An Evaluation of Racially Diverse Skilled Immigrants' Experiences of Career Advancement in the Irish HR Industry

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ABSTRACT

Globalisation has dramatically underscored the importance of diversity and inclusion within workplaces around the globe, particularly enhancing organisational productivity through the diverse perspectives that come with international migration. However, despite these potential benefits, skilled immigrants frequently encounter substantial barriers in accessing employment and advancing their careers. This qualitative study investigates the experiences of skilled immigrants, focusing on their access to employment, career advancement, and the availability of support programs designed to facilitate professional growth in Ireland's HR sector. This is in the bid to fill the gap that exist in the Irish literature as there is a dearth of studies that explore the perceptions, thoughts and experiences of racially diverse immigrants, while adopting an occupation specific approach.

Data from semi-structured interviews with seven HR professionals was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings suggest that immigrants experience significant obstacles such as stringent visa restrictions, difficulty securing interviews and discrimination during interviews which impedes access to employment opportunities. Despite these hurdles, the findings suggest that with substantial effort, career advancement is achievable. Immigrants must often perform significantly better than their local counterparts to gain recognition and progress within their careers. Importantly, the research identifies the availability of structured support programs that are crucial in aiding immigrants' professional integration and advancement within the sector.

Recommendations based on the findings include policy reforms aimed at expanding the definition of critical skills, simplifying visa sponsorship processes, and improving employer education to promote more inclusive hiring practices. Future research should aim to quantitatively evaluate the impact of support programs and further explore persistent barriers, thereby improving the integration and success of skilled immigrants in the HR sector.

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List of Abbreviations

AMES- Adult Education Multicultural Education services

DBS – Dublin Business School

CPD- Continuous Professional Development

CRIW- Centre for Research on Inclusion at Work

CSO- Central Statistics Office

CV- Curriculum Vitae

DEI- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

EAP- Employee Assistance Programmes

EU- European Union

HA – Human Administration (HR and Finance)

HR- Human Resource

HRM – Human Resource Management

IOM- International Organization for Migration

GNP- Gross National Product

NCI – National College of Ireland

NGO- Non-Governmental Organisations

OECD- Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SM – Strategic Management

TUD - Technological University of Dublin.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background to the Study

Organisations around the world are increasingly recognising the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. More than ever, organisations are getting involved in research on equality and diversity (Oikelome, Broward and Hongwu, 2022). Martin (2014) argued that globalisation is responsible for this change as it has necessitated cultural diversity to become a trend in the workplace. Indeed, globalisation has led to increased international migratory trends, resulting in a diverse workforce (D'Netto *et al.*, 2014). In other words, with globalisation, there has been an increase in migration across economies which plays a role in diversifying the population.

Europe, in particular, has become a major destination for immigrants given the continent's prosperous economy and good quality of life (Farashah and Blomquist, 2020). Within Europe, Ireland has become a destination country for immigrants (Murphy, Caulfield and Gilmartin, 2019; Villarroel *et al.*, 2019). McDonald (cited in Syed, 2008) contended that immigration had a positive impact on Ireland's economic growth as between 2003- 2005, the migrant workforce increased Ireland's Gross National Product (GNP) by 3%. It could be contended that this study is dated but a similar result could be deduced from more recent statistics by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Data by the OECD showed that the Irish labour force grew by 7.4% between 2005-2015 with migrants contributing 12.5% (Spielvogel and Meghnagi, 2018) and the GNP during this period experienced an exponential growth from 6.01% in 2005 to 11.87% in 2015.

Indeed, a diverse workforce results from migration and studies have revealed that a diverse workforce enhances organisational productivity. For instance, Martin (2014) argued that a

diverse workforce gives room for various perspectives on an issue since the employees will have different ways of thinking because of their diverse cultural experiences. The scholar, further argued that this benefits the organisation by providing it with a vast knowledge base. The implication of this is the opportunity for continuous innovation and problem solving which will increase the organisation's performance and enhance productivity (Friedman, Friedman and Leverton, 2016). Ultimately, this will be reflective on the economy of the country. This argument was buttressed by Syed (2008) as the author explained that migration helps enrich the host country given the movement of human capital from underutilised economies to economies where they are in high demand. The global migrant population, therefore, has positive influences on social and economic development (Farashah and Blomquist, 2022).

In spite of the known benefits of migration however, various studies have shown that gaining employment remains an issue for skilled immigrants (Mohyuddin *et al.*, 2022; Risberg and Romani, 2022). For instance, in Canada, Dietz *et al.* (2015) discovered in their study that skilled immigrants in Canada are less likely than the locals to gain employment. The same conclusion was reached in studies conducted in the European clime such as the study by Busetta, Campolo and Panarello (2020) conducted in Italy. Furthermore, after getting a job, Tharenou and Kulik (2020) argued that skilled migrants often have less favourable experiences in their workplaces which negate their integration into their destination country. Thus, although migration is beneficial for both the migrants and the host countries, migrants experience difficulty while seeking employment (Farashah and Blomquist, 2020). Such studies that examine the career advancement experiences of skilled migrants in the labour market are, however, scarce in the Irish context.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the career advancement experiences of racially diverse skilled immigrants in Ireland. This is given the scarcity of such studies in

the Irish context as against other climes. This study, therefore, seeks to ascertain if the results achieved in other climes will be obtained. Furthermore, the focus will be on examining the career advancement experiences of skilled immigrants in the Human Resource (HR) sector. This is because the few studies conducted in Ireland that address the study area did not focus on the HR sector. In addition, HR often spearheads diversity and inclusion initiatives within organisations, thus examining the HR sector provides insight into the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion practices in Ireland.

This study seeks to address this question- What are the career advancement experiences of racially diverse immigrants in the Irish HR industry? This will be done in respect to their access into the Irish HR industry, their career progression in the workplace as well as the availability of support initiatives that facilitate career growth. In order to achieve this, this study will employ the use of the qualitative method and thematic analysis to analyse the data obtained as these are effective techniques for achieving the aim of the study. This is given that the qualitative method is a more suitable method as it provides the opportunity for exploring the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of the sample on the research area in ways that the quantitative methods might be limited in.

1.2   Research Questions

The central research question:

What are the experiences of career advancement of racially diverse skilled immigrants in the Irish Human Resource industry?

Research Question 1:

What are the experiences of racially diverse skilled immigrants in gaining access into the Human Resource industry in Ireland?

Research Question 2:

Do racially diverse skilled immigrants in the Human Resource field in Ireland experience barriers to their promotion within their workplace?

Research Question 3:

Are there support programs and initiatives aimed at facilitating career progression for racially diverse skilled immigrants in the Human Resource field in Ireland?

1.3   Rationale for the Study

The relevance of exploring the career advancement experiences of racially diverse skilled immigrants cannot be overemphasised. The global focus on the promotion of diversity and inclusion, and the eradication of discrimination makes a study like this important as this study will shed light on the inequities that racially diverse immigrants might be facing in the labour market. Furthermore, Ireland is becoming more diverse and studies such as Farashah and Blomquist (2020) as well as Martin (2014) have revealed the benefits of a diverse workforce. Thus, the findings from this study would be beneficial in ensuring better integration of immigrants into the Irish society so that their talents can further be harnessed, resulting in their maximum contribution to the growth of the economy.

This study will also add to the pool of knowledge on diversity and inclusion management which could be used by organisations in the formulation and implementation of HR policies that create a more inclusive environment.

1.4   Scope of the Study

This study seeks to explore the career advancement experiences of racially diverse skilled immigrants within Ireland with a focus on the HR industry. This will be done in respect to their access into the industry as well as their career progression within the industry. The targeted

participants for the study are immigrants from a non-European and non-North American country who are employed in an HR related position.

1.5   Structure of the Study

This dissertation is divided into six chapters. An overview of what each chapter will discuss is presented below:

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter provides a general overview and background on the research topic. It also outlines the rationale for the study, providing justification for the chosen area of investigation. It also presents the research questions, scope of the study and the relevance of the proposed methodology.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter presents an extensive review of literature on issues in line with the research topic. It begins with an overview on diversity and inclusion management and continues with a discourse on migration. It also explores the experiences of access into the labour market of skilled immigrants globally before narrowing in on the experiences of skilled immigrants in Ireland. The chapter goes on to examine views of other scholars on the experiences of career progression and existence of support programs to facilitate career progression. Finally, the chapter concludes by identifying the gaps in the existing research and emphasises the importance of bridging those gaps.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter is concerned with the methods adopted for conducting the research. This consists of the research philosophy and design employed in the study. It also focuses on the study population, sample size and the sampling technique. The instrument for data collection and the

method of data analysis is also discussed. In conclusion, ethical considerations that this study is mindful of, are presented.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter focuses on data analysis. It begins with a presentation of the participants' demographics. The data collected from the semi-structured interviews are also analysed according to the research questions, using thematic analysis.

Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings

This section presents a review of the research findings in relation to each research question. This is presented by making reference to the literature in light of the findings from this study.

Chapter Six: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

The final chapter summarises the research under study, including a summary of the research outcomes. It also focuses on the conclusion obtained from the study, provides recommendations, addresses the limitations of the study and makes suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section presents a review of literature on relevant issues in line with the study. The review of literature helps provide background for conducting a study and demonstrates knowledgeability of the study area. Various scholars have conducted studies on the experiences of skilled immigrants in the labour market, therefore, reviewing their works will enhance insights into the important areas of this study. This chapter is presented under sub themes that allows the review of the opinions of other scholars on the relevant issues concerned in the study and they are discussed below:

2.2 Understanding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Diversity Management

The importance of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) within the workplace has become well established in recent years. Diversity is an important factor for consideration by organisations given the increased level of globalisation in today's world of work (Hays-Thomas, 2022). Businesses now easily operate across borders. For instance, doing business in Europe is more flexible due to the removal of barriers of commerce and travel for the EU member states (Hays-Thomas, 2022). In addition to globalisation, there has been increased participation of women in businesses, and the existence of multiple generations (Garg and Sangwan, 2021).

Buttinger (2023) explained that a DEI agenda is considered essential for achieving a productive and effective workforce as well as a positive culture. Morfaki and Morfaki (2022) agreed with this argument when they explained that having a diverse workforce necessitates improved organisational efficiency, effectiveness and productivity. To this effect, various organisations have increased commitment to enhancing their diversity recruitment practices and providing diversity training in recent time (Morfaki and Morfaki, 2022).

The business case for DEI began with a focus on diversity (Hays-Thomas, 2022). Diversity within the workplace refers to the differences among people on the bases of characteristics such as race, sex, education level, language, and other attributes that can affect acceptance, performance, satisfaction or progress within the workplace (Hays-Thomas, 2022). It is the existence of variations in knowledge bases and opinions as a result of individuals having different cultural backgrounds, educational backgrounds, experiences and trainings (Garg and Sangwan, 2021).

After a while, the diversity case expanded to include inclusion. Hays-Thomas (2022) explained that inclusion began to be considered alongside diversity when it was noticed that the minority groups that were hired, hardly progressed within the organisation and even resigned within a short period of working. Inclusion can be defined as "the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness" (Shore *et al.*, cited in Hays-Thomas, 2022, p. 4). It involves creating an environment in which diverse groups are integrated and have a sense of belonging.

Indeed, inclusion needs to be considered alongside diversity in maximising the benefits of a diverse workforce (Garg and Sangwan, 2021). Hays-Thomas (2022) expanded this when she argued that it is important to consider the factors and practices that can make people of difference to be fully accepted, productive and rewarded in the workplace.

Fairly recently, the "equity" concept was added to make the case a triad. Hays-Thomas (2022) stated that some organisations have even incorporated equity with diversity and inclusion and have termed it "DEI programme". The inclusion of "equity" stems from the intention to consider fairness in outcomes rather than opportunities alone (Buttinger, 2023). Equity involves fairness in the treatment of people with regard to opportunities and outcomes (Arsel, Crockett and Scott, 2022). Equity helps achieve impartiality and fairness in the distribution of

resources. To achieve this, Hays-Thomas (2022) contends that it is important that organisations provide their employees with resources individually as required to achieve equal outcomes rather than treat people equally.

It is, therefore, important for organisations to be concerned with the management of diversity. Managing diversity involves the processes and structures organisations can put in place to transform differences among employees into strengths and assets as against weaknesses and liabilities (Hays-Thomas, 2022). Diversity management entails including diverse people and implementing policies and programmes to improve interaction among them so that diversity becomes a source of creativity and effectiveness thereby improving organisational productivity (Hays-Thomas, 2022; Morfaki and Morfaki, 2022). In other words, managing diversity will involve making efforts via practices and policies that would help achieve diversity, equity and inclusion.

Many scholars have established the benefits of diversity management practices to organisations. Morfaki and Morfaki (2022) gave a range of the benefits of diversity management. According to the scholars, diversity management helps reduce minority retreat tendencies, thereby minimising absenteeism and turnover rate. Organisations with effective diversity management have less experiences of sexism, racism, conflicts and stress and they tend to enjoy more opportunities of contributions from minority groups (Morfaki and Morfaki, 2022). The authors also stated that diversity management helps save cost and prevent losses due to language and communication style as well as lack of feedback openness.

The organisational benefits of diversity and diversity management was also extensively discussed by Cox (cited in Morfaki and Morfaki, 2022). The scholar explained that with good diversity management practices in place, diverse teams are better able to solve problems and achieve creativity and innovation given the varied level of expertise and knowledge that exists among the team members.

2.3   Migration: Definition, Types and Exploring the Benefits of International Migration

Migration has become an important concept in today's world. It is a feature of daily life and has always been a fundamental part of human activities (Chisasa and Khumalo, 2023). Migration is "the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border or within a state" (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2019, p. 62). Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana (2016) stated that the importance of migration as a demographic factor has further been heightened with globalisation. As such, immigration has become an important social and political issue in certain countries (Ford and Heath, cited in McGinnity *et al.*, 2018).

People move from one place to another for various reasons. Black *et al.* (2011) in their study argued that some of the reasons why people migrate include improving one's standard of living, reuniting with family, escaping persecution or conflict and seeking refuge due to environmental disaster. Migration can also occur in various ways. Fleury (2016) argued that migration can be circular, permanent, or temporary and can involve people going back to their places of origin. Attempts have also been made to distinguish between migration types. Chisasa and Khumalo (2023) explained that migration can be intranational or international. Intranational or internal migration involves migrants remaining within a country's borders but moving between provinces, states or towns or from rural to urban settings or vice versa (Fleury, 2016). For the purpose of the study however, the focus will be on international migration.

International migration involves movement or travelling across national borders. Fleury (2016) contends that international migration is movement across country borders, often with the intention of settling in the destination. There are usually two parties involved in international migration- the migrants and the destination or receiving country (Penninx and Garcés-

Mascareñas, 2016), often referred to as the host country. Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana (2016) argued that the impacts of international migration have become a global phenomenon.

Migration is usually beneficial for both migrants and the host country. Migration facilitates development for the destination country as the country is provided with a pool of knowledge and expertise required, thereby enhancing economic productivity (Bosetti, Cattaneo and Verdolini, 2015). The economic statuses of the migrants are also likely to improve given that international migration is likely to be from less developed countries to more developed ones (Taylor, 2006). Migrants are therefore able to send remittances to their home countries as a result of their movement to more developed countries (Taylor, 2006).

2.4 Documenting Skilled Immigrants' Experiences in Access into the Formal Labour Market

Migration has been established as being beneficial for both migrants and their host countries. For migrants, migration provides opportunity for economic advancement, and it remains a major purpose for which people migrate among various reasons (Simpson, 2022). In the same vein, for the host countries, migration has globally been identified as an important index for economic growth.

In many western countries, the importance of skilled immigrants as part of the labour force is increasing given that there is a need to fill skill shortages (Dietz *et al.*, 2015; Farashah and Blomquist, 2020). For example, Crea-Arsenio *et al.* (2022) established the fact that Canada's reliance on migrants to boost its population and economic growth has necessitated a modification of their migration programme to ensure that they are able to attract skilled and highly educated migrants. Therefore, migration is important for western countries and it would be expected that it would be easy for skilled migrants to find employment and be successful in their host country's job market given that they are needed.

Literature, however, reveals that the reverse is the case. Despite the need for skilled migrants, they usually experience discrimination in the labour market (Christiansen and Kristjansdottir, 2022; Dietz *et al.*, 2015). In other words, skilled migrants usually experience difficulty of entry into the labour market in their host countries. The study by Crea-Arsenio *et al.* (2022), which was conducted in Canada, confirms this. The authors argued that upon arrival into Canada, many highly skilled and educated migrants experience difficulty gaining employment that matches their skills and qualifications and are more likely to be underemployed when compared to their Canadian counterparts. Another study conducted in Canada by Dietz *et al.* (2015) provided explanations for such difficulty when they stated that skilled immigrants' difficulty in gaining commensurate employment is due to the less favourable evaluation of their skills in comparison with the local counterparts because of the perceptions of immigrants' skills as a threat. Thus, skilled immigrants are excluded from the labour force because they are highly skilled and qualified.

This skill underutilisation is not peculiar to studies conducted in Canada. Research has revealed that studies conducted in other climes produced a similar result like the studies in Canada. For instance, the Almeida and Fernando (2017) study conducted in Australia contended that skilled immigrants in Australia tend to work in occupations requiring lower skills than their skillset. There are also levels to the experience of discrimination as Oikelome *et al.* (2022) in their study on immigrant health care workers in the USA found that ethnic minority immigrants from developing countries are more likely to experience work discrimination than those migrants of the same ethnic minority born in the US.

Studies conducted in the European clime also acknowledge immigrants' experience of difficulty of entry into the labour market of their host countries. Bussi and Pareliussen (2017) and Risberg and Romani (2022) in their studies both conducted in Sweden argued that foreign

born individuals are more likely to be underemployed than the natives. The Busetta *et al.* (2020) is another study within Europe that reported the discriminatory experiences of immigrants within the labour market.

The Busetta *et al.* (2020) study is a particularly interesting Italian study. In this experimental study of 1000 employers, which focused on assessing the response rate of these employers to local and immigrant job applicants, it was discovered that the call-back rate for Italians was 52% while that of first-generation immigrants was 24%. This difference was present despite the use of the same Curriculum Vitae (CV) in the applications with the exemption of the name and gender as fictitious CVs were sent to real job openings and advertisements. It can thus be deduced from this study that migrants' education and experiences are disregarded (Dietz *et al.*, 2015). This is further asserted by the study of Alboim, Finnie and Meng (cited in Dietz *et al.*, 2015) wherein the scholars argued that in Canada, foreign work experience and education are valued at 30% and 70% respectively of the Canadian experience and education.

Another important revelation in the Italian study is that immigrants who were of a different race than the Italian locals were even more discriminated against than immigrants of the same race. All these necessitate migrants to take up positions lower than their skills qualification (Riva and Zanfrini, 2013).

Indeed, these studies were able to establish that immigrants experience discrimination and skill underutilisation in the labour market, as well as identify barriers to the employability of immigrants. However, the majority of the studies in literature that have been reviewed, either adopted the use of the quantitative method of research or presented a narrative review of other studies in literature. The focus was mainly on statistical data which limits the depth of understanding on the career advancement experiences of skilled immigrants in the labour market.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that Ireland and the countries where these studies were conducted are more developed countries which, therefore, attract a high population of skilled migrants. However, countries like Canada and the US boast of a larger land mass, and thus attract a larger population of skilled migrants as compared to Ireland. This in turn is reflective of the implementation of policies that support the integration of migrants. Since this difference exists, it is, therefore, important to also review studies that focused on the career access experiences of skilled immigrants in the Irish labour market, to understand if similar results are also found within the Irish context.

2.5 Exploring the Experiences of Skilled Immigrants' Access into the Irish Labour Market

Understanding the migratory pattern in Ireland is important in order to sufficiently examine the experiences of skilled immigrants in the Irish labour market. This is because it would provide insights into the flow of migrants into Ireland and thus help understand the dynamics of the population. Thus, a discourse on the migratory trend in Ireland is first presented below.

2.5.1 Assessing the Immigratory Trend in Ireland

Migration is important in shaping the diversity of societies as it influences a society's demographic patterns and population composition. Just like many other countries, immigration has had a significant impact in shaping the population in Ireland in recent times.

Traditionally, Ireland has a history of being a country of emigration (Hughes *et al*., 2007). However, statistics show that between the 1970s and 1980s, Ireland began to experience slight changes in its migratory pattern (Central Statistics Office (CSO), 2023b). According to the CSO (2023b), Ireland experienced positive net migration during the 1970s, this, however, reversed by the 1980s. Thus, there was fluctuation in Ireland's migratory trend during this period, which is why scholars like McGinnity and Kingston (2017) could argue that prior to the 1990s, there were very few foreign- born groups within the Irish population.

At present, Ireland is becoming multi-cultural given that it is now being recognised as an immigrant receiving country (Murphy *et al*., 2019). McGinnity *et al*. (2018) argued that Ireland has experienced a change in its migration with a shift from net emigration to net immigration. According to Villarroel *et al.* (2019)**,** migratory patterns in Ireland began to change significantly from the 1990s. From the mid-1990s up until 2007, the country experienced an economic boom (Fahey *et al.*, 2019) in what is now known in history as the "Celtic-Tiger" years.

The "Celtic-Tiger" period was a period of an all-time high economic growth in Ireland. McGinnity and Kingston (2017) contended that between 2000 and 2007, Ireland experienced robust economic growth as the construction industry flourished, standard of living was high and unemployment rate averaged 4.5% yearly. This "Celtic-Tiger" era as a result, gave rise to a growth in the migrants' population that came into Ireland both as a result of its economic boom as well as its decision to allow full access to its labour market after the expansion of the EU to include 10 more member states in 2004 (Fahey *et al.*, 2019; Barrett and Kelly, 2012).

Indeed, Ireland became more culturally diverse as a result of the economic boom between 1994 and 2007. According to CSO (2012), during the period of the economic boom, Ireland had the highest percentage increase in population in the EU, with the non-Irish population increasing by 143%. In fact, according to Murphy *et al.* (2019), it was as a result of this period that Ireland began to take immigration seriously with the formulation of immigration initiatives. However, such development was put to a halt with the experience of the "Great Recession", which spanned from 2008 to 2011, with Ireland experiencing a reversal in its migratory trend (Fahey *et al.* 2019). Between 2010 and 2014, Ireland experienced a negative net migration as a result of the economic downturn, with the lowest point being in 2010 (CSO, 2023b).

The number of immigrants moving into Ireland once again saw a rise in 2014 (Fanning, 2016) and has been on a steady increase since then. Net migration in Ireland took a positive turn between 2015 and 2016, and has remained positive since then (CSO, 2023b). According to the 2016 census, 17.3% of the population in Ireland were foreign born (Murphy *et al.*, 2019). These 535,475 foreign born people that resided in Ireland in 2016 rose to 631,785 foreign born by 2022 (CSO, 2023a). European nationals contribute the highest percentage of migrants to Ireland (CSO, 2023a). According to the 2022 census, Poland, United Kingdom and Romania are the European countries with the highest number of immigrants to Ireland with 93,680 nationals, 83,347 nationals and 43,323 nationals respectively (CSO, 2023a).

Although Ireland is occupied by a vast number of European nationals, the population is becoming more diverse to include non-European nationals. According to the 2016 Census (CSO, 2023a), the top three non-European migrants in Ireland were Brazil (13,640), India (11,465), and United States (10,519). By the last census in 2022, these three countries remained the countries with the highest number of non-European immigrants in Ireland. There was a positive change in the number of immigrants from these countries with India having 45,449 nationals, Brazil with 27,338 nationals and the United States with 13,412 nationals (CSO, 2023a).

2.5.2 The Experience of Skilled Immigrants' Access into the Irish Labour Market

Studies in literature have examined immigrants' experiences in gaining access into the Irish labour market. Certain studies have revealed a similar experience of discrimination entering into the labour market by immigrants in Ireland as obtainable in other climes. For instance, a similar study to the Busetta *et al.* (2020) study was conducted in Ireland in 2011 by McGinnity and Lunn in which the scholars made a finding similar to that in the study by Busetta *et al.* (2020). It was observed that candidates with Irish names were more than twice more likely to

get call-backs for interviews than candidates with non-identifiable Irish names, although equivalent CVs were submitted. This finding was buttressed by the study of Kingston, McGinnity and O'Connell (2015) as they discovered in their survey that non-Irish nationals experience a higher rate of discrimination gaining entry into the labour market.

Certain studies, have however, extended the discourse to address immigrants' experiences of discrimination in the labour market differentiated by their nationality and ethnicity. For one, although Kingston, McGinnity and O'Connell (2015) argued that non-Irish nationals are more disadvantaged in their search for work, they further revealed that the Black African and non-white European groups (i.e., EU nationals of minority ethnicity) in Ireland reported higher rates of discrimination while looking for work. A similar result was obtained in a more recent study by McGinnity *et al.* in 2017 as they revealed in their survey of 15,000 individuals on discrimination in Ireland that black and Asian immigrants experienced the highest level of difficulty looking for work. In other words, these studies argue that other white groups have a more favourable experience looking for job in the Irish market than the non-white ethnic groups. This is despite migrants of the non-white groups in Ireland being naturalised and gaining access to European citizenship (Kelly *et al.*, 2016).

Certain studies in literature further back up this argument. The study by Pearson *et al.* (2012) confirms that skilled immigrants in Ireland experience fewer barriers to skilled employment than in other immigrants' research. However, this study was conducted amongst Polish immigrants, who are members of the white European group. Another study of Polish immigrants which compared their experiences in Ireland against Netherlands also discovered a more positive experience for the Polish migrants in Ireland than the Netherlands (McGinnity and Gijsberts, 2018). On the other hand, the study by Joseph (2019) confirms that black immigrants experience less favourable treatments than white immigrants in the Irish labour

market. This agrees with the argument of Busetta *et al.* (2020) that immigrants of a different race than the locals are more disadvantaged in the labour market than immigrants of the same race. As argued by Joseph (2019), race, therefore, plays an important role in the experience of skilled immigrants in terms of their entry into the labour market.

The Joseph (2019) study is a particularly important study that takes a different curve, adopting semi-structured interviews in the bid to understand the experiences of black immigrants against white immigrant groups in the Irish labour market. The semi-structured interviews were conducted among 32 participants- 12 first generation immigrants from Nigeria, 10 first generation immigrants from Spain and 10 first generation immigrants from Poland. The participants were required to recount their career experiences in the Irish labour market. Five characteristic experiences were then derived from these experiences of career progression which were explained using counter storytelling in this study.

A major finding in the study is that migrants generally experience different levels of resistance in the Irish labour market that necessitates a renegotiation of their career pursuits which often takes a downward slope till they find areas of least resistance. A reason for this could be because of the perception that highly skilled migrants are potential threats to organisational norms and practices (Risberg and Romani, 2022). As a result, migrants experience five distinct career paths when accessing employment in the Irish labour market. However, more specifically, the study found that the experiences of the participants varied significantly depending on their race, nationality and skin colour. It takes a shorter time for white immigrants to experience career progression as within two to four years the white participants progressed from unstable jobs to jobs with better working conditions while the majority of the black participants still had precarious employment after eight to ten years.

By juxtaposing the career experiences of black and white immigrants and employing the counter storytelling approach, this study helped to provide a deep understanding of the Irish labour market. Furthermore, although the study amplifies the voice of one marginalised group among others, it sheds light on skilled immigrants' struggles of accessing employment opportunities which could particularly be useful in the formulation of policies in migration and integration.

2.6   Understanding Skilled Immigrants' Experiences of Career Progression in the Workplace

Exploring the lived-in experiences of skilled immigrants in their workplace is just as important as examining their access into the labour market of their host countries. Thus, studies that explored the experiences of skilled immigrants within their workplace will be reviewed. This will be done in terms of the availability of opportunity for progression or promotion in their careers within the workplace. The discourse is presented below.

The integration of migrants into society is very important. According to Busetta *et al*. (2020), the participation of migrants in boosting a country's economy is a major means of ensuring their integration into the society. As a result, the labour market integration of immigrants is important for their well-being (Lai, Shankar and Khalema, 2017). Research has emphasised the importance of immigrants' entry into the labour market as a means of integration (Busetta *et al.*, 2020). Integration however, goes beyond migrants' entry into the labour market, to include migrants' workplace experience (Micheline and Basford, 2022).

Tharenou and Kulik (2020) argued that skilled immigrants have less favourable experiences in the workplace. Such experiences range from socialisation to career advancement. For instance, with regard to socialisation, Ertorer *et al*. (2022) explained that the participants in their study, who were immigrants, experienced difficulty developing close relationships with their colleagues who were locals. This, therefore, buttresses the Tharenou and Kulik (2020)

argument that skilled immigrants are capable only of establishing good relationships with ethnic minority colleagues but not with native born managers and colleagues. In other words, skilled immigrants are not fully integrated as they experience difficulty in their workplace relations with the locals of their host countries. This lack of integration with all colleagues affects their ability to fully contribute to organisational productivity and thus the growth of their host country (Ng, Rajendran and Waheduzzaman, 2022).

Beyond socialisation, studies that have focused on the career progression aspect of integration within the workplace exist in literature. International studies have reported different findings on skilled immigrants' experience in advancing their careers within the workplace. Fang *et al*. (2012) explained that the immigrants in their study were less likely to earn rewards like promotion or better pay than the locals. Indeed, it could be argued that this study dates back, however the more recent study by Ertorer *et al*. (2022) produced a similar result.

The Ertorer *et al.* (2022) study was conducted in Canada and it was discovered that the participants who were immigrants believed they were victims of the "glass-ceiling" effect as they were of the opinion that no matter how productive they were at work, they would not get promoted to a management position. These responses were obtained through semi-structured interviews that were thematically analysed. Thematic analysis adopted for use in this study involves identifying patterns and themes that enable researchers gain a detailed understanding of participants' experiences, perspectives, and meanings and, thus, have detailed insights into the phenomena being researched. Two major themes identified by the researchers include "perceived barriers to workplace entry" and "perceived barriers to workplace advancement". The study was conducted amongst 25 first generation immigrants who had acquired either the Canadian permanent residency or citizenship and worked in medium to large sized companies.

To further back the belief of the respondents, none of them held a managerial position at the time of the study.

A study that examined a similar issue and adopted a similar method was conducted by Faaliyat *et al*. (2020) in Australia, of which a similar result was obtained. Major themes that were identified by the researchers in this study that focused on employees from a Non-English-Speaking Background (NESB) are "performance appraisal and perceptions of NESB employees regarding career progression" and "employee involvement and participation for NESB employees". It was discovered that the NESB employees encountered difficulties advancing in their careers. Furthermore, it was observed that many of them felt their NESB status hindered their career progression in Australia given that it is an English-speaking country. Indeed, language plays a major role as a barrier to career advancement (Ertorer *et al*. 2022). The lack of language proficiency and communications skills remain an obstacle to long term integration and career success (Mahmud, Alam and Hartel, 2014; Friesen, 2011). However, the respondents indicated the receiving of positive feedback from performance appraisals. It can thus be implied that communication was not an issue given that they were performing well in their roles, yet that was apparently not enough for them to gain promotion.

On the other hand, the study by Fernando and Cohen (2016) conducted among 32 Indian academics in the UK reported the experience of career progression by skilled immigrants. The participants of the study were able to recount their career experiences through semi-structured interviews and it was discovered that they experienced a fast career progression. It was further observed that their career progression was linked to their ethnicity as the scholars reported that it was their unique culture that enabled them to progress and be selected for jobs among other candidates.

Sarpong and Maclean (2021) in their study also reported the opportunity for skilled migrants to advance in their careers in their host countries. This study conducted in the UK adopted the use of semi-structured interviews to obtain data from 20 skilled migrants with West African origin. According to the scholars, although skilled immigrants might experience a bit of difficulty advancing in their careers given that their foreignness and lack of social capital makes it difficult, it is not impossible to experience career progression in their chosen professional fields. Skilled migrants are likely to experience career progression when they respond positively to impediments (Fernando and Cohen, 2016). Renegotiating career pursuits enables migrants to respond to the impediments they encounter (Joseph, 2019). According to Sarpong and Maclean (2021), the participants in their study were able to progress when they worked twice as hard and invested significant time and resources to acquire the skills and professional networks that caused them to be recognised and considered for promotion.

To the best of the knowledge of the researcher, there are a dearth of such studies within the Irish context with the exception of the McGinnity *et al*. (2017) study. Indeed, it was observed in this study that a higher degree of discrimination existed in the workplace among the respondents of other races as opposed to the white respondents. This was a study that adopted the survey of 15,000 individuals in evaluating discrimination in Ireland. However, as stated, the study employed the use of a survey in gathering data and therefore did not obtain in-depth information regarding the personal experiences of the participants in their workplace.

2.7   Existence of Support Initiatives to facilitate Immigrants' Career Progression

There is compelling evidence from previous research that well-designed support programmes for employees deliver immense benefits to both employers and employees at large (Noe, 2019). Employers benefit from employee development by reaping the reward of organisation productivity and growth (Maurer and Chapman, 2013). On the other hand, effective employees

can leverage their knowledge and skills to their individual advantage within their organisation (Islam *et al*. 2020; Noe, 2019). In essence, the existence of support programmes to facilitate immigrants' career progression would produce these benefits for them and the organisations they are employed in.

Studies that focused on the sources of sponsorship of support initiatives for immigrants exist in literature. For instance, the study by Oikelome *et al.* (2021) argued that support initiatives can be facilitated by third party organisations like Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In their study that focused on immigrants in the health sector in US, it was revealed that there are several effective intervention programs sponsored by non-profit organisations that enable immigrants in the health sector to return to professional employment.

Furthermore, the study by Noe, Clarke and Klein (2014) revealed that support programmes can be organisation sponsored. These scholars emphasised that employee development programme can include formal education, job experiences, professional relationships and assessment of personality and skills that help employees grow professionally. To buttress this Pinnington *et al*. (2022) also explained that examples of organisational development interventions that support employees in their quest for career progression include 360-degree feedback, on-the-job training, Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), and coaching/mentoring among others. It can be assumed that these initiatives would also be useful for immigrants in their career progression since Rajendran, Farquharson and Hewege (2017) observed in their study that mentoring assisted immigrants with integration and advancement in their career.

Support initiatives to facilitate migrants' careers can also be established by the government. Crowley-Henry *et al*. (2023) stated that there are national policies that help immigrants advance their network and, thus, their career in their host countries. The scholars further listed some of these programmes like the Adult Education Multicultural Education services (AMES) scheme

in Australia that provides programmes and mentorship opportunities for newly arrived skilled migrants (Crowley-Henry *et al*., 2023).

In terms of skilled immigrants' access to support programmes and initiatives, studies in literature support different sides of the argument. In a qualitative study conducted in Canada in 2019 by the Centre for Research on Inclusion at Work (CRIW), it was observed that skilled immigrants reported receiving useful advice and assistance from their organisations. Furthermore, the Ottawa Job Match Network (a government support programme) facilitated career advancement for the participants as it played an important role in providing them with employment opportunities. To buttress this observation, many of the participants interviewed had relatively well-paid jobs aligning with their expectations and qualifications.

On the other hand, results from the study by Dostie and Javdani (2020) revealed a contrary result. Their study aimed to observe differences of access to support opportunities between immigrants and Canadian-born employees. Contrary to the findings in the study by CRIW, it was observed study that visible minority immigrants were significantly less likely to receive training and fewer and shorter training courses as compared to their white counterparts. A significant point to note is the fact that both studies were conducted in Canada. They, however, support different sides of the argument. This study would, therefore, examine the availability of programmes that can support the advancement of immigrants' careers existing in Ireland.

2.8   Gap in Literature

Following an extensive review of literature on the career advancement experiences of skilled migrants, it was observed that there is a need for further research in this domain. As highlighted in the Joseph (2019) study, there is a need for further research to explore the experiences of skilled immigrants in Ireland. This is considering the fact that Ireland is becoming a country of immigration.

Indeed, the Joseph (2019) study is an important study for this research as it adopted the method to be employed in this study. Yet, the study centered on the experiences of one marginalised group- black migrants- in comparison with white immigrants. Joseph (2019) did not take into account the experiences of immigrants of non-white and non-black background. This research will therefore take a different curve by focusing on "racially diverse" skilled immigrants.

Furthermore, to the best of the knowledge of the researcher, such a study like the Almeida and Fernando (2017) study conducted in Australia that adopted an occupation specific approach to the exploration of the career advancement experiences of skilled immigrants does not exist within the Irish context. Thus, by focusing on the HR industry in Ireland, this study would be delving into an uncharted domain within the Irish literature. This is in addition to the fact that examining the HR sector provides insight into the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion practices in Ireland.

The trajectory of the experiences of skilled immigrants' career progression remains unclear as international studies support different sides of the argument. In addition, although a study like the McGinnity *et al*. (2017) study focused on the career progression experiences of skilled immigrants within the workplace in Ireland, such studies remain scarce within the Irish context. This study, therefore, seeks to explore the career progression of racially diverse immigrants in Ireland in order to know the side of the argument the result will support. This study will also take a different step than the McGinnity *et al*. (2017) study by adopting a qualitative approach to examine the career progression experiences of skilled immigrants.

In the bid to fill the research gaps mentioned, this study seeks to explore the career advancement experiences of racially diverse skilled immigrants within the HR industry in Ireland. A major reason for this is in order to find out if HR skilled immigrants as a group of migrants in Ireland have similar experiences as immigrants in other countries and occupations.

Furthermore, there are no sufficient similar studies in literature in the Irish context that adopt the qualitative method of research. Thus, there are only a few studies that have explored the thoughts and perceptions of skilled immigrants on their experiences in the Irish labour market.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology. Methodology is concerned with the process of data collection and the analysis of the collected data. It commences with an overview of the research philosophy, approach and design employed in the study. It continues with a focus on the study population, sample size and the sampling technique. The data collection method and instrument as well as the method of data analysis is also addressed. In conclusion, ethical considerations and limitations of the study, is discussed.

3.2   Research Philosophy

This study adopts the interpretivist research philosophy. Interpretivism emphasises the importance of understanding the diverse interpretations of social contexts given that human beings have different social realities (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Thus, since this research seeks to explore the experiences of skilled immigrants in the Irish labour market, the most appropriate philosophy for the study is interpretivism. This will provide comprehensive understanding and explain the perceptions expressed about the issue being studied (Saunders *et al.*, 2019).

3.3   Research Approach

This research adopts an inductive research approach. Saunders *et al.* (2019) stated that adopting an inductive approach enables a better understanding of the issue being discussed as data is first collected from a sample to understand what is happening before analysing the data to make sense of it. An inductive approach is thus adopted to identify patterns and themes from the data obtained and gain deeper understanding of the unique career advancement experiences of racially diverse HR skilled immigrants in Ireland. Furthermore, the scholars explained that the

inductive approach is often informed by the interpretivist philosophy (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, the choice of the inductive approach is also informed by this.

3.4   Research Design

This research adopts the cross-sectional, qualitative method of research design. Saunders *et al.* (2019) explained that a qualitative research design is more likely to be chosen for inductive research as it helps gain a deep understanding of the issue being studied. Since this study seeks to document the experiences of racially diverse HR skilled immigrants, adopting a qualitative research design would help provide comprehensive insights into the career experiences of HR skilled immigrants in ways that cannot be accurately measured using numbers. The qualitative method is therefore more suitable for eliciting the responses required for this study. In addition, the qualitative approach was adopted in similar studies like the Joseph (2019) study, which is an important study for this research.

3.5   Method of Data Collection and Instrument

Semi-structured interviews are adopted to elicit responses for the study. The purpose of using semi-structured interviews is the flexibility allowed in developing more themes and issues as participants respond to questions (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). A semi-structured interview guide was developed and adopted to elicit responses from the respondents regarding their experiences in the HR labour market as immigrants. The semi-structured interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom and Microsoft Teams, based on the preference of this option by the interviewees. The sessions were audio-recorded after verbal and written confirmations were received from each participant. The interviews were thereafter transcribed and anonymously stored.

3.6   Study Population, Sampling Size and Technique

The target population for this study are skilled immigrants working in the Human Resource (HR) industry in Ireland. Specifically, the participants are nationals of non- European and non-North American countries.

The proposed sample size for the study is 8 racially diverse HR skilled immigrants working in Ireland. This sample size falls within Fugard and Potts (2014) recommendation of between 6-10 participants for small projects.

This study employed the purposive and snowballing non-probability techniques of sampling. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to use their judgment in selecting participants with specific characteristics that align with the requirements of the study and would, therefore, be able to provide answers to the research questions and meet the objectives of the study (Saunders *et al.*, 2919). Snowballing was also adopted due to the difficulty that could occur in accessing participants.

Thus, participants were selected on the basis of their being employed in an HR related position and nationals of non-European and non-North American countries. This was achieved using LinkedIn to identify and make initial contact with 3 of the participants. The snowballing technique was, thereafter, employed in reaching out to the other 4 participants.

3.7   Data Analysis

The data obtained will be transcribed and then analysed using thematic analysis. To achieve this, the Braun and Clarke (2006) process of thematic analysis will be implemented. Table 1 below reveals the phases of thematic analysis of the scholars.

	Phase	Description of the process
1	Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2	Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire dataset, collating data relevant to each code.
3	Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4	Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire dataset (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5	Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6	Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Table 1: Phases of thematic analysis
(Adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.87)

3.8   Ethical Consideration

This study is mindful of ethical issues that could arise during research. Ethical considerations concerning voluntary participation, consent, anonymity and confidentiality and prevention of harm were addressed. Efforts were made to ensure voluntary participation as participants were repeatedly informed via written and verbal means of communication that participation in the research was their sole decision. This was done after all necessary information was disclosed to the participants through an information form. Interviewees were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. Agreement to participate in the research was received from each participant through a consent form sent to the participants for their signed approval before conducting the interviews. The researcher also took efforts to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of the interview participants. The participants are solely identified by pseudonyms as their names were concealed for the purpose of anonymity. Furthermore, information gathered from the participants was kept in confidence and used purely for research purpose. For the prevention of harm to the interview participants, the participants were provided with a debriefing sheet that included details of professional helplines that they could

reach out to in case of emotional distress. They were also informed that they had the right to refuse to answer any question and to withdraw from the interview at any time.

3.9 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

3.9.1 Strengths

This research leverages in-depth qualitative methodologies to capture the nuanced experiences of skilled immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland, providing valuable insights into their career access, advancement, and availability of support programs. By focusing on semi-structured interviews, the study draws out rich, detailed narratives that reveal the complex interplay of cultural, organisational, and systemic factors affecting immigrants. This approach allows for a deep understanding of individual experiences, offering a textured understanding of immigrants' integration within the HR sector.

3.9.2 Limitations

Although this study has provided deep insights into the experiences of racially diverse skilled immigrants employed within the HR sector, the narrow focus on currently employed HR immigrants means that the perspectives of those still seeking employment or those outside the traditional HR pathways might not have been adequately represented. This could potentially limit the generalisability of the findings across the broader immigrant population seeking HR roles.

Furthermore, the sample size and qualitative nature of the study mean that the findings, while rich and detailed, may not fully capture the breadth of experiences or quantify the impact of certain barriers and supports on career progression. This research initially set out to obtain insights from 8 racially diverse HR skilled immigrants. However, data were eventually obtained from 7 interviewees due to the difficulty in sourcing participants and time constraint. This, therefore, further increases the challenges that come with a limited sample size. Such limitation

underscores the importance of interpreting the results as indicative rather than definitive. The study's focus also means that systemic issues might be viewed primarily through the lens of individual experiences, which could lead to an underestimation of wider structural problems or overemphasis on personal agency within the HR sector.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the qualitative analysis of interviews with skilled immigrants, focusing on their experiences in the Irish labour market. It specifically explores the experiences in accessing employment, advancing in their careers, and the effectiveness of support programmes designed to aid their career progression.

4.2 Participants Demographics

This study includes a diverse group of seven participants, whose demographic details are outlined in the following table. These individuals vary in age, gender, nationality, and educational background, providing a broad perspective on the experiences of skilled immigrants in Ireland. Their durations of residence range from just over two years to six years, with professional roles spanning across various HR functions. This diverse representation helps to capture a wide array of experiences and insights related to the labour market challenges faced by skilled immigrants.

	Age	Gender	Nationality	Education Qualification	Duration of Residence in Ireland	Current Position	HR Experience in Ireland	Experience outside Ireland
Participant 1	26	Male	Nigeria	Msc. HRM at DBS	4 Years	Recruiter	3 Years	Yes
Participant 2	23	Female	India	Msc. HA at DBS	2.25 Years	Training Consultant	1.6 Years	-
Participant 3	28	Female	Brazil	Msc. HR at NCI	4.5 Years	Recruitment Resource	1 Year	-
Participant 4	28	Female	India	Msc. SM &HR at TUD	4.6 Years	Recruitment Admin	1.5 Years	
Participant 5	29	Female	Nigeria	MBA HRM at DBS	3.5 Years	Talent Acquisition	2.25 Years	1 Year
Participant 6	31	Female	Nigeria	Msc. HRM	6 Years	HR Business Partner	5 Years	4 Years
Participant 7	23	Female	Brazil	Msc.	3 years	Agency Recruitment	1.5 years	

Table 2: Participants Demographics

4.3 Immigrants Experiences in Gaining Access to Employment in the HR Sector in Ireland

In the pursuit of employment within the HR sector in Ireland, the findings suggest that skilled immigrants encounter a complex array of challenges that significantly hinder their integration into the workforce. The data presented in the table below categorises these obstacles into distinct themes: visa restrictions (7 participants affected), difficulties in securing call-backs for interviews (6 participants), and discriminatory practices during interviews (6 participants). These challenges suggest a systemic barrier that immigrants must navigate, though there are occasional exceptions such as companies actively seeking diversity or offering specific training opportunities. The findings suggest such exceptions, however, are few and would not substantially alleviate the broader issues of access to employment for immigrants in this sector.

Theme	Code	Participants
Visa Restrictions		7
	HR not on critical list	2
	Visa sponsorship requirements	7
	Companies sponsoring visas	1
Getting Callbacks or Securing Interviews		6
	Getting additional skills	2
	Hard time getting callbacks	2
	No hard time getting callbacks	1
	Non-English Name Discrimination	2
Discrimination During Interviews		6

	Discrimination but not to your face	4
	Experience Outside Ireland doesn't matter	4
	First language discrimination – accent	3
	Settle for other positions	3
Exceptions where there is no discrimination	Companies hiring diverse people	3
	Irish Experience in an unrelated field	1
	Training is offered	1

Table 3: Codes and Themes Related to Immigrants' Experiences in Gaining Access to Employment

4.3.1 Visa Restrictions

Embarking on a critical exploration of the visa restrictions faced by immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland. The discussions highlight the multifaceted barriers that visa restrictions impose on immigrants' employment opportunities, professional advancement, and integration into the local workforce.

Visa status emerges as a primary gatekeeper in employment opportunities, often overshadowing qualifications and experience. Participant 6's account underscores how initial job application screenings immediately filter out candidates based on visa type. In their words:

"Most employers will ask, what visa are you holding?" (Participant 6).

This illustrates how this preliminary query can end employment prospects before they truly begin. This practice not only marginalises non-EU immigrants but also suggests a broader issue of systemic bias where immigration status, rather than professional merit, dictates job opportunities.

According to Participant 3, immigrants experience structural exclusion that stems from employer misconceptions and limited understanding of visa processes.

"I really think the employers, they really don't have knowledge about how to apply for work permit and it's a big deal to them because they don't know how to do it" (Participant 3).

This narrative suggests a leading towards preference for candidates who do not necessitate work permit applications, rooted in employers' reluctance to navigate these complexities.

Participant 2 adds to the discussion of structural exclusion where their experience elucidates a tiered system of employment preference that structurally disadvantages immigrants under the general employment permits. They describe a hierarchy where non-critical sectors, like HR, are less likely to see employers sponsor visas, putting immigrants at a systematic disadvantage:

"HR is something which is not under the critical skill... they are not willing to sponsor you the visa" (Participant 2).

Participant 1 echoes the barriers tied to the dichotomy between critical skills and general employment permits, which significantly influences the accessibility of HR roles for immigrants. In their words:

"So, as you know, with the critical skills permit, once you are on that list, there's a particular list for critical skills... But unfortunately, HR does fall within the general employment permit skillset" (Participant 1).

Their comment suggest bureaucratic and regulatory hurdles that might further complicate the employment process for non-EU nationals. From the findings it could be argued that structural bias is entrenched within immigration and employment policies, which prioritise local over global talent in non-critical sectors, underscoring a need for policy revision to broaden what is considered "critical".

Despite the significant visa-related barriers that skilled immigrants face in the HR sector in Ireland, it's important to recognise that not all organisations adhere to restrictive practices. Some companies do exhibit a willingness to sponsor visas or provide the necessary supporting documents, thereby facilitating employment opportunities for non-EU immigrants. For instance, Participant 2 describes:

"…three of the jobs who are happy to give me the supporting documents and they are happy to sponsor the visa" (Participant 2).

This demonstrates that there are employers who recognise the value skilled immigrants bring and are willing to navigate the complexities of visa sponsorship. This more inclusive approach by certain organisations suggests that change is possible and serves as a model for others in the industry. By expanding these practices, alongside necessary reforms in regulatory frameworks, educational initiatives for employers, and comprehensive support systems for immigrants, Ireland can create a more inclusive and equitable employment landscape.

4.3.2 Difficulty Securing Interviews or Getting Call-backs

In addition to the challenges posed by visa restrictions, the findings indicate that skilled immigrants in Ireland encounter significant hurdles relating to securing interviews or call-backs for HR positions.

Participant 7's experience suggests disproportionate efforts by immigrants to break into the HR sector. Despite numerous applications, the return on investment is minimal, with only a few interviews leading to an actual job.

"And so basically it was very tough I think specially. Due to the number of applications I had to apply for few months but then I got a few…I got one interview and I actually got the job" (Participant 7).

Participant 2 experience goes further to quantify the daunting challenge of securing interviews, revealing that out of hundreds of applications, only a fraction led to interview opportunities, with even fewer progressing further. They said:

"So, for the first time I applied for like 300 to 400 job after applying for the 300 to 400, I got the call for about just 30 or like, yeah 30 {responses} I would say" (Participant 2).

Their experience suggest that disproportionate effort is required for immigrants to make inroads into the HR sector, exacerbated by preference for EU nationals. Findings from the study further reveal that the preference for EU nationals necessitate non-EU nationals to take extra steps just to secure interviews. For instance, Participant 6's approach to securing interviews in the HR sector involves strategic networking and personal enhancement. Recognising the preference for local candidates, they engaged proactively with peers and pursued internships to bolster employability. Their efforts to join professional groups and build networks

underscore the necessity of strategic actions to penetrate the HR industry. Participant 6 elaborates:

"So, I sought to do internships, you know, just getting into the market to get internships... Then I joined a few groups. One of the groups I know I'm currently in is the HR Directors of Ireland" (Participant 6).

On the other hand, Participant 4's approach was to get additional certification to gain a foothold in the HR industry in Ireland. The participant undertook a professional course from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) to enhance their qualifications, reflecting the heightened barriers immigrants face in proving their competency.

"So, it was kind of really hard to get an opportunity to work as a HR in Ireland so I had to do like a professional course" (Participant 4).

These unorthodox strategies suggest that the standard pathways to employment are often blocked or insufficient for immigrants, necessitating immigrants to go above and beyond to prove their worth.

Participant 5 suggest bias where non-English names receive fewer call-backs. They observed a stark difference in call-back rates compared to their peers with English names, suggesting a deep-rooted bias in the screening process. The need to anglicise names to increase job call-backs insinuates a stark indication of systemic bias embedded within HR practices.

"I think one thing I forgot to mention was, another challenge was, I noticed when I used to just, like I used to apply to jobs, my full name and everything, I hardly get interviews"(Participant 5).

Their experience of having to choose between their identity and job opportunities suggest a deeper cultural bias that extends beyond mere professional qualifications and into personal identity. Similarly, Participant 1's observation about the impact of having a non-English name aligns with Participant 5's experience and further validates the pervasive nature of this bias. They note,

"…the weirdest thing would be even your name can actually affect what people think about you"(Participant 1),

pointing out the subtle yet significant ways in which biases influence hiring decisions.

Each narrative, while unique, shares a common thread that suggest barriers to accessing employment for immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland. From high application volumes with low success rates to discrimination based on names and the necessity for additional qualifications, these experiences are interconnected and suggest the systemic nature of employment segregation in Ireland.

4.3.3 Discrimination during Interviews

Securing an interview or a call-back is merely the beginning of another set of challenges for non-EU nationals seeking HR positions in Ireland. The results of this study suggest that despite making it past initial screenings, racially diverse candidates often encounter subtle, yet profound forms of discrimination during interviews that further undermine their prospects for employment. This discrimination manifests in various ways, from undermining international experiences to subtle biases in communication and assumptions based on nationality or accent.

A recurring theme among the participants in seeking employment in Ireland's HR sector is the systematic undervaluation of their international experience. Despite possessing relevant qualifications and extensive professional backgrounds, they often find that their overseas

experiences are not regarded with the same esteem as local experience. Participant 7's commentary suggest bias against international experience. They observe that even when non-EU nationals have superior qualifications and more extensive experience, they are still viewed as less capable compared to their Irish counterparts.

"You have a master's degree, you have 10 years of experience in HR...and a person that has international experience and even sometimes a better experience and more years of experience or more qualifications, this person that is an immigrant is not necessarily in the eyes of someone who is hiring, not necessarily more skilled of a person than they" (Participant 7).

The findings suggest that the, undervaluation of international experience is often justified through arguments about the relevance of such experience in the Irish context. Participant 5's interview experience sheds light on how deeply probing questions are used to undermine their previous roles in Nigeria, suggesting a scepticism of the applicability of her skills in Ireland.

"Interviewers are asking me to talk about the difference in the HR work I did in Nigeria...then the interviewer is like 'Oh, no, that we have a much bigger branch of duties here', like just trying to make me feel like my experiences didn't count" (Participant 5).

Another argument is the requirement for specific knowledge of Irish employment legislation as a prerequisite for HR roles illustrates another layer of this issue. Participant 2 highlights this when she discusses the expectations for hands-on experience with Irish laws. They said:

"They wanted a candidate who has like Irish experience because HR is something that is not just related to your soft and hard skills, but you also need to get hands-on experience in the Irish employment legislation" (Participant 2).

Participant 6 and Participant 5 describe experiences of discrimination that are less about what is said and more about how candidates are treated during interviews. Participant 5's experience where the interviewer appeared disengaged—failing to maintain eye contact or show active listening—further exemplifies these subtle forms of discrimination.

"After introducing myself, I noticed the recruiter wasn't paying attention" (Participant 5).

On the other hand, Participant 6's observation about discriminatory behaviours being concealed during direct interactions but possibly occurring behind the scenes points to a culture of covert prejudice within some organisations.

"I've experienced this before but not to me...they do it, but when the employee comes, they never do it to their face" (Participant 6).

This type of behaviour suggests that some companies maintain a façade of fairness while practicing discrimination.

The inclusion façade extends beyond interviewers discriminating against non-EU nationals behind their backs to tokenistic diversity hiring practices. The findings suggest that some companies might engage in diversity hiring simply to enhance their public image or to comply with diversity metrics, without a genuine commitment to inclusivity. Participant 6 elaborates on this when they said:

"Some companies do that and at the end of the day might constructively push the employee out of the organisation after six months or nine months after they've been able to do their audit" (Participant 6).

This experience suggests that diversity is a "reduced checkbox exercise" rather than a substantive commitment to changing workplace culture. It not only fails the individuals who are hired under such pretences but also undermines the broader goals of diversity and inclusion initiatives, which are designed to foster genuine integration and equitable treatment within the workplace.

A majority of participants believed that non-EU nationals face pervasive discrimination during interviews for HR positions in Ireland suggesting deep-seated biases and systemic inequities within the hiring process. These candidates perceive that despite their qualifications and international experiences, they are often subjected to a gauntlet of scepticism and subtle biases that undermine their professional capabilities and potential contributions. The discrimination extends from the undervaluation of their international experiences to insidious practices during interviews that diminish their confidence and professional standing.

4.4   Experiences of Career Progression for Immigrants in the HR Sector in Ireland

For skilled immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland, the findings of this study insinuate that the primary challenge often lies not within the bounds of their qualifications or expertise but in securing that crucial first role—a task mired by systemic barriers and nuanced biases. The entry phase is particularly daunting due to perceived cultural biases, stringent visa requirements, and the insular nature of networking within the HR community, which often favours candidates with local experience and connections. However, the results suggest that for immigrants who have managed to gain a foothold, the progression to higher roles often becomes more accessible, albeit not without its unique set of obstacles. The table below outlines various codes linked to the theme of experiences for career advancement, each illustrating a distinct yet interconnected experience that immigrants face in their professional advancement.

Theme	Code
Career Advancement Experiences	Career advancement exists
	Showcase your skills
	Cultural fit and internal networks
	Double effort for visibility
	Overt Discrimination for promotion

Table 4: Codes for Career Advancement Experiences

The findings of this study reveal that once immigrants secure a role within the HR sector, the path to upward mobility becomes markedly clearer and somewhat easier, particularly for those who manage to demonstrate their capabilities and align with the organisational culture. The experiences shared by participants highlight a significant shift in opportunities once they are integrated into the system. For instance, Participant 6 illustrates this transition clearly:

"Once you can defend your skills and you're good at what you do, then you get the accolades you deserve. I've moved up the ladder... I don't think I've experienced any difficulty."

Similarly, Participant 7's experience within her company highlights a system that ostensibly removes cultural biases by focusing strictly on economic contributions:

"Basically, the structure for career progression within my company is how much you bring to the table... as soon as I bring 25k to the company, it doesn't matter, like anything, really like it doesn't matter if I'm Brazilian, it doesn't matter, you know, if I'm Irish."

This system, which rewards clear, quantifiable achievements, suggests a meritocratic approach where career progression is ostensibly unbiased. This reflects a scenario where, post-entry, the professional environment can be meritocratic, with skills and performance taking precedence over background.

However, the reality of achieving these metrics is often complicated by the need for robust professional networks and cultural capital, which many immigrants may lack initially. For immigrants, achieving the same financial or client-based targets can be significantly more challenging due to factors like smaller professional networks, less familiarity with the local market, or even subtle biases from clients towards non-native professionals.

The findings also suggests that non-EU nationals must not only network within the organisation to gain career progress, but must also double their efforts to gain visibility and recognition within their organisations. Participant 5 notes:

"You have to work twice as hard as anyone in your team for you to move up" (Participant 5).

This double burden not only suggest the inequity in how work is evaluated but also suggests a pervasive underestimation of immigrant contributions.

Furthermore, Participant 1's and Participant 4's experiences encapsulate the frustrations many immigrants feel when they meet all stated criteria for advancement yet are overlooked in favour of native colleagues, suggesting a layer of prejudice that affects decision-making. Participant 1 describes a scenario where, they believed that despite meeting all the criteria for advancement, they were passed over in favour of native colleagues, pointing to an underlying prejudice in the decision-making process:

"I did not get it and it was all boiled down to... it was almost a case of if I was a native I would have gotten it because I know every native that went for that promotion got it" (Participant 1).

Similarly, Participant 4's career progression is severely limited by the type of visa she holds, which underscores a broader systemic issue that affects many immigrants. They explain,

"Major, major, I've been getting interviews but due to work visa... it's just the visa issue that has been my problem" (Participant 4).

Their situation highlights how visa restrictions not only impact the ability to secure initial employment but also impose a glass ceiling on long-term career development, suggesting deep-seated structural barriers within the sector.

In summary, while the initial hurdles of securing entry into Ireland's HR sector are daunting for skilled immigrants, suggesting systemic biases and restrictive networking cultures, there exists a silver lining once these barriers are surmounted. The organisational environment, particularly within companies that value diversity, can offer a clearer and somewhat smoother pathway for career advancement. However, based on the experiences of the participants, this pathway is not devoid of challenges, requiring immigrants to continuously prove their worth, often needing to surpass their native counterparts in effort and performance. These findings underscore the necessity for organisations to reassess their career progression frameworks and for policymakers to consider more inclusive visa regulations and support systems.

4.5 Career Progression Support Programmes for Immigrants in the HR Sector in Ireland

Navigating the HR landscape in Ireland as an immigrant is undoubtedly challenging, but it is also filled with opportunities for those who are determined to succeed. Immigrants face a myriad of obstacles, from unpaid internships to entrenched workplace biases. Yet, it is not all lost; there are clear pathways and strategic measures that can pave the way for substantial career advancements. Immigrants like Participant 6 exemplify the adage, "work until they can't ignore you." Their journey from internships to a significant role at TikTok underscores a relentless pursuit of growth and excellence:

"I came to Ireland to do my master's in HR... started as an intern with Comfort Keepers... then moved to Infinite Focus... and after my internship, I got my first major HR role with Lyca Mobile…to becoming a global HR partner at Tiktok" (Participant 6).

They worked through initial roles that included unpaid internship and progressively took on more responsibilities, proving their value unequivocally and rising to become a global HR business partner. Participant 6's path illustrates how immigrants can leverage every available resource to carve out a viable career path, transforming each challenge into a stepping stone towards success. One key resource that immigrants should take advantage of is the support programme offered by institutions as summarised by codes in the Table below.

Theme	Code
Career Progression Support Programmes	Promotion readiness trainings
	Career advancement support
	Employee assistance programmes

Table 5: Career Progression Support Programme Codes

Most participants perceived that most organisations have implemented specific programmes aimed at fostering the professional development of their employees, including immigrants. Participant 7's experience with a three-month academy that covered the entire recruitment lifecycle is a prime example. Such programmes not only bridge knowledge gaps but also integrate immigrants more deeply into the corporate culture and systems, making them strong candidates for future promotions.

Furthermore, immigrants should take advantage of the continuous professional development (CPD) programmes. Companies that facilitate access to CPD opportunities or subsidise further

education help immigrants not only stay competitive but also signal an employer's commitment to their career growth. Participant 6 emphasised the importance of CPD programmes when they noted:

"Well, some companies have something called CPD, and that's Continuous Professional Development... my current employer is willing to pay on my behalf" (Participant 6).

Participant 6's journey highlighted the importance of such support, noting that her progression was aided by internships and later roles that offered structured growth paths and learning opportunities. CPD opportunities may also be tailored to an employee's weakness. Participant 3 mentions a unique aspect of support that addresses communication skills, which can be essential for roles requiring frequent interactions, such as HR positions:

"This last company, they offer to me to do elocution classes so to lose a little bit more, my accent as I have to speak on the phone most of the day" (Participant 3).

Finally, employee assistance programmes are vital for immigrants. Employee support programmes extend beyond career-specific training to include comprehensive assistance measures that address various employee needs. Participant 2's account of her company's support highlights programmes that cover educational expenses for further qualifications, which not only enhance an employee's skills but also their prospects for promotions and better roles within the organisation. These programmes extend to mentorship programmes. Participant 5 also shares how her organisation's mentorship programme has significantly impacted her professional development. Being introduced to an executive partner helped her navigate through growth opportunities within the company:

"Like they have a mentorship programme... the Chief People Officer in my organisation introduced me to like an executive partner that can help me navigate through my growth in the company" (Participant 5).

Employee assistance programmes are crucial for providing guidance, building networks, and offering direct support from experienced professionals, which can be especially beneficial for immigrants adapting to new professional environments.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that journey for immigrants in Ireland's HR sector is undoubtedly challenging, marked by barriers that often seem insurmountable. However, the landscape is not devoid of opportunities for those who are prepared to harness them. While systemic changes are necessary and awaited, immigrants can still find pathways to success through strategic engagement with available support programmes. From leveraging internships and continuous professional development to participating in structured training and mentorship programmes, these initiatives provide critical tools for career advancement. Participant 6's progression from internships to a significant role at TikTok, supported by her relentless pursuit of growth and strategic use of support systems, exemplifies how immigrants can turn potential obstacles into stepping stones toward significant professional achievements.

4.6   Conclusion

The professional landscape for immigrants in Ireland's HR sector presents a complex tapestry of opportunities and formidable challenges. From stringent visa restrictions to overt and subtle forms of discrimination during recruitment and interviews, immigrants must navigate a labyrinth of systemic barriers that extend far beyond the initial job search. However, once these initial barriers are overcome, the path to career advancement becomes increasingly feasible, though not without its challenges. As immigrants integrate into the workforce, navigating

cultural fit, leveraging internal networks, and managing the double burden of proof are still required, but these tasks become less daunting over time. Despite these ongoing challenges, significant progress is attainable. The journey, while arduous, is lined with viable pathways forged through resilience, strategic action, and the effective utilisation of support programs.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

5.1   Introduction

This section critically discusses the experiences of skilled immigrants encounter in the HR sector in Ireland. It delves into their experiences with gaining access to employment, career advancement, and the existence of support initiatives aimed at facilitating their career advancement.

5.2   Immigrants' Experiences in Gaining Access to Employment in the HR Sector in Ireland

The findings suggest that skilled immigrants in Ireland face significant barriers to employment, particularly in the HR sector, which is not considered a part of the critical skills list. This exclusion from critical skill categories has profound implications on the visa sponsorship and employment opportunities available to non-EU nationals. The findings suggest that skilled immigrants must navigate a labour market that frequently discounts their international experience and qualifications. These findings resonate with the literature which highlights the structured biases against immigrants, with immigration status often overshadowing professional merit either by discounting international experience or education (Alboim, Finnie & Meng, cited in Diaz *et al*., 2015; Busetta *et al*., 2020).

The findings suggest discriminatory hiring practices ranging from receiving few call-backs to practices during interviews that diminish their confidence and professional standing. These findings are supported by Risberg and Romani (2022) who suggest that non-European immigrants are more likely to be underemployed and subject to discriminatory hiring practices than their European counterparts. The participants' difficulty in getting call-backs aligns with the findings in the Busetta *et al.* (2020) study where it was discovered that immigrants of a different race than the locals experienced more difficulty in getting call-backs for interviews.

Furthermore, the findings support the research conducted by McGinnity *et al.* (2017) in Ireland. In this survey of 15000 respondents, it was discovered that there is a higher rate of discrimination against Black and Asian immigrants in Ireland, mirroring the experiences shared by the participants.

The research findings point out specific instances of discrimination during interview processes, such as the undervaluation of international experience, which severely hinder skilled immigrants' ability to secure employment in alignment with their qualifications. These findings align with literature that underscores the prevalence of subtle yet impactful discriminatory practices within the labour market. The study by Dietz *et al.* (2015) highlighted specific discriminatory practices such as the systematic undervaluation of foreign credentials and work experiences resulting in difficulty in entering into the labour market of host countries. Such experiences are particularly detrimental as they not only impede the immediate employment opportunities but also long-term career advancement and integration into the host society.

Furthermore, the emphasis on local experience and knowledge of specific Irish employment legislation as a prerequisite for employment in the HR sector creates a barrier that disproportionately affects non-local candidates. This double standard is particularly highlighted in studies like those by Joseph (2019), who found that black immigrants are often compelled to navigate more stringent challenges in the Irish labour market. Joseph's (2019) study reveals that due to racial and ethnic biases, these immigrants frequently find themselves in a cycle of underemployment and credential devaluation, struggling to find stable and suitable employment. For example, the black participants in the study described experiences of 'going round in circles,' where despite high qualifications and experience, they were repeatedly passed over for employment opportunities, illustrating a pervasive system of institutional discrimination.

The findings also suggested employer prejudice, which often disguises itself as concerns over administrative burdens. The participants believed that employers are reluctant to engage with visa sponsorship or navigate the administrative complexities associated with hiring non-EU nationals is a significant hurdle. This aligns with the literature indicating a general hesitance among employers to invest in foreign talent, despite the potential benefits they could bring to the organisation and the broader economy (Wickramasinghe and Wimalaratana, 2016).

Despite the challenges, the study also points to instances where some employers demonstrate a willingness to navigate the complexities of visa sponsorship and engage with skilled immigrants more inclusively. This indicates potential pathways for change, where employer education and structural reforms could significantly improve access to employment for skilled immigrants. The positive experiences shared by some participants suggest that with the right support and regulatory frameworks, employers can become pivotal agents in enhancing workforce diversity and integration. To address these systemic and cultural barriers, policy reforms are needed that expand the definition of critical skills and simplify visa sponsorship processes. Furthermore, employer-focused initiatives should aim to educate and incentivise inclusive hiring practices, supporting employers in understanding and navigating immigration regulations more effectively.

5.3   Experiences of Career Progression for Skilled Immigrants in the HR Sector in Ireland

The journey to career advancement for skilled immigrants in Ireland's HR sector, while fraught with systemic and cultural barriers, also reveals a landscape rife with opportunities once initial barriers are surmounted. As demonstrated in the study results, overcoming significant initial hurdles such as visa restrictions and discriminatory hiring practices marks the beginning of a new phase where career advancement becomes more tangible. This observation aligns with literature that acknowledges the persistent challenges in securing jobs and advancing careers

as exemplified by the themes in the study by Ertorer *et al.* (2022). However, it also highlights a transition to greater opportunities once within the system.

The experiences shared by participants illustrate that ascending to senior positions in the HR sector can be challenging due to cultural biases and the necessity of internal networks. However, progression is possible and is facilitated by certain organisational practices that reward clear, quantifiable achievements. The study by Ertorer *et al.* (2022) offers a contrasting view, revealing a 'glass-ceiling' effect perceived by immigrants. It was revealed in the Ertorer *et al.* (2022) study that despite high productivity and qualifications, the participants noted limited promotion opportunities, with none holding managerial positions. The findings of this study, however, support the argument of Fernando and Cohen (2016) that reported the experience of career progression by skilled immigrants in their study.

Nonetheless, it is undeniable that immigrants often face significant challenges in terms of visibility within organisations, requiring them to exert double the effort compared to their native counterparts to achieve similar recognition and advancement. This echoes the findings of Sarpong and Maclean (2021), who observed that overcoming both visible and invisible barriers is essential for immigrants' career progression. These barriers necessitate not only matching but exceeding the performance of native counterparts, highlighting the ongoing inequity within many organisations.

5.4   Support Initiatives for Career Progression of Skilled Immigrants in the HR Sector in Ireland

The integration and career progression of skilled immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland can significantly benefit from well-structured support programs. These initiatives, as shown in the results and the literature review, are crucial for navigating the multifaceted challenges immigrants face, from unpaid internships to ingrained workplace biases. The evidence supports

the importance of these programs, not only for the immigrants' professional development but also for enhancing organisational productivity and growth (Noe, 2019; Maurer and Chapman, 2013).

The findings illustrates a commendable narrative of leveraging organisational support to climb the professional ladder, from internships to a significant role at TikTok. This progression underscores the potential of support programs like CPD, promotion readiness trainings, and employee assistance programs to bridge knowledge gaps and foster professional growth. The literature review points to the role of third-party organisations and governmental policies in supporting skilled immigrants. Programs like the AMES scheme in Australia serve as exemplars of how national policies can facilitate career progression for immigrants (Crowley-Henry *et al.*, 2023). However, the research indicates a gap within the Irish context, where similar government-backed initiatives are not prominently discussed or evidenced. This suggests a potential area for policy development and implementation that could standardise support across various sectors, including HR. While some immigrants benefit from comprehensive support, others may not have access to similar opportunities. While studies such as those by Dostie and Javdani (2020) highlight disparities in the training and opportunities provided to visible minority immigrants compared to their white counterparts, the context in Ireland offers a contrasting narrative. In Ireland, initiatives and programs are structured with the intent to afford equal opportunities to all skilled immigrants, irrespective of their background.

To address these disparities, there is a strong argument for the development of more robust, standardised, and government-supported initiatives that ensure all skilled immigrants have access to the support they need to succeed. Policies should aim to create an equitable

framework that mandates the provision of career advancement support across all organisations within the HR sector.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   Research Outcomes

The study has identified several critical outcomes regarding the experiences of skilled immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland, spanning access to employment, career advancement, and the availability of support programmes for their career.

The data and themes identified suggest that non-EU skilled immigrants perceive significant discrimination and systemic barriers in terms of their access or employment into the HR sector in Ireland. Using qualitative research methods including semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis of transcripts, three themes were identified; restrictive visa requirements, difficulty securing interviews, and discrimination during interviews. The findings suggest a labour market that often prioritises local experience and connections over merit, which disproportionately affects non-EU nationals.

In terms of career advancement, the study reveals that once immigrants successfully navigate these initial entry barriers, the landscape for career advancement shows a significant shift. While challenges may persist, they become notably more manageable within the organisational framework. The study reveals that, upon entry into the labour market, skilled immigrants encounter a more accessible pathway to career progression. Although issues like cultural fit, internal networking, and implicit biases still play a role in career advancement, these factors become less prohibitive over time. This change is indicative of a work environment where, once established, immigrants are able to leverage existing structures and opportunities for growth more effectively.

On a positive note, the study has also shed light on the existence of various support programmes that aid in the career advancement of skilled immigrants. These programmes, ranging from on-the-job training to continuous professional development and mentorship initiatives, are instrumental in helping immigrants integrate more fully into the workforce and ascend in their careers. However, the availability and effectiveness of these programmes can vary significantly between organisations, suggesting a need for more standardised and accessible support systems across the sector. Overall, these outcomes paint a comprehensive picture of the multifaceted challenges and supports that skilled immigrant's encounter in the HR sector in Ireland, providing a foundation for targeted recommendations and policy interventions to improve their professional integration and advancement.

6.2   Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is important to first acknowledge that some organisations within the HR sector in Ireland are already making commendable efforts in supporting the career progression of skilled immigrants through various support programmes. These initiatives, which include comprehensive on-the-job training, continuous professional development opportunities, and structured mentorship initiatives, have proven instrumental in aiding skilled immigrants' integration and advancement in the workplace. Building on these existing foundations, it is recommended that organisations work towards the standardisation and expansion of such support programmes, potentially backed by governmental policies that mandate and facilitate such initiatives. Additionally, the creation of partnerships with NGOs and other third-party organisations could provide further resources and support to immigrants, diversifying the sources of assistance and integrating broader community resources.

The study also calls for significant policy reforms to address systemic barriers such as visa restrictions and biased hiring practices that disproportionately affect skilled immigrants.

Revising visa policies to make them more accommodating for career advancement, and not just initial employment, is crucial. Furthermore, there is a strong need for employer education programmes that can help reduce cultural biases and increase awareness about the benefits of a diverse workforce. These programmes should aim to educate HR professionals and hiring managers on the value of international experience and the importance of inclusivity in hiring and promotion decisions. By implementing these recommendations, organisations can create a more inclusive, equitable, and productive workplace for skilled immigrants.

6.3   Opportunities for Future Research

The findings and limitations of the current study open several avenues for future research in the field of career advancement for skilled immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland. First, to address the methodological constraints and enhance the generalisability of the findings, future studies could employ a broader demographic that includes not only those currently employed in HR but also recent graduates with HR qualifications who are actively seeking employment. This would provide a more comprehensive view of the entry barriers and initial employment challenges faced by skilled immigrants.

Additionally, there is a significant opportunity to quantitatively evaluate the effectiveness of support programmes in aiding career advancement for skilled immigrants. Such research could involve statistical analysis to measure the impact of specific interventions like mentorship programmes, CPD opportunities, and structured on boarding processes on the career trajectories of immigrants. This would help in identifying which programmes are most beneficial and warrant further investment.

Finally, a comparative analysis between policies and practices in Ireland and other countries like Australia and Canada, known for their progressive immigration and integration policies, could yield valuable insights. This research could explore how different national strategies

affect the professional integration of skilled immigrants in the HR sector and identify best practices that could be adapted or adopted in Ireland to improve outcomes for this group.

6.4   Personal Learning Statement

Throughout the thematic analysis conducted in this study, I have come to appreciate that sometimes, the full scope and depth of a situation can only be discerned by examining multiple data points. This process has illuminated how successes and systemic issues are often not immediately apparent without a comprehensive and detailed view. This realisation underscores the complex and layered experiences of skilled immigrants in the HR sector in Ireland, revealing that what might initially seem like isolated challenges are often indicative of broader systemic patterns. This insight has profoundly shaped my understanding of qualitative research and its power to uncover nuanced truths that might otherwise remain hidden.

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Appendix I
Semi-Structured Interview Guide

A. Socio-demographic Information

1. Can you please tell me about yourself? providing your age, gender, nationality, educational qualifications and duration of residence in Ireland?

2. Did you obtain any post-secondary qualification in Ireland?

3. What HR capacity are you currently employed in?

4. How long have you worked in your current role? How long have you worked in an HR capacity in Ireland?

B. Access into the Labour Market

1. How would you describe your experiences in seeking employment in the Irish HR industry as a person with a different nationality?

2. Are there challenges or barriers you encountered during your overall job search process, which you perceive as being attributed to your immigration status?

    Probe for: Difficulties encountered in getting callback for interview

    Challenges encountered during the interview process

3. During any interview process, was there an occasion where you perceived that your accent, foreign qualifications or experience might have influenced the interviewer's perception of your suitability for a job role?

4. Have you experienced any feeling of prejudice during a job interview in Ireland? If yes, could you provide some examples? How did you handle such a situation?

C. Barriers to Career Progression in the Workplace

1. How do you perceive the availability of career progression opportunities for skilled immigrants in comparison with native HR professionals?

2. Can you share your career progression experiences in the Irish HR industry?

3. Have you encountered any specific barriers or challenges in terms of career progression in the Irish HR industry? If yes, what were they?

D. Availability of Career Progression Support Programs and Initiatives

1. Has your workplace provided you with any training programs relevant to the HR industry in Ireland? If yes, could you provide examples of such programs?
2. Do you perceive such trainings will avail you of the opportunity for career progression in your workplace?

E. General Overview

1. Is there any other information that you might be willing to share that was not addressed by any of the other questions?

Appendix II
Information Sheet

AN EVALUATION OF RACIALLY DIVERSE SKILLED IMMIGRANTS' EXPERIENCES OF CAREER ADVANCEMENT IN THE IRISH HR INDUSTRY

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you would want to take part in the study.

WHO I AM AND WHAT THIS STUDY IS ABOUT

My name is Aderonke Ojuolape Alaba and I am a postgraduate student of Human Resource Management in the National College of Ireland (NCI). The purpose of conducting this research is in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Master of Arts in Human Resource Management.

The aim of this study is to explore the career advancement experiences of racially diverse HR skilled immigrants in the Irish labour market. This stems from the interest of the researcher to examine and document the experiences of skilled immigrants in the Irish HR labour market given the fact that Ireland is becoming more diverse and it is important that immigrants are integrated into the society.

WHAT WILL TAKING PART INVOLVE?

Taking part in this research would involve recounting your experiences of career advancement in the HR industry within Ireland. This would entail discussing your experiences in terms of gaining access into the Irish HR industry as well as your career progression in the workplace after gaining entry into the HR industry. Furthermore, the interview is expected to take 30-45 minutes of your time.

It is important to also mention that the interview process will be audio recorded using a mobile phone. This purpose of voice recording is to capture all information, everything you commiunicate, both verbal and non-verbal cues which might be valuable for the study. This would be difficult to achieve if only notes are taken. The recordings will however be anonymously used, so there will be no direct link between you and the recording.

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WHY HAVE YOU BEEN INVITED TO TAKE PART?

You have been invited to take part in the research because you fall within the category of participants required for the study. The criteria for the selection is having a legal residency right to live and work in Ireland; employment in an HR related position; and being from a non-European or non-North American country. You were selected because it is believed you will be able to provide useful answers to the research questions.

DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE PART?

Participation in this research is completely voluntary, the decision to participate in the research therefore solely rests on you. In addition, if at any time during the interview you decide that you do not want to continue with the process, you have the right to withdraw from the study without any consequences.

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF TAKING PART?

By taking part in this research, you will be contributing to the body of knowledge which could necessitate improvement in HR policies. Furthermore, your contribution would be published in the dissertation and as a participant, you will have entitled access to the information provided at any time.

It is also possible that by taking part in this research, you become emotionally distressed. This could particularly occur while answering questions that arouse difficult emotions or memories. It is therefore important to remember that you can decide not to answer any question and if you would like to discontinue at any time during the interview, you have the right to do so.

WILL TAKING PART BE CONFIDENTIAL?

Your participation in this research will be confidential. To ensure anonymity, identifiable information will not be gathered during the interview. Furthermore, although non-anonymised data will be obtained in the form of signed consent forms and audio recordings, the signed consent forms will be locked in a cabinet in NCI. The audio recordings will also be transcribed and then reviewed to ensure any identifiable information is removed, after which the recordings will be permanently deleted. Also, the information you provide will be kept in confidence and used purely for research purpose. Only me and my supervisor will have access to information provided which will be kept in a password protected file on a password protected computer.

The only instances in which confidentiality will be broken is if there is a serious risk of harm or danger to you or another individual or if a serious crime has been committed.

HOW WILL INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE BE RECORDED, STORED AND PROTECTED?

The interview process will be recorded with the use of a mobile phone. However, IDs will be assigned to each participant rather than using identifiable information such as names during the interview. Furthermore, information obtained will be kept in confidence as once the interviews have been transcribed, the audio recordings will be permanently deleted. Anonymised data will be kept for five years and then deleted in accordance with National College of Ireland (NCI) research policy. This information will be kept on a password protected file, on a password protected computer that only me and my supervisor will have access to. Physical copies such as consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet in National College of Ireland. It is important to also mention that you have the right to access the information you provide at any time.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

The results from this interview will be published in my dissertation which will be available in NCI's library. There is also the possibility of using the data you provide for publication in the future.

WHO SHOULD YOU CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

Researcher: Aderonke Ojuolape Alaba

Master of Arts in Human Resource Management (MAHRMD)

x21238448@student.ncirl.ie

Supervisor: Dr David Mothersill

Associate Professor in Psychology

Programme Director, BA (Honours) in Psychology Full-Time Programme

david.mothersill@ncirl.ie

THANK YOU

Appendix III
Consent Form

Consent to Take Part in Research

- I…………………………………… voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

- I understand that participation involves recounting experiences of career advancement within the HR industry.

- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.

- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the researcher's dissertation and future publication.

- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm, they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for five years from the date of NCI's exam board.

- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Researcher: Aderonke Ojuolape Alaba
Master of Arts in Human Resource Management (MAHRMD)
x21238448@student.ncirl.ie

Signature of research participant

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Signature of participant   Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

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Signature of researcher   Date

Appendix IV
Ethics Application

National College of Ireland

Human Participants Ethical Review Application Form

All parts of the below form must be completed. However in certain cases where sections are not relevant to the proposed study, clearly mark NA in the box provided.

Part A: Title of Project and Contact Information

Name

Aderonke Ojuolape Alaba

Student Number (if applicable)

x21238448

Email

x21238448@student.ncirl.ie

Status:

Undergraduate	☐
Postgraduate	☑
Staff	☐

Supervisor (if applicable)

Dr David Mothersill

Title of Research Project

An Evaluation of Racially Diverse Skilled Immigrants' Experiences of Career Advancement in the Irish HR industry

Category into which the proposed research falls (see guidelines)

Research Category A ☑
Research Category B ☐
Research Category C ☐

Have you read the NCI Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants?

Yes ☑
No ☐

Please indicate any other ethical guidelines or codes of conduct you have consulted

N/A

Has this research been submitted to any other research ethics committee?

Yes ☐
No ☑

If yes please provide details, and the outcomes of this process, if applicable:

N/A

Is this research supported by any form of research funding?

Yes ☐
No ☑

If yes please provide details, and indicate whether any restrictions exist on the freedom of the researcher to publish the results:

N/A

Part B: Research Proposal

Briefly outline the following information (not more than 200 words in any section).

Proposed starting date and duration of project

September 4 (9 months duration)

The rationale for the project

The purpose of this study stems from the interest of the writer to examine and document the experiences of skilled immigrants in the Irish HR labour market. This is given the fact that Ireland is becoming more diverse and it is important that immigrants are integrated into the society.

The research aims and objectives

The central aim and objective of the study is to explore the experiences of racially diverse HR skilled immigrants in the Irish labour market. The sub-objectives include documenting the experiences of the racially diverse skilled immigrants in terms of access into the Irish HR industry as well as their career progression in the workplace after gaining entry into the HR industry.

The research design

The cross-sectional, qualitative method will be adopted as it is the best approach to elicit responses required for the study. This is since the intention is to document the experiences of racially diverse HR skilled immigrants in Ireland's labour market which cannot be quantified. Semi-structured interviews, in particular, will be implemented to elicit responses.

The research sample and sample size

Please indicate the sample size and your justification of this sample size. Describe the age range of participants, and whether they belong to medical groups (those currently receiving medical treatment, those not in remission from previous medical treatment, those recruited because of a previous medical condition, healthy controls recruited for a medical study) or clinical groups (those undergoing non-medical treatment such as counselling, psychoanalysis, in treatment centres, rehabilitation centres, or similar, or those with a DSM disorder diagnosis).

The sample size is 8 respondents. This is believed to be sufficient to gather the information required since each participant is to provide in-depth knowledge on the research questions. Furthermore, it might be difficult recruiting more participants given that the study will specifically focus on immigrants in the Irish HR industry. The interview participants will be racially diverse HR skilled immigrants.

If the study involves a MEDICAL or CLINICAL group, the following details are required:

a) **Do you have approval from a hospital/medical/specialist ethics committee? If YES, please append the letter of approval. Also required is a letter from a clinically responsible authority at the host institution, supporting the study, detailing the support mechanisms in place for individuals who may become distressed as a result of participating in the study, and the potential risk to participants.**
If NO, please detail why this approval cannot or has not been saught.
b) **Does the study impact on participant's medical condition, wellbeing, or health? If YES, please append a letter of approval from a specialist ethics committee. If NO, please give a detailed explanation about why you do not expect there to be an impact on medical condition, wellbeing, or health.**

The nature of any proposed pilot study. Pilot studies are usually required if a) a new intervention is being used, b) a new questionnaire, scale or item is being used, or c) established interventions or questionnaires, scales or items are being used on a new population. If no such study is planned, explain why it is not necessary.

A pilot study will not be conducted given that the questions will be prepared based on literature and similar studies that have been conducted in the past, including those conducted in Ireland.

The methods of data analysis. Give details here of the analytic process (e.g. the statistical procedures planned if quantitative, and the approach taken if qualitative. It is not sufficient to name the software to be used).

The data obtained will be analysed using thematic analysis. The process is as follow:

Stage 1: Analysis will begin with transcribing the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews. After this, the data will be read in order to get familiar with the information.

Stage 2: Key features of the data of each of the respondents that are relevant to the research questions, will be highlighted and coded.

Stage 3: The codes will then be organized according to their themes and all data relating to a theme will be collated.

Stage 4: The themes will then be reviewed to ensure they capture the information contained in the codes as well the entire data set.

Stage 5: The themes will be defined and named based on the information it aims to project.

Stage 6: The report will then be written and would contain excerpts from the codes obtained from the data set. The extract included would be comprehensive and capture the idea of a particular theme being discussed at any point in time.

Study Procedure

Please give as detailed an account as possible of a participant's likely experience in engaging with the study, from point of first learning about the study, to study completion. State how long project participation is likely to take, and whether participants will be offered breaks. Please attach all questionnaires, interview schedules, scales, surveys, and demographic questions, etc. in the Appendix.

During the period of data collection, a consent form will first be given to each of the participants. This consent form will provide information regarding the nature of the study including the study title, purpose and information about the researcher. The consent form will also entail information relating to their freedom of choice to participate and to discontinue in the study at any point as well as information confirming their anonymity and confidentiality of any data they provide. The consent form will also inform the participant that the interview will be recorded and the result obtained from the report will be transcribed and published in the researcher's dissertation. Each participant will be informed that that they are to go through the consent form and reach out to the researcher in case of any enquiry. They are also to append their signatures to the form to indicate their consent.

At the beginning of the interview, the participant will be reminded of the information above. In addition, the participants will be informed that the interview will take 30–45 minutes of their time. They will also be informed that there will be no break given the short period for which the interview will go on with an apology for any inconvenience that could cause. Furthermore, they will be informed that no incentives will be provided.

At the start of the interview, the participant will be reminded that the session will be recorded but the information obtained will be used solely for research purpose. Furthermore, the data will be stored only for the period stipulated by NCI. In addition, the result will be published in the researcher's dissertation which will be available in NCI library in case they want access to it.

Thereafter, the interview will proceed, after which the participants will be thanked for taking the time to participate in the study.

Please identify any ethical issues or risks of harm or distress which may arise during the proposed research, and how you will address this risk. Here you need to consider the potential for physical risk, social risk (i.e. loss of social status, privacy, or reputation), outside of that expected in everyday life, and whether the participant is likely to feel distress as a result of taking part in the study. Debriefing sheets must be included in the appendix if required. These should detail the participant's right to withdraw from the study, the statutory limits upon confidentiality, and the obligations of the researcher in relation to Freedom of Information legislation. Debriefing sheets should also include details of helplines and avenues for receiving support in the event that participants become distressed as a result of their involvement in this study.

It is possible that by taking part in this research, the participants become emotionally distressed. This could particularly occur while they are answering questions that arouse difficult emotions or memories. To reduce this tendency, the participants will be reminded that they have the right to refuse to answer any question and to withdraw from the interview at any time they feel they cannot continue with the process. The participants will also be provided with a debriefing sheet that will include the details of professional helplines they can reach out to, in the case of an emotional distress. This is included in the appendices.

Do the participants belong to any of the following vulnerable groups?
(Please tick all those involved).

- ☐ Children;
- ☐ The very elderly;
- ☐ People with an intellectual or learning disability
- ☐ Individuals or groups receiving help through the voluntary sector
- ☐ Those in a subordinate position to the researchers such as employees
- ☐ Other groups who might not understand the research and consent process
- ☐ Other vulnerable groups

How will the research participants in this study be selected, approached and recruited? From where will participants be recruited? If recruiting via an institution or organisation other than NCI please attach a letter of agreement from the host institution agreeing to host the study and circulate recruitment advertisements/email etc.

The participants will be selected based on their compatibility with the inclusion criteria. The participants will be recruited using convenience and snowball sampling techniques, making use of social media to advertise the recruitment.

What inclusion or exclusion criteria will be used?

The inclusion criteria is having a legal residency right to live and work in Ireland; employment in an HR related position; and being from a non-European or non-North American country.

How will participants be informed of the nature of the study and participation?

Each participant will be provided with a document that would provide information about the study. The title of the study will be included in the document, the document will also have information on the purpose of the study as well as about the author of the research. The document will also inform the participants that the decision to participate in the research will rest solely on them.

Does the study involve deception or the withholding of information? If so, provide justification for this decision.

No

What procedures will be used to document the participants' consent to participate?

A consent form will be given to all the participants to append their signature as a consent to participate in the study. The form will contain information regarding the nature of the study including the study title, the purpose of the study and information about the author of the research, inclusive of the author's email address. The form would also inform the participants that the decision to participate in the research will rest solely on them.

At the beginning of the interview, the participants will also be verbally informed of the nature of the study and their consent will again be obtained.

Can study participants withdraw at any time without penalty? If so, how will this be communicated to participants?

Yes, study participants can withdraw at any time without penalty. Participants will be provided with a consent form that would inform them that participation in the research will be their sole decision and they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point in time.

The participants will at the beginning of the interview, be verbally reminded that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage during the interview.

If vulnerable groups are participating, what special arrangements will be made to deal with issues of informed consent/assent?

N/A

Please include copies of any information letters, debriefing sheets, and consent forms with the application.

Part D: Confidentiality and Data Protection

Please indicate the form in which the data will be collected.

☐ Identified   ☑ Potentially Identifiable   ☐ **De-Identified**

What arrangements are in place to ensure that the identity of participants is protected?

Identifiable information such as names will not be gathered during the interview. Furthermore, information obtained will be kept in confidence as once the interviews have been transcribed, the audio recordings will be permanently deleted. Anonymised data will be kept for 5 years and then deleted in accordance with National College of Ireland (NCI) research policy. This

information will be kept on a password protected file, on a password protected computer that only the author and her supervisor will have access to. Physical copies such as consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet in National College of Ireland.

Will any information about illegal behaviours be collected as part of the research process? If so, detail your consideration of how this information will be treated.

No

Please indicate any recording devices being used to collect data (e.g. audio/video).

A mobile phone will be used to do an audio recording in order to collect data from the participants. This is in order to capture everything the respondent commiunicates, both verbal and non-verbal cues, as they might be valuable for the purpose of the study.

Please describe the procedures for securing specific permission for the use of these recording devices in advance.

The participants will be provided with a consent form which in addition to other details that have been mentioned, will also inform them that the interview process will be recorded. They will be informed that the reason for voice recording is to capture all information as that would be difficult if only notes are taken. They will also be informed that the recordings will be used in an anonymous form.
The participants will also be verbally reminded that the interview process will be recorded just before the start of the interview.

Please indicate the form in which the data will be stored.

☐ Identified   ☐ Potentially Identifiable   ☑ **De-Identified**

Who will have responsibility for the data generated by the research?

The author of the study and NCI will be responsible for the secure storage of the data obtained during the research. The data will be kept only for 5 years post the study which is the relevant period stipulated by NCI.

Is there a possibility that the data will be archived for secondary data analysis? If so, has this been included in the informed consent process? Also include information on how and where the data will be stored for secondary analytic purposes.

No

If not to be stored for secondary data analysis, will the data be stored for 5 years and then destroyed, in accordance with NCI policy?

☑ Yes   ☐ No

Dissemination and Reporting

Please describe how the participants will be informed of dissemination and reporting (e.g. submission for examination, reporting, publications, presentations)?

The consent form that will be provided to the participants will inform them of how their data will be used. This will involve notifying them that the result of the research will be published in the researcher's dissertation as a partial fulfillment towards the completion of a master's degree.

At the beginning of the interview, after basic introduction of the researcher and the nature of the interview, the participants will be reminded that their results from the interview will be published in the researcher's dissertation which will be available in NCI's library. The participants will also be informed that the intention to use the data for publication also exists.

If any dissemination entails the use of audio, video and/or photographic records (including direct quotes), please describe how participants will be informed of this in advance.

The consent form that will be provided to each of the participants will explain that extracts from their interviews may be quoted in the researcher's dissertation as their responses are intended to provide answers to the study's research questions. Thus, there may be instances where the researcher will refer to certain statements a participant made in the course of the interview which will be found in the researcher's dissertation. They will however, be informed that such will be anonymized.

At the beginning of each interview, the participant will be reminded of the above information.

Part E: Signed Declaration

I confirm that I have read the NCI Ethical Guidelines for Research with Human Participants, and agree to abide by them in conducting this research. I also confirm that the information provided on this form is correct.

Signature of Applicant ___

Date   09/02/2024

Signature of Supervisor (where appropriate):

Date   _____

Any other information the committee should be aware of?