



How does diversity impact conflict between employees and relationships among employees

“A research on the role of diversity and conflict management in the retail industry for immigrants aged between 20-40 years in Dublin workplaces.”

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Submitted to the National College of Ireland
August 2024

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Project Title: How does diversity impact conflict between employees and relationships among employees
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Being as an immigrant employee working in Dublin retail sector, this dissertation gave me more information about diversity and conflict management.	As an immigrant employee who work in Dublin retail industry, this dissertation process has improved my awareness of diversity and conflict management.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank to my supervisor, Elaine Rossiter, who gave me her guidance and expertise and, who enlightened me in every step of my dissertation process.

Many thanks to my friends, who were always there for me, who has never hesitated to help me whenever I needed them.

I have appreciated all participants, who took part in this project, who gave their valuable time for being interviewee and contributed with their opinions in this study, it would not be feasible complete this project without them.

Above all, many thanks to my mother, who always gave her love and support to me in every aspect of my life.

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Abstract

The increment diverse workforce of the contemporary business world has made diversity and conflict management essential components of organisations. The research was conducted to explore the role of conflict management and diversity in employee relations in the retail industry. Conflict management and managing employee relations are significant to understanding diversity management in organizations. The aim of this study is to gain an insight of how diversity impacts employee relations and conflict management among 20-40-year-old immigrant employees in Dublin retail industry.

Semi-structured interviews were employed in the qualitative approach to collect more in-depth perspective from participants' individual experiences about diversity and conflict management. The participants are 9 immigrants, aged 20-40, who works in the Dublin retail industry. The theme in the coded documents has been developed by the application of interpretive phenomenological analysis. By giving labels or codes to real material extracted from transcripts of interviews, open coding facilitates the methodical classification and interpretation of qualitative data.

Along with the wide range of diverse workforce in Dublin retail industry, some participants shared positive experiences they came across in their workplace while others faced negative encounters and consequences.

The study findings deepen the comprehension of the complexity of the workplace diversity and conflict management in both academic and industrial areas. In addition, it underscores the challenges experienced by immigrant employees and offers ways to improve workplace inclusion and conflict resolution. The research analyses the core employee relations and conflict resolution that can take place with effective management of diversity in the workplace. The research is useful for organisations to analyse diversity, themes of diversity, management of employee relations with diversity, and the role of immigrant employees in diversity at the workplace.

Keywords: diversity, workplace diversity, conflict, conflict management, employee relations, immigrants, Dublin, and workplaces.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to ascertain a background for understanding impact of diversity on conflict management between employees and relations amongst them in the retail industry for immigrants.

Workplace diversity is referred to as a holistic concept, which indicates the differences that exist between people who are working inside the company (Dietz and Fasbender, 2022). It elaborates on complex sociological, psychological or physical attributes like political beliefs, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. According to research, current reviews on diversity have focused mostly to how it affects interaction between employees (Yadav and Lenka, 2020). The impacts of team diversity have been the focus of conflicting studies, although some research has suggested that diversity can be advantageous, others have opposed this finding (Gomez and Bernet, 2019).

This research aims to address some of these problems and offers a background on how does diversity and conflict management impact relationships among immigrant employees in the retail industry.

1.2. Background

For years, global population diversity has been enhanced by environmental, socioeconomic, technological and geopolitical factors. Additionally, these dynamics have changed consequently the composition of various societies and have influenced the way human interactions occur (Cletus *et al.*, 2018). The economic and sociocultural transformations along with economic liberalization, globalization and changing customer preferences have increased workforce diversity substantially and forced companies to make their workforce more diverse, competitive and innovative (Gomez and Bernet, 2019).

Farashah and Blomquist (2022) suggested that immigrant workers significantly contribute to global economic and social development. Warr and Nielsen (2018) have added that the success of a company relies on the team members that are involved in the process of development in terms of performance. The members belonging to various teams within the structure of the company are referred to as company assets (Warr and Nielsen, 2018). Presently, a huge amount of the workforce is engaging in those jobs which involve greater interactions and a certain level of expertise and communication skills to carry out their jobs effectively, considering the dynamic business nature (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2018).

In addition, an innovative workforce can be achieved by hiring various talented individuals from different backgrounds to provide better services and products to clients and customers. Diversity in the workplace is categorised into underlying and observable attributes. Observable attributes are nationality, gender, age, nationality and race; however, the underlying attributes are tenure, personality and education (Behlau *et al.*, 2023).

Research has showed that that group dynamics impact in the case of communication skills with those of different race or gender or other attributes, and their interpersonal relations and social interaction in companies. There was a potential relationship between level of social interaction and communication skills among employees, which significantly impacts on potential conflict in diverse teams (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2018).

Considering the aspects of conflicts, communication plays a vital role and is referred to as the significance of any company and the basis of success of any business to a higher extent that relies upon the effective and efficient communication (Musheke and Phiri 2021).

It has been found that there was a potential relationship between the level of social interaction and communication skills among the diverse employees, which significantly impacted the rise of potential conflict in diverse teams (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2018).

O'Neill and McLarnon (2018) found that the occurrence of conflict affects the process and negatively impacts the performance of company and employee's decision-making process, building consensus, team management and decision acceptance. Those team members, especially the immigrants who experience the friction and disagreement at their workplace tend to place blame on one another instead of concentrating on their work.

Mohanty and Mohanty (2018) also found that there is limited research present on the aspects of teamwork and its impact on diversity and conflict that are carried out in the service delivery companies. As an example, the majority of research studies have put their focus on areas like healthcare in which the teams are from multidisciplinary backgrounds with problems like professionalism, hierarchy and collegiality. However, banking and retail sectors are dependent heavily on potential teamwork. Considering the retail industry, many scholars have focused on assessing their teamwork performance and internal communication systems (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2018).

1.3. Research Objectives and Questions

Research in relation to diverse teams, found that the disagreements over responsibilities, and task allocations have been demonstrated to have a long lasting negative impact on team performance, and studies are addressing the components which contribute to rise of conflicts (Panditharathne and Chen, 2021). In addition to that, the link between the diversity and team performance is found to be affected significantly by the relationship based conflicts that are commonly faced by immigrants (Kong et al. 2022). If the workplace is not diverse, immigrants may have issues with other team members due to differences in viewpoints and ideas, which may result in conflicts because of the task. In various cases, this kind of task related conflict within a team is correlated positively with the diversity of the team in case of traits that are linked to the workplace (Toksöz, 2020). This study has focused on addressing the challenges faced by the immigrants in terms of diversity and conflict management in the retail industry.

1.3.1. Research Question

The study will address the below research question:

“What is the role of diversity and conflict management in the retail industry for immigrants aged between 20-40 years in Dublin workplaces?”

1.3.2. Research Aim & Objectives

Present research goal is to explore the role of diversity and conflict management in the retail industry for immigrants aged between 20- 40 years. Some of the objectives of the study include:

- To explore the role of conflict management and diversity in building employee relations in the retail industry
- To analyse the impact of diversity on the conflict between employees especially those conflicts which occur with immigrants
- To explore the challenges faced by immigrants in terms of diversity and conflict management that influence their work and relations with other employees
- To recommend the strategies to overcome the challenges faced by the workplace

1.4. Rationale for this Study

Research revealed that diversity in the workplace cannot be neglected and will consistently rise in the modern environment of business, which means employees will be able to possess a huge range of characteristics (Cletus *et al.*, 2018). As an outcome, it is important to achieve diversity in the workplace especially for the immigrants to overcome the challenges. Not only that, but

prejudice, resistance to change and assumptions are all too common in businesses and can hinder the complete integration of various employees in diverse workplace (Suveren, 2022). Due to this reason, the present research will contribute to the industry and academia to help overcome the challenges in terms of conflicts and their relation with team performance in the retail industry.

1.5. Methodology

For the purpose of this research, data will be gathered using qualitative approach through by conducting interviews. This method is chosen because it aligns with the nature of the research problem. Moreover, conducting interviews to obtain information will help to determine the cause and effect links between variables. When doing so, it is required to understand the motivations behind the choices made by research participants or the causes behind their beliefs and viewpoints (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

There will be semi structured interviews with a list of themes and questions to address. This implies that some questions in a given interview will be related to a particular workplace environment that is faced in relation to the research topic. Data will be recorded by audio recording the conversation due to the nature of the questions and following discussion (Saunders *et al.*, 2009).

1.6. Dissertation Structure

1.6.1. Chapter 1

Chapter 1 provides the background information related to the topic that is about the diversity impact on the conflict between employees and their relationships. An overview and an introduction of the research are given to readers in this chapter. The goal of the study is to address the gap in literature regarding the impact of diversity on conflict management in Dublin workplaces for immigrants. Research topic and research objectives have been established for this reason.

1.6.2. Chapter 2

Chapter 2 helps to explore and evaluate theoretical perspectives and existing knowledge on the topic objectives. Based on the research questions, an in depth and extended review of literature is covered in this chapter.

1.6.3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3 provides and explains research methodology of this study, which is qualitative approach through by conducting interviews. This chapter goes into considerable details about description of methodology, participants, data collections and analysis method.

1.6.4. Chapter 4

Chapter 4 provides findings based on the collected data. In order to have a deeper understanding of responses to the research question, it presents answers provided by the participants.

1.6.5. Chapter 5

Chapter 5 includes discussion of this research. This discussion provides justification for the dissertation findings or offers comparisons between results and existing research on related subjects. It presents comprehensive understanding of effectiveness and reliability of the research.

1.6.6. Chapter 6

Chapter 6 provides conclusion and recommendations which discuss the overall analysis of the study and justify results that helped to address the answer of given questions. It gives an overview of the research subject and the way this dissertation addresses it.

1.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided background information related to the topic that is about the diversity impact on the conflict between employees and their relationships. This is further expanded to explore the role of diversity and conflict management in the retail industry for immigrants. Exploring the background has helped in identification of issue for research based on the conflict management and diversity and their aspects of dealing immigrants in the workplace. With the identified problem, the research has designed the research question and objectives and has discussed the significance of study accordingly.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to give a high level examination of the body of research on diversity that will inform the reader on the subject's background and, in particular, how it affects team dynamics and employee relationships in an Irish business context.

An overview of what is included in this chapter; the first section gives introduction for literature review, second section provides information about cultural diversity and Dublin workplaces,

third section explains role of conflict management and diversity in building employee relations; which includes team cohesion and employee performance, fourth section gives an overview about impact of diversity on conflict management between employees; which includes navigating cultural differences, language barrier, discrimination and bias, identity and acculturation, workplace integration, conflict management style, economic and social pressure on immigrants, fifth section provides strategies to overcome the challenges faced by diverse workplaces, sixth section explains theoretical framework; which includes information/decision making theory and social categorisation theory.

The literature review will be used as a foundation to analyses a current state of knowledge regarding the research question, thereby emphasising the gaps that must be filled by the primary research, questions presented by the literature review will be investigated through primary research.

2.2. Cultural Diversity

2.2.1. What is Cultural Diversity?

Cultural diversity can refer as people who belong different generations, groups, ethnicities, races or geographical origins and working in same environment. Additional, cultural diversity is appreciating a mixed society, which is supported by different interests, skills and people (PennState, 2023). In different work settings employees are widely recognised and known for their different cultures which include language, behaviour, appearance, lifestyle and customs (Dale-Olsen and Finseraas, 2020). Furthermore, diversity in workplace could be referred as a holistic concept, because it differentiates employees and their relationship and how their relationship effects productivity at work (Dale-Olsen and Finseraas, 2020). According to Hunter (2023), basic concept applicable in workplaces of Ireland is based on equality and diversity which contained Employment Equality Act (1998-2015). Cultural diversity standards have been set in terms of discrimination and uniqueness covering nine grounds to provide adequate support such as gender, marital or family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, and diversity communities (Traveler communities) (Duskova, 2023).

2.2.2. Cultural Diversity and Dublin Workplaces

The relationship amongst employees associated with an organisation is considered the most basic component for positive growth of organizations, healthy and cooperative work environment enables employees to work effectively with their fullest attention and interest (Salas-Vallina *et al.*, 2021). According to research of Soriano, (2022), change in the

demographics in terms of diversity, race and ethnicity leads to the change in relationships between employees by transforming the workplaces into more diverse organisations.

According to Soriano, (2022), employees who work in diverse workplaces have experienced more ways to learn and adopt innovative strategies and effective planning which engage them in groups that support minorities and societies. Moreover, organisations tend to hire employees who have diverse beliefs, belong to diverse cultures, backgrounds and races because they can interact with each other more effectively, having behaviours and attitudes towards understanding of work and workplace (Soriano, 2022).

The benefits of cultural diversity cannot be overstated in the workplace because it increases performance and employee engagement (Adnan, Bhatti and Baykal, 2022). Additionally, Hunter (2023), has found that cultural diversity in the workplace also results in providing effectiveness in the financial performance of employees, performances of the teams, innovation, employee engagement in workplaces collectively.

According to Hunter, (2023), workplaces of Dublin have shown drastic change, they introduce a multicultural work environment which promotes and embraces cultural diversity, there are benefits of cultural diversity that have been incorporated with Dublin workplaces to provide ultimate support and enable employees to maintain healthy relationships. Ireland's business culture is deemed the "easiest to understand" in Europe to foreign employees, according to global research, it is said that Irish work culture is approachable and simple to adapt to (Dublin City Council, 2024).

2.3. Role of Conflict Management and Diversity in Building Employee Relations

2.3.1. Role of Conflict Management in Diverse Workplaces

Conflict can be defined as a mixture of good, bad and uncertain opinions of people have differences in ideas and thoughts especially related to certain events, in order to resolve to crucial matters of business, which means conflict management plays an important role in maintaining standards of diversity in workplace (Omene, 2021). Conflict management also can be defined as managing disagreements in terms of goals, interests, and values of different groups, communities and employees such as immigrants working in same workplace (Francis, Enyinna and Callista, 2021).

There is no doubt that globalization and immigration have changed the dynamics of workplaces and create links between people from different cities, countries or religions (Inegbedion *et al.*,

2020). Developed countries have talented immigrants in their workforce, however there are many negative aspects related how diversity has impact well-being of these employees and overall performance of immigrants (Aida Hajro *et al.*, 2021). There are many realistic reasons that become sources for rising of conflict among diverse employees, that affected their relationships in workplace, like cultural differences, lack of support or discrimination, which emphasizes why conflict management is required (Ahmed, Leung, and Ojo, 2022). Additionally, Dale-Olsen and Finseraas, (2020) have found that rise of conflict arises because of diverse culture in workplaces has affected productivity.

2.3.2. Role of Conflict Management in Team Cohesion and Employee Performance

Employees are the workforce of industries and organizations; there is no industry can run and achieve its goals without strong and adequate employees (Ali and Anwar, 2021). According to Babatunde *et al.*, (2023), employees' performance is influenced by a variety of circumstances, and one of the main cause in workplace is conflict. Every human being is in competition with others in terms of success, power and recognition; conflict might arise on the basis of these different causes (John-Eke and Akintokunbo, 2020).

Conflict management contributes a lot to building relationships of employees (Francis, Enyinna and Callista, 2021). It ensures that none of the parties such as employer or employee have faced any lack of communication during resolving critical situations, additional it ensures that there will not be any extending long-term detrimental effect on productivity in workplace (Babatunde *et al.*, 2023).

Productivity is an outcome of healthy relationships amongst employees regardless of the native citizens or immigrants (Maqsoom *et al.*, 2023). It requires time, investment, dedication, resources and effective team performance which can only be achieved by a diverse work culture (Hardcopf, Liu, and Shah, 2021).

Furthermore, conflict management plays a vital role in bringing team together (Maqsoom *et al.*, 2023). According to Labour Guide, (2024), conflict and diversity management enables an idea of effective recruitment process which is contribute to team building; in same sense, conflict management ensures that every employee in business has received equal treatment and opportunities and there is no discrimination on the basis of race, age, gender or any other ground, which leads strong teams in workplace.

A detailed research question emerging from exploring the role of conflict management and diversity in building employee relations in the retail industry, which will be addressed in the primary research.

2.4. Challenges

2.4.1. Impact of Diversity and Conflict Management on Employee Relations

Over the past years, diversity has been a constant part of industries especially retail industry in which a large amount of employment has been covered by migrants. Additionally, industries have adopted effective strategies to support and maintain multicultural environment (Ozgen, 2021.). Employees working in retail industries, especially in Dublin workplaces are known to handle different perspectives which help them to adopt new and innovative ideas to perform well in their workplaces (Hunter, 2023).

According to the research of Liu, Zhu and Wang, (2023), immigrant employees are more likely to face several challenges in their workplaces as compared to native employees because of their ethnicity or racial backgrounds. Additionally, they are more likely to get affected by bias and inaccurate judgmental opinions by other employees which negatively impact their relationships with others in workplace (Parigoris *et al.*, 2024). Conflict management has a great influence on relationship of the employees in any organisation as it boosts good communications skills, cooperation, and time management amongst employees (Omene., 2021).

According to Jones *et al.*, (2021), many factors can build healthy relationships among employees at their workplaces such as effective communication, understanding each other, social gatherings and freedom of speaking. However, immigrants also faced a lack of relationships and found themselves isolated and lacking confidence while engaging in activities of organisations (Adams *et al.*, 2020).

Practices are the main source to initiate the diversity training amongst employees for benefit of their relationships. These practices involve adequate plans, like having a company culture which support diversity, or mentorship from higher associates in industries to obtain desirable outcome (Parigoris *et al.*, 2024).

2.4.2. Immigrants' Experiences Navigating Cultural Differences

Cultural norms are directly associated with social interaction, communication style, work ethics and attitudes towards each other (Di Stefano *et al.*, 2019). Immigrants experience navigating cultural differences because some individual's cultures value direct communication, while other individuals prefer indirect or implicit communication. These differences can lead to

misunderstanding or misinterpretation and conflict in workplace, which means misinterpretation and inefficiencies in communication are the key challenges that immigrants face most of the time (Tharenou and Kulik, 2020).

2.4.3. Language Barrier

Immigrants always come across with challenges; language barrier is one of the key challenges that create hurdles for employees to fit in the workplace; dominant language in the workplace plays an important role in enhancing the performance of employees (Ertorer, *et al.*, 2022) In same way, limited language proficiency in the workplace can lead to miscommunication as well as affect the confidence level of the immigrants; due to this reason, immigrants may prefer social isolation and not willing to involve in employee's engagement activities (Rabiul and Yean, 2021). These barriers significantly influence employee performance and their assigned duties (Guo, 2018). The organisation could suffer from language barriers in terms of diversity and conflict management and that influence immigrants' work and their relationship with other employees (Ertorer, *et al.*, 2022)

2.4.4. Immigrants Face Discrimination and Bias

Immigrants deal with discrimination and biases within the workplace in context of explicit (describes something that is very clear) or implicit (something that is understood, but not described clearly based on assumption) (Holmes, 2018). In organisations or industries colleagues or workers and supervisors' approaching way to immigrants might not a good and does not help them in providing guidance, leave them lack of recognition for their contributions or exclusion them from key projects (Vernby and Dancygier, 2019). Immigrants often experience this type of treatment within workplace can lead to an unfriendly environment that affects job satisfaction and mental health, and poor relationship between other employees (Esses, 2021).

2.4.5. Identity and Acculturation

There are many encounters that immigrants face in the workplace, one of the key challenges is to create a balance between personal and professional identities (Farashah and Blomquist, 2022). Work environment needs to maintain cultural identity, in new workplace, immigrants always face difficulties to adapt dominant culture of the organisation (Lefrid *et al.*, 2022). The requirements for adapting to dominant culture refer to process of acculturation with an organisation. This process may cause stress for immigrants (Harrison *et al.*, 2019). This process

of acculturation can also lead to identity conflict that outcome in terms of loss of cultural heritage (Lefrid *et al.*, 2022).

2.4.6. Workplace Integration

Immigrants and organisations need to work on or put more effort in order to effectively integrate immigrants within the workplace (Hajro *et al.*, 2019). Organisational requirements could be reinforced by an effective support system for this integration, oppositely a lack of structured support systems can be a reason for low engagement of immigrants in organisational integration (Hajro *et al.*, 2019). Many organisations suffer from a lack of structured support systems, a lack of diversity training for employees, and insufficient mentorship opportunities; these ineffective integration approaches are not suitable for immigrants to contribute to organisation (Ertorer *et al.*, 2022).

2.4.7. Conflict Management Styles

Cultural backgrounds significantly influence conflict management styles, immigrants' approach to handling with obstacles within the workplace may be totally different from other employees (Zhao *et al.* 2019). Immigrants may have different tactics for handling conflict, and sometimes cannot meet the usual conflict management styles; for instance, some cultures prioritise agreement, they do not prefer direct confrontation, on the other hand, usual conflict management styles may value direct resolution. If the conflict management style is not managed properly, can lead to misinterpretations and miscommunication (Labrague *et al.*, 2018).

2.4.8. Immigrants Face Economic and Social Pressure

There are many challenges for immigrants within new country, these challenges are the main reason for increasing the stress level of the immigrant; which involves several factors such as lack of support from family members in a new place, financial instability, and navigating legal and immigration issues (Dheer and Lenartowicz, 2018). Immigrants deal with economic and social pressures that influence their focus, performance, and interactions with colleagues at work. (Dheer and Lenartowicz, 2018) Therefore, they may prefer social isolation which influences their work and relationships with other employees (Dheer and Lenartowicz, 2018)

In the primary research, it is going to be analysed that the impact of diversity on conflict between employees especially those conflicts which occur with immigrants, additionally it is going to be explored that challenges faced by immigrants in terms of diversity and conflict management that influence their work and relations with other employees.

2.5. Strategies to Overcome the Challenges Faced by Workplace

Immigrants face many challenges in terms of diversity and conflict management; these complex obstacles not only affect their work but also their relationships with other employees in work environment (Grzymala-Kazłowska *et al.*, 2018). Colakoglu *et al.* (2018) mentioned that immigrant employees are an important source for organisations same as other workers; their issues, problems and challenges need to be addressed; it is the responsibility of the organisation.

Immigrants and organisations need to put significant effort into addressing challenges. They could focus more on creating an inclusive, supportive, and equitable work environment in order to overcome the challenges faced by immigrants, therefore different strategies could be implemented (Hajro *et al.*, 2019).

To develop a healthy work environment, organisations adopt a diversity training program, its objective is to improve the employee's awareness about different kinds of diversity, increase value of differences among workforces and provide strategies to boost employees' interpersonal skills and communication skills across diversity; this approach helps to build a positive and inclusive work environment (Devine and Ash, 2022). Main purpose of training programs is to generate an effective system where all the employees can easily enhance their performance and take part in company's success (Colakoglu *et al.*, 2018).

When it proposed strategies related to diversity, language plays an essential role in cultural diversity as a fundamental aspect (Rabiul and Yean, 2021). Therefore, along with a diversity training program, immigrants must be provided language training and communication workshops to improve their language skills (Ertorer, *et al.*, 2022). It could serve as a tool for communication for communicating opinions, concepts and values that enhance immigrants' confidence level and ability to engage with other employees. In addition, translation services or multilingual support can bridge communication gaps and enhance employee relationships (Li and Sah, 2019).

Discrimination and biases within the workplace can develop because of lack of ability to engage with colleagues and inadequate policies. Organisations need to consider more about its dynamics and properly evaluate the activities to overcome these types of unethical behaviours (Vernby and Dancygier, 2019). Strict anti-discrimination policies and their enforcement are important for reporting and addressing discrimination and bias, in order to overcome

discrimination, workplace develops regular training sessions on anti-discrimination policies and defines clear protocols to make an unbiased workplace (Ontiveros, 2018).

Organisations also need to adopt innovative yet considerate conflict resolution strategies (Zhao *et al.*, 2019). Using efficient techniques like fostering collaboration, compromise active listening, conflict resolution, and effective conflict approach to management may be used to accommodate diverse cultural backgrounds (Labrague *et al.*, 2018). It is imperative for organisations to acknowledge the diversity of conflict management approaches and offer conflict resolution training. Additionally, immigrants may benefit from cultural orientation in understanding workplace norms and expectations (Harrison *et al.*, 2021).

Detailed recommendations for the strategies to overcome the challenges faced by the workplace will be addressed in the primary research.

2.6. Theoretical Framework

2.6.1. Information/Decision Making Theory

A theoretical framework explored theories and their applications on cultural diversity and its impact on immigrants. Information/Decision Making Theory shows benefits of the cultural diversity in workplaces (Zhu *et al.*, 2021). This theory promotes heterogeneity which provided freedom to take decisions and adopt their cultural norms in any other cultural settings without any hesitation (Zhu *et al.*, 2021). Theoretical analysis considered every aspect that is related to diversity and its emerging conflicts that influences decision-making skills of the immigrants who are working in the Dublin workplaces (Hartono *et al.*, 2020).

2.6.2. Social Categorisation Theory

Social Categorisation Theory covers different aspects and perspectives of the employee relations in workplace, this term refers to relationship between employees and employers (Rhodes and Baron, 2019). This theory can be implemented to evaluate the impact of diversity and conflict management between employees as well as it is also useful to mainstream perspectives to discuss the factors that influence employee behaviour within organisations (Köllen, 2021). This theory shows that diversity negatively impacts effectiveness of teams and organisations (Scheepers and Ellemers, 2019). It is a cognitive process in which individuals classify themselves and others into social groups based on shared attributes or characteristics; variations in the demographic structure of teams would increase conflict, weaken collaboration, and hinder effective dialogue (Scheepers and Ellemers, 2019).

2.7. Conclusion

This literature review examined the complex impact of diversity on employee conflict and relationships within organisations. Previous research has highlighted fundamental aspects which are associated with diversity. The need for further research is evident to develop strategies to mitigate conflict and leverage the benefits of diversity. Diversity presents challenges and offers considerable opportunities for growth and innovation in the workplace. The findings from this review underline the importance of continued research to develop solutions of diversity impacts on employee interactions. This will ultimately contribute to effective diversity management practices in the workplace.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter explains the approach used in this study to examine the effects of diversity on conflict and employee relations in the retail industry. It outlines the context within which the research will be conducted by stating the research philosophy, approach and design. Ethical issues concerning the research study, the ways through which data were collected, and the expected limitations to the study will also be discussed in this chapter in preparation for the overall analysis and results.

3.2. Objective of the Research/Research Aim

Concisely, this research aims to examine diversity and conflict management for enhancing employee relations in the retail business by targeting immigrants between age of 20-40 years. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of diversity on conflict between employees and consequently define the difficulties of diversity and conflicts which immigrants experience in organizations. The research objectives are as follows:

- To investigate the importance of conflict management and diversity in building employee relations.
- To understand the influence of diversity brings to the general conflicts within the workforce, especially immigrants.
- To investigate the problems of immigrants regarding diversity and conflicts, which impact their work and interaction with other staff members.

3.3. Research Framework

This research methodology framework entails a well-ordered structure for this study adopting the ‘Research Onion’ model as postulated by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009). This framework is based on the interpretivism philosophy that tries to understand people’s behavior through experience. The methodology analysis is carried out along the inductive lines so that generalizations may be produced from the study data collected at the time of the research (Iovino and Tsitsianis, 2020). The exploratory strategy helps conduct an extensive analysis of the research topic, how does diversity impact workplace conflict and employee relations (Mardiana, 2020). To capture a deeper understanding, of more descriptive data, face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used as the major data collection tools. Altogether, this framework allows for the systematic and logically coherent analysis of the effects of diversity on employee relations and their conflicts within organizational setting.

3.4. Research Philosophy

Research philosophy elaborates the methods of expansion and creation of knowledge. There are various research philosophies researcher can adopt based on research topic and area of investigation (Bryman, 2016). Considering epistemology, researcher stance can be positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism. Positivism refers to testing knowledge, theories and hypothesis based on available facts (Sakeran, 2007). Post-positivism includes not only acceptance or rejection of theories but also develop new theories and models by challenging the existing models and theories. Interpretivism refers to explore new knowledge based on inductive approach; and pragmatism can be adopted when researcher focuses on mixed method study by combining few choices of quantitatively and few approaches of qualitative research design (Creswell, 2013).

For this research it was decided that the most appropriate approach would be interpretivism, as it considers social phenomena as social constructs influenced by individuals, it enables the understanding of organizational experiences. Interpretivism presupposes that human activity cannot be described using quantitative data only and that it is necessary to look into how people define their experiences (Iovino and Tsitsianis, 2020). This approach is rather useful while analyzing variety and conflicts inside the workplace since it allows researchers to explore characteristic of employees’ stories (Akella and Eid, 2021). Since interpretivism will help to define the many qualitative facts that characterize employees’ attitudes and feelings related to workplace diversity problems, it may be adapted through this study (Bianchi, 2021). Interviews that are semi-structured could be used to provide participants with an opportunity to express

their opinions (Deshpande and Magerko, 2024). This philosophical approach not only supports the goals and objectives of the study but also contributes credibility and reliability to the record by accurately reflecting the interactions between employees in a multicultural workplace (Wall and Palvia, 2022). Finally, the interpretive framework will become the start line to take a look at the complex connection among diversity and conflict (Garvey and Jones, 2021).

3.5. Research Methodology Approach

This research is underpinned by an inductive methodology approach which is very relevant for a detailed analysis of the complexity of diversity and conflict management in workplace. Thus, the inductive approach would involve the gathering of unique impressions and perceptions of employees from the qualitative data, which would help facilitate the recognition of trends and patterns that can be generalized on employee relations and conflicts encountered in their working environment (Mardiana, 2020). In contrast, another approach is deductive approach which has the ability to explain casual relationships between the concepts and variables. This approach gives possibility to measure the concepts on a quantitative basis (Pelser-Carsten and Bunt, 2023).

Basing the study on the inductive research approach is suitable because there is relatively limited literature on this subject in the context of the dynamics of workers especially immigrant workers in the retail sector. It is useful in the sense that one can modify the inquiry about the themes and questions that emerge during the data collection process (Pelser-Carsten and Bunt, 2023). Thus, by adopting an objective that looks at the specifics of participants' personal experiences, the research can reveal the essence of conflicts and relationships among employees.

The adaptation of the inductive approach also encourages the participants to be the focus of the research hence the data collected is usually enriched (Bingham and Witkowsky, 2022). By conducting face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the participants, it is possible to get the participants' individual experiences and attitudes towards diversity and conflicts in the workplace, which is always beneficial in understanding the issue in question to be as multifaceted as possible (Iovino and Tsitsianis, 2020).

Research methods can be classified into three categories: exploratory, descriptive and casual. Causal research evaluates the relationship of two variables; independent variables and dependent variables. Causal research elaborates the impact of one variable of another variable

(Creswell and Poth, 2018). Descriptive research is another approach, characterized reality is the goal of descriptive research. In its most basic form, descriptive research leaves explanation and assessing to the reader or other disciplines, the goal of descriptive research is neither theory creation or the formulation of hypotheses (Lars and Van Der Voordt, 2002).

Exploratory research was selected as the main approach in this study due to many reasons as discussed below. This research decision was influenced by the realisation that the literature on diversity and conflict management in organisations is quite scarce and complex especially concerning the role of immigrant employees in the organisational retail sector. This was the case since exploratory research is suitable for studying fields that lack prior knowledge, which can help in establishing new patterns and information (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Also, exploratory research doesn't restrict the type of data collected and is useful when responding to new themes and depth of the participants' reaction during face-to-face semi structured interviews (Mardiana, 2020).

3.6. Data Collection Approach

This dissertation used a qualitative approach, which means the emphasis is made on obtaining extensive information on the employees' experiences and views on issues related to diversity and conflicts at the workplace (Abdelhakim, 2021). Qualitative techniques are relevant for this study since understanding social phenomena, which are often difficult to measure quantitatively, is the goal of this research. Due to the focus on personal experiences, this study hopes to identify the complex interactions of diversity and conflict management in the workplace, (Vindrola-Padros and Johnson, 2020). This type of research approach is crucial when studying human interaction from a qualitative perspective in today's dynamic environment, especially in the retail industry where interpersonal relations are vital for operation (Khan and MacEachen, 2022).

In contrast, another approach for the data collection is quantitative approach, which means utilizing the techniques of the natural sciences, quantitative research generates real facts and numerical data. It uses mathematical, computational, and statistical techniques to demonstrate a case and effect link between two variables. Quantitative research is based in questionnaires and close ended questions may asked from respondents (Ahmad *et al.*, 2019).

3.7. Data Collection Methods

Considering this study, research technique was face-to-face semi-structured interview. This makes it easier to design interview questions and focus areas because the researcher can modify the form and contents of the interview as the process to include or extend any emergent theme or any perceived depth of participants' replies (Mezmir, 2020). Semi-structured interviews are more flexible than structured or unstructured ones because while there are set questions that the interviewer asks the participants are allowed to share their opinions in their own words, and as such they help in getting more comprehensive data (Delgado-Hito and Romero-Garcia, 2021).

Qualitative approaches such as the application of semi-structured interviews are especially useful when researching specific individuals' life experiences which are essential in examining the effects of diversity regarding employee relations (Annink, 2017). The interview was based on ten consent-based, semi-structured questions that were enable the interviewer to gain an understanding of the participants' diversity, samples of common conflicts that they experienced, and their organizations' conflict management approaches (Thompson Burdine, Thorne and Sandhu, 2021). The questions were established from the literature review and which were covered topics of contemporary interest regarding diversity and relations between employees. Strength of the semi-structured interview is it allows for an elaboration of certain areas that may emerge from the flow of the conversation. The participants are more likely to share everyday experiences and therefore the data generated by the method is richer (Blandford, 2013).

This research would also comprise a cover letter that the participants received, outlined the rationale behind the study, and the participant's role, and inclusive of a confidentiality statement. In written form, before the participants completed the interviews, they had received a cover letter in which the goal of the study was explained, it was expressed appreciation for their willingness to participate in the study and informed them that all information they provided will be anonymous (Edwards and Holland, 2020). It is necessary to mention that such openness is essential to foster trustful relations and to exclude any possibility of deceptive replies, which can harm data accuracy (Burgoon, Buller and Floyd, 2001). The interviews conducted with participants were analyzed and categorized to derive prominent patterns and susceptible themes regarding diversity, conflict and employee relations.

Ensuring the credibility and validity of the data collected; a pilot study has done on a few participants to assess the validity of the interview questions used (Gioia, 2021). This pilot study revealed any difficulties or uncertainties in the questions so that the main data collection can be carried out without significant issues. The pilot study has assisted in fine-tuning the interview questions to assess any complications or obscurity with the questions. This approach increased the likelihood of the questions formulated being relevant and directed towards the achievement of the research objectives hence enabling the data to be gathered rightfully.

3.8. Sample Selection

Sample selection is another critical element of the research methodology since it determines the credibility and extensiveness of the results of the study. Therefore, for this research, the non-probability sampling technique were used specifically purposive sampling. The method enables the researcher to recruit participants, who are most likely to contribute useful information regarding their experiences and attributes, which is critical in determining the effects of diversity and conflict in workplaces (Lakens, 2022). Target audience were people between the ages of 20 and 40; who employed in the retail industry. This age group is important since it includes a population that encounter different places of work and conflicts related to work (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). To a greater extent, the participants were from several retail organizations to control sample bias in Dublin.

According to the literature, non-probability sampling is most commonly used in qualitative research because it provides the researcher with the opportunity to reach out to special groups and obtain more unique data concerning the participants' experience (Lehdonvirta *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, through purposive sampling, this study targets participants who have had incidents involving diversity conflicts at the workplace to achieve worthwhile data. Recruitment was done, either personally or with the help of organizations, that assemble lists of people who was willing to participate in the study.

3.9. Data Presentation and Analysis

Qualitative data to be extracted from the semi-structured interviews were presented and analyzed by threading technique known as thematic analysis. It enables the researchers to categorise, describe and systematically explain patterns (themes) within the data in participants' own experiences and views of diversity and conflict management practices in the workplace (Vindrola-Padros and Johnson, 2020). Initially, the recorded interviews were

transcribed to the extent to avoid the loss of any information provided by the participants. The operations of this transcription are significant to ensure that the information is preserved and analyzed properly. After the transcription process, the data was read several times to familiarise the researcher with the content and to start sorting codes that depict essential characteristics of the particulars of the data (Maxwell, 2021). After coding, the researcher put together the codes into categories which was captured the general experience of the participants in their own words. This is a cyclic process with the theming process including refining and revising the themes to fit the study objectives as well as the collected data. These final themes were then be accompanied by quotations from the participants to offer additional descriptions that the reader will find comprehensive of the participants' outlooks and histories (Nassaji, 2020).

The main method of data presentation was therefore include narrative text with the use of tables or charts where the researcher deems fit to enrich the presentation and description of the findings and relationship between the themes. This positive correlation between qualitative and quantitative outcomes further increases the readability and overall comprehensiveness of results as appreciated by the readers (Le and Schmid, 2022).

3.10. Ethical Considerations

Issues of ethics remain a crucial factor when undertaking research, most especially, when people will be involved. In line with the principles of professional conduct when conducting this study, this study followed set ethical standards to work towards presenting credible research results while fairly protecting participant's rights and best interests. For this study and as part of the general ethical considerations for any research, consent, privacy and withdrawal rights are the cornerstones of this research (Pietila *et al.*, 2020). Assented participants do consent to participate in the particular research study after being given specific details concerning the aim of the research, activities required in the research process, advantages and disadvantages of the study, and any possible risks involved. Copies of a more elaborate cover letter was forwarded to all the participants; the letter stated the objectives of the research, the fact that it is voluntary and that everyone's identity will be kept a secret. It helps develop a trusting relationship and be free during the interviews through the disclosures (Akdeniz, Yardımcı and Kavukcu, 2021).

Confidentiality is the other ethical consideration that needs to be exercised at all times. The personal attributes of participants were disguised by giving them nicknames and excluding any features that might lead to their recognition from the overall data analysis and the reports

generated. All collected data was kept confidential and restricted to the research team's only interest (Char, Abramoff and Feudtner, 2020). This is because the main idea of research is to have participants open and give their honest opinions to the researcher. Furthermore, the participants were briefed on their right to withdraw from the study at any of the mentioned stages without any repercussions. This right helps in making the individuals to be at ease to answer the question that the researcher wants to be answered and also it helps in protecting the rights of the individuals to be independent in their responses. This right was reinforced during the consenting process and was specifically mentioned throughout the interviews. Permission from the ethical consideration/committee of the respective institutions were obtained before the data collection process begins (Pietila *et al.*, 2020).

3.11. Limitations

It is acknowledged that there are always restrictions in any research work that can influence the study outcomes and their applicability to other contexts. Admitting these restrictions is necessary to set the conditions and boundaries of the study. As is the case with any research on the topic of diversity and its effects on conflict and relations among employees in the retail sector, there are certain limitations which need to be addressed. First, the research used a qualitative approach and even though such an approach focuses on obtaining in-depth information, it may not be very generalizable (Newman, Guta, and Black, 2021). The findings were therefore be restricted to the perception of the particular number of participants within the limited number of retail organizations in Dublin. Therefore, the conclusions may not reflect the general population of the workforce or the other sectors and regions. However, since qualitative research doesn't aim to provide statistics across different settings, it can be considered to be holistic in its depth, but not necessarily in its width (Safdar, Banja and Meltzer, 2020). Second, the use of semi-structured interviews as the main data, collection technique adds biases to the study. Respondents may give responses that are likely to be perceived as acceptable by society or may refrain from stating their feelings because of fear of being sacked or transferred to another company. This dynamic can affect the validity of their response and the quality of results that have been obtained in terms of their experience and perception of diversity and conflict (Maddux *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, the sample size used in the current study is appropriate for qualitative research; however, the range of sample diversity can be limited to the retail industry only. While purposive sampling aims at identifying participants with experience on specific issues, the final sample may not have the diverse demographics or

employment levels needed for the investigation, thus, narrowing down the findings' generalizability.

3.12. Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has described the methodological approach to studying the relationship between diversity and conflict management and the state of affairs with the employees in the retail sector. The study takes an exploratory, qualitative viewpoint and aims to rely on face-to-face semi-structured interviews to grasp the participants' experiences; 20-40-year-old employees are included in the sample. The study is expected to help explore how diversity and conflict affect organizational relations in particular reference to immigrant workers. The ethical considerations about informing the subjects and their anonymity have been taken into consideration to ensure the study has been conducted ethically. In some ways, this work is not without certain drawbacks like introducing possible bias and issues in generalization.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1. Introduction

The qualitative analysis has increased the integration of the research dynamics, as the interpretive methodology has developed to address the limitations of the research methodology to answer the semi-structure questions from the employees working in the Dublin workplace. The research is conducted in regard to explore the factors of diversity which impacts the well-being of teams working collectively in any organisation as it is considered as the valuable aspects in terms of providing advantageous benefits as diversity increases the socioeconomic, technological, environmental and geopolitical factors and positively influenced the human interaction.

Additionally, the important consequences of diversity and employee performance based on the relationship between conflicts immigrant employees face because the environment does not support a diverse culture, which directly reflected in disagreements and poor employee performance within teams. As a result of conflicts and disagreements over opinions and ideas that have the potential to collectively damage functionality of the organisation.

The in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted from 9 participants who are currently working in the Dublin workplaces in order to explore their understanding related to the impacts of diversity in the Dublin workplaces. The consent has been taken from the participants on the

prior basis and interviews has been conducted under the ethical consideration and permission was taken for audio recording. Additionally, the interview based on approximately 20 to 30 minutes consists of 8 qualitative open-ended questions to answer the required questions.

The coding documents' theme has been developed by the application of interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). By giving labels or codes to sections of actual information extracted from interview transcripts, open coding also facilitates the methodological classification and interpretation of qualitative data. The process of axial coding allows researcher to identify patterns, themes, and insights of the conducted research for the thematic study.

4.2. Demographics of Participants

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Respondents	Respondents Age	No. of Years of Experience	Residential Area	Level of Education	Monthly Income	Location
Respondent 1	25 years	1	Dublin	Master's degree	1200 Euro	Dublin
Respondent 2	37	1	Dublin	Bachelor's degree	1500 Euro	Dublin
Respondent 3	29	1.5	Dublin	Bachelor's degree	1900 Euro	Dublin
Respondent 4	35 years	1	Dublin	Master's degree	1400 Euro	Dublin
Respondent 5	24 years	1	Dublin	Master's degree	1850 Euro	Dublin

Respondent 6	25 years	1	Dublin	Master's degree	1900 Euro	Dublin
Respondent 7	26 years	1.5	Dublin	Master's degree	1400 Euro	Dublin
Respondent 8	36 years	2.5	Dublin	Master's degree	1900 Euro	Dublin
Respondent 9	28 years	1.5	Dublin	Master's degree	2000 Euro	Dublin

4.3. Coding Documents

Table 2: Coding Documents Based on Transcriptions

Transcriptions Coding Sheet			
Interviews	Open Coding	Axial Coding	Themes
Interview 1	<p>By the conversation, the language barrier creates conflicts because some colleagues are from other places, other countries, having different nationality and background.</p> <p>The language barrier in the workplaces is not just about vocabulary or grammar things and also about like, I would say, specifically like slangs, because, you know, every different place has their own slangs in that area, like in Ireland.</p>	<p>Language become the barrier in the communication of the employees, the cultural norms are being affected by the prevalence of non-diverse culture.</p>	<p>Immigrants faced language barrier while working in Dublin workplaces.</p>

Interview 2	<p>A new member from Spain feels like a bias regarding Russians. I do not know why but she joined the team to me it was kind of a joke that “You are Russian, you are so rude.”. For about the human beings, if we interact with the customer, we interact with each other in our teams. And we do have sometimes conflict because of like different backgrounds, what she (manager) usually does like, these days that we guys here, all we are the only team and all we are here to work and make money. However, we have to respect each other and respect the background of each other’s and our traditions. I can experience working in Ireland and the differences is that everything in Ireland is grand (meaning good) as compared to other countries.</p>	<p>Different employees working in the same workplaces irrespective of their cultural norms, language and other traditional aspects have not the right to destroy someone else personal well-being by hurting them with jokes. Starting the conflict by own self in terms of fights or exchanging bad comments is not an appropriate manner while working in any organisation.</p>	<p>The first and most important key rule of diverse workplace is to respect with each other and every culture and traditions without hurting their personal sentiments.</p>
Interview 3	<p>In my working experience I have worked with five or six Latin American people, the teamwork and the collaboration is suffered due to the language barriers of new hiring of the company in order to understand</p>	<p>Extra workload in the organisation has affected the wellbeing of employees as</p>	<p>Treat the immigrant employees with dignity and respect and offer them work most suited their capacity and abilities.</p>

	<p>each other, this process waste our time.</p> <p>In some countries people tend to do what they been paid for as they do not want to do extra work or just to help others but some, while the other cultures are more tolerant to do extra work, if they are told to do if their employer talk to them like to do something apart from their core job.</p>	<p>employees can only do the work that have assigned and paid for. The positive employers do not overburden their employees and trying to understand each other.</p>	
Interview 4	<p>More training and advanced training sessions help in building good relations with foreign colleagues because sometimes we do not know about their culture, so we will have some misunderstandings. Employees can work together better and to create better effectivity.</p> <p>The employees working in retail industry usually belongs from different countries and need to just share their duties together, to finish all the works together and step by step.</p>	<p>It is fundamental to respect every employee belonging from other countries and do not create any conflict which is bases on assumptions.</p>	<p>Advanced training sessions help in building good relations with foreign colleagues to create better work and effectivity.</p>
Interview 5	<p>Employees from different cultures and backgrounds working in any organisation affected the teamwork a lot. As there are different types of</p>	<p>Diversity helps to bring different ideas which help people find</p>	<p>The teamwork has been affected by different cultural and traditional backgrounds of</p>

	<p>communication gaps, styles of communication, which lead to misunderstanding. Some of the employees are merely likely to indulge in their own cultures as they want dictatorship and others want open communication.</p> <p>The activities like team bonding activities day to day, like meetings and discussions on the regular basis will help in team collaboration and understanding.</p>	<p>solutions in unique ways, which have been not solved before. It helps people deepen their knowledge and understanding.</p>	<p>immigrants who working together as a team.</p>
Interview 6	<p>Sometimes it happens that when people come from different cultures, there is communication gap in between but people want to communicate effectively. From my experience, people will try to put down each other as they will not communicate very well due to the communication gap.</p> <p>In order to resolve the problem of less communication in terms of mediation, people will sit down with each other, let them talk, talk it out, to each other, like, what the difference is, what is the problem, what was the issue, and they will have someone mediate. To follow open communication, it is always preferable to communicate with managers.</p>	<p>Immigrants from other countries faced lack in communication because most of the countries have followed English as their first business language.</p> <p>Training and screening would help to increase knowledge of immigrants.</p>	<p>Major challenges faced by the immigrants in terms of diversity and conflict which impact the work interaction.</p>

Interview 7	<p>The team's diversity and cultural backgrounds and expertise lead to richer brainstorming sessions, this perspective help to identify different innovative solutions and anticipate potential challenges enhance the overall collaboration within the team and our quality of work also went up.</p> <p>The implementation of diversity determined and solved more different problems with effective solutions which affect the teams also contribute in the innovation and problem solving of the teams. However, immigrants have faced many challenges regarding cultural acceptance and integration.</p>	<p>The innovation strategies and solutions which solve the general conflict of diverse workplaces to enhance the overall collaboration of the teams for the sake of high quality of work.</p>	<p>Potential challenges enhance the overall collaboration within the team and quality of work also upgraded.</p>
Interview 8	<p>A diverse workplace has a lot of employees, my colleagues as they belong from different countries. However, they can work together, chat together, and then finish the job together and being happy at the same time.</p> <p>Immigrants do not have conflict, but sometimes if they have some</p>	<p>Influence of diversity in healthy workplaces in which the immigrant belonging from different countries have sometimes gone</p>	<p>Diverse workplaces implement conflict management strategies in building employee relations.</p>

	<p>misunderstandings, they will feel so full of pressure because they would misunderstand the actual situation. Immigrants from different countries have different point of view, they come up with some different and effective ideas to solve the problem may be better than just Irish or just Taiwanese.</p>	<p>through the misunderstanding because of the language barrier pressure.</p>	
Interview 9	<p>Every culture has a different work ethic such as if someone is following different paths and sometimes having different points of view regarding one thing. Due to the mixture of different languages in any organizations, differences as different language, brings us different cultural norms and every culture has different communication styles.</p> <p>The immigrants also faced difficulties due to their mother tongue as English is not the mother tongue of many of the employees working in Dublin workplaces and sometimes it is hard to explain themselves as it increases the chances of misunderstanding among them. The effective mentorship programs are really effective as they show the immigrants how to communicate with your team members, by doing cultural meetings with them which is</p>	<p>Having different opinions and point of view enhance the effectiveness of workplace, production of any of the organisation which have immigrant employees who incorporate different languages and communication style in the company.</p>	<p>The communication gap arises due to the mixture of different languages as it is difficult for the immigrants who do not understand English as a mother tongue in Dublin workplaces.</p>

	considered as one of effective way in adapting cultural norms to support the inclusivity of workplace.		
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4.4. Thematic Analysis of Qualitative Responses

4.4.1. Language Barrier Faced by Immigrants in Dublin Workplaces

The Dublin workplaces have employed a large number of immigrants belonging from different countries of the world, but due to their migration processes, employees of Dublin workplaces also face challenges in terms of communication and language gap (Kim *et al.*, 2019). The immigrant employees with disparate linguistic backgrounds are confronted with major challenges and obstacles in achieving the effective goals of the organisation.

Participants 1: “I would say the most common one like I experienced before as the language like it's not just about vocabulary or grammar things and also about like, I would say, say specifically like slangs, because, you know, like, every, like different places has their own slangs in that area, like in Ireland”.

In addition to that, many of the colleagues also faced cultural conflict due to their different nationality and traditional background which make them unique and identical as compared to other native employees. According to Rabiul and Yean, (2021), immigrants have faced a lack of language proficiency while working in an unfamiliar culture and norms the feeling of social exclusion, exploitation and discrimination has negatively affected the well-being of the employees. Furthermore, it is always preferable to immigrants that they should try to adopt the culture of their workplaces as well. In contrast, the non-immigrants and native employees always feel as an independent employee having similar cultural beliefs and values in the process of integration (Ertorer *et al.*, 2022).

Participant 3: “I think the body language and the gestures the facial expressions can lead a conflict and misunderstanding in workplaces because in some cultures, somebody's expressions considered as offensive and or even when you greet some people, hugging kissing these, those kinds of close relationships are, you know, feels you uncomfortable”.

Additionally, limited language proficiency in the workplace can lead to miscommunication as well as affect the confidence level of the immigrants. Similarly, language limitations have a

big impact on how well employees perform and complete their tasks. Work environment and behaviour of leaders are also influenced by the work engagement of the immigrants as cooperative leaders always try to facilitate their employees with positive well-being to merge them into the organisation. According to Rabiul and Yean, (2021), prominent leaders always incorporate effective and highly motivated work environment by taking the assistance mediating role of verbal communication that fulfil the gaps and lacking communication and enables a greater satisfaction level that empowers and encourages the immigrant employees to enhance their poor communication skills.

Participant 4: "I think it's language barriers, because sometimes they speak English with their own accents. So, when we are communicating with each other, it's a little bit hard for me sometimes to understand what they are talking about".

4.4.2. Respect and Equality for Each Culture and Tradition of Immigrants in Dublin

The top management of the organisations are responsible to maintain respect decorum within the organisation, especially in the situation of conflict management which has been created among the immigrant and native employees of the company. According to Soriano, (2022), the acceptance of the respect of every culture and tradition are the part of the organisation which should be followed by every responsible employee. Additionally, workplaces should be free from any conflict that based on political, social, or religious beliefs as the sensitiveness of these topics increases the chances of damage of the peace in workplaces.

Participant 8: "I think because my thinking, I'm from Taiwan, and my thinking is really different from the Irish or the Brazilian, so I think I sometimes I have different point of view to them. So we can come up with some ideas really different, and we can solve the problem may be better than just Irish or just Taiwanese".

Participant 4: "I want to finish everything on time, and I want to make the environment very tidy. But the Irish, or some maybe European, they are really dirty, yeah. So, they always create a lot of mess and just make everything really dirty. So sometimes we have some conflicts about this".

The diverse working culture includes the characteristics that protect the dignity of race, culture, sexuality, ethnic group, age, character, style, seniority, profession, and ethical background (Farashah and Blomquist, 2022). The terms "inclusion" and "diversity" describe the distinctive qualities that individual exhibit due to variance in their social, physical, and psychological viewpoints. Furthermore, diversity is the process that protects employees' distinct identities,

regardless of their ages, races, status or religious convictions that set them apart from one another. The workplaces should include fundamental regulations for employees where they can freely share their opinions and thoughts in open communication, employees should be respected and have right to express their thoughts with no future consequences as their individuality should be protected within the premises of the organisations.

4.4.3. Challenges Faced by Immigrants Impact Work Interaction

The developing countries have seen major issues in work productivity due to the greater recruitment of immigrants and the immigrants also faced a lot of challenges while working in developed country like Ireland due to the communication gap. According to Dheer and Lenartowicz, (2018), in recent years a trend to leave the native country and migrate into the developed countries for the sake of better economic status has increased drastically as young generations are more likely to create well-established careers.

Participant 2: “We do have a new member she's from Spain. And she feels like a bias this regarding Russians. I don't know why. She like, initially, when she joined the team to me it was kind of a joke like, oh, you Russians, you're so rude”.

In addition, immigrants face through many difficulties which negatively affect on their social identity and belief. In order to pursue different forms of stable careers to their choices, immigrants faced obstacles while getting and pursuing their desired jobs as they faced criticism while making their career choices.

Participant 3: “That's the biggest challenge. And when you move to another country, I think, what else, what else? Well, maybe the country where they are coming from, it's the Middle East, people tend to tend to communicate less with them”.

In addition to that, other factors such as environmental, geographical and economic have a larger impact on diversity, it transformed the way of communication as the organisations that faced difficulties in maintaining diversity, which looking forward to improving the competitiveness in the workplaces which would reduce the challenges faced by immigrants to increase the work interaction.

4.4.4. Conflict Management Strategies in Diverse Workplaces

The conflict management style has influenced the cultural backgrounds each and all employees have different approaches for handling the conflicts which could not be met by conflict management strategies and systems. The main reason of the conflict development in diverse

workplaces is related to the consequence that arises due to the opposing views, values, opinions, and preferences of employees working in any organisation.

Participant 9: “By mentorship program shows you how to communicate with your team member, actually, and so sometimes, we are doing meeting it's like cultural meeting. And this one is effective as well, like supporting us”.

According to Zhu, Haugen and Liu, (2021), the undesired consequences are associated with the lack of awareness and not following rules and regulations due to poorly structured problems, ambiguity and unclear goals, these all can be resolved by implementing conflict management strategies to facilitate good decision-making skills among the employees.

Participant 7: “Our organization addresses conflicts arising from cultural differences through open dialogue. Sometimes they adopt a newer way and sometimes we try their way of doing things. So just mix and match but we solve the problem being all together”.

The decision-makers and leaders of the organisation have tried their best to maximise the benefits while respecting each and every culture and tradition as their objective is to fulfil interaction of employees (Zhu, Haugen and Liu, 2021). Additionally, the conflict management strategies and values that add respect and dignity to the employees regardless of their race, gender, language or ethnicity as one of the major issues that arise from the perspective of employees working in Dublin workplaces is the communication gap and language barrier, especially for those employees who are not native English language speakers and migrants in the high developed countries.

Participant 8: “We have a buddy, colleague, and like a mentor, and he or she will tell you anything that just something that you need to do here, and sometimes you get along with get along good, well with him or her, so you can share your opinions together. I think this is a good system to support it”.

Lastly, conflict management strategies emphasize that all the workers working in the organisation obtain equal handling of their rights with no bias on the basis of race culture or gender (Zhao *et al.*, 2019).

4.4.5. Communication Gap and Mother Language

Every human being feels a sense of competition while working with diverse and multi-functional team members in terms of success, power, recognition, resources and jobs as the rise

of conflict is always increasing based on different issues. In addition to that, the immigrant employees who work in the Dublin workplaces are also affected by the communication gap because of their non-Irish culture and traditions.

Participant 3: “I think that the first thing that came to my mind is, is discrimination based on like, the religion or sex or ethnicity, even the age like there was a woman who is at the age of like, who is elder than most of us, and where the rest of the employers are like nearly 20-25 years so nobody would like to talk to her as much as she is older than us”.

The immigrant workers significantly contributed to the economic development of the organisation by paying for their hard work with honesty and dedication (Farashah and Blomquist, 2022). In the same sense, it is their fundamental right to receive equal respect and appreciation of their work by the higher authority and their colleagues working with them. The process of migration is a complex issue that arises complexity for immigrants in terms of access to their jobs, and a healthy and grateful work environment which helps to achieve career development (Labrague *et al.*, 2018).

Participant 5: “Workplace norms like the rules and regulations, which were not there in their previous country or their state, then there are communication types of styles which is different from every place to place. Then the way people like some people have like to be in their own world do not like to interact much, like introverts and some like extroverts that is that is another one which affects.”

Furthermore, organisational performance is based on the well-managed conflict attribute in which immigrants do not become victims because of their language. The reluctance due to the misunderstanding of English as the native language of Irish people collectively increases the challenges in the broader spectrum, as they deal with other pressures also in terms of social, economic, and psychological.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The increment of diversity in the workplace has played a significant role in the impact of conflict between employees and relationships among employees. The impact of diversity among the immigrant employees of Dublin workplaces increases organizational performance and employee engagement (Adnan *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, the overall concept of diversity is based on conflict management and strategies that have been adopted by Dublin workplaces

to create better and healthier relationships between native and non-native employees in Ireland. There are many factors that emphasize the impact of diversity in the Dublin workplace, such as language barrier, discrimination, and bias in terms of challenges faced by the immigrants to secure their identity and respect, which affect their work interaction and work performance. In the same sense, conflict management strategies have been designed by the organization to fulfil the requirements of diverse workplaces.

The conflict management style has influenced the cultural backgrounds of different employees to resolve the problems for handling conflicts that could not be met by conflict management strategies and systems. The findings conducted by the primary qualitative method represented the thoughts and opinions of the participants regarding the questions in terms of the role of conflict management and diversity in building employee relations in the retail industry, the impact of diversity on the conflict, which involves the issues faced by the immigrant employees. Lastly, effective and innovative conflict management strategies are needed to overcome the challenges faced by employees in their workplaces. The research demonstrates the findings gained by the respondents working in the Dublin organisation, as their thoughts and diverse opinions have significantly impacted the results of the study. This discussion chapter of the research interprets the findings of the preceding sections to concern the goals of the research.

5.2. Impact of Cultural Differences on the Work Performance of Immigrant Employees

In various research, it has been found that immigrants who come from other countries, especially for the sake of employment purposes, are always exposed to challenges, but language and communication barriers are the fundamental obstacles. According to this primary research it has been found that cultural differences have a significant influence on the work performance of immigrant employees. According to Ertorer *et al.*, (2022), the incorporation of the dominant language in the workplace plays an important role in enhancing the work performance of employees. In contrast, immigrant employees who are not aware of the cultural norms and traditions of the migrant countries face huge difficulties in terms of building healthy relationships with their colleagues.

Additionally, through the findings of the research, it has been found that cultural conflict due to the differences in nationality and traditional background marks the uniqueness of the identity of immigrants. According to Rabiul and Yean, (2021), immigrants are also considered as the strong workforce of the organization as they perform their assigned tasks, their dedication and

hard work, but one of the most important factors, which is also highlighted by the research findings is communication gap and lack in mother language as being a part of unsimilar culture.

The study also has revealed some strategies to overcome the communication gap between the immigrants and managers of the organisation because active participation and understanding of the organisational goals are necessary for each employee who working in the organisation. Positive leaders always incorporate highly motivated and diverse work environments for which they take the assistance of the mediating role of verbal communication, which overcomes the lack of communication between employees. According to Babatunde *et al.* (2023), effective communication between co-workers helps them collaborate constructively without any hesitation and ask as many questions as possible for clarification of the task. Furthermore, conflict management ensures the provision of the most suitable solution for employees and employers to tackle any critical situation that arises due to immigrant employees (Zhu, Haugen and Liu, 2021). However, the extension of conflicts and discrimination negatively impacted the work performance of the immigrant employees in the long term.

5.3. Impact of Discrimination and Bias on the Work Performance of Immigrant Employees

The research conducted by Vernby and Dancygier, (2019), supported the finding of the research as the way immigrants have been treated in their workplace is not justifiable. In some cases, the discrimination becomes more violent, which destroys the social well-being of employees. As a result of extreme discrimination and bias, immigrants self-isolate themselves and do not interact with other people very often.

The diverse culture adopted by the organization should adopt the principle that the acceptance and respect of every culture and tradition are compulsory in the working environment of the organisation (Esses, 2021). However, the work performance of the employees is based on comfort and relaxation and the right to give an opinion in the organisation. This study has contributed by drawing the findings that a workplace should be free from any sort of conflict and discrimination based on the differences of culture, race, and gender. Moreover, the personal and professional well-being of the immigrant employee should be safe and secure, along with the protection of the sentiments, because the after-ward effect of the discrimination damages the work performance of the employees.

The concept of the inclusion and diversity in the workplaces has created a sense of uniqueness and difference in identity, which can also contribute to the betterment of maintaining the

difference in the social and physical perspectives of people (Lin, 2020). Moreover, there is no harm in the act of implementation of the act, which consists of rules and regulations to present diversity within the premises of workplaces inclusive of a large number of immigrant employees. According to Salas-Vallina *et al.*, (2021), inappropriate behaviour and unequal treatment towards immigrant employees affect their job satisfaction level.

5.4. Impact of Work Integration on the Work Performance of Immigrant Employees

The immigrant employees of the Dublin workplaces have faced continuous challenges that impact their work interaction. According to the findings of the study, developing countries that offer job opportunities to immigrant employees always emphasize the work productivity of the employees. According to Dheer and Lenartowicz, (2018), the immigrants who worked under pressure and could not get their rights always worked with less effective performances. In addition to that, the whole process of employment for immigrants is not easy to pursue their desired jobs. However, positive work interaction also increases the work performances of the employees; organisations are responsible for the implementation of diversity and inclusion in order to maintain a healthy environment in the workplace.

The research also emphasizes the implementation of conflict management strategies, which greatly influence the cultural background of employees from different countries. The research concluded by Hartono *et al.*, (2020) supports the findings of the study that the main reason for the risks and conflict development among co-workers is related to the consequences and lacking understanding of opinions and views, values, and decisions. However, the implementation of diversity and inclusion through conflict management strategies would raise the inclusiveness and belonging of the employee at the workplace, which would result in enhancing work performance (Royall *et al.*, 2022). In order to find out the appropriate solution for the promotion of diversity in the workplace, comprises several strategies that add value and respect to the well-being of employees without judging their race, culture, gender, and tradition (Babatunde *et al.*, 2023).

Diversity and conflict management tools have gained much more attention in the past years because of the attention of the Human Rights Association to secure the rights of immigrants (Itam and Bagali, 2019). These strategies become well-known with globalisation and recognition needs to satisfy the immigrant employees along with the manager and leaders of the organisation. Therefore, the managers and stakeholders of the organisation emphasize the achievement of the goals of the organisation without any conflict or mismanagement by

providing legal assistance to the immigrants in their immigrant-related issues (Rosander and Blomberg, 2022). Several studies have found that diversity is not limited to traditional thinking like discrimination and race but is inclusive of all the characteristics of individual group of minorities and immigrants that relates to their personality, language, affectional orientation, national origin, ethnicity, lifestyle, and economic status, and more (Soriano, 2022).

The success of the organization depends on the numerous diverse interventions implemented by the organisation at each level. Moreover, the implementation of diverse and inclusive strategies is not a task that can be handled by a single hand. It needs the supervision of each employee, co-workers, junior to senior employees, and include of all management staff. The major goals, mission, and vision behind the implementation of innovative interventions initiated by the organisation to fulfil the all business requirements.

5.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the effective research finding of the study has connected to the literature review conducted to analyse the impact of diversity on the conflict between employees and relationships among the employees working in Dublin workplaces. The finding of the research shows that immigrant employees have faced challenges in terms of communication gaps and language barriers, as most of the participants have highlighted these consequences while working in the Dublin workplace. Additionally, the study also reveals that diversity is not related to discrimination and bias but is also dependent on several factors like personality of immigrants. However, most of the immigrants feel insecure about the conversations they initiate with the native employees of the workplaces because of insufficiency in English, which is not their mother language. Respondents belonging to Russia and Taiwan have reported the language barrier and communication gap very often while conducting their interviews.

The organisation plays a fundamental role in maintaining a diverse and inclusive work environment within the premises of the organization in order to maintain a sustained and satisfied work performance of the employees. In contrast, a lack of organisation in implementing strategies would result in the loss of employees as well as work productivity because a positive work environment enhances the work interaction of employees.

The study comprises the research question that was answered by the respondents currently working in the Dublin workplace, every respondent provided a sufficient amount of information as per their own experiences and events they have faced while working in their current or previous working organisations. The finding of the research based on the analysis

also found that the majority of the participants had favourable and positive experiences regarding the research questions, which positively affected the results of the research. Moreover, the findings of the study further help to draw the recommendations for the future research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1. Conclusion

The study reveals the importance of impact of diversity on conflict between employees and relationships among employees working in Dublin, located in Ireland. The employees working in the Dublin workplace faced challenges that collectively damaged their organisational performance and work productivity. However, the purpose of the study is to ascertain the role of diversity and conflict management in the retail industry for immigrants aged between 20 and 40 years working in Dublin workplaces. The study was conducted using the primary qualitative method of interviews. The qualitative method is considered the best method for the alignment of the nature of the research problems by taking the answers of the respondents. Moreover, the method of conducting interviews is very accessible to obtain adequate information, which help to determine the cause and effect to provide the links between the variables. In addition to that, the semi-structured interviews provide a list of themes to address the research question. The research study is based on the inductive research approach suited for the research, which has a limited literature review in the context of the dynamics of immigrant employees working in the retail sector of Dublin workplaces.

The primary qualitative study collected the data by conducting semi-structured interviews conducted by nine participants who are currently working in the Dublin workplaces. However, the outcomes and findings of the study highlighted the extensive experiences and opinions of the employees on the issue related to the diversity and conflict that arises in the workplace due to several factors that negatively impact the organizational performance of the employees. The conflict management strategies in terms of mediation of verbal communication, training sessions, and other educational programmes to help the employees and management in creating productive work environment.

Qualitative research conducted using this approach is useful in answering research problems and developing themes after analysing the respondents' data. Additionally, the aim of the research is to explore the role of conflict management and diversity in building employee relations in the retail sector. The study also wants to analyse the impacts of diversity on the

conflict between employees facing challenges in terms of the language barrier, communication gap, adoption of Dublin culture and tradition, and engagement with other co-workers. However, the findings of the research represent that immigrant employees are demotivated in workplaces where their dignity and cultural identification are not secure as per the legal rule of immigrants' rights. Another aim of the research is to explore the challenges faced by immigrants in terms of diversity and conflict, which influence the work performances of the employees and their work relationships with other employees. The research question has been satisfactorily answered by each respondent who participated in the study, that lack of diversity has recognized a lot of unbearable challenges within the success path of desired jobs of immigrant employees.

6.2. Recommendations

The research has been conducted to analyse the impact of diversity and conflict management in Dublin workplaces. The research provided positive insights to leaders and managers in order to implement diversity and conflict management strategies within the organization. Moreover, this research can play its role as the core part of organizational management and performance by taking the assistance of diversity. Diversity not only brings peace to the organization but also provides a safe space for immigrant employees to serve the organization with dedication and hard work. Additionally, immigrants are considered the core component of the organization regardless of their language and ethnic differences. A few of the recommendations that could be drawn after the completion of the research are discussed below:

The research study has only focused on the Dublin region of Ireland, and the respondents included in the study are also currently employed in Dublin retail organizations. Now, the research provides an open ground for analysing the challenges faced by immigrants associated with any other retail industry sector.

It is also recommended that managers, leaders, and stakeholders should initiate strategies to avoid any conflict and risk situations in a work culture to embrace the traditional and cultural values of immigrants.

Addressing the issues related to diversity is considered an important factor which has to be aligned with policymaking while assessing any new policy within the organization. The conflict and misunderstanding should be resolved on a prior basis and should be the top priority of the organization.

In order to initiate diversity open door policy, it should be implemented by every retail sector organisation of the Dublin, and they have to endeavour it to maintain a healthy and cooperative work environment.

The beneficial impact of the diverse culture has also impacted by the different aspects of organisational operations, in terms of revenue generation, level of satisfaction of employees, superior decision-making, and innovation.

6.3. Areas of Future Research

The research conducted by a qualitative approach provides a practical approach to other researchers in order to analyse the impact of diversity and conflict management in other regions except the Dublin region of Ireland. Moreover, this research provides a role model for conducting further research to evaluate the challenges faced by immigrant employees working in other regions of the world. Additionally, further research can be conducted to analyse the impact of diversity on the organizational performances and work interaction of the employees, which is directly reflected in terms of higher employment engagement and work productivity. Furthermore, creating a diverse and cooperative work culture is the major key for the development of opportunities for the immigrant employees who are willing to continue their employment within the organisation.

6.4. Personal Learning Statement (CIPD Requirement)

As a part of my master's degree journey, I have been conducting research on how diversity impact conflict and relationships among immigrant employees aged 20-40 years working in Dublin retail industry. I will be able to reflect on how I have developed in relation to the CIPD specification and how I carried out this research through this personal learning statement.

As an immigrant employee who work in Dublin retail industry, this dissertation process has improved my awareness of diversity and conflict management. The retail industry in Dublin is diverse, and it provided me insight towards the challenges and benefits that immigrant employees face on a daily basis. I am able to combine my academic understanding of diversity and conflict management with my experience working in the retail industry in Dublin, after completing this project. I have gained invaluable knowledge in human resource management practices.

Interviewing immigrant participants helped me strengthen my ability in qualitative approach. Not only I have learned how to handle delicate subjects like diversity and conflict, also I have realised how crucial cultural competency and empathy towards different cultures.

The analysis of this study demonstrated that while diversity can bring new viewpoints and creative ideas to an organisation, it also requires a strong ability to manage conflict. This was a significant finding since it shapes HR practices in organisations which have diverse workforce.

6.5. Practical Recommendations and Implementation

Based on my research, I have created a few implementations that would help organisations improve their diversity and conflict resolution practices, which would enhance workplace inclusion for employees who have immigrant backgrounds.

One significant part would be implementing diversity training programs, which would emphasise cultural awareness. Other training programs would focus on improving communication skills and conflict resolution. Through this training process, employees would gain a variety of insights towards each other, which would help to reduce miscommunication and conflict.

Furthermore, for immigrant employees who do not speak English as their first language, English language training programs would be beneficial. Programs for teaching English to immigrant employees would promote effective communication and lessen friction due to language barriers.

A pilot retail store that conducts a pilot project would be utilised for implementing these recommendations. The project would be expected to cost between €6000-€7000, which includes resource for language training, facilitators, and training materials.

The project would be examined and assessed in 6 months. Employees would provide feedback throughout the program, and it would be shaped and modified in accordance with their feedback and the assessment. If the trial process generates positive result, the program would be implemented in other stores.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Interview Consent Form

Participant Consent / Cover Letter

Notes to Interviewee: Thank you for taking part in this research. Before beginning, I will explain the project to you. Your participation is important to this study and will provide rigor and robust findings.

- Length of interview: Approx. 20 to 30 minutes and consists of 8 qualitative open-ended questions.
- The questions relate to the role of diversity and conflict management in the retail industry for immigrants.
- Your participation is voluntary and with your will.
- You may withdraw participation at any point of time.
- Information will be kept confidential and will be used for research purposes only.

Your's Sincerely

Researcher

Appendix 2 – Interview Questions

Respondent Information and Details of Interview

Date/Time _____	Location _____
Interviewer _____	Interviewee _____
Respondent's Age _____	Level of Education _____
No. of Years of Experience _____	Approximate Monthly Income _____
Residential Area _____	

Thematic Questions

The role of conflict management and diversity in building employee relations in the retail industry

Q1: Can you describe a recent experience where diversity among employees affected teamwork or collaboration?

Q2: How does your organisation handle conflict that arise due to cultural differences among employees?

The Impact Of Diversity On Conflicts Involving Immigrant Employees

Q3: What are some common misunderstandings or conflicts that arise between immigrant employees and their colleagues in your opinion?

Q4: How does diversity contribute to innovation and problem-solving in your team?

Challenges Faced By Immigrants In Terms Of Diversity And Conflict Management That Influence Their Work And Relations With Other Employees

Q5: What specific challenges do immigrant employees face in your workplace regarding cultural integration and acceptance?

Q6: How does your organization support immigrant employees in adapting to the cultural norms of the workplace?

Strategies to overcome challenges faced by the workplace

Q7: What strategies or initiatives could improve cultural sensitivity and inclusivity in the workplace based on your experience?

Q8: How can organisation promote diversity and conflict resolution training among all employees who have immigrant backgrounds effectively?