

An study conducted in 2025: Challenges, ethnic networks, and  
the positive impact it has on the community..

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## Abstract

In the current era, globalization and migration have changed the economic and cultural landscapes of countries around the world, giving rise to new forms of immigrant entrepreneurship. The city of Dublin, Ireland, has experienced a significant increase in the number of immigrants, including the Mexican community. Despite the growing trend toward Mexican gastronomy and business, there is limited academic theory on this economic and social phenomenon. This research explores the phenomenon of Mexican migrant entrepreneurship in the restaurant and food business sector, analyzing their motivations, challenges, support networks, and community impact.

Based on qualitative and quantitative methods, this research used interviews and questionnaires with Mexican entrepreneurs in Dublin. The study is framed within the existing literature on immigrant entrepreneurship (Light & Dana, 2013; Portes & Manning, 2006; Zhou, 2004) and other authors, also incorporating critical perspectives that challenge traditional theories of ethnic entrepreneurship (Cooney & Godwin, 2021).

The findings reveal that Mexican entrepreneurial motivations go beyond economic necessity. Cultural identity, nostalgia for Mexican food, and an entrepreneurial spirit were the main motivators. Ethnic networks and transnational ties played a limited role in supporting these businesses. It was also confirmed that Mexican businesses have a positive impact on the local community through job creation, the use of Irish suppliers, cultural diversity, and social cohesion by promoting Mexican traditions. This research contributes to the field of entrepreneurship by offering a deeper understanding of Mexican businesses in Dublin and highlighting the need to expand current theoretical frameworks to include factors such as emotional, cultural, and identity-based motivations. It also offers practical recommendations for the benefit of entrepreneurs

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Also, culture of failure is still negative, which do hard to try new business Additionally, the **culture surrounding failure** remains negative,

### Additional Evidence:

[Place evidence here]

| Google   |  |
|--|--|
| business information search  |  |
| Find the location of Mexican restaurants and their operating hours |  |

## Evidence of AI Usage

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### Additional Evidence:

How many Mexican restaurants does El Grito have in Dublin? What are their hours of operation? What is the location?

| Chat gpt   |  |
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| How can I improve the organization of this information?    | Could you improve the structure of these tables? |

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## Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the people and institutions that made this thesis possible: *From migrants to entrepreneurs: the role of immigrant entrepreneurship in Mexican restaurants and Food Business in Dublin*. First and foremost, I would like to thank my advisor, Jeffrey Walsh, for his academic guidance, valuable observations, and support in developing this work. My sincere gratitude to the entrepreneurs and collaborators of the Mexican restaurants in Dublin who participated in this research. Thank you for sharing your experiences, challenges, and visions with complete generosity and openness. Your passion for preserving Mexican cuisine abroad is a great inspiration. I would also like to thank the Mexican Embassy for helping me contact Mexican entrepreneurs and showing interest in the topic. To my family, for their support and unconditional love, even from a distance. For being my greatest source of support along this journey, especially during the most difficult times. This achievement is also yours.

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## Chapter 1 : Introduction

### 1.1 RESEARCH GAP

While immigrant entrepreneurship has been widely studied in recent years, the vast majority of studies have focused on established nationalities such as India, China, or Eastern Europe, mainly in destinations such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Zhou, 2004; Tiessen, 1997). In contrast, Latin American entrepreneurship in Europe remains underexplored, particularly the case of Mexican entrepreneurship in Ireland. In Ireland, studies on migrant entrepreneurship have mainly focused on African, Asian, and Eastern European communities (Cooney and Godwin, 2021; Pinkowski, 2009). However, there is a gap of research on Mexican immigrants who decide to open restaurants, despite the popularization of gastronomy and the increase in them in the city. According to information obtained by Rentech Digital, a business technology platform, there are approximately 112 Mexican food restaurants in Ireland. This figure is inaccurate as there are no official sources to corroborate it. The Companies Registration Office and Central Statistics Office in Ireland publishes and filters statistics by food and beverage sector, but not by nationality. To obtain an estimate of the total number of Mexican-owned restaurants in Dublin, the Mexican Embassy was contacted and an approximate figure of 15 Mexican-owned restaurants and business food, this highlighting an institutional and academic void regarding this community (Aguilera, 2009; Cooney & Godwin, 2020).

On the other hand, the role of ethnic networks as support factors for the creation and sustainability of businesses has been widely recognized in the literature (Light & Dana, 2013; Gomez, Perera, Wesinger & Tobey, 2019; Stephens, 2013), but its specific application to Mexican entrepreneurship in Dublin has not been sufficiently studied or proven. Likewise, challenges such as limited access to the labor market, cultural and language barriers, obtaining financing, and lack of knowledge of regulations and legal procedures constitute little-studied areas in the migrant context. Cooney & Godwin, 2021; Pinkowski, 2009; Morris & Schindehutte, 2005). It is also important to study the impact that these restaurant ventures have on the community in terms of job creation and cultural diversity. For the reasons mentioned above, this research seeks to fill these gaps through a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the challenges, ethnic networks, and community impact.

### 1.2 JUSTIFICATION

This research work arose from the need to understand the emerging phenomenon of Mexican migrant entrepreneurship in the city of Dublin, specifically in the restaurant sector. Recently, international migration to Ireland has increased significantly due to the economic, social, and demographic transformation it has undergone. This process has benefited the development of new immigrant-driven businesses that have a positive impact on the community, fostering the cultural richness and economic growth of the area. (Cooney & Godwin, 2021; Pinkowski, 2009). However, although the rise of Mexican food and restaurants is on the rise, there is a lack of academic studies analyzing the experiences of Mexican restaurant entrepreneurs in Dublin.

Previous research analyzes the importance of social capital and ethnic networks as supporting factors for business creation and maintenance among the migrant community (Light & Dana, 2013; Gomez et al., 2019; Stephens, 2013). However, the dynamics between which these elements interact are still unknown in the context of restaurants established by Mexican

owners in Dublin. Likewise, further analysis of the specific challenges faced by this community, such as legal, economic, cultural, and language barriers, is needed. (Cooney & Godwin, 2021; Morris & Schindehutte, 2005). This research has academic, social, and practical importance. At the academic level, its objective is to contribute to the theoretical framework of ethnic entrepreneurship with an underexplored case study. At the social level, it aims to study the contributions of the Mexican community to the economy and cultural diversity in Ireland. And in practical terms, their findings could be important for designing more inclusive public policies for migrant entrepreneurs. Furthermore, this work is an important motivator for me as a Mexican, since I am familiar with the culture and the wide range of Mexican gastronomy. This background helps me to understand this studied social phenomenon in greater depth.

### 1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE.

The objective of this research is to analyse Mexican business entrepreneurship in Dublin (restaurants and food businesses) in order to identify the key factors that motivate them, the challenges they face, the role played by ethnic networks and the local cultural and economic impact.

### 1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

For this investigation of ethnic entrepreneurship in Mexican restaurants in Dublin, the following research questions are presented:

1. What factors determine the development of Mexican restaurants in Dublin?
2. How do ethnic networks influence the establishment of restaurants and food businesses owned by Mexican immigrants in Dublin?
3. What are the main challenges that immigrant entrepreneurs face when establishing restaurants in Dublin?
4. What advantages does the establishment of Mexican restaurants offer to the culture and economy of the host country?

### 1.5 HYPOTHESIS

1. Lack of access to the Dublin labour market and economic necessity drive Mexican immigrants to start businesses as a viable means of generating income.
2. Ethnic networks and Transnational ties play a key role in opening and sustaining Mexican restaurants in Dublin, providing support in terms of capital, contacts, staff, customers, and suppliers.
3. Mexican restaurants in Dublin have a positive impact on the local economy and contribute to cultural diversity, particularly through job creation and the promotion of Mexican cuisine.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1 IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Immigrant Entrepreneurship is a key economic and social strategy for many immigrants. The lack of job opportunities and cultural identity lead them to establish ethnic businesses in other countries. Beyond generating income, these businesses help immigrants integrate into the social fabric of the host country and maintain ties of identity and culture with their own countries. This literature review is important because it contributes to a deeper understanding of the research topic and is broadly related to the research questions and objectives. This research paper focuses primarily on the theories of migrant entrepreneurship, cultural Identity, middleman minority, ethnic entrepreneurial niches and ethnic enclave, Diaspora Entrepreneurship, Transnational ties, Mixed-embeddedness, Ethnic networks and Discrimination in Immigrant Entrepreneurship.

### 2.2 Immigrant Entrepreneurship

Immigrant Entrepreneurship has been widely studied by researchers and there are two main approaches that try to explain this phenomenon (Zhang, Wei and Mao, 2023). The first one that tries to analyse the importance of ethnic networks considering factors such as: social capital, market support, structural factors, segmented labour markets, cultural resources and Identity and integration (Light & Dana, 2013; Aguilera, 2009 & Ghorbani, 2011, Waldinger, R. & Aldrich, 1990) and the second one that proposes ethnic values such as solidarity, collectivism and entrepreneurial tradition encourage the likelihood that certain ethnic segments start ventures (Yang & Zhang; 2022, Morris & Schindehutte, 2005; Tiessen, 1997; Zhou, 2004).

Within the first current the following considerations can be established: The authors Waldinger and Aldrich conceptualise migrant entrepreneurship as a form of entrepreneurial activity that is carried out by minority immigrants. These migrant entrepreneurs establish businesses in which they employ members of their own ethnic group. This process creates a focused economic network that benefits the ethnic community. This type of business contributes to overcoming the economic and social barriers and discrimination that many immigrants experience in the new country, as well as serving as a mechanism of social mobility for migrant. The main factors considered by this theory are ethnic networks, social capital, structural factors, segmented labour markets, cultural resources and identity and ethnic entrepreneurship as a path to integration (Waldinger, R. & Aldrich, 1990).

Light and Dana define ethnic migrant entrepreneurship as those businesses established by immigrants from one ethnic community who move to another country with a different socioeconomic and cultural environment. These new ventures not only serve their ethnic community but also contribute to economic integration. They emphasise the importance of ethnic social networks and their relationship to access to resources and markets. (Light & Dana ,2013).Aguilera establishes that immigrants turn to the creation of small businesses as a response to the lack of opportunities in the new country. These ventures generate job opportunities for members of their community and considers ethnic networks and human, social and cultural capital as important factors. (Aguilera 2009). Ethnic entrepreneurship functions as an adaptive strategy in contexts of exclusion and lack of opportunities for formal employment. This type of business represents not only a method of subsistence, but also a tool for economic mobility and cultural affirmation (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990; Stephens, 2013). Aguilera (2019) explains in her research how the self-employed in the United States

use ethnic enclaves to integrate into the labour market, even though economic conditions are unequal, particularly in the case of Mexicans compared to Cubans.

Ghorbani considers the concepts of business entrepreneurship and migrant dynamics. He establishes that ethnic migrant entrepreneurship uses its characteristics to overcome barriers in local markets and asserts that cultural identity can be a competitive advantage but also an obstacle for entrepreneurs. He believes that migrant entrepreneurship not only has an economic impact but also a social impact, as it facilitates social integration and improves the personal and family well-being of entrepreneurs. (Ghorbani, 2011)

Entrepreneurship is a key driver of economies as it generates new job opportunities and activation of the economy. For small and medium-sized enterprises, the development of strategic linkages that create resources is essential. (Murphy A., Bogue J., O Flaherty). The case of migrant entrepreneurs is different due to the challenges they face in the new environment. In the local economy, the creation of new businesses in turn creates new jobs for members of their same ethnic group. These small businesses create value in the local market. This type of entrepreneurship multiplies investment and the value of the work itself. (Pinkowski J 2009)

In the second approach regarding ethnic values in migrant entrepreneurship we can mention the following:

Yang and Zhang explain in their research that the factors of ethnic embeddedness, ethnic identity, trust, reciprocity, community support, cultural sensitivity, cultural capital and ethnic networks play a major role in the creation of migrant entrepreneurship. Under this premise, migrant ethnic values guide entrepreneurs to develop strategies for the establishment and success of their businesses and the well-being of their community. (Yang & Zhang; 2022). Morris and Schindehutte focus on the importance of ethnic values in migrant entrepreneurship. Their studies analyze the elements of: Ethnic Values as a Driving Force in Entrepreneurial Behavior, Dual Cultural Identity and Market Niche Creation, Social Capital and Network Formation, Community-Oriented Business Practices, Cultural Capital and Innovation and Adaptability and Resilience. (Morris & Schindehutte, 2005)

Tiessen analyses how cultural, social and ethnic factors impact immigrant entrepreneurs' strategies and challenges. The factors his theory analyses are: Ethnic networks, Community-oriented business practices, Cultural capital, Resilience and adaptability, family involvement and Innovation. In general, the author analyses the entrepreneurial behaviour of migrants and its link with ethnic values such as ethnic networks, cultural capital, and community values. (Tiessen, 1997). Zhou's research examines how ethnic values and social capital are critical to migrant entrepreneurial success, highlighting how these factors influence how entrepreneurs deal with challenges in starting and managing their businesses, particularly in regards to market segmentation, business strategies, and community involvement (Zhou, 2004).

Waldinger and Aldrich analyse in depth ethnic networks and the role of migrant entrepreneurship within their own community or ethnic group. Yang & Zhang expand the concept of migrant entrepreneurship and incorporate issues such as cultural resources and transnational ties in migrants, highlighting how these concepts allow immigrants to maintain cultural, economic and social ties with their country of origin. Morris & Schindehutte give greater importance to the challenges, objectives and strategies of the migrant entrepreneur and establish that ethnic identity is a strategic resource in local markets.

## Similarities

Most of the authors presented present similarities in some concepts such as: Ethnic Networks, Barriers in the mainstream market and Cultural Resilience. Regarding ethnic networks, we can mention that they play a crucial role in ethnic entrepreneurship. They develop shared community, cultural and linguistic ties and provide economic, social and human resources that are necessary for migrant entrepreneurship. The most important elements in ethnic networks that are mentioned by the authors are: access to resources and capital, access to markets and potential clients, social support and trust in entrepreneurship, labour force and obtaining qualified workers, cultural capital and community identity, the reduction of discrimination barriers and the establishment of transnational connections. (Light & Dana, 2013; Aguilera, 2009 & Ghorbani, 2011, Waldinger, R. & Aldrich, 1990)

Barriers in the mainstream market: The theories largely agree that entrepreneurs face barriers in the markets they enter, such as discrimination or lack of access to capital. Several authors explain structural discrimination and lack of access to capital as barriers that condition the development of migrant businesses. These limitations explain why migrants choose to start independent businesses within their ethnic communities, taking advantage of the support networks in their new country. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) analyse how discrimination in the labour market and restricted access to financing sources drive many migrants towards self-employment. Aguilera (2009) analyses how various ethnic groups in the United States find differences in income, capital, and business resources related to their national origin and geographic context. On the other hand, Stephens (2013), in his studies with immigrants from Ireland, shows that business barriers, combined with discrimination and a lack of guidance in the banking system, limit the growth and financing opportunities of immigrant entrepreneurs. Analysing and understanding these barriers helps us understand ethnic migrant entrepreneurship. Some of the factors that these barriers include: discrimination and bias, limited access to capital, lack of market knowledge, competition with established local businesses, legal and regulatory barriers, social and cultural exclusion and inability to leverage mainstream resources. Barriers in the market often create challenges but also opportunities for immigrants. These entrepreneurs often create businesses that serve the needs of their ethnic communities, overcoming these challenges through support networks, cultural knowledge and resilience. (Light & Dana, 2013; Aguilera, 2009 & Ghorbani, 2011, Waldinger, R. & Aldrich, 1990, Yang & Zhang 2022, Morris & Schindehutte, 2005, Tissen, 1997, Zhou, 2004)

Another factor discussed by the various authors is cultural resilience as a key element in ethnic migrant entrepreneurship. This resilience enables immigrant entrepreneurs to thrive in the face of economic, social and cultural challenges. Factors such as preserving Identity and traditions, social and economic challenges, innovating and adapting in the market, building customer loyalty, overcoming barriers and discrimination, global network integration require resilience on the part of migrant entrepreneurs. (Light & Dana, 2013; Aguilera, 2009 & Ghorbani, 2011, Waldinger, R. & Aldrich, 1990, Yang & Zhang 2022, Morris & Schindehutte, 2005, Tissen, 1997, Zhou, 2004)

## Contrasts

Emphasis on cultural Identity. Authors Morris & Schindehutte explain that ethnic identity is not only a barrier but can be a competitive advantage for migrant entrepreneurs. They also establish that cultural identity not only influences how immigrant entrepreneurs do business, but also why they do ethnic entrepreneurship, becoming a central element of their business strategies, their decision-making, and the way they approach opportunities and competition in their niche market. On the other hand authors Waldinger & Aldrich focus on the study of ethnic

networks as the main support for immigrant entrepreneurs, since these provide economic, social and financial resources. (Waldinger, R. & Aldrich, 1990, Morris & Schindehutte, 2005).

Transnational resources. Yang & Zhang, Ghorbani's theories prioritize connections with the country of origin (transnational resources) since these are fundamental in ethnic migrant entrepreneurship because they allow entrepreneurs to access capital, technical and business knowledge, markets and international suppliers. Transnationalism is associated with cross-border movements and relations, both social, economic or cultural ones, and therefore migrant entrepreneurs conducting international business activities are understood as transnational entrepreneurs (Sommer & Gamper, 2018). Most often, transnational entrepreneurs are those who migrate from their country of origin, run their companies in a country of residence based on business links between both countries (Aluko et al., 2022; Brzozowski et al., 2017), being embedded in multiple socio-economic contexts (Harima & Baron, 2020), at least of two countries (Veréb & Ferreira, 2018). Growing globalisation and international mobility of people contribute to the increase in exchanges between their countries of origin and residence (Von Bloh et al., 2020). The development of digital technologies (Sufyan et al., 2023), digital communication tools and the availability of travelling (Solano et al., 2022) are enablers of cross-countries business operations of transnational entrepreneurs.

They also allow the creation of resilient and competitive businesses in local and global markets. On the contrary, authors such as Light & Dana focus more on local networks and integration in the host society as determining factors of success in ethnic migrant ventures. The authors state that the integration of migrant entrepreneurs into these networks contributes to overcoming economic and social barriers, better adapting to the local market, strengthening business resilience and market positioning. This integration not only benefits immigrants, but also the host communities by enriching the country's economic and cultural diversity. (Light & Dana, 2013, Ghorbani, 2011, Yang & Zhang 2022)

Motivation and Objectives: While Morris & Schindehutte point out that migrant entrepreneurs have a multifactorial motivation that goes beyond economic factors, as Aguilera also mentions, other authors such as Tiessen focus on a more pragmatic and survival function of entrepreneurship in the migrant context and includes elements such as socioeconomic conditions of the country of origin, barriers to entry into the labor market of the host country, economic benefits for the family and preservation of cultural identity among others. (Aguilera, 2009, Morris & Schindehutte, Tissen, 1997)

The analysis of small and medium-sized companies in the hospitality sector in Ireland by Mexican immigrants is an area that has not been explored much, despite the fact that there have been numerous and relevant studies on migrant entrepreneurship in Europe. This is why I consider it important to carry out a specific analysis that covers the economic, social and cultural particularities of Mexican entrepreneurship in the city of Dublin, thus contributing to the understanding and knowledge of business dynamics in migratory contexts.

## 2.2 CULTURAL IDENTITY

Cultural identity is an essential part of immigrant entrepreneurship, as it explains how immigrants find their place in a new environment and adapt new cultural and economic strategies. Hall (1990) argues that cultural identity should not be understood as static, but rather as a constantly developing social construct. In migratory contexts, this identity changes with the interaction of new cultures, generating hybrid identities. In this way, immigrant entrepreneurs not only transfer traditions and values from their country of origin, but also adapt and blend elements of their cultural identity with new elements of the environment. Yuval-

Davis (2011) adds the role of belonging in the formation of cultural identity. Immigrant practices such as language, consumption, and the type of business they undertake are forms of community vindication, but also mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in the host country. Additionally, Anthias (2001, 2006) introduces the idea of symbolic identity capital. This concept helps us understand how cultural aspects such as food, language, and aesthetics become key factors within the market. In the case of entrepreneurs in Dublin, identity not only represents belonging but is also used as a competitive advantage in the gastronomic market.

## 2.3 DIASPORA ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Diasporic entrepreneurship is defined as business activities or businesses started by ethnic minorities or immigrants in the new country. Entrepreneurs who start new businesses and serve their community generally have cultural ties, business networks, support, and shared experiences that aid them in the process. Aldrich, E., & Waldinger R. (1990). A review of the literature on the topic of diasporas shows that it has been extensively studied by researchers and that it shares several key elements that help us understand the concept. Authors such as Cooney and Godwin (2020, 2021), Portes, Haller, and Guarnizo (2002), and Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) explain certain similarities in networking and social capital issues that are essential for migrant entrepreneurship. They establish that ethnic connections allow entrepreneurs to access resources, opportunities, and market support. From this same perspective, Light and Dana (2013) and Stephens (2013) explain how these connections facilitate or limit the operation of ventures, depending on the social or institutional environment.

On the other hand, there are also significant contrasts between the various approaches. Authors Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) adopt a sociological approach, while Aguilera (2009) uses a quantitative data methodology, and Cooney and Godwin (2021) explain the concept from the perspective of institutional inclusion and the development of public policies. Portes et al. (2002) establish the concept of transnational entrepreneurship by explaining how immigrants establish economic, cultural, and social connections with their country of origin. The ethnic enclave is another contradictory point, while Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) and Aguilera (2009) consider it essential. Aguilera explains that its impact is not necessarily beneficial since Mexican entrepreneurs earn lower incomes than those who operate outside of them. Cooney and Godwin (2020) establish that networks and policies have more impact than enclaves

## 2.4 TRANSNATIONAL TIES

Transnational ties refer to the economic, social, and cultural ties that migrant entrepreneurs have between their country of origin and their country of residence. These ties transcend borders and allow entrepreneurs to interact with economic resources, goods, information, and contacts across multiple countries. These ties are typical of transnational entrepreneurship, as entrepreneurs are not limited to operating in the host country but, through these ties, open up business opportunities for both countries. Transnational entrepreneurs are conceptualized as immigrants who mobilize social networks that transcend borders to adapt economically, facilitating access to resources and business opportunities in both countries (Portes, Haller, & Guarnizo, 2002). Cooney and Godwin (2020) analyse the Migrant Enclave Theory and its link with the formation of transnational entrepreneurial opportunities. They suggest that opportunities arise from the interaction between the entrepreneur and their environment mediated by transnational networks. Aguilera (2009), in her work, establishes how Latino immigrants in ethnic enclaves obtain economic income through self-employment. The author

explains that the networks within these spaces can influence business opportunities. Some of the key elements of these transnational networks are: Two-way communication: These connections allow cultural, economic, and social exchanges between the country of origin and the destination country. Extended social capital: Community networks provide valuable resources such as contacts, services, capital, and knowledge. Investment and trade facilitation: These ties allow importing and exporting products between both countries, finding strategic partners, and mobilizing financing between countries. Cultural and linguistic flexibility. Employers operate in diverse cultural, economic, and institutional environments, giving them an advantage in terms of experience and international relations. (Portes, Haller, & Guarnizo, 2002).

## 2.5 MIXED-EMBEDDEDNESS

Mixed embeddedness is a definition developed by Kloosterman and Rath (2001) that attempts to explain how migrant entrepreneurs are influenced by the following factors: institutional and market structures of the host country (government regulations, policies, economic situation and legal regularizations) and social networks (ethnic community, family and business and professional contacts). This research recognizes that mixed-embeddedness theory has been essential to understanding migrant entrepreneurship, as it not only analyses factors in the host country but also those in the country of origin and the entrepreneur's global connections. Their studies explain how businesses founded by migrants residing in developed countries manage to internationalize to emerging countries such as India or China. It also establishes that the greater the degree of transnational mixed-embeddedness, the greater the likelihood of success for businesses in the internationalization process. Success is often reflected in: greater access to emerging markets, a strategic stance regarding the country's institutional and cultural knowledge, impact on costs and reduced uncertainty, and effective connections in distribution, manufacturing, and consumption networks. In this context, three key components are identified: Dual structural embeddedness. Entrepreneurs are anchored in the institutional frameworks of two or more countries and can interpret and adapt business strategies to each environment. Transnational social capital. Connections from the country of origin, whether familial, professional, or cultural, offer valuable resources such as market knowledge, ethnic and linguistic credibility, and financial and human capital. Cultural capital. Migrant identity is a strategic advantage for incorporating migrants into their home markets or international niches, thanks to their knowledge of both cultures.

## 2.6 ETHNIC NETWORKS

In the field of migrant entrepreneurship, ethnic networks have been a relevant topic and are a key element in understanding the dynamics that facilitate the establishment of ethnic businesses. Various researchers have analyzed the role of these networks in accessing contacts, capital, and resources, recognizing their importance at the local and transnational levels. Although there is consensus regarding their importance, it is necessary to consider the focus, ethnic group, and geographic context. Authors such as Aldrich and Waldinger (1990), Aguilera (2009), Portes et al. (2002), Zhou (2004), and Stephens (2013) have identified commonalities in the following themes: importance as a resource, enclave function, relationship with transnationality, and positive and negative impacts. Importance as a resource. Aldrich and Waldinger (1990), Zhou (2004), and Portes et al. (2002) establish that ethnic networks function as support in the early stages of migrant entrepreneurship, facilitating access to contacts and clients, labor, capital, and broad market knowledge. Enclave function.

The authors explain that many migrant entrepreneurs operate with ethnic networks, which allow them greater access to markets and cultural dynamics in the host country. This offers greater business opportunities for new businesses that develop within a social network made up of members of their own community. Relationship with transnationality. Portes et al. (2002) and Stephens (2013) establish that ethnic networks can have a transnational factor that fosters social and economic ties with the country of origin, allowing them to obtain additional products, capital, and markets. Zhou (2004), Aguilera (2019), and Stephens (2013) warn that ethnic networks are not always beneficial and can be limiting if entrepreneurs are in a limited market or if the networks have strong dependency relationships.

## 2.7 DISCRIMINATION IN IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Discrimination is a social problem that immigrant entrepreneurs face when developing their businesses in host countries. Discrimination can occur in various forms, ranging from unequal access to financing, regulatory laws, cultural stigmatization, and exclusion from certain markets (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Aguilera, 2009). In particular, Aguilera (2009) demonstrates how unfavorable structural conditions limit the opportunities of immigrant entrepreneurs, generating exclusion and reducing their earning capacity. Cooney and Godwin (2021) explain how, despite inclusive entrepreneurship policies from organizations such as the OECD and the European Commission, immigrants continue to face disadvantages related to their ethnic origin, legal status, and lack of professional qualifications. Additionally, Sinkovics and Reuber (2021) and Sandoz et al. (2022) emphasize that discrimination not only limits access to key resources but also the entrepreneurial trajectory of immigrants, limiting them to operating in specific ethnic or informal niches as a method of survival. Discrimination acts as a determining factor in the configuration of migrant business models.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

When conducting and designing this study, it was essential to consider the underlying philosophical assumptions incorporated into the methodology. This research is oriented toward an interpretivist philosophy because it seeks to understand the subjective experiences of Mexican restaurant owners in Dublin, particularly regarding the issues of access to the labor market, challenges, ethnic networks, and the impact on the local economy. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2015), the philosophy of interpretivism focuses on understanding the world through the meanings that individuals assign. This philosophical paradigm explains that reality is constructed by society, and knowledge emerges from the interactions between the researcher and the participant. Given that this research on Mexican restaurant entrepreneurs is based on the participants' experiences and considers them valid and significant for the interpretation of reality, this study adopts a subjectivist ontological stance. (O'Leary, 2017; Punch, 2014).

Compared to positivist research, which seeks a single, objective truth, this study recognizes the complexity of the truths experienced by different individuals. By understanding the context, it is possible to understand and delve deeper into the ethnic entrepreneurship of Mexican restaurants in Dublin (Mills, 1959). It is also assumed that for entrepreneurial research, especially that focused on minority sectors or niche markets, a flexible methodological approach tends to yield more complete and nuanced results. Although the research is mostly qualitative, a structured supporting questionnaire is incorporated to obtain quantitative data that enriches the research. This does not orient the research toward positivism or pragmatism, but rather contributes to the improvement of the research and allows for a deeper understanding of social reality (O'Leary (2017) and Saunders et al. (2015).

### 3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

This research primarily uses a qualitative approach, employing interviews to analyze the phenomenon of Mexican migrant entrepreneurship in Dublin restaurants. However, it relies on quantitative data obtained through questionnaires that provide a broader understanding of the subject under study. This approach allows for the analysis of the business and social phenomena of Mexican entrepreneurs by combining the depth and breadth of qualitative data with the measurement of the quantitative method (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015; Punch, 2014). The qualitative approach consists of semi-structured interviews that capture the entrepreneurs' experiences, challenges, and experiences, which adds flexibility to the research (O'Leary, 2017). On the other hand, the quantitative component integrates the use of Likert-scale questionnaires that allow for the assessment of entrepreneurs' perceptions based on factors such as access to the labor market, challenges, ethnic networks, and community impact. Both tools were developed based on ethnic entrepreneurship theories.

The research combines inductive and deductive reasoning. The deductive aspect is due to the fact that the research is based on existing entrepreneurship theories and hypotheses that can be approved or refuted are addressed. Furthermore, research tools such as the Linkert questionnaire are used. The inductive aspect is due to the limited literature specifically studying Mexican migrant entrepreneurship in Ireland. The interview was used as a research tool, which allowed us to gain new perspectives based on the experiences of migrant

entrepreneurs. This mixed approach allows for a more thorough and nuanced investigation of the phenomenon under study (McCabe, 2018, Punch, 2014; O'Leary, 2017).

### 3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research adopts an exploratory and descriptive design. It is exploratory because Mexican migrant entrepreneurship in Ireland is a poorly documented social and entrepreneurial phenomenon with gaps in the literature. It is descriptive because it seeks to identify and classify key factors of migrant entrepreneurship, such as ethnic networks, access to the labor market, and community impact (Punch, 2014; Hart, 2010). To achieve this purpose, semi-structured interviews with 12 entrepreneurs were used as a key data collection technique. This helped to explore the entrepreneurs' experiences and ideas in greater depth, facilitating open dialogue guided by key themes (O'Leary, 2017; McCabe, 2018). Additionally, the research incorporates a complementary quantitative component. A Linkert scale questionnaire was used to measure the specific perceptions of each entrepreneur on a scale of 1 to 5. This questionnaire was administered to a group of 12 participants to identify and classify certain patterns that would corroborate or refute general theories of ethnic entrepreneurship (Peat, 2002; Hulley, 2007).

The quantitative data generated by the questionnaires were processed and analyzed in Microsoft Excel, generating valuable information for the creation of percentages and graphs that facilitate the visualization of the research results. This quantitative approach is merely complementary and does not replace the depth of the qualitative approach; rather, it strengthens the validity of the study. This allows for an analysis of the subjective depth of the entrepreneurial and social phenomenon while simultaneously measuring observable patterns (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2015; De Bono, 2000).

### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION APPROACH

The data collection phase was designed considering the interpretive philosophical stance of this research, this allowed for a more in-depth investigation of the experiences of Mexican entrepreneurs in Dublin. This study considered qualitative and quantitative instruments for the collection of information that allowed for the collection of valuable data. Obtaining the data proved to be somewhat challenging to determine the total number of Mexican entrepreneurs owning restaurants in Dublin. According to information from Rentech Digital, a business platform, there are approximately 112 Mexican restaurants in Ireland. However, the official institutions, the Companies Registry Office and Central Statistics, do not have specific data, as they manage information by restaurant sector, not by nationality. To determine this number, the Mexican embassy was contacted and an approximate estimate of 15 Mexican entrepreneurs owning restaurants in Dublin.

Through semi-structured interviews, qualitative data were collected, which allowed for the exploration of the experiences of Mexican entrepreneurs. Active participation was encouraged in topics of interest to the research such as: access to the market and capital, the motivations and challenges of opening the restaurant, ethnic networks and the impact that these businesses have on the community. From a methodological point of view, this qualitative approach was vital to understanding the reality of migrant entrepreneurs, which is guided by constructivism and the sociological imagination explained by Mills (1959). In addition to the qualitative approach, a structured questionnaire using a Linkert scale was developed to support and enrich the research. The sample size in this case was larger since the

questionnaire was administered to 12 entrepreneurs. This allowed for the quantification and classification of participants' perceptions regarding topics based on Ethnic Entrepreneurship Theory, such as market and capital access, motivations and challenges of opening a restaurant, ethnic networks, and the impact these businesses have on the community. The questionnaires were systematized using Microsoft Excel to obtain percentages and general graphs, which improved the clarity of the research results. This mixed approach of interviews and questionnaires allowed for the depth of the entrepreneurs' experiences and the breadth of general trends in ethnic entrepreneurship to be captured, offering a more complete view of the Mexican restaurant entrepreneurship phenomenon in Dublin. As Punch (2014) mentions, the combination of data types offers greater reliability and enrichment to research, especially in complex phenomena such as entrepreneurship.

### 3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data collection for this study was carried out using two main tools: semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires. This mixed approach aligns with the interpretive philosophy, allowing for a deeper exploration of the topic and the obtaining of measurable data (O'Leary, 2017; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). The total number of Mexican entrepreneurs who own restaurants in Dublin is 15. This estimate was made through field research and with the support of the Mexican embassy, which contacted us with the network of Mexican entrepreneurs. It should be noted that there is no official data from the Irish government regarding the total number of Mexican restaurant entrepreneurs in Ireland. Of this universe of 15 entrepreneurs, 12 completed the structured questionnaire and the face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Restaurants were visited one by one to learn about the business dynamics, the type of food offered, and the ambiance and decor of the restaurant. This also allowed for direct observation. This strategy allowed for combining the richness of qualitative data with the generation of quantitative information (Punch, 2014). The design of this predominantly qualitative research with complementary quantitative information allowed us to triangulate the data, improving the study's interpretations. As Hart (2010) and Punch (2014) explain, the use of multiple data sources strengthens qualitative research while providing a structure for analysis. Furthermore, this method was especially appropriate for an understudied entrepreneurial phenomenon such as Mexican restaurant entrepreneurship in Dublin.

### 3.6 SAMPLE SELECTION

The sample selection for this study was drawn from a target population of 15 Mexican immigrant entrepreneurs who opened Mexican restaurants in Dublin. The selection criteria were: having Mexican nationality, legally residing in Ireland, and being directly involved in the creation and management of their own Mexican restaurant in Dublin, Ireland. Factors such as age, gender, religion, and socioeconomic status were not considered. The result was a wide range of experiences and perspectives on the migrant entrepreneurial journey. Of this established population, 12 Mexican entrepreneurs completed the structured questionnaire, and also completed semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires and interviews were conducted in person at Mexican food restaurants from July 7 to 19, 2025. The sampling approach was purposive (non-probability), which is geared toward qualitative and exploratory research focused on a specific group with shared characteristics. This method allows for the intentional selection of entrepreneurs who could contribute valuable information to the study, such as the case of the first Mexican restaurant in Dublin or the first Mexican entrepreneur to

share recipes and create themed dinners (O'Leary, 2017; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). This selection strategy is consistent with the interpretive approach, where the objective is not statistical generalization, but rather to understand the experiences of a particular group. Due to the small size of the ventures established by Mexican immigrants and the specific inclusion criteria, the sample is considered sufficiently representative of the social and entrepreneurial phenomenon, also allowing for qualitative exploration supported by quantitative analysis.

### 3.7 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The information obtained was analyzed using a mixed-method approach, using qualitative research using interviews and quantitative research supported by questionnaires. Both were designed based on key factors from ethnic entrepreneurship theories. This methodological strategy allowed to capture the depth of the entrepreneurs' experiences and, at the same time, identify common patterns in Mexican restaurant entrepreneurship in Dublin.

**Qualitative Data: Semi-Structured Interviews.** Interviews were conducted with 12 Mexican entrepreneurs. These interviews explored key themes within ethnic entrepreneurship theories: market entry, challenges, motivations, ethnic networks, and perceived impact on the community. Open-ended questions allowed the entrepreneurs to narrate their experiences and provided flexibility to explore beyond the planned topics (O'Leary, 2017; McCabe, 2018). For qualitative data analysis, the thematic analysis method was used, following the approach of Braun and Clarke (2006). This allowed us to identify recurring themes and patterns. These findings were compared with the ethnic entrepreneurship literature to validate the data obtained and identify potential new contributions. The main themes identified were: the importance of cultural authenticity as a business strategy, nostalgia for Mexican food, and the desire to preserve and disseminate Mexican identity. These interviews offered a broad overview of how entrepreneurs experience and develop their business activity in a migratory context and in a country other than their own.

**Quantitative Data: Structured Questionnaire.** The structured questionnaire was developed based on ethnic entrepreneurship theories and contains Likert-scale questions designed to assess the perceptions of Mexican entrepreneurs. This questionnaire was completed by 12 participants and processed using Microsoft Excel, which allowed for the generation of statistics and graphs that facilitated the visualization of results.

**Integration of qualitative and quantitative data.** The combination and integration of both types of data allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon studied. While the qualitative data offered depth and richness of information, the quantitative responses allowed for the identification of certain general patterns among Mexican entrepreneurs. This combination reflects the inductive and deductive reasoning of the research by combining statistical indicators with the entrepreneurs' personal narratives (McCabe, 2018; Hulley, 2007; Punch, 2014).

### 3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research considers the ethical principles described in the National College of Ireland's Ethical Guidelines and Procedures for Research Involving Human Participants and the Belmont Report (1979), which guarantee the rights and well-being of research participants. The three fundamental principles that guide all methodological and ethical decisions are: Respect for Persons, Beneficence and Non-maleficence, and Justice. Respect for persons was established through informed consent from the subject and the research objectives. The

Mexican entrepreneurs were thoroughly informed about the purpose, methods, and implications of the research. Their participation in the interviews and questionnaires was voluntary, and they were informed that answering questions was not mandatory. They were given the freedom to withdraw at any time, thus protecting their personal rights.

Beneficence and non-maleficence was addressed by minimizing potential discomfort associated with conducting interviews or participating in the research. Because this study includes observation, questionnaires, and interviews that yield confidential business information, all data obtained was handled anonymously and stored securely. Pseudonyms were also used in the presentation of the results. It is intended that the results of this research can be shared with the Mexican Embassy and Mexican entrepreneurs and positively impact the formulation of public policies that promote migrant entrepreneurship. Justice is contemplated in the equitable selection of participants. The criteria for selecting the sample were based on the research topic of Mexican restaurant entrepreneurs in Dublin and not on personal characteristics such as religion, gender, or age. There was no discrimination of any kind in the selection of research participants. This contributed to the equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of the research.

### 3.10 LIMITATIONS

While this study provides relevant information on the entrepreneurial dynamics of Mexican restaurant entrepreneurs in Dublin, the following limitations must be considered: First, the scope and scale of the research were somewhat limited by time and resource availability. The distribution of Mexican restaurants in Dublin is extensive and encompasses several areas of the city separated by considerable distances. Although the sample size was sufficient, it may not fully capture the diversity of all experiences in the sector. This affects the generalizability of the findings beyond the specific context of Dublin (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2015). Second, researcher bias could have influenced data collection and analysis. The researcher's ideological stance and prior assumptions could have affected the development of the research. Although measures were taken to maintain objectivity in the research through structured guides and questionnaires based on migrant entrepreneurship theory, complete neutrality is difficult to achieve in this type of qualitative research (Punch, 2014).

Another limitation could be associated with the subjectivity of the participants and their responses during interviews and questionnaires. Participants may have felt confused by the questions asked, provided incomplete information, or were simply protecting the image of their business. This could generate a distorted perspective of the social phenomenon studied (Peat, 2002). Methodologically, the study includes semi-structured interviews and structured questionnaires based on migrant entrepreneurship theories, but does not include financial statistics such as revenue, profit margin, and business growth rate. This decision was made to build trust and protect participants' financial data. This limits the research in that it does not include the entrepreneurial success rates of each business (Hulley, 2007; Peat, 2002). These limitations do not minimize the value of the research findings; rather, they broaden the scope of the investigation into future topics that can be explored within the social and entrepreneurial phenomenon of Mexican migrant entrepreneurship.

## Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

### 4.1 OVERVIEW OF PARTICIPANTS

With data provided by the embassy the research be able to detect a total of 22 establishments selling Mexican food and food products, owned by 15 Mexican entrepreneurs legally established in Ireland. This study involved the participation of 12 Mexican entrepreneurs selected through purposive sampling. Of this sample, 12 participated in face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and questionnaire.(see table 1)

| Num | Participant | Restaurant    | Number of Business | Years in Ireland | Years in operation | Products Sold                         | Location |
|-----|-------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 1   | P1          | El grito      | 3                  | 15               | 11                 | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 2   | P2          | Salsa         | 3                  | 15               | 7                  | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 3   | P3          | Agave         | 3                  | 9                | 5                  | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 4   | P4          | Tacos lupillo | 2                  | 11               | 2                  | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 5   | P5          | Pikosito      | 1                  | 10               | 1                  | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 6   | P6          | Chilangos     | 1                  | 6                | 1.5                | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 7   | P7          | El Milagro    | 1                  | 4                | 4                  | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 8   | P8          | Acapulco      | 1                  | 28               | 26                 | Food and drinks                       | Dublin   |
| 9   | P9          | Picado        | 1                  | 25               | 15                 | Packaged products, food and beverages | Dublin   |
| 10  | P10         | El antojo D   | 1                  | 7                | 6                  | Food                                  | Dublin   |
| 11  | P11         | Huastecan     | 1                  | 3                | 2                  | Food                                  | Dublin   |
| 12  | P12         | Elso          | 1                  | 8                | 8                  | Packaged products, food               | Dublin   |

Table 1 : List of interview participants and research questionnaires

Of the 12 research participants, 7 were women and 5 men, all legal residents of the country, with Mexican nationality. Eleven were business owners and one manager. Factors such as age, religion, educational level, and socioeconomic status were not considered. The sample size was considered sufficient for the type of research conducted since the mixed-method research method was able to capture a greater wealth and depth of data and experiences of the entrepreneurs. The qualitative analysis was conducted using the principles of Thematic Analysis. To this end, codes were generated from the written and detailed reading of the interviews, which were then grouped into families or themes. This process was carried out with Atlas.ti software, which facilitated data organization and coding. For the quantitative analysis, Excel was used to generate statistics and graphs. All participants were informed of the research objectives and agreed to participate voluntarily, guaranteeing the confidentiality of their personal data and respect for their rights.

## 4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS : THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND CODING PROCESS

For the analysis of qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews, the thematic analysis approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used. This approach helped to researcher to identify, organize, analyze, and establish themes or families within the data presented in an interview, helping us effectively and systematically interpret the content of the interviews. To conduct this analysis, the ATLAS.ti software was used, which facilitated the systematization of categories. The process consisted of data familiarization, initial code generation, theme search, theme review, theme definition and naming, and report production. Braun and Clarke (2006). (See appendix 3)

Process: The interviews were transcribed in word format and subsequently, for coding, a detailed reading of all the transcripts began to identify the most important segments of the interview. Inductive codes were generated, that is, labels applied to fragments of the interview, without imposing predefined categories. These codes were subsequently analyzed to create thematic families, key factors of the experience of Mexican migrant entrepreneurs. The codes obtained from the program were: Appreciation of Mexican food, authenticity, benefits, business challenges, cultural and language barriers, cultural diversity, different business practices and negotiation styles, difficulty in legal procedures, discrimination, economic autonomy, employment for migrants, entrepreneurial spirit, ethnic networks, family support, homesickness for food, Mexican embassy networks, other communities, promotion of Mexican culture, savings and own investment, social media, support for Mexican customers, transnational ties and work for local businesses and suppliers. (See figure 1)

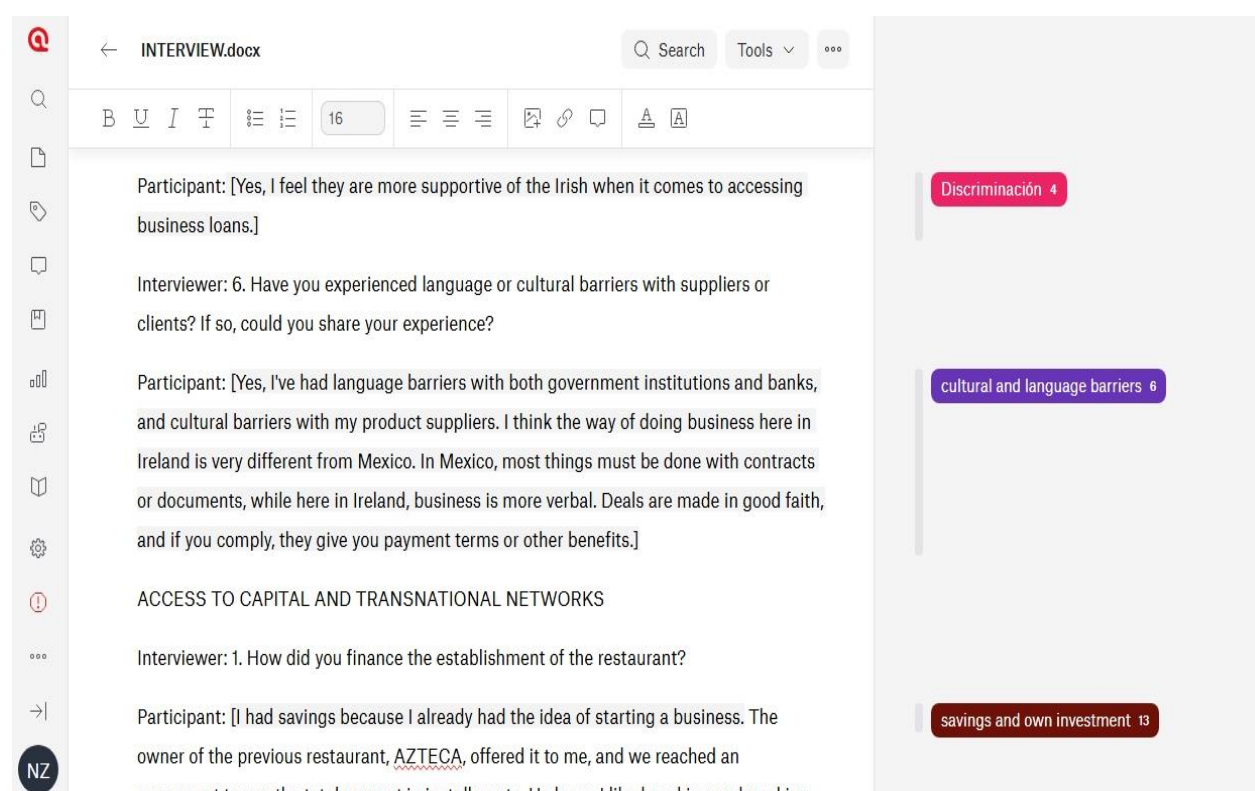
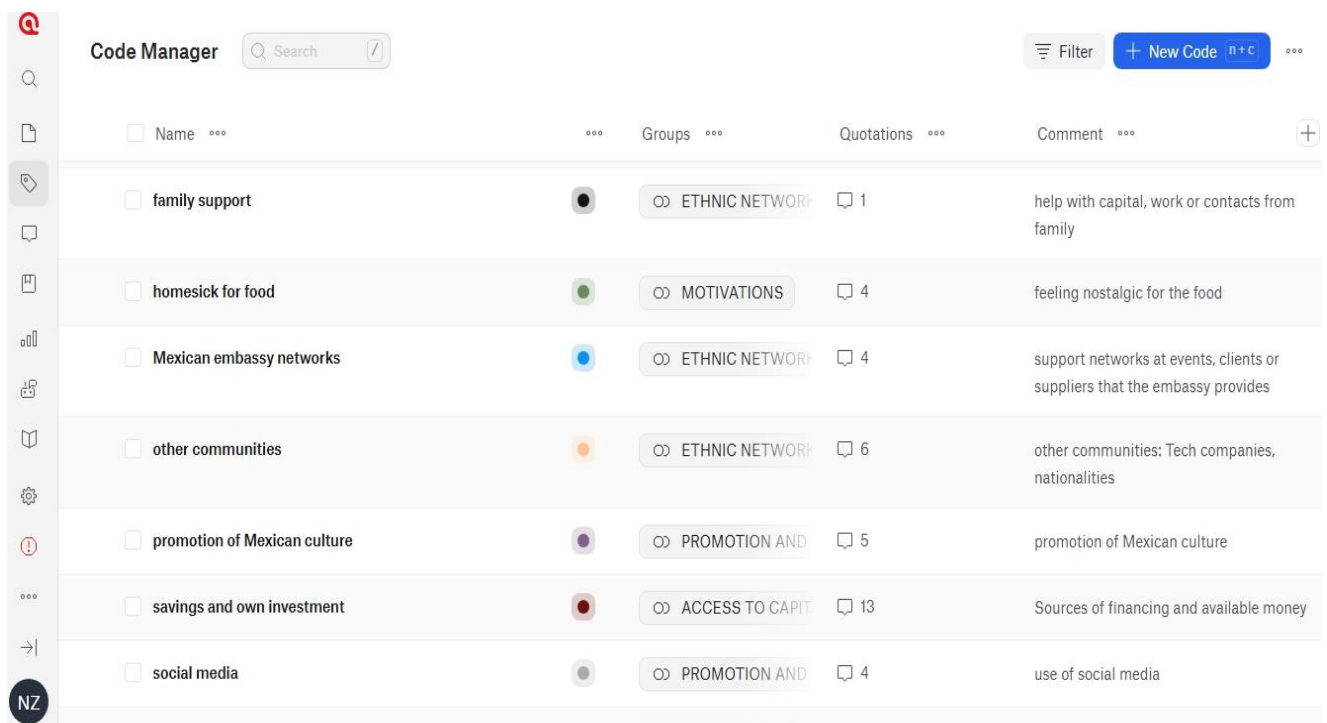


Figure 1: Coding of the interviews

The codes were subsequently grouped into themes or families, which were: Ethnic network, lack of access to labor and capital and challenges, motivations, access to capital and transnational ties, impact on the community, and promotion and marketing. (See figure 2) This systematization and organization allowed for a clearer and more detailed interpretation of the

data. Thematic saturation was considered reached when no new relevant codes emerged in the interviews. To ensure the validity of the analysis, the codes were reviewed, determining internal coherence and their differentiation between families or themes. Textual quotes were also used to support each theme or family.



| Name                         | Groups          | Quotations | Comment  |
|------------------------------|-----------------|------------|--|
| family support               | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 1          | help with capital, work or contacts from family                            |
| homesick for food            | MOTIVATIONS     | 4          | feeling nostalgic for the food   |
| Mexican embassy networks     | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 4          | support networks at events, clients or suppliers that the embassy provides |
| other communities            | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 6          | other communities: Tech companies, nationalities                           |
| promotion of Mexican culture | PROMOTION AND   | 5          | promotion of Mexican culture   |
| savings and own investment   | ACCESS TO CAPIT | 13         | Sources of financing and available money                                   |
| social media                 | PROMOTION AND   | 4          | use of social media  |

Figure 2: Grouping by themes

#### 4.3 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

To complement the information obtained from the qualitative research, a structured questionnaire was developed for the same group of 12 Mexican entrepreneurs interviewed. This instrument was designed with a Likert scale (1 to 5) and was based on key concepts from ethnic entrepreneurship theories such as ethnic networks, lack of access to labor and capital and challenges, transnational ties, and impact on the community. The objective of the quantitative research was descriptive: to measure and analyze participants' perceptions, identify patterns, and support the information obtained from the qualitative research with precise numerical data. The results of these questionnaires were processed in Microsoft Excel to generate statistics, tables, and graphs that would allow for a clearer visualization of the information. This analysis revealed consistent patterns among the participants. Although the sample consisted of 12 participants, it represents 80% of the total target population, which is 15 Mexican entrepreneurs who own a restaurant in Dublin. This provides a solid foundation for obtaining representative information. These quantitative data provided essential information that complements the qualitative interview research, allowing for methodological triangulation that strengthens the investigation. According to Punch (2014) and Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2015), the integration of quantitative data into in-depth qualitative studies improves the credibility of the results, as is the case with Mexican ethnic entrepreneurship.

## 4.4 BUSINESS PROFILE

### 4.4.1 Qualitative results

**Business Type.** Most of the businesses are traditional Mexican restaurants, such as Pikosito, which is food from Coahuila, Chilangos, which is food from Mexico City, or Salsa, which are dishes from Jalisco, Mexico. Others offer food truck services, catering, cooking classes, or the preparation of Mexican food products, such as Elso, which makes organic sauces with different flavors, or Huastecan, which makes Huastecan-style chorizo. This diversity is explained by Zhou's (2004) theory, which indicates that ethnic businesses tend to diversify their products to respond to the different needs of the local market. For example, Participant (9): "The business is called Picado, and we opened in 2010. The concept is a Mexican food store that offers cooking classes and themed dinners. In the store, we sell products such as salsas, tortillas, chilies, and snacks. In the cooking classes, we offer courses on how to make tortillas, tamales and enchiladas."

**Mode of Operation.** Mexican businesses are showing a tendency to combine fixed and mobile operations, whether through food trucks, events, catering, takeaway, or parcel delivery. For example, El Milagro started its business in a food truck and now collaborates with Irish Pubs. The same dynamic is seen with Tacos Lupillo, which has its own restaurant but also collaborates with local pubs. Participant (7): "The restaurant is called El Milagro. We sell Mexican food, especially tacos. We had a food truck in Malahide; people really liked the concept, and we even had articles published in the Irish Times and on radio and television programs. We currently sell in Herbert Park and have agreements with Irish pubs to sell our food."

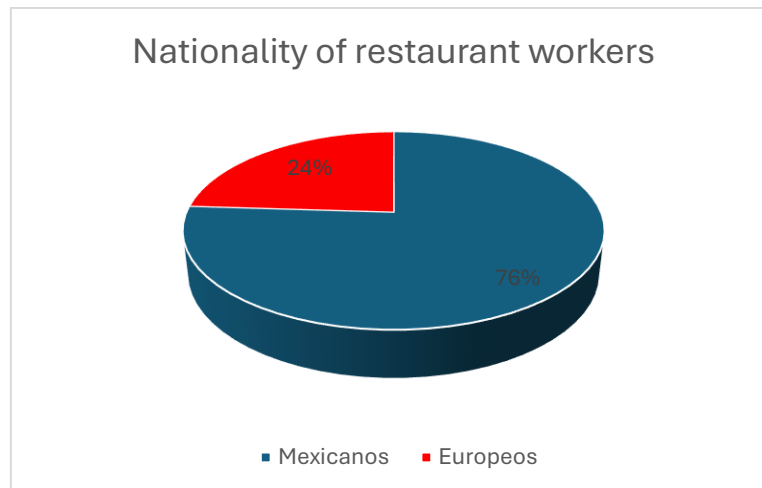
**Suppliers.** All of the Mexican businesses studied report having mostly local suppliers in Ireland, whether the suppliers are Irish or Mexicans with legally established businesses in the country. Some examples of these are: Mexican Things, Musgrave, Pallas Foods, and Balam. Some report having difficulty sourcing authentic Mexican ingredients, which led them to consider Mexican suppliers. There are also businesses that resort to purchasing their ingredients in countries like the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and the Netherlands. For example, Agave Restaurant uses a combination of Irish, Mexican, and sometimes British suppliers. This is explained by Cooney and Brophy (2024), who describe strategic transnationalism, where immigrant ethnic entrepreneurs adapt cultural authenticity to local business, legal, and logistical regulations.

**Multicultural clientele.** A phenomenon observed in most of the businesses analyzed is the cultural diversity of their clientele. Although many started with a target market aimed at Mexicans, they have expanded their reach to the European, American, and Asian markets. This situation has been explained by Morris & Schindehutte (2005), who explain how cultural values and gastronomic authenticity act as competitive advantages in multicultural contexts.

### 4.4.2 Quantitative results

**Workforce and Ethnic Solidarity.** The composition of the workforce in restaurants owned by Mexican immigrants is often focused on the recruitment of Mexicans. It is a combination of solidarity, practical necessity, and cultural authenticity. Aguilera (2009) explains how in ethnic immigrant entrepreneurship, support networks facilitate not only the hiring of staff but also involve other factors such as the market, suppliers, etc. Cooney and Golwin (2020) explain that this process is part of a formation of entrepreneurial opportunities known as diasporas, where ethnic businesses begin to scale and diversify their workforce and then adapt to a

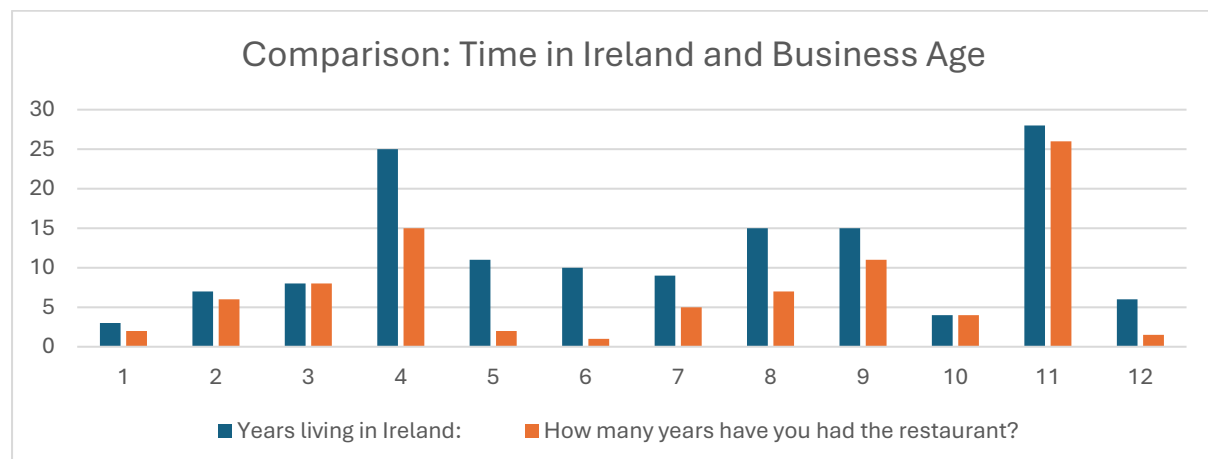
multicultural clientele. The twelve Mexican businesses studied show great variation in the size and scale of Mexican entrepreneurship. While some entrepreneurs have a small business with two employees, others own three restaurants and have a workforce of 36 employees. The vast majority of employees are Mexican (76%), while the hiring of employees of other nationalities represents a smaller percentage (24%), which confirms the importance of ethnic networks and cultural affinity in workforce recruitment (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990; Aguilera, 2009). (See graph 1)



Graph 1: Nationalities of restaurants workers

Microenterprises such as Huastecan, Antojo Dublin, and Elso operate with only two employees. In contrast, El Grito operates with 36 employees and three branches, making it the largest business in the sample and reflecting a more advanced stage of business development with greater organizational development. Agave and Salsa follow, also with three branches and 14 employees, positioning these three businesses as the most viable for potential expansion beyond their ethnic enclave (Zhou, 2004).

Residence and length of business Another factor to consider is the length of residence in Ireland compared to the length of business operations. This data varies greatly: the owner of Picado has lived in Ireland for 25 years and her business has been operating for 15 years, in contrast to Chilangos, whose owner has lived in Ireland for six years and her restaurant has been operating for a year and a half. According to Zhan et al. (2023), entrepreneurs with a long residence tend to have greater social integration and business connections, as they accumulate local knowledge and build business and support networks. (See graph 2)



Graph 2: Time and Business Age

#### **4.4.3 Integrated Analysis**

The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings reveals a clear profile of Mexican ethnic entrepreneurship in Dublin. This demonstrates a complex combination of cultural expression, ethnic networks, and strategic adaptation. A defined pattern is observed regarding the type of business and diversification. Most entrepreneurs operate in the restaurant and food sector, but the range is varied: from established traditional restaurants, food trucks, catering services, collaboration with local pubs, and the sale of packaged artisanal foods. This entrepreneurial heterogeneity is explained by Zhou (2004). From a quantitative perspective, an interesting finding is the high hiring of Mexican personnel (76%) in the businesses studied. This workforce pattern is explained by ethnic solidarity (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). The role of suppliers and logistics reveals a strategic adaptation by Mexican businesses. While it is true that all businesses source from local suppliers such as Dublin and establishments such as Mexican Things, Musgrave, and Pallas Foods, some also have European suppliers in countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, and France. Others turn to Mexican suppliers to purchase authentic Mexican ingredients and spices.

Finally, the number of years entrepreneurs have been legal residents in Ireland also influences the establishment of businesses. The more established businesses demonstrate greater integration and organizational maturity, as is the case with Picado, El Grito, or Salsa. This supports the theory of Zhan et al. (2023), which argues that long-term residence provides local knowledge and the development of support networks.

### **4.5 MOTIVATIONS TO START A BUSINESS**

#### **4.5.1 Qualitative results**

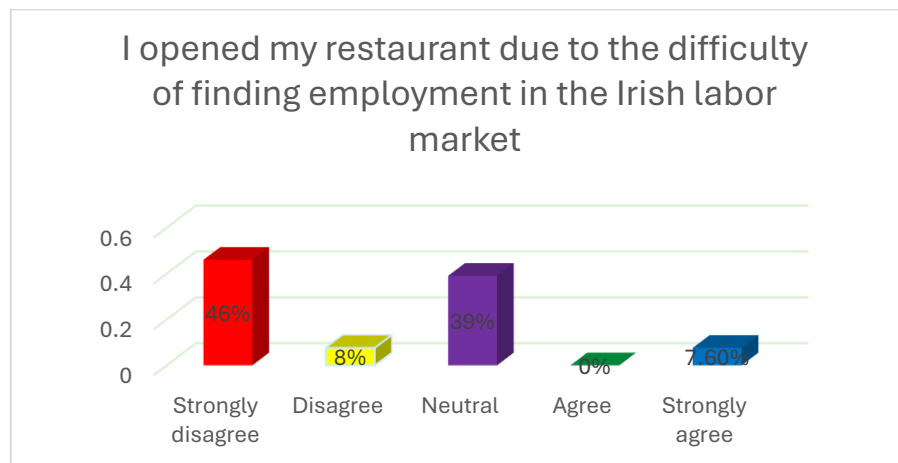
The qualitative analysis of the interviews conducted with Mexican entrepreneurs in Dublin reveals diverse motivations for entrepreneurship, highlighting emotional, cultural, and economic factors. While these motivations differed among participants, three were primarily mentioned: the desire to promote Mexican cuisine and culture, nostalgia for food, the entrepreneurial spirit, and the pursuit of economic autonomy. Regarding the promotion of Mexican culture and gastronomic nostalgia, for many entrepreneurs, the decision to open a Mexican food business was strongly linked to emotional motives and the desire to preserve and spread their Mexican culture and cuisine abroad. Their stories reflect a strong cultural pride and a sentimental connection to food. Participant (5): "I opened the restaurant because of nostalgia for Mexican food. I missed this a lot, I wanted homemade food like the one we make in Mexico." For Yang and Zhang (2022), cultural persistence and identity are fundamental keys in the business decisions of migrant businesses. A restaurant becomes not only a commercial venture but a cultural space that reaffirms the belonging and identity of a people. Entrepreneurial spirit and previous experience.

Several entrepreneurs had already owned previous businesses in Mexico or Ireland or had family with family businesses. As Participant (12) explained, "I've always liked business; I married an Irishman and since I arrived I opened an online business selling Mexican jewelry." This demonstrates what Cooney and Godwin (2020) call the "diasporic entrepreneurial mindset," in which migrant entrepreneurs arrive with entrepreneurial skills, ambitions, and sometimes established business models that they later adapt to businesses abroad. In addition to the factors mentioned above, economic factors play an important role. Several interviewees mentioned the desire for financial independence and to generate more income. Participant (5) said, "The reason was economic necessity; we both worked, but we wanted to generate more income," while another simply stated, "For me, it was economic self-reliance."

Aguilera (2009) argues that ethnic enclaves often offer alternatives for self-employment and financial independence to immigrants who find it difficult to enter the country's labor market.

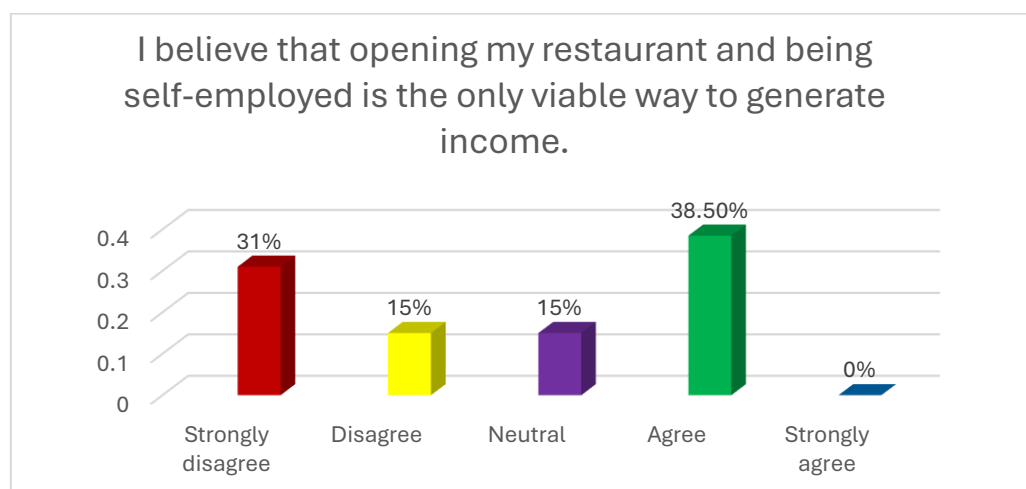
#### 4.5.2 Quantitative results

The quantitative data reveal important information about Mexican migrant entrepreneurs when starting a business in Dublin, especially in two specific questions related to economic need and access to the labor market. When asked if difficulty finding employment in the Irish labor market motivated their decision to start a business, 46% of respondents strongly disagreed and 7.7% only disagreed, indicating that for the majority of entrepreneurs this was not the main reason. This result partially contrasts with classic theories of ethnic migrant entrepreneurship, which argue that lack of access to the formal labor market encourages the creation of migrant businesses Aguilera (2009). (See graph 3)



Graph 3: Labor market

Entrepreneurship as a strategy for economic autonomy. The response to the statement: "I believe opening my restaurant and being self-employed is the only viable way to generate income" shows greater variation. While 30.8% strongly disagreed and 15.4% only disagreed, a significant 38.5% agreed, indicating that for a significant portion of entrepreneurs, self-employment was considered a viable strategy for achieving economic autonomy. These responses reinforce Cooney and Godwin's (2020) argument that the creation of entrepreneurial opportunities in immigrant communities may be due to the desire for economic independence and self-employment. (See graph 4)



Graph 4: Income

### **4.5.3 Integrated Analysis**

The integration of qualitative and quantitative results reveals a detailed understanding of the motivations behind Mexican ethnic entrepreneurship in Dublin. While classic theories of migrant ethnic entrepreneurship—Aguilera (2009) and Aldrich and Waldinger (1990)—posit that ethnic entrepreneurship generally arises as a response to exclusion and a lack of job opportunities in the formal market, this research presents a different view. The findings show that the majority of Mexican businesses in Dublin are established out of cultural identity, an emotional connection to culture and gastronomy, and the generation of higher incomes.

Entrepreneurial spirit is another important factor to consider. Stories of previous business experience and family ventures indicate that many of these individuals arrived in Ireland with an entrepreneurial spirit. This is consistent with Cooney and Godwin's (2020) definition of a diasporic entrepreneurial mindset, which establishes that migration is not only a journey of necessity, but also of opportunity. Economic motivations were not entirely absent; a considerable portion of the entrepreneurs cited financial independence and the need to generate more income as important factors. Regarding the quantitative analysis, the responses support the qualitative results. This indicates that ethnic entrepreneurship among Mexicans in Dublin is not predominantly a response to structural exclusion from the labor market, but for a significant number of them, the business offered a viable path to financial autonomy.

## **4.6 CHALLENGES: ACCESS TO CAPITAL, DISCRIMINATION, LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, AND CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE BARRIERS**

### **4.6.1 Qualitative results**

The qualitative analysis of interviews with Mexican entrepreneurs in Dublin reveals a variety of challenges they face when establishing and managing a business. These challenges encompass diverse structural and cultural dimensions, including factors such as access to capital, financing, discrimination, legal procedures, cultural and linguistic barriers, and different business practices.

**Access to Capital.** Many entrepreneurs reported significant difficulties in obtaining financial support through banks or formal institutions. All businesses started by Mexicans were started with their own savings, family loans, and some with the help of investors who believed in their projects. Participant (3) shared: "I had savings because I already had the idea of starting a business. The previous owner offered to sell me the restaurant. So we reached an agreement and I gave him part of the debt and paid the rest in installments. These data reflect the importance of ethnic networks and the ability to adapt when financial institutions are not accessible in the host country. In addition, there was a perception of unequal treatment in banking institutions. As participant (3) recounted: "In terms of access to financial credit, I feel that they support the Irish more," which suggests that migrant status may influence the level of institutional support.

**Discrimination** The results of the interviews showed that a portion of the migrant entrepreneurs identified subtle forms of discrimination, although this does not represent the majority of cases. Although they were not always direct, the entrepreneurs recounted experiences of discrimination with neighboring businesses and others with access to services. Participant (4):

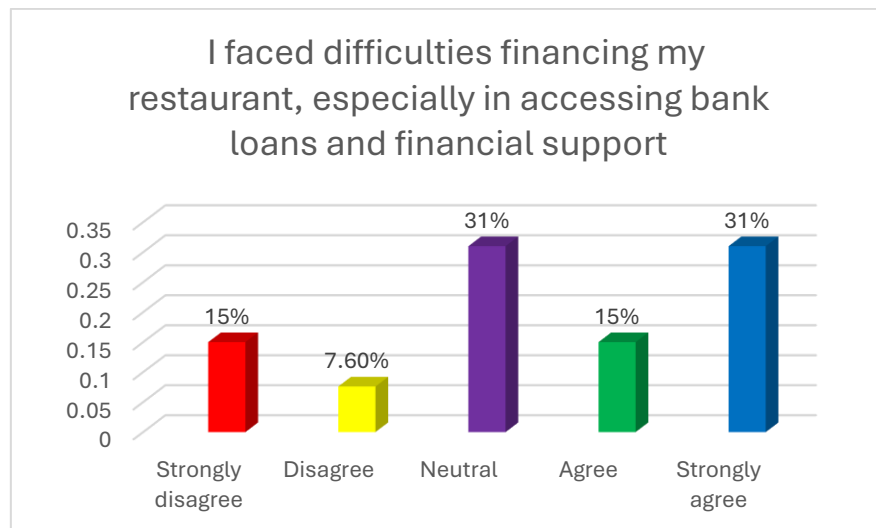
At first, we had problems with the pub next door. They complained about everything, the food we sold, the customers, etc. They were very closed-off and didn't want us to open the restaurant. After getting to know each other, we ended up doing good business. We sold tacos and they sold beers. Occasionally, we held fair events where we hired Mexican charros. These experiences support Aldrich and Waldinger's (1990) assertion that migrant entrepreneurs operate in unequal economic and social contexts where race and culture can act as obstacles to economic integration.

**Legal Requirements.** Most Mexican entrepreneurs face challenges due to the legal requirements for starting a business in Dublin. Several participants described the bureaucratic burden as more demanding for immigrants than for Irish or Europeans. Participant (8) story: "You have to be Irish so that the procedures are easier. If you are not European or Irish, they ask you for more things to prove, more procedures to manage and also more money to prove if you want to open a business. This information suggests that institutional procedures can directly affect migrant entrepreneurs, which is explained by Cooney and Brophy (2024) when they mention that ethnic entrepreneurship often faces more obstacles in regulatory procedures and legal processes compared to local or native companies.

**Cultural or Language Barriers** Cultural differences in business practices and negotiation styles were also difficult for Mexican entrepreneurs to face. Participants reported that adapting to the Irish way of doing business was complicated, especially regarding negotiation styles. For example, Participant (3) commented: "I think the way of doing business here in Ireland is very different from Mexico. In Mexico, most things must be done with contracts or documents, while here in Ireland, business is more verbal. Deals are made in good faith, and if you comply, they will give you payment terms or other benefits." This reflects how informal communication norms and social and business dynamics in Ireland can conflict with the more formal, document- and contract-based Mexican business culture. Language is also an essential element. Half of the entrepreneurs had difficulty communicating effectively with Irish institutions, banks, suppliers, and some contacts. Participant (3): "I had language barriers with government institutions and banks, and I had cultural barriers with the suppliers of my products." These barriers generate various disadvantages such as generating misunderstandings, delaying processes, and hindering business growth. According to Yang and Zhang (2022), these cultural differences generally affect the integration of immigrant entrepreneurs into local markets, especially in the early stages of the business.

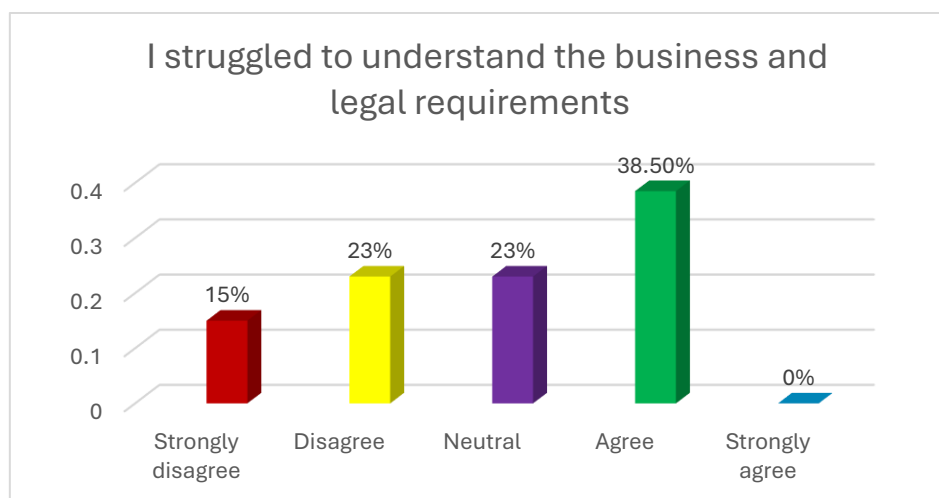
#### 4.6.2 Quantitative results

Quantitative Results Challenges: Access to Capital, Discrimination, Legal Requirements, and Cultural and Language Barriers . The questionnaire responses highlight the significant challenges faced by Mexican migrant entrepreneurs in Dublin. One of the greatest challenges relates to access to capital. When asked if they had difficulty financing their business, especially accessing bank loans and institutional financial support, 31% of participants strongly agreed and 15% agreed, indicating that almost half (46%) of respondents experienced financial difficulties. This supports the argument of Ram et al. (2008), who explain that ethnic migrant entrepreneurs often face difficulties in obtaining formal financing. (See graph 5)



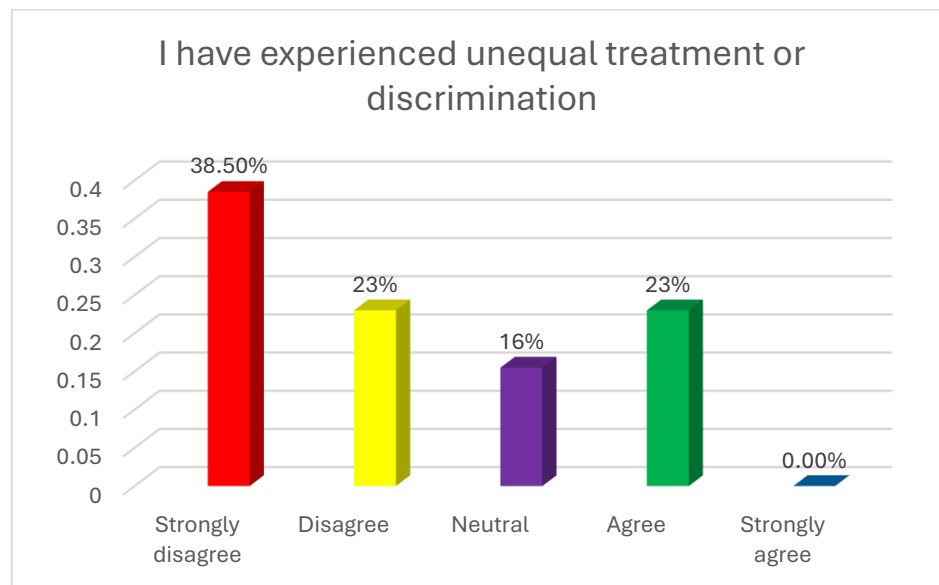
Graph 5: Financial support

Legal and administrative requirements were also considered important. When participants were asked if they found it difficult to understand the legal and commercial requirements for opening a business in Ireland, the vast majority (38.50%) agreed, while 23% disagreed. These figures indicate that the complexity of business requirements and lack of familiarity with the Irish legal framework are significant concerns for migrant entrepreneurship. Barrett et al. (2001) highlight the obstacles migrant entrepreneurs face in navigating legal systems outside their linguistic and cultural contexts.(See graph 6)



Graph 6: Legal requirements

On the other hand, discrimination appears to be a less recognized barrier. In response to the statement "I have experienced unequal treatment or discrimination," 61.5% responded that they strongly disagreed or disagreed. Only 23% agreed that they had experienced some form of discrimination in opening and running their business. These results show that, while some respondents perceive unequal or discriminatory treatment, the majority of entrepreneurs do not explicitly recognize discrimination as a significant barrier to managing their business..(See graph 7)



Graph 7: Discrimination

#### 4.6.3 Integrated Analysis

Although broader literature on ethnic migrant entrepreneurship, such as that of Aldrich and Waldinger (1990) or Ram et al. (2008), emphasizes that migrant entrepreneurs face structural disadvantages such as labor market restrictions, dependence on ethnic networks, difficulty in product diversification, disadvantaged institutional and legal environments, and limited access to capital, the findings of this study dismiss the notion that Mexican ethnic entrepreneurs depend on ethnic networks and that the main factor in starting businesses is structural restrictions in the Irish labor market. The study highlights that the main barriers for entrepreneurs are related to financial support, complex legal requirements, cultural and linguistic barriers, and business practices. From a qualitative perspective, the interviews revealed that access to capital is a significant challenge for Mexican entrepreneurs. Most Mexican businesses were established with their own savings, and a few with family assistance and by seeking private investors, rather than banks or formal financial institutions.

Discrimination, although not a major barrier, manifests itself in subtle ways. According to quantitative data, only 23% reported having experienced unequal treatment or discrimination. The interview results present this in greater depth. Regarding legal and administrative challenges, the findings show that migrant entrepreneurs face greater challenges than local entrepreneurs. The quantitative data showed that 38.5% of participants agreed they had encountered difficulties with these procedures. This is supported by interviews that describe the legal process as more demanding for immigrants. Cooney and Brophy (2024) explain that these administrative obstacles limit the capacity and expansion of immigrant-owned businesses. Cultural and linguistic barriers were important themes, entrepreneurs described difficulties adapting to Irish business culture and practices, as it contrasts with Mexican

practices, where formalized documents and contracts are necessary for business operations, especially with suppliers. Zhou (2004) emphasizes the need to correctly interpret the business culture and business practices of the host country.

#### 4.7 ETHNIC NETWORKS, COMMUNITY NETWORKS, AND TRANSNATIONAL TIES

##### 4.8.1 Qualitative Results

Ethnic networks made up of family, friends, and other Mexican entrepreneurs are fundamental for entrepreneurs when opening their businesses, although ethnic networks were present in Mexican businesses, it is important to note that all of them were opened with the entrepreneurs' own resources, such as savings. However, ethnic networks offered other types of support, some of the interviewees mentioned having received help from members of the Mexican community to get their establishments up and running. These networks not only provide logistical and emotional support, but they also facilitate access to information on commercial and cultural events. This collaboration reflects the importance of these ethnic networks as a key factor in overcoming the structural and market barriers faced by immigrant entrepreneurs. Aguilera (2009)

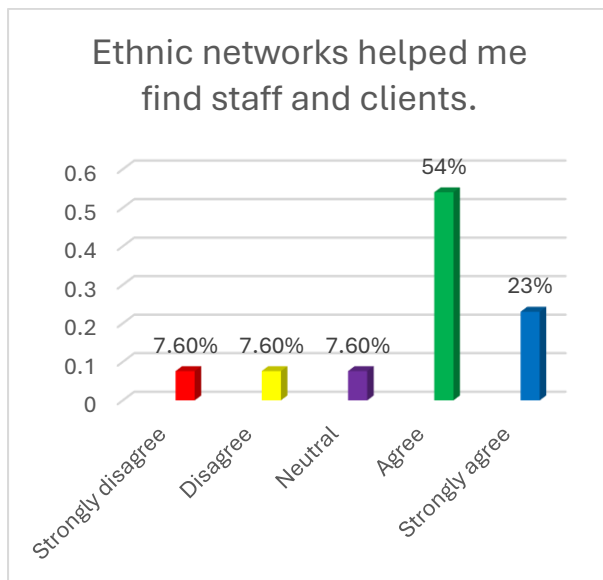
Network of ethnic entrepreneurs of the Mexican Embassy. A particular group is the network of entrepreneurs linked to the Mexican Embassy. This institution has recently promoted different cultural events to make visible and connect immigrant entrepreneurs in Ireland. As one participant (11) recounted: "The only network I know is the Mexican embassy entrepreneurs network. Lately the embassy has been very attentive to us and has held various events so we can get to know each other and be able to sell our products." However, there have also been some limitations to this network, as participant (3) recounted: "Previously I belonged to a group called the Global Network of Mexicans MX, which was part of the Mexican embassy, but there weren't many benefits to being there, plus I had little time to attend and a lot of work at the restaurant, so I decided not to go anymore."

Community Networks. Another important group to analyze is the community networks that Mexican entrepreneurs form with other communities. Some participants highlighted collaborations with supermarkets and immigrants of other nationalities, as in the case of Participant (11): "I have collaborated with the Mercaole supermarket, which is owned by a Spanish man and his Latin American wife. They were very kind to me and allowed me to sell my products in their store. I sold a lot on weekends. Now my idea is to start with Brazilian supermarkets." These statements are consistent with the theory that social capital is a key element in the commercial and social integration of immigrant entrepreneurs. Gomez et al. (2019) and Light & Dana (2013).

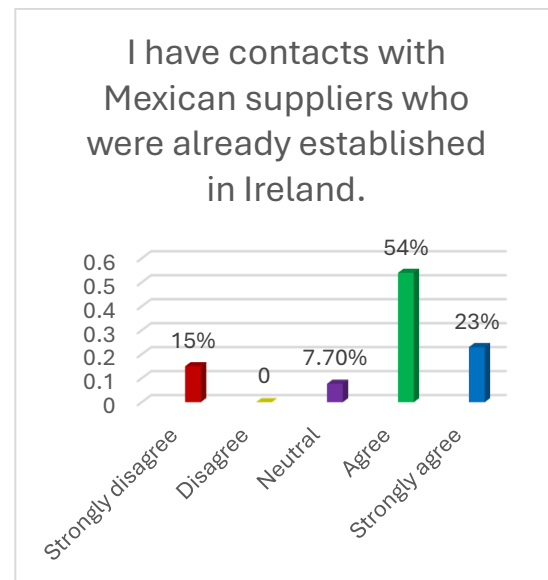
Transnational Ties. Transnational ties between ethnic entrepreneurs and Mexico are essential to maintaining the authenticity of some typical dishes and products, ensuring access to unique, native ingredients. Several Mexican entrepreneurs mentioned that local Mexican businesses and family businesses send them raw materials such as chili peppers, spices, herbs, and condiments. Other entrepreneurs have developed trade networks with other European countries, importing products from the UK, Germany, France, and the Netherlands, or even exporting their products to other places such as Galway, Northern Ireland, Paris, and Germany. This phenomenon of double connection, both local and global, is pointed out by Cooney & Godwin (2020, 2021) and Cooney & Brophy (2024), as transnational links generate resources and opportunities that represent a competitive advantage for ethnic migrant entrepreneurs.

#### 4.7.2 Quantitative Results: Ethnic Networks and Transnational Ties

**Ethnic Networks.** Almost half of the Mexican entrepreneurs indicated having received support from ethnic networks. In response to the statement "When I opened my restaurant, I received support from the Mexican community (access to market, connections)," 46% expressed a favorable perception, expressing that they agreed or strongly agreed, while 15% disagreed and only 7.6% expressed a strong negative opinion. The role of networks also extends to the hiring of staff, business clients, and suppliers. Regarding the statement "Ethnic networks helped me find staff and clients," 54% agreed and 23% strongly agreed, representing 77% of favorable opinions. Similarly, access to Mexican suppliers already legally established in Ireland is an important aspect; 77% of entrepreneurs stated that they have or have had contact with Mexican suppliers established in Ireland, while only 15% disagreed. These findings support the theory of Light & Dana (2013), who explain that social capital allows for the generation of trust structures, facilitating labor market incorporation and sustaining the viability of small migrant businesses in migratory contexts..(See graph 8 and 9)

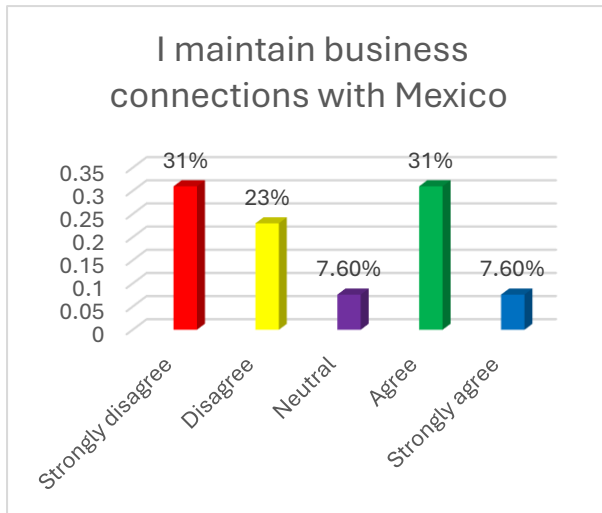


Graph 8: Ethnic networks



Graph 9: Contacts

**Transnational ties.** Regarding transnational ties, the data is more varied. In response to the statement "I maintain business connections with Mexico (suppliers, contacts, financing)," 38.6% expressed a favorable opinion, saying they either agree or strongly agree. However, the vast majority (54%) disagreed with this statement. This shows that, while a significant portion of entrepreneurs maintain ties with Mexico, a large percentage have already lost them and do not maintain active business relationships with their country of origin. Additionally, regarding the statement "My networks outside of Ireland have helped me obtain financing, capital, ideas, clients, or products," almost half of the entrepreneurs disagreed (46%) compared to 31% who agreed. This suggests that, while there is a willingness to establish transnational ties, these are not always effective for Mexican entrepreneurs..(See graph 10 and 11)



Graph 10: Mexican Connections



Graph 11: Outside connections

#### 4.7.3 Integrated Analysis: Ethnic Networks and Transnational Ties

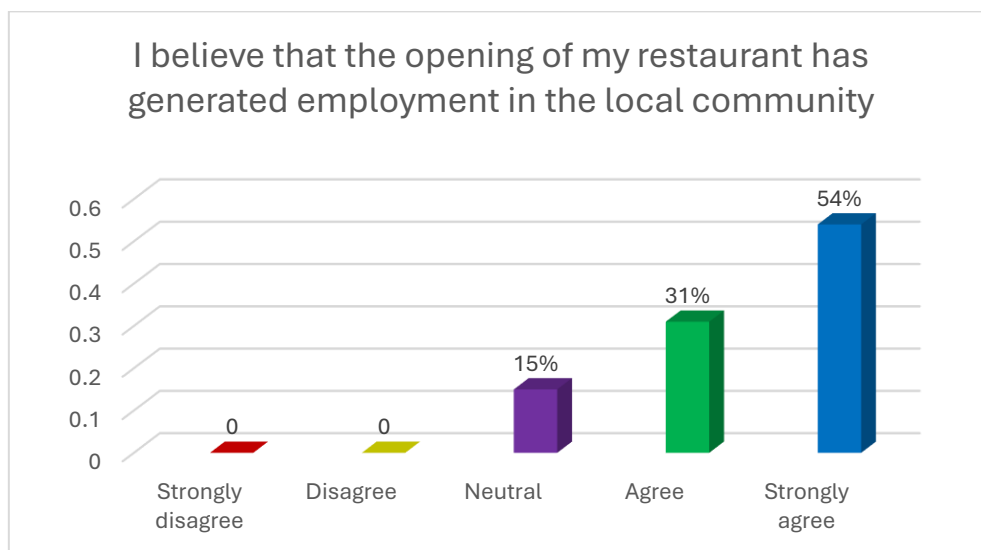
The integrated analysis of qualitative and quantitative data revealed the pivotal role played by ethnic and community networks and transnational ties in the establishment of Mexican migrant restaurant and food business ventures in Dublin. While traditional literature emphasizes the importance of these connections in overcoming structural economic or market barriers (Light and Dana, 2013; Cooney and Godwin, 2020), the findings of this study differ slightly, as all Mexican entrepreneurs started their businesses with their own savings, and almost half (46%) reported disagreeing when asked whether external networks had helped them obtain financing, capital, ideas, or products. The findings showed that, in the case of Mexican entrepreneurs, the advantages of these networks are more related to factors such as business connections, staff, clients, and suppliers.

Support networks composed of friends, family, and fellow Mexican entrepreneurs emerged as support systems during the initial stages of the business. Qualitative data reveal that these networks offered logistical, commercial, and labor support. This supports the findings of Gómez et al. (2019), who note that migrant entrepreneurs generally turn to community ties for resources and labor. The quantitative data establish that 77% of participants stated that ethnic networks helped them find clients and staff, supporting the functional utility of these networks in Mexican entrepreneurship. Participants also discussed their collaborations with non-Mexican community networks, such as with a Spanish supermarket. This is consistent with Morris and Schindehutte (2005), who explain that entrepreneurs with intercultural networks generally develop mixed business models that adapt to the local market, respecting the authenticity of products from their country of origin.

In contrast, transnational ties appear to be limited in the case of Mexican ethnic entrepreneurship. Only 38.6% of respondents reported maintaining active business connections with Mexico, and 31% agreed with the statement that "My networks outside of Ireland have helped me obtain financing, capital, ideas, clients, or products." These figures reflect the logistical and legal challenges faced by entrepreneurs. As Cooney and Godwin (2021) point out, success in ethnic entrepreneurship depends on institutional support, legal facilitation, and multiple regulatory environments.

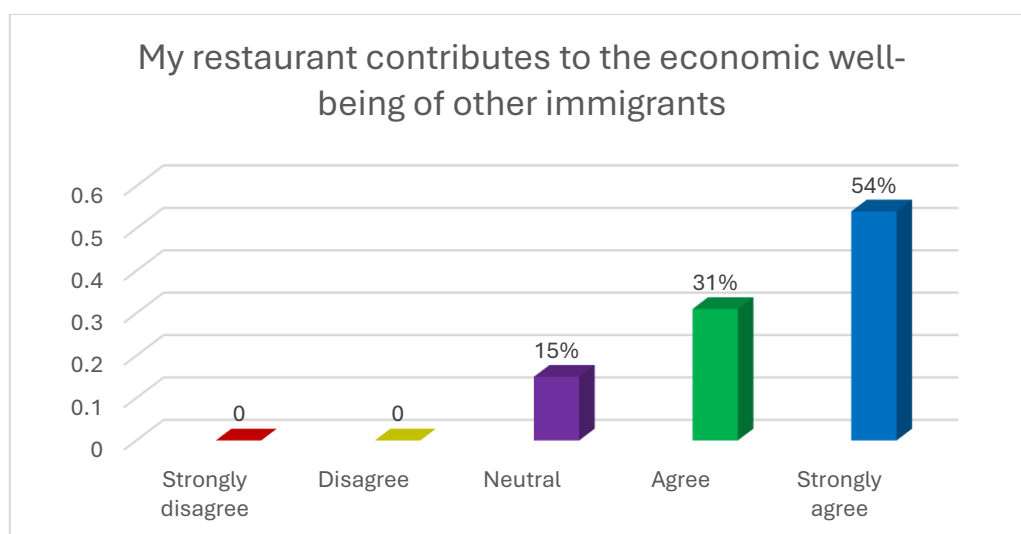
#### 4.8 IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

**Economic Factor and Job Creation.** An important dimension is job creation in the local economy. When asked "I think opening my restaurant has created jobs in the local community," 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, while only 15% remained neutral. Furthermore, a clear preference for hiring Mexicans was observed, given that 85% of respondents agreed with the statement "I generally hire Mexican or Latin American workers." These findings indicate a frequent employment dynamic within the migrant community, which strengthens support networks and facilitates the integration of Mexican immigrants into the Irish labor market. This is mentioned in previous studies on ethnic entrepreneurship, which argue that businesses established by immigrants foster job creation, primarily for their own ethnic group or community (Cooney and Godwin, 2021).(See graph 12)



Graph 12: Local employment

Regarding the statement "My restaurant contributes to the economic well-being of other immigrants (customers, contacts, suppliers), 85% agreed with this statement, which shows that these ethnic businesses act as spaces of opportunity for both employees and local and external suppliers, as well as other actors involved in the value chain. (See graph 13)



Graph 12: Economic well-being

#### 4.8.1 Qualitative results

**Economic Impact.** One of the main contributions of Mexican businesses in Dublin is economic. Several entrepreneurs highlighted the creation of jobs, especially for other Mexican immigrants, generally students with part-time work permits. Participant (8) emphasized: "When a business opens, many people benefit: suppliers, customers, and employees. We support the economy of Mexican migrants by hiring them, and we also contribute by paying taxes." In this sense, Mexican businesses contribute to local development and the economic inclusion of immigrants. (Cooney and Godwin, 2021; Murphy et al., 2020)

Local suppliers are another important part of job creation. All Mexican businesses have local suppliers from whom they acquire ingredients such as spices, herbs, vegetables, meat, and dairy products, contributing in part to the Irish economy. Participant (3): "In the case of suppliers, the money stays here. I work with local suppliers, buying vegetables, meat, cheese, and cream." I also collaborate with MEXGROCER, a company that imports Mexican products."

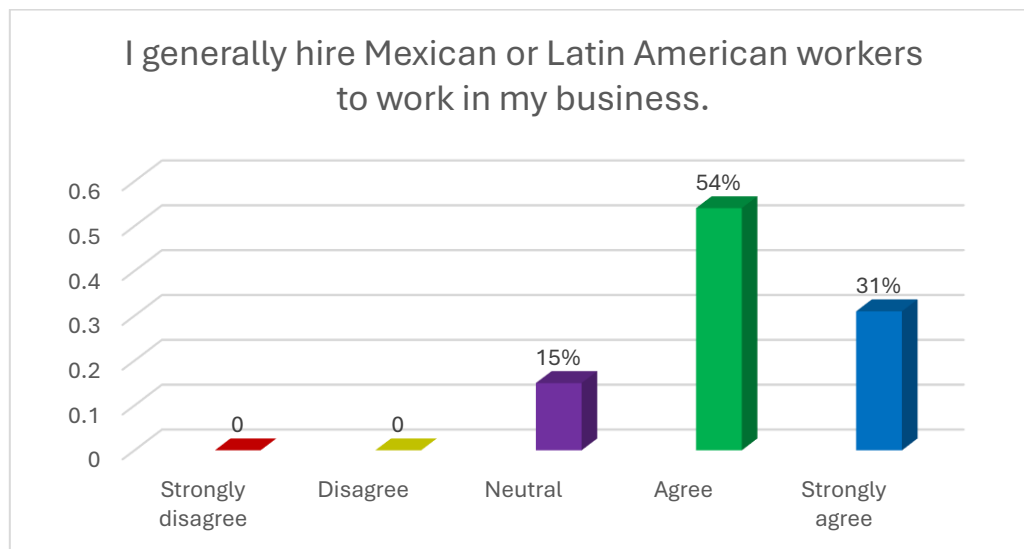
**Cultural Impact.** From a cultural perspective, Mexican businesses contribute to the enrichment of cultural diversity and promote Mexican traditions and food. Several participants noted the growing trend and acceptance of Mexican food among the European community. As participant (3) added: "Currently, Mexican cuisine is on the rise. More and more pubs are offering Mexican dishes like tacos or nachos." I'm going to share my experience. I opened a taqueria on Aungier Street. The idea was aimed at Mexicans who, after a night of partying at the bars, were craving something to eat at midnight. However, now we have more Europeans and Irish people coming for dinner." This growing popularity aligns with global market trends. Organizing cultural events commemorating Mexican holidays such as Independence Day or the Day of the Dead is common among Mexican businesses. Participant (1): "We promote Mexican culture through events like Independence Day and the Day of the Dead. We hire mariachis and help the Latino community by giving away food at Latino masses."

**Social integration and representation.** Participants also mentioned that their businesses help combat social prejudices and promote inclusion. As participant (8) mentioned: "For me, it's a way to combat xenophobia. People hate what they don't know. Through food and culture, we teach them who we are." Another participant (9) added: "We offer Mexican cooking classes and gastronomic experiences. We also share our history, recipes, and promote Mexico's image abroad." This phenomenon is explained by Gómez et al. (2019), who explain that immigrant entrepreneurship contributes to building social capital in host countries through cultural identity and community connections. Furthermore, several participants pointed out that Mexican culture has broken borders and even influenced international businesses. They noted that "Burger King launched a Mexican hamburger some time ago" and supermarkets such as TESCO already include Mexican products from the La Costena brand or Mexican sauces of different flavors. This is argued by Cooney and Brophy (2024), who argue that immigrant entrepreneurs are a fundamental element in building inclusive urban economies, especially those that rely on ethnic networks and local strategic alliances.

#### 4.9.2 Quantitative results

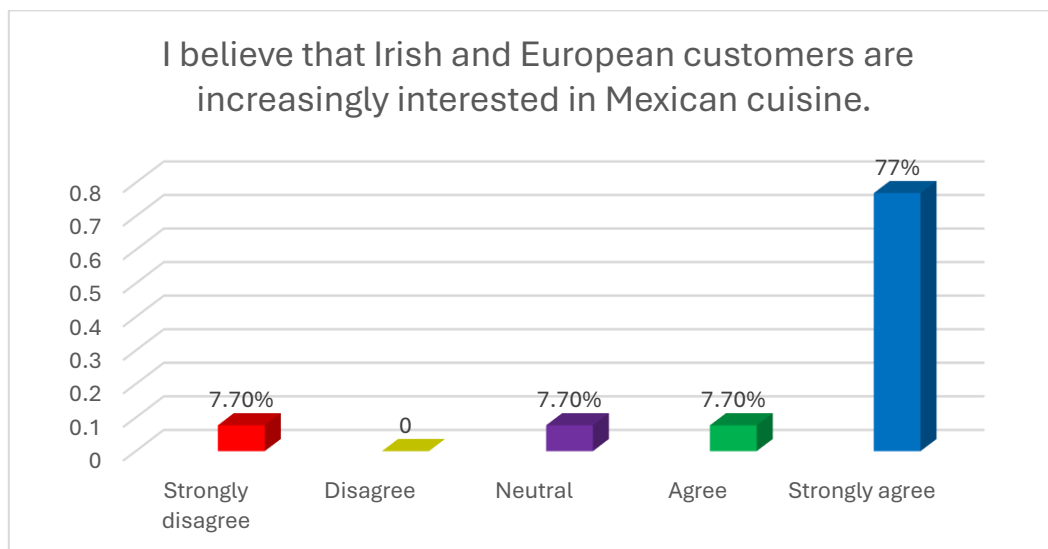
**Economic Factor and Job Creation.** An important dimension is job creation in the local economy. When asked "I believe opening my restaurant has created jobs in the local community," 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Furthermore, a clear preference for hiring Mexicans was observed, given that 85% of respondents agreed with the statement "I generally hire Mexican or Latin American workers". These findings indicate a frequent employment dynamic within the migrant community, which strengthens support networks and

facilitates the integration of Mexican immigrants into the Irish labor market. This is mentioned in previous studies on ethnic entrepreneurship, which argue that businesses established by immigrants foster job creation, primarily for their own ethnic group or community (Cooney and Godwin, 2021). (See graph 13)



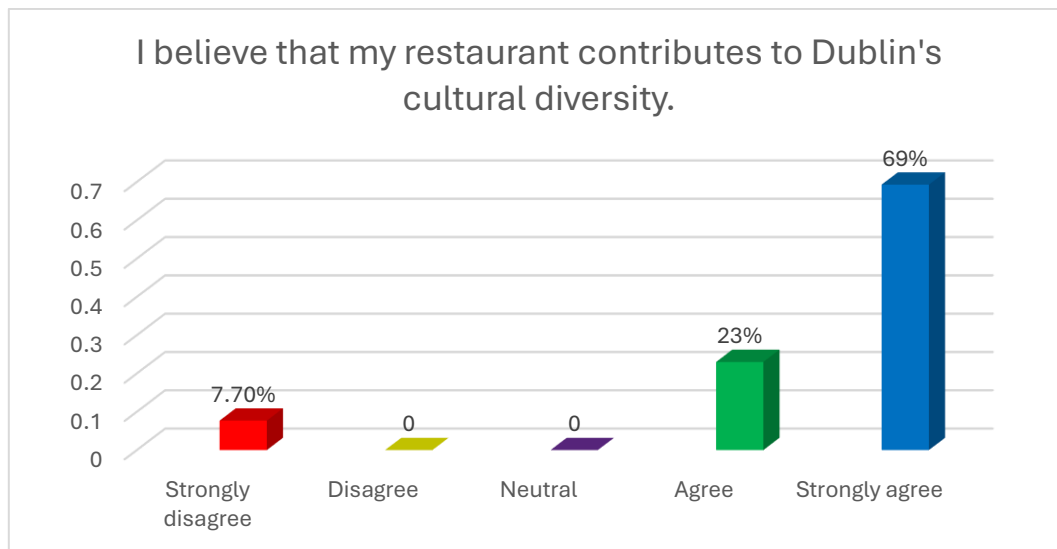
Graph 13: Staff

Cultural Diversification. Mexican cuisine contributes to Dublin's cultural diversification and a deeper understanding of Mexican culture. Regarding the statement "I think Irish and European customers are increasingly interested in Mexican food," 77% of participants strongly agreed, compared to only 7.7% who strongly disagreed. This confirms a growing preference for Mexican food, which was also noted in the interviews. (See graph 14)



Graph 14: European customers

Similarly, 92% of participants (69% strongly agreed and 23% agreed) believe that their businesses contribute to Dublin's cultural diversity, reflecting the importance of Mexican cuisine as a factor of cultural expression. The creation of jobs for staff and suppliers, and the growing trend toward Mexican cuisine, are indicators of successful integration into the local community. As Sandoz et al. (2022) argue, immigrant businesses not only provide economic value but also function as cultural and social bridges in contexts of diversity. (See graph 15)



Graph 15: cultural Diversity

#### 4.8.3 Integrated Analysis

**Economic Impact and Employment Creation.** One of the most notable findings is the contribution of Mexican businesses to the local economy. The quantitative data show that 85% of respondents agree with the statement "I believe that the opening of my restaurant has generated employment in the local community." This is also mentioned in the interviews, where the hiring of Mexican staff, especially students, is highlighted. This dynamic not only facilitates job placement for people from their own communities, but also strengthens internal support networks and allows ethnic businesses to act as drivers of economic inclusion (Cooney and Godwin, 2020). Additionally, these ventures also benefit local suppliers, all participants mentioned that they purchase fresh products such as vegetables, meat, and dairy products from Irish suppliers, thus integrating themselves into local supply chains.

**Cultural Enrichment and Community Participation.** From a cultural perspective, Mexican businesses function as spaces for exchange, diversification, and community dissemination and promotion. Ninety-two percent of entrepreneurs believe their business contributes to the city's cultural diversity. Cultural exchange is reflected in entrepreneurs' efforts to preserve their Mexican heritage, many of them hold events that include music, gastronomy, and public activities, bringing the Irish public closer to Mexican customs. As Zhou (2004) argues, ethnic businesses can break down cultural barriers and promote social integration by offering accessible experiences.

**Social Integration.** Mexican businesses also have beneficial impacts on society, such as combating stereotypes and xenophobia: As participant (8) highlighted: "People hate what they don't know. Through our culture and food, we teach them who we are." Mexican businesses can improve public perception and promote community inclusion. Gómez et al. (2019) explain

that ethnic businesses generate social capital by connecting their cultural identity with the economic and social aspects of the host country. Participants also mentioned the influence of Mexican food on Irish culture. For example, it was mentioned that fast-food chains like Burger King have incorporated hamburgers with Mexican or Tex-Mex flavors, and supermarkets like TESCO now sell Mexican salsas, beans, and Mexican snacks. This suggests a preference for Mexican food and an increase in consumers in the local market.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### 5.1 Discussion of research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Lack of access to the Dublin labour market and economic necessity drive Mexican immigrants to start businesses as a viable means of generating income.

The results of this research contradict the hypothesis. Although much of the literature on ethnic entrepreneurship, such as Aguilera (2009), argues that ethnic enclaves and self-employment develop as a response to a lack of job opportunities, the case of Mexican entrepreneurship in Dublin demonstrates a different phenomenon. For most Mexican entrepreneurs, job exclusion is not the main reason for opening a restaurant or Mexican food business in Dublin. 53.7% rejected the idea that they started their business due to a lack of job opportunities in Ireland, which deviates from the traditional approach established by Cooney, T., & Godwin, O. (2020, 2021), who assert that migrant entrepreneurship often arises from structural limitations in the labor markets of host countries.

In the interviews conducted with Mexican entrepreneurs, the main reasons for opening their business were related to the desire to promote Mexican cuisine and culture, nostalgia for food, and the entrepreneurial spirit. This study supports the ideas established by Yang and Zhang (2022), who argue that the entrepreneurial culture of the country of origin influences the entrepreneurial decisions and behaviors of immigrants, and Vázquez-Medina and Medina (2018), who explain how nostalgia for the food of the country of origin and the preservation and dissemination of culture are important triggers in the creation of ethnic businesses. For the reasons mentioned above, the hypothesis that emphasizes lack of access to the labor market and extreme economic need is discarded.

Hypothesis 2: Ethnic networks and Transnational ties play a key role in opening and sustaining Mexican restaurants in Dublin, providing support in terms of capital, contacts, staff, customers, and suppliers.

This hypothesis is partially confirmed. The literature explains the great importance of ethnic networks in migrant entrepreneurship. Light and Dana (2013) highlight how these networks play a fundamental role in access to resources, financing, and logistical and emotional support, while Zhou (2004) explains how these networks contribute to employment, capital, and market access. Based on the qualitative and quantitative information collected, it was discovered that in the case of Mexican businesses, ethnic networks have limited benefits. The data indicate that the majority of entrepreneurs did not require capital or financing from these networks; however, other types of support were provided. 77% stated that the networks helped them secure staff and clients, which is consistent with these theories. Transnational ties were not significant, as only 31% reported receiving support (ideas, products, capital) from abroad, which rules out the theory of Sandoz et al. (2022) which suggests the “transnational entrepreneurship” model. In conclusion, the hypothesis is partially validated, with ethnic networks being necessary for operational aspects such as employment and market access, but not for capital and financing.

Hypothesis 3: Mexican restaurants in Dublin have a positive impact on the local economy and contribute to cultural diversity, particularly through job creation and the promotion of Mexican cuisine.

This hypothesis is confirmed. Research shows that 85% of entrepreneurs believe their business has generated employment in the local community, in addition to integrating into the local supply chain, since 100% of Mexican businesses have Irish suppliers. This supports what Cooney and Godwin (2021) proposed: ethnic entrepreneurship not only helps generate job opportunities but also contributes positively to local economies. From a cultural perspective, Zhou (2004) proposes that ethnic businesses are spaces for cultural transmission. This is clearly reflected in Mexican businesses, where the preservation and dissemination of Mexican culture is ever-present through the organization of events such as the Day of the Dead, Independence Day, or the Mexican lottery. These businesses play a role beyond the economic, becoming spaces for cultural expression and social cohesion.

## 5.2 INTEGRATION OF KEY FINDINGS

1. Business profile and cultural and economic motivations. One of the most important findings was that the majority of Mexican entrepreneurs started their businesses for emotional reasons and the desire to promote Mexican cuisine, rather than for extreme economic reasons or failures in the labor market structure. The majority of Mexican businesses are restaurants, although their diversification includes themed dinners, cooking schools, and the sale of Mexican food products. This pattern aligns with motivations that go beyond economic factors and shows a strong relationship with the preservation and commercialization of Mexican culture in Dublin. In this way, Mexican entrepreneurship serves as a tool for social and cultural integration (Yang & Zhang, 2022; Gomez et al., 2019).

2. Ethnic, community networks and Transnational ties: complementary rather than essential. The results show that ethnic and community networks play an important, but not necessary, role in opening and managing Mexican businesses. Ethnic networks function as operational and emotional support networks, as they enable Mexican entrepreneurs to secure clients, staff, and promotion of their restaurants. These networks do not contribute to financing or access to capital for migrant ventures. Additionally, the integrated analysis reveals that the use of these networks does not limit their reach into the local Irish market, as some studies suggest. On the contrary, there is a growing adaptation of the Irish market to Mexican food, reflected in the increase in European customers, the use of local suppliers, and integration into Mexican cultural events. In this way, ethnic networks function as bridges between two diverse cultures, rather than as closed ethnic enclaves (Sandoz et al., 2022).

Regarding transnational ties, it was revealed that Mexican entrepreneurs have limited ties with other countries, including Mexico. These are generally maintained for logistical reasons, such as the importation of authentically Mexican products or the purchase of ingredients not available in the local market. Most businesses use transnational ties as a symbolic source of cultural differentiation, rather than as economic support. In contrast to other immigrant communities with a strong dependence on transnational ties for their logistics, Mexican entrepreneurs maintain their majority business relationships with Irish and European suppliers.

3. Challenges. Migrant businesses face more challenges than local businesses, including legal, financial, and cultural aspects. Legal requirements for opening a business in Ireland were the main challenges for Mexican entrepreneurs; the second most important challenge was access to capital and financing sources, and finally, discrimination. Added to this are

linguistic challenges and business practices with local institutions, suppliers, and customers. Despite these barriers, entrepreneurs have managed to consolidate their businesses, and some have expanded into the local Irish market by opening several restaurants. These entrepreneurs have leveraged cultural knowledge, ethnic networks, and an entrepreneurial spirit to create businesses more out of opportunity than economic necessity.

4. Community impact from economic to cultural. The establishment of Mexican restaurants and food businesses in Dublin goes beyond economic factors or job creation. These businesses act as spaces for promoting Mexican culture, community participation, and gastronomic diversification. The celebration of Mexican holidays, collaboration with local institutions, and the hosting of themed events position immigrant entrepreneurship as an active agent of cultural diversity and social integration (Gomez et al., 2019).

In conclusion, the findings show that Mexican immigrant entrepreneurship in Dublin cannot be explained solely by traditional entrepreneurship theory, which emphasizes economic factors and market barriers. Rather, it is a phenomenon where cultural expression, strategic innovation, and integration into community networks are the main factors (Zhou, 2004; Cooney & Godwin, 2021).

### 5.3 IMPLICATION FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE

#### **Implications for Theory**

This research confirms the need to consider more social and cultural factors in ethnic entrepreneurship and to overcome structuralist approaches that emphasize market constraints. The evidence contradicts the idea that immigrants become entrepreneurs primarily due to exclusion and lack of employment (Ram et al., 2008). On the contrary, Mexican entrepreneurs in Dublin are active cultural and economic agents, motivated by the desire to preserve their identity and promote Mexican gastronomy, as well as by strategic opportunities identified in the Irish market (Morris and Schindehutte, 2005; Yang and Zhang, 2022).

This study supports the most recent proposals of immigrant entrepreneurship theories, which consider emotional, cultural, and economic factors (Cooney and Godwin, 2020; Stephens, 2013). Likewise, the results provide evidence for Zhou's (2004) ideas, which establish that entrepreneurships should not only be analyzed from the perspective of structural marginality, but also as dynamic mechanisms of adaptation and diversification in the local context. The limited reliance on community networks and transnational ties refutes some theoretical assumptions of entrepreneurship theory (Guarnizo, 2002; Sandoz et al., 2022), which postulate that ties with the country of origin are essential in the development of migrant entrepreneurship. In the case of Mexican businesses in Dublin, these connections have a symbolic rather than strategic value, which coincides with Sinkovics and Reuber (2021), who highlight the differentiation between economic, logistical, and symbolic aspects of transnational ties.

## Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

### CONCLUSION

This study on Mexican entrepreneurship in the restaurant and food service sector in Dublin has provided a comprehensive understanding of a complex phenomenon that combines economic, social, and cultural factors. The research revealed a discrepancy with traditional and structuralist theoretical models that emphasize labor exclusion and economic necessity as the main drivers of migrant entrepreneurship (Cooney, T., & Godwin, O. (2020, 2021)). The findings demonstrated that, in the case of Mexican entrepreneurs, emotional and cultural aspects, the preservation of their gastronomy, and an entrepreneurial spirit were the most important motivations for starting their businesses. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that Mexican entrepreneurs have a diverse business profile, predominantly restaurants, but also other types of businesses such as food trucks, catering, cooking schools, collaborations with local pubs, and the sale of artisanal products. This heterogeneity reflects the strategic adaptation to the Irish market. A strong recruitment of Mexican personnel was also evident, based on ethnic solidarity and gastronomic authenticity. In the case of suppliers, this picture is different, as all Mexican businesses mostly have local Irish suppliers.

For the development of this study, three research hypotheses were established. The first hypothesis, which established that immigrants' business establishment is due to exclusion from the formal labor market in the host country, was rejected. The results of this research showed that more than half of the participants did not consider these determining factors. In contrast, the interviews presented a broader picture that highlighted nostalgia for Mexican food, cultural identity, and entrepreneurial skills as drivers for opening Mexican restaurants and food businesses. The second hypothesis, related to ethnic networks and transnational ties, was partially validated. While it is true that Mexican businesses have connections with their ethnic community that help them recruit staff and attract customers, these networks do not offer them financing, access to capital, or play a strategic role in opening and managing their businesses, as some authors (Light and Dana, 2013) point out. The third hypothesis was strongly confirmed: Mexican restaurants and food businesses have a positive impact on the city of Dublin that goes beyond economic aspects and incorporates social and cultural benefits.

The key findings were integrated into five main axes: business profile, motivations for entrepreneurship, challenges (access to capital, discrimination, legal requirements and cultural and linguistic barriers), ethnic networks, community networks and transnational ties, and community impact. These axes demonstrate that Mexican entrepreneurship in Dublin is a hybrid phenomenon that includes economic, cultural, and social aspects. Finally, the theoretical implications of these findings suggest the need to expand existing theoretical frameworks on migrant entrepreneurship in Ireland, incorporating emotional, cultural, and identity-based motivations to help us understand this phenomenon more deeply.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for public policymakers, business agencies, the Mexican embassy, entrepreneurs, and researchers. The objective is to contribute to the well-being of Mexican migrant entrepreneurship in Dublin and increase its economic, social, and cultural contribution.

### 1. For public policymakers:

- \*Simplify legal and administrative processes for starting a business for non-EU entrepreneurs. The majority of Mexican entrepreneurs reported difficulties with registration, regulations, and obtaining permits. The creation of multilingual technical assistance and counseling could facilitate these processes.
- \*Expand access to financing for immigrant entrepreneurs through collaborations with local banks and cooperatives. Lack of investment capital remains a major barrier.
- \*Support the creation of multicultural businesses by investing in initiatives that promote exchange and cultural diversity, such as Latin American food fairs, community events, and agreements with restaurants and pubs.

### 2. For business agencies.

- \*Implement business training programs that include the requirements for opening a business, including legal and financial aspects, permits, and tax payments, among others.
- \*Offer ongoing, in-person advice on the procedures required for opening a business, hiring staff, suppliers, etc.
- \*Promote cultural networking, which allows for collaboration and the exchange of ideas among immigrant entrepreneurs of all nationalities.

### 3. For the Mexican Embassy in Ireland and Associated Institutions (SRE and AMEXCID)

- Create and implement support programs for Mexican entrepreneurs that include legal, financial, labor, and tax regulations for opening a business.
- Implement capital financing programs for Mexican entrepreneurs.
- Facilitate connections between entrepreneurs and local networks such as the Restaurants Association of Ireland, tourism authorities, and Local Enterprise Offices.
- Actively organize cultural and gastronomic promotion events within the embassy and in the city.
- Support the export and import of Mexican products by providing specialized advice.

### 4. For Mexican entrepreneurs

- Actively participate in gastronomic and cultural activities.
- Promote mutual support among entrepreneurs through the recommendation and consumption of their products.
- Diversify and expand their market, without losing the authenticity of Mexican food.

### 5. For future researchers

- Expand the study of Mexican migrant entrepreneurship to other Irish cities, such as Galway, Cork, Limerick, etc.
- Conduct more in-depth studies of trends and expansion of business models for Mexican startups

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1 :Interview Questions

### INTERVIEW

Objective: To determine the impact of ethnic networks on Mexican restaurants in Dublin and analyse the factors and challenges they face.

#### A) BUSINESS PROFILE

1. Tell me a little about the restaurant ( name, type of cuisine, year it opened)?
2. What motivated you to open a Mexican restaurant in Dublin?
3. How many employees currently work at the restaurant? Are they of Mexican or Latin American origin?
4. What nationalities are the restaurant's customers? Have you identified any trends?
- 5.What do you think are the advantages of opening a Mexican food restaurant in Dublin?

#### B) ETHNIC NETWORKS

1. When starting your business, did you have support from members of the Mexican community (capital, access to market, clients, personal, connections)? If so, can you share your experience?
2. Have you used resources from the Mexican community or other ethnic networks to obtain capital? If so, Could you tell us a little about this?
3. Are you part of any Mexican community or support network? (family or friend networks, business networks, community associations, transnational ties, religious or sports networks). If so, which one is it and how does it provide support?
4. Do you think these networks have been beneficial in gaining access to suppliers, clients, or staff?

#### C) LACK OF ACCESS TO LABOR AND CAPITAL AND CHALLENGES

- 1.- Before opening your restaurant, did you face difficulties finding work in the Irish labor market? If so, tell me about your experience.
2. Do you consider opening your own restaurant to be the most viable way to generate income in Dublin?
3. What's your opinion on business support networks in Ireland for immigrant entrepreneurs?
4. Have you experienced any type of discrimination since starting your business? If so, could you share your experience?
5. Have you faced difficulties accessing financing, resources, or carrying out procedures due to your ethnic origin? If so, could you share your experience?
6. Have you experienced language or cultural barriers with suppliers or clients? If so, could you share your experience?

#### D) ACCESS TO CAPITAL AND TRANSNATIONAL TIES

1. How did you finance the establishment of the restaurant?
2. Do you have business or family ties to Mexico (capital, contacts, suppliers)? Which ones?

4. Have you considered expanding your restaurant to other cities in Ireland or abroad? If so, could you tell me a little more about it?
5. Do you believe international connections give you a competitive advantage? Explain why

#### E) IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

1. Do you think the restaurant has had a beneficial impact on the local economy or culture? Explain a little more.
2. If you have Mexican or Latin American staff, contacts, suppliers in your business, do you believe that working them contributes to the economic well-being of immigrants? Explain why.
3. Do you think Mexican food is valued in Dublin and is increasingly consumed in the market? Explain a little more.
4. Have you collaborated with local businesses or communities other than Mexican? Explain a little more.
5. Do you have any recommendations you would give to entrepreneurs who want to open a restaurant in Dublin?

## Appendix 2 : Questionnaire

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**Objective: To analyse the impact of ethnic networks, transnational ties, and the challenges faced by Mexican restaurant and food business owners in Dublin.**

Years living in Ireland: \_\_\_\_

How many years have you had the restaurant? \_\_\_\_

Number of employees: \_\_\_\_ Do you have Irish nationality? Yes [ ] No [ ]

**Instructions: Mark with an "X" the number that represents your opinion:**

**1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree**

#### Section A: Lack of access to labor and capital and Challenges

I opened my restaurant due to the difficulty of finding employment in the Irish labor market.

| 1  | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1. I believe that opening my restaurant and being self-employed is the only viable way to generate income. |                          |                          |                          |                          |

| 1   | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I faced difficulties financing my restaurant, especially in accessing bank loans and financial support from banks and institutions in Ireland. |                          |                          |                          |                          |

| 1   | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I struggled to understand the business and legal requirements for opening my business here in Ireland. |                          |                          |                          |                          |

| 1  | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. As an immigrant entrepreneur, I have experienced unequal treatment or discrimination. |                          |                          |                          |                          |

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### Section B Ethnic Networks

6. When I opened my restaurant, I received support from the Mexican community (capital, access to market, connections)

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. Ethnic networks helped me find staff and clients.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8. I had or have contacts with Mexican suppliers who were already established in Ireland.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Section C Transnational ties

9. I maintain business connections with Mexico (suppliers, contacts, financing).

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. My networks outside of Ireland have helped me obtain financing, capital, ideas, clients, or products.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11. I am interested in expanding my restaurant to other countries.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Section D Impact on the Local Economy

12. I believe that the opening of my restaurant has generated employment in the local community.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. I generally hire Mexican or Latin American workers to work in my business.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

14. Hiring people from my own community has been a key element in the business's success.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15. My restaurant contributes to the economic well-being of other immigrants (customers, contacts, suppliers).

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

16. I believe that Irish and European customers are increasingly interested in Mexican cuisine.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17. I believe that my restaurant contributes to Dublin's cultural diversity.

| 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

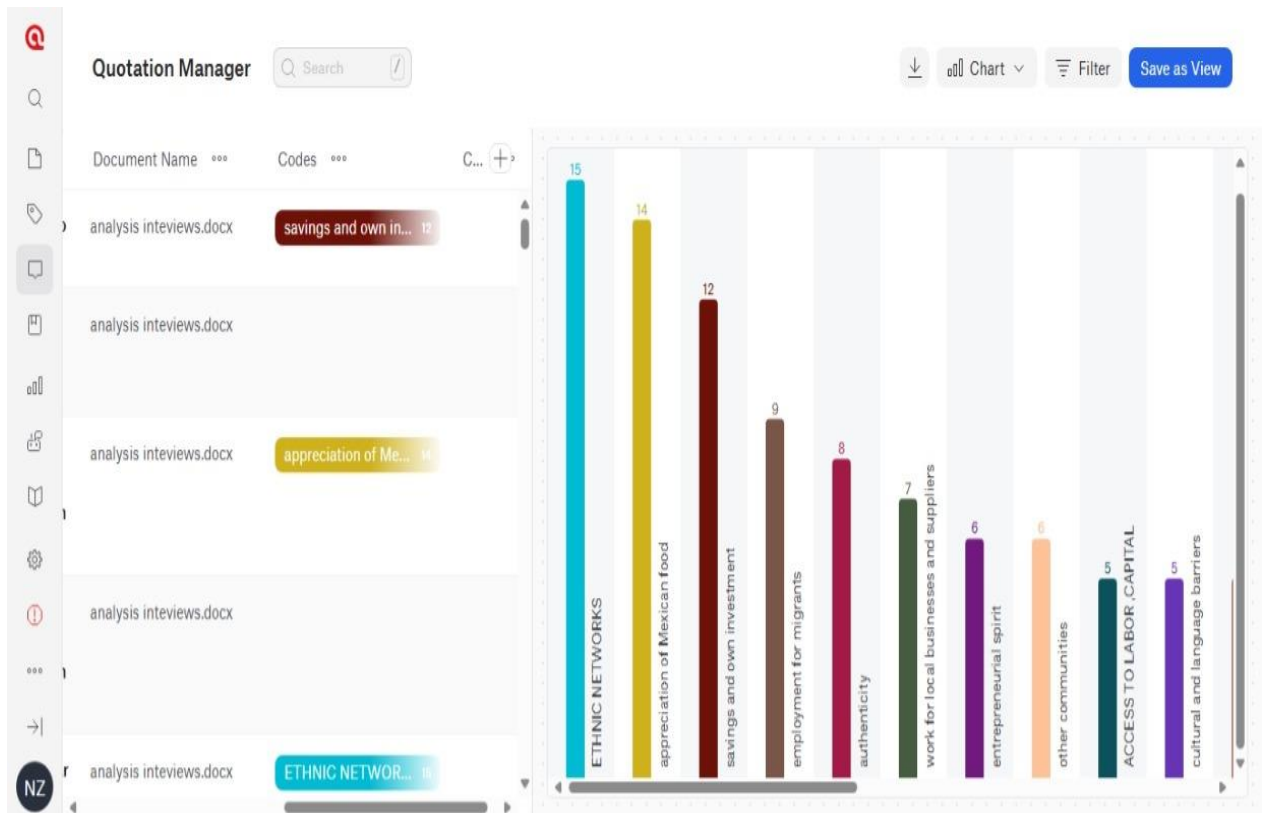
### Appendix 3 : Thematic Analysis and Coding Process with the Atlas Ti program

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| <input type="checkbox"/> ACCESS TO LABOR ,CAPITAL       |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
|   |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> appreciation of Mexican food   |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> authenticity                   |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BENEFITS                       |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> business challenges            |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cultural and language barriers |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cultural diversity             |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> cultural diversity                                  |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> different business practices and negotiation styles |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> difficulty in legal procedures                      |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discriminación                                      |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> economic autonomy                                   |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> employment for migrants                             |     |        |     |            |        |                |     |

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| Name                     | Groups          | Quotations | Comment  |  |        |            |     |
| employment for migrants  | IMPACT ON THE C | 9          | provide employment to Latino or Mexican immigrants   |  |        |            |     |
| entrepreneurial spirit   | MOTIVATIONS     | 6          | natural entrepreneurial skills or having a business before   |  |        |            |     |
| ETHNIC NETWORKS          | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 15         | interconnected relationships and patterns among individuals who share a common cultural background or migration experience |  |        |            |     |
| family support           | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 1          | help with capital, work or contacts from family  |  |        |            |     |
| homesick for food"       | MOTIVATIONS     | 4          | feeling nostalgic for the food   |  |        |            |     |
| Mexican embassy networks | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 4          | support networks at events, clients or suppliers that the embassy provides   |  |        |            |     |

| Code Manager                            |                 |            |   |  | Filter | + New Code | ... |
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| Name                                    | Groups          | Quotations | Comment   |  |        |            |     |
| other communities                       | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 6          | other communities: Tech companies, nationalities                |  |        |            |     |
| promotion of Mexican culture            | PROMOTION AND   | 5          | promotion of Mexican culture                                    |  |        |            |     |
| savings and own investment              | ACCESS TO CAPIT | 12         | Sources of financing and available money                        |  |        |            |     |
| social media                            | PROMOTION AND   | 4          | use of social media   |  |        |            |     |
| support for Mexican customers           | ETHNIC NETWORK  | 0          | Mexican customers who came to the businesses                    |  |        |            |     |
| TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS                  | ACCESS TO CAPIT | 3          | Capital availability and network management outside the country |  |        |            |     |
| work for local businesses and suppliers | IMPACT ON THE C | 7          | work for local businesses and suppliers                         |  |        |            |     |



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| IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY            | 38 |
| LACK OF ACCESS TO LABOR AND CAP... | 21 |
| PROMOTION AND MARKETING            | 9  |

