand the goals, needs and personalities of their employees before deciding how to manage them. Some managers can use the same management style no matter the goals, needs and personalities of the employees while other managers will

adapt their management style in line with the needs of each individual employee.

From the research findings, it was clear that dyadic management style was not used by all managers that took part in the study. 66% of the managers used this style while two managers acknowledged that they were aware of the style but it was not appropriate to the department they managed. Participant A and B from company one, acknowledged that they did not use this style of management mainly due to the department that they worked in. Both participants explained that when managing teams that are “on the front line” as in customer facing employees, the main task of the manager is to ensure they are servicing the customers in the best possible way. If the employees are performing as expected, the manager will then adapt a style that allows the employee to express themselves through their personalities that will help them progress their career. Participant A stressed that this is only done if the manager is confident that the employee is going to develop their career within the company mainly due to the high staff turnover in this department. Participant B stated that if the employee wasn’t providing the customer with the best possible service, the manager would provide coaching on a weekly basis through one on one meetings. Even after the coaching is complete and the employee is struggling, the employee is put on a performance improvement plan. Both participants clearly stated that this is the way the firm wanted their customer facing employees to be managed as the firm were really concentrated on getting a high net promoter score (NPS) from customers. Participant B went on to explain that NPS stands for net promoter score which in simple terms is a survey that is completed by customers stating whether they were satisfied with the service they got from the customer support representative.



Participants from company two and three stated that they used the dyadic management approach. Participant C and D from company two explained that the analytics teams that they managed are usually hired externally. On top of this, the employees would have previously worked in the analytics area therefore the participants referred to them as specialists. Participant D stated that the role and responsibilities of the employees were clearly stated. Each employee was expected to fulfil their roles and responsibilities but they also had the freedom to express their personalities and values in order to achieve these. Participant C spoke strongly about treating each specialist depending on their personalities and values. Participant C touched on the point that the team of specialists was relatively small with at most eight specialists in the team. This was highlighted as the main reason as to why a dyadic management style could be used. Participant D highlighted that the firm was eager to retain talented specialists that they recruited externally. This was demonstrated in the managers' goals with an employee retention rate built into their bonus package. It was also discussed that as these specialists were recruited externally, other managers within the business were not able to provide insight into the employees in the same way that they could if the roles were filled with internal applicants. Participant C referred to a previous management role where the company didn't encourage managers to get to know their new employees and instead encouraged managers to implement the goals and responsibilities of the employees as quickly as possible to ensure employees were productive as early as possible. Although productivity was high from the start, participant C stressed that in the long run, employees didn't feel valued and they ended up looking for alternative roles in a short space of time. Both participants underlined that they always want to use the dyadic management style but in most cases, the management style is dictated by the company culture.

In company three, it was also confirmed that a dyadic management style was practiced by both participants in the way they managed their human resource teams. Participant E documented that the company culture encouraged

managers to get to know their employees and manage them in a way that allows the employee to blossom in their development both within their role and within the company. Participant E stated that the wellness of each employee was a vital component of the firm's strategy. Employees in this firm are entitled to a "monthly wellness allowance" which can be spent on beauty treatments and products or any activity within reason that helps employees keep their minds fresh. Participant F explained that the dyadic management style was part of the wellness programme as the company understood that if managers are given time to learn about their employees, they will be able to understand the needs of each employee. In the long run this would leave to high productivity and a high retention rate within the company. Participant F concluded that in the four years spent managing teams in the firm, the retention rate within the department was 90% therefore displaying that the dyadic style of management was playing a significant role in helping the firm maintain its talented workforce. As with company two, the style of management within company three was dictated by the culture of the company.

### **5.3: Conclusion:**

The findings of this study have been analysed in a descriptive manner therefore providing a deep level of insight into the views of each participants in relation to their experiences in managing diverse teams. The main theme of the findings of each topic discussed was based around the department in which each of the managers operated in. The department in which they operated in dictated the need for diverse teams, the value of diverse teams and the management style used to manage diverse teams successfully. Overall it was clear from the findings that diversity management is practiced proactively in all three firms and the value of it is recognised. The discussion and conclusion section will provide more insight in terms of how the findings of the current study either agree with the previous literature or fill the gaps in the literature

## **Chapter 6: Discussion:**

### **6.1: Introduction:**

In this chapter, the similarities and differences between the literature and the findings of the current study will be discussed. From this, a conclusion will be drawn up in line with the research findings from the research question and objectives. In the last section of the paper, the researcher will provide recommendations for future studies.

**6.2: Objective 1:** *To determine if managers are firstly aware of the two types of diversity (surface-level diversity and deep-level diversity) and in turn investigate if each type of diversity impact how diverse teams are managed.*

The literature indicated that both types of diversity can make a difference to group outcomes and can potentially impact the role that individuals play within a team. The findings from the current study supported this concept but provided more insight into which type of diversity was easier to manage. There was no conclusion in the literature that indicated how best both types of diversity should be managed in order to drive success. In this study, it emerged that managers are aware of both types of diversity with the level of knowledge varying between each manager. In terms of the management of both types of diversity, it was felt that surface level diversity was much easier to manage in the Irish workforce as the understanding was that Ireland in the majority is open to welcoming different races and ethnic groups to work in this country. Age was also discussed as not been an issue in terms of surface level diversity as the majority of employees that the participants manage were under 40 years of age which indicated an open approach to working with employees from other nationalities with different values and personalities. In terms of the management of deep level diversity, the view was that this needs to be managed closely on an individual basis. The literature did not provide this level of insight on surface level diversity therefore this was a new learning on this topic. All participants agreed that all employee values and views have to be respected, provided they aren't breaking any HR rules and policies. If the

values and views of the employees are not managed correctly, it was concluded that team performance and success can be negatively impacted. This point was in line with the literature.

### **6.3: Objective 2:**

*To understand if diversity management is proactively practiced in the three US firms based in Ireland to gain a competitive edge or are managers encouraged to portray an image that they are engaged in diversity management*

The literature provided limited information on diversity management in Ireland but it was clear that the area of diversity management was evolving mainly due to the number of US multinational companies locating in Ireland and attracting talented employees from all over the world. Although the IBEC report from 2003, provides insight in how diversity should be managed in Ireland, it was unclear if firms were actually practicing it proactively to gain a competitive edge or just to portray an image to the public that they engaged in it without actually caring about it. From the current study, it was clear that the three companies involved in the study, were firmly engaged in diversity management and understood the importance of it. Each firm had either diversity workshops/ trainings for their employees to allow them to learn about it and put their learnings into actions. The current study illustrated that the companies involved in the study were passionate about diversity management and they strongly felt that it helps them maintain and attract the best talent which enables them to be successful in their line of business. All three companies acknowledged that it is ethically correct to practice diversity management but their involvement in it extended way further than this. The general assumption was that diversity management was an “enabler” to success and if it was not practiced each company would be setting themselves up for failure. All three companies publicly express their support to diversity management and eluded to it be a large part of their company values. Each company provided examples to how they actually live their values around

diversity. Participants from company two referred to how their company were setting up a new site in a state in the US. It came to light that the state had overturned a local law that would have let transgender people use public bathrooms that match their gender identities. Although the company were only a few weeks away from moving into the new site and had invested huge amounts of money into the project, they pulled out and decided not to locate in the state as the gender inequality did not fit into their company values. It's worth noting that this example is not based in Ireland but the participants from this company stated that as a global company, their behaviours and values are aligned no matter the location of their offices around the world. The current study provided an insight that has not be reflected previously on the views of diversity management from the perspective of US firms based in Ireland.

**6.4: Objective 3:** *To investigate if managers feel there is real value in terms of performance in establishing diverse teams in comparison to homogeneous teams.*

Previous research by Morgeson et al (2010) indicated that the role of managers and leaders is to ensure that the firm's objectives are met. In order for the objectives to be met, managers can form diverse teams as they can offer a wide range of skills and characteristics. The literature demonstrated contrasting views with some researchers indicating that diverse teams are more successful in terms of performance while others indicated that homogeneous teams are better performing than diverse teams. The current study was able to validate which view was most accurate from the perspective of US online firms based in Ireland. From the information provided by each participant across the three companies, it was evident that diverse teams were firstly vital to their departments. It was stated that without diverse teams, their departments would not be able to function correctly with language and experiences cited as the main contributors to performance attributes of diverse teams. It was clear that from the managers that participated in the study, the departments they worked in needed diverse teams to perform. This

would indicate that managers feel that diverse teams offer real value in terms of performance in comparison to homogenous teams. As the study was only confined to three departments within three US Online firms, it's difficult to evaluate if this is the case for all US online firms based in Ireland. But in relation to the three companies that formed part of the study, it's fair to say that there is real value in terms of performance in having diverse teams in comparison to homogeneous teams. In relation to this, it was agreed that it was more a necessity to have diverse teams as they have the skills and characteristics that fit the job specifications which homogeneous teams would not have.

**6.5: Objective 4:** *To determine if managers use the "dyadic management" style to manage diverse teams and if not what style is most effective to enhance team performance.*

Zander & Butler, (2010) stated different cultures have different expectations and preferences as to how they should be led therefore confirming that there is no one specific type of management style that can be used in organisations. It's proposed that organisations should use the "dyadic management" style as it allows the managers to get to know employees and determine how best to manage them in order to maintain high performance. The results of the current study on the topic of management style was in line with the literature. Four of the six managers used the dyadic style of management with two of managers not using this style. Both participants in company one stated that this style of management was not suitable to all departments within an organisation with customer facing departments specified as being the least appropriate. The style of management used instead was a directive style that was built around employee performance and meeting targets. The large size of the team that both managers managed was another factor in not choosing the dyadic style.

The four managers that used the dyadic style of management stated that the department in which they operated in allowed them to practice this style. This style was preferred as the employees they were managing were experienced

employees and also the size of the teams allowed them to do so. It was agreed that this style of management allowed the manager to understand the needs, values and personalities of its employees. From this, the manager could decide what the best way was to manage individuals in order to gain high performance. This is what the previous literature had indicated. In addition, the research findings from this study are in accordance with the literature as it indicates that no one style of management is best. But the current study found new information that was not discussed previously in the literature. This was that team size and the department that the employees work in are two of the main reasons that define what type of management style is used.

#### **6.6: Conclusion:**

The main aim of the study was to fill a gap in the literature which was centred around the lack of literature on the management of diverse teams within US online firms based in Ireland. In order to do this, the experiences of managing diverse teams from a management's perspective was reviewed. By incorporating the experiences of managers, the study aimed to determine if there were more opportunities than challenges with establishing diverse teams within US online firms based in Ireland. The research findings indicated that there were more opportunities than challenges with establishing diverse teams. Although a number of challenges came to light, there was more opportunities associated with establishing diverse teams in US online firms based in Ireland.

The main challenges that were identified among the participants included:

1. Adapting to new cultures

This challenge was prominent among the majority of the participants. In some cases, employees were moving to a new country when accepting positions in either of the three US firms that participated in the study. Managers found that employees who moved to Ireland to start a new job, took longer to adapt to their new roles as they had to manage new surroundings, life styles and many other aspects of their lives. Some employees have ended up leaving their roles as they were not able to fully adapt to the new surroundings. It was agreed among the participants that this is not only a challenge with diverse teams but also with teams that contain native people as they also have to adjust to new work surroundings when they start a new position.

2. Language barrier

Although all employees in the three participating firms needed to have fluent English in order to obtain a position within the three firms, language barrier was still mentioned as a popular challenge in managing diverse teams. In the roles where specific languages were needed such as customer facing roles, language barrier was not a challenge. In roles where the employees had to communicate in English, this caused a challenge for managers. The interpretation or lack of interpretation on the employee's behalf who were not native English speakers led to misunderstandings with other areas of the business. This also left the employees themselves frustrated and lead to conflict within teams.

3. Management skills

This challenge was highlighted by 50% of the participants. Three of the participants confirmed that it's almost impossible for managers to have developed or possess the skills to deal with every situation that they encounter while managing diverse teams. In some instances managers eluded to the fact that they had to seek advice and support from other managers within their firms in order to deal with sensitive situations among diverse teams. It was discussed that this support is not always available to managers therefore the



skillset of the managers can be a challenge of managing diverse teams. It was agreed when these situations arise, managers need to learn from these experiences and try to develop the skills to be able to deal with similar situations in the future.

The main opportunities of establishing diverse teams that were identified among the participants included:

1. Large talent pool

The participants indicated that if firms have the scope to recruit employees from all over the world, it gives them a larger talent pool to choose from. This allows them to choose the best candidate for the job as they aren't limited to recruiting someone that is located in Ireland. Although that it was noted that Ireland had a large talent pool suited to the online sector, participants expressed that the home market does not always offer the most suitable candidates.

2. Different perspectives leading to innovation

In today's business world, firms are always trying to gain a competitive edge in order to become the market leader in their line of business. With diverse teams, it emerged among the participants that when people from different backgrounds and cultures work together, different perspectives and ideas are shared. These new ideas and perspectives can lead to successful initiatives that can help the firm to drive success. This is something that can only be associated with diverse teams due to their different backgrounds and cultures. The participants classified this as a real opportunity of attracting and having diverse teams within their workforce.

3. Language skills

Language skills were identified as a main factor in establishing diverse teams. Although language barrier was identified as a challenge, language skills associated with diverse team is a major advantage. Although it depended on the department within the firm, it was determined that language skills were vital to serve customers sufficiently from all over the world. Without having access to various languages, firms would not be able to expand into new

markets and attract new customers. From the current study, 2 of the participants stated that it was vital for the success of their department to have access to employees who had a number of languages, without these the customer facing department would not have been able to serve their customers. This would have a major impact on the image and success of the company.

#### 4. Competitiveness leading to high performance

It emerged that when employees from different cultures who obtain different beliefs and values comes together to form a team, they bring with them a competitiveness to succeed. It was noted that a lot of employees in the three US online firms that participated in the study, move to Ireland to take up employment in these firms as they want to progress their career. As the majority of employees enter the firms with this mentality, there is huge competitiveness among team members. It was acknowledged that when managed correctly, this creates competitiveness which in turn leads to high performance. Although it was mentioned that it may be costly to attract employees from foreign countries who have gained extensive experience, the current study indicated, the competitiveness that these employees bring with them leads to higher performance. This indicates the return on investment outweighs the cost of attracting diverse employees.

In conclusion, the current study has been successful in answering the research question. In addition to identifying the opportunities and challenges of establishing diverse teams, the current study indicates that in most cases there are more opportunities than challenges with establishing diverse teams with US online firms based in Ireland. From the analysis and discussion sections, it's worth noting that there was contrasting views between the participants in relation to their responses to the objectives of the study which was mainly dictated by the department within the firm that they led. Overall the research question has been answered adequately and has filled a gap in the previous literature. The research acknowledges that further studies in the area of

diversity management in Ireland would be necessary with a stronger focus on a wider number of departments within firms.

#### **6.7: Limitations of the study:**

While the researcher was very grateful to the six managers that participated in the semi-structured interviews, it was felt that the level of participation of each manager varied. Although each manager was at a middle management level within their company, it was quite clear that some managers were able to provide more quality information than others. This is a limitation of using such a small research sample. Due to the tight deadline, the researcher had to rely on personal contacts from each of the firms to gain access to the six participants. Although all initial criteria were met by each participant, the use of convenience sampling to identify the six participants from three different US online firms may not fully represent the population of this industry based in Ireland.

The researcher found the IBEC report based on diversity management in Ireland published in 2003, very helpful when reviewing the history of diversity management in Ireland. The fact that this report was published in 2003 means the data is slightly outdated. The researcher reached out to IBEC via email (appendix 8.4) to check if there was any updated published report on diversity management in Ireland. Upon reply, they confirmed no further publication was available around diversity management but instead other papers were published around diversity and inclusion. The other publications were reviewed but they were not relevant to the current study. The researcher felt that if IBEC or other business representatives in Ireland had published updated reports on diversity management in Ireland, it would have enhanced the current study.

As only three US online firms were part of the current study, a broader and more in-depth study is needed to fully explore the experiences of managers in relation to diversity management in US online firms based in Ireland. Although the three firms were fully engaged in the study, a broader study would yield more consistent results and provide more accurate assumptions on the experiences of dealing with diverse workforce from a management perspective.

#### **6.8: Recommendation for future study:**

The researcher is satisfied with the current study but feels there is opportunity for future studies in the area of diversity management in Ireland. The current study was limited to three firms. Each firm was represented by two managers who worked in the same department. Upon the research findings and learnings from the current study, it's clear that there is an opportunity to gather vital information within other departments that would enhance the study. In addition, a wider focus of research for future studies would yield better results that would be complemented with the use of company data/company reports to enhance future studies. Although the participants referred to company information in the current study, they were not encouraged to provide any hard copies of the data. The use of secondary information for future studies on diversity management in Ireland could potentially enhance the results and provide better insights into how company's manage the topic of diversity management to gain an advantage.

#### **6.9: Recommendations for the Irish Government:**

The current study highlights that Ireland is a country that is dedicated to attracting international firms and employees to set up here. The Irish government has encouraged foreign direct investment by offering grants to firms willing to set up in Ireland. Once these international firms set up in Ireland, they naturally attract international employees. The firms are engaged in welcoming these employees to Ireland but there is an opportunity for the government to introduce initiatives that allow international employees to

settle easily once they arrive to work. From the current study, it's evident that the international firms that set up in Ireland and fully engaged in diversity management and actively practice it. This can be used as a benchmark for the Irish government to promote diversity in the workplace and society to highlight the benefits of having diversity in all types of society. There is an opportunity for the government to celebrate the huge benefits that diverse groups have brought to the Irish workplace and society. There is also an opportunity to promote the importance of diversity from an early age by introducing an element of diversity management/ promotion into the primary educational curriculum.

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## **8.0: Appendix:**

### **8.1- Information Letter to participants**

Dear Sir /Madam,

My name is David Donohoe. For the past five years, I have worked as a workforce management analyst in an online payments firm based in Dublin. I am currently completing a Master's in Business Management. The course is a two year part time course which is offered by the National College of Ireland in Dublin. At the end of year two, I have the task of completing a dissertation on the topic of my choice provided there is further study to be done on the topic.

In order to help me complete my dissertation, I would like to invite you to consider participating in this research study that I am undertaking. Before you confirming your inclusion/ absence from the study, I will provide you with an insight into the study I will undertake and what role you will play in it. The title of my study is: To examine the experience of managing a diverse workforce within three US online firms located in Ireland.

By gaining an insight into the experiences of managers leading diverse teams, the aim of the study is to be able to answer the following research question: Are there more opportunities than challenges with establishing diverse teams within US online firms based in Ireland?

Information for participants: As a manager with between four and six years management experience- two of which involve managing diverse teams, I would be utmost grateful if you would make yourself available to participate in a semi-structured interview to assist in this research. If you are unable to participate, I would be grateful if someone in your organisation within a similar career profile would participate in your absence. I will ensure that the

information provided in the interview will only be used for the purpose of this study. In the off chance that you may need to withdraw from the interview process at any stage, I will support this fully without question. The interview will take approximately forty five minutes and be based on your experiences of managing diverse teams in US online firms based in Ireland. In order for the gathered data from each interview to be reviewed properly, the interview will need to be recorded. Once the data has been extracted, the recording will be permanently deleted.

I appreciate your time in reading this letter and I look forward to hearing about your experiences in dealing with diverse teams. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [daviddonohoe90@gmail.com](mailto:daviddonohoe90@gmail.com). Your participation in this research study would be much appreciated with the hope that it will help to enhance the research on diversity management in Ireland.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

David Donohoe

Masters Student at NCI

## **8.2: Interview Questions**

Please note follow up questions were asked depending the responses of each participant.

1. Can you please provide a brief description of your current role and how long you have been in it?
2. What are your general understanding of the meaning of diversity?
3. Are you aware of surface-level diversity and deep-level diversity?
4. Are both types of diversity evident in the teams you manage? If so can you please provide specific details?
5. Does your firm proactively practice diversity management and what's are the reasons for practicing/not practicing diversity management?
6. Do you feel there is any value in establishing diverse teams in comparison to homogeneous teams? Please provide reasons for this based on your experience.
7. Are you aware of the dyadic style of management? Do you practice in the management of your team? Please provide insight into why/why not use this style of management.
8. If you don't use the dyadic management style, what style do you use and why?
- 9 .From your experience, what are the main challenges and opportunities to establishing diverse teams?



### **8.3: Informed Consent Form:**

I (the participant) freely agree to participate in the research study titled: To examine the experience of managing a diverse workforce within 3 US online firms located in Ireland.

I am satisfied with the information and background to the study that has been provided to me by the student researcher David Donohoe and I have been afforded the opportunity to ask any questions in relation to the current study.

I agree to have my interview recorded on an audio device and I am satisfied that my company name will remain anonymous.

If required, the researcher has informed me that at any time, I have the opportunity to withdraw from the research at any stage.

Participant full name:

Participant Signature:

Date:

## 8.4: IBEC Email

Hi David,

Many thanks for your email which was passed for my attention. I'm afraid we haven't updated that particular publication but rather have developed papers and tools to address aspects of the diversity and inclusion strategy that our members engage with. This has included Maternity & Parenting toolkits, best practice toolkits to support gender balance, policy positions on the labour market participation of women, line manager's guide for mental health and wellbeing and various articles and conference briefings around how diversity and inclusion is not only good for business but a strategic imperative that only a naive leader would ignore.

I'm sorry I can't point you in the direction of any useful publication that is overarching in this area but if you have any particular question I'm happy to try and answer it.

Kind regards,

Kara

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