

**AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF HOW MANAGEMENT ENGAGE
WITH CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE WEST OF
IRELAND'S HOTEL SECTOR**

A Thesis Submitted for the Master of Business
In Strategy and Innovation Management

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ABSTRACT

In Ireland, non-nationals play a very important role in the Irish hospitality sector. The long hours they put in, their hard work and their efficiency has proven invaluable to the sector both in the good and the bad times in the Irish economy. During the boom years when hotel managers found it hard to fill job vacancies within the sector, non-nationals from all over the world were more than willing to come to Ireland to take these jobs that at the time, it seemed the Irish was not prepared to do. Due to the sheer size of the influx of non-national workers into the sector, hotel managers may not have been ready to deal with important issues such as the language barrier and integrating non-nationals with their Irish colleagues who brought different cultures with them.

The author has previously worked in one of the hotels that was researched as part of this study. It was while working in this particular hotel that the issues surrounding the objectives of this research study was first noticed. The author witnessed first hand the problems that non-nationals incur while trying to adapt to the language barrier and also adapting to the cultural changes they face in Ireland.

The author believes that now is a good time for managers within the hotel sector to look at how they performed while managing a diverse workforce during the height of immigration into Ireland. The reason why now is a good time is because many non-nationals have returned home in the last couple of years due to the economic downturn. By this happening it will give them a chance to look back and see what ways they can change their management style so that they can manage cultural

diversity during a boom with a different approach. Even though this has occurred, there are still many non-nationals working within Irish hotels to date. This research study looks at three key research objectives that are related to cultural diversity. Within any organization, it is vital that these three areas of research are managed with great care and sensitivity as chapters four and five will highlight for the reader.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Ireland as a country has changed as it has gone through an economic boom known, to many across the globe as the Celtic Tiger. Ireland's economic boom during the 1990's brought unprecedented levels of prosperity and helped to transform it into a "country of net immigration" by the early 2000's. For the first time in its history, Ireland experienced a significant flow of migrants – both workers and asylum seekers – from outside the European Union.¹ The accession of ten new member states to the EU in May 2004 has resulted in a greater increase of non-nationals eligible to work legally in Ireland.² Ireland was only one of three countries (along with the United Kingdom and Sweden) of the fifteen member states that granted accession state nationals unrestricted access to its labour market immediately upon EU enlargement. In the twelve months following the enlargement, The Irish Department of Social and Family Affairs issued about eighty thousand PPS numbers to people from the ten new member states.³ Many of these non-nationals who have made their way to Ireland have found themselves in many different sectors such as construction, retail and hospitality. This study will focus on the hospitality sector.

In 2008, the hotels and restaurant industry employed one hundred and thirty thousand people and took in most of the €6.5 billion in tourism revenue each year. Almost one third of the workforce at the time was non-nationals, which was almost double the

¹ Migration information source, fresh thought, authoritative data, global reach, by MPI.
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=740>

² Best practice HR in Ireland, chapter six, P93.

³ Migration information source, fresh thought, authoritative data, global reach, by MPI. (EU enlargement 2004 & 2007: Impact on labour immigration and policy).
<http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?ID=740>

percentage in sectors such as manufacturing, at 15.2 % and construction at 14.2%.⁴ With these figures and statistics of how important non-nationals were for hotels during the Celtic Tiger and even up until today, the author wonders how they would of coped if the ten EU accession members did not join the EU, which in turn would of made it much harder for these workers to freely travel to Ireland and work without a working visa. As the AIB (2006) argues, Ireland's strong economic growth would not have been impossible without increased non – national participation in its workforce.⁵ The huge influx of non-nationals into Irish hotels in recent years found themselves working in areas such as restaurant, accommodation, reception, bars, food preparation personnel and as porters. These would have been some of the typical jobs they would have taken up while working within hotels in the hospitality sector. The author questions whether the hotel managers were ready for these non-national workers and how much preparation and thought was put into key areas such as integration, language barriers, career progression opportunities and general management skills. If a manager can manage their staff in the correct manner and accommodate the needs of their non-national workers, huge benefits can be reaped by hotels. The employees will be more loyal and hardworking as they will enjoy working for their manager and will feel comfortable in their surroundings. This is discussed further in chapter two under the diversity management section.

⁴ SIPTU – Tourism and hospitality sector.

<http://www.siptu.ie/IndustrialSectors/TourismandHospitality/News/Name.10150.en.html>

⁵ (AIB) Allied Irish bank global treasury economic research (2006), Non – National workers in the economy: here to stay

<http://www.aibeconomicresearch.com>

This report is going to focus on cultural diversity within the hotel sector in the West of Ireland. It is going to focus on how managers and non-national employees have integrated since the beginning of the Celtic Tiger and what lessons can be learnt. The key objectives that this research study will focus on in chapter four will be on the language barrier and the implications for non-national employees who do not have a basic understanding of English, career progression opportunities for non-nationals working in Irish hotels and finally the advantages/disadvantages of cultural diversity to Irish hotels. The author takes into account that Ireland is currently in the grip of recession which has seen businesses within the hospitality sector decrease in the last couple of years. The latest figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show that some 502,500 people visited Ireland in May - 155,000, or 23.6% fewer than in the corresponding period of 2009.⁶ Also with the banking sector in turmoil, many hotels face a bleak future. With the announcement that the Bank of Scotland is going to cease providing working capital to business customers by the end of the year due to the Bank withdrawal from the Irish market, this does not spell out good news for some one hundred and fifty hotels around Ireland. It is estimated that the Bank provides upwards of thirty million in working capital to the hotel sector.⁷ This spells out worrying times indeed for the Irish hospitality sector and the future is very uncertain, but this study will focus only on hotels in the West of Ireland, mainly County Galway.

⁶ Irish Times article – the number of tourists visiting Ireland falls.
<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/ireland/2010/0731/1224275910352.html>

⁷ Irish times article: Bank's exit could affect viability of 150 hotels.
<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/finance/2010/0820/1224277228098.html>

The hotels that I will be focusing my research on still employ a considerable amount of non-nationals even though many have since returned home or are unemployed. As there is not as great a need or reliance on non-national workers compared with a few years ago, these hotels still have to manage diversity issues on a regular basis for the workers who are still employed with them. In the author's opinion the world has become a lot smaller in recent years and Ireland has quickly caught up fast with countries such as America, the UK and many central European countries in terms of adapting to a diverse workforce. One day Ireland will recover from the global economic downturn that nearly every country world-wide is experiencing, which may mean recovery for the tourism industry. Today Irish managers know that it is very easy to recruit both non-national and Irish employees, so the author believes that this study is most certainly worthwhile as it will highlight research objectives that have not yet been researched in the West of Ireland's hotel sector. The author is hopeful that the findings of this research may prove very helpful indeed for hotel managers who are looking to further their understanding of diversity management.

1.2 IDENTIFYING RESEARCH PROBLEMS

A significant amount has been written on cultural diversity within the Irish hospitality sector in recent years. Many issues and debates have taken place between various authors and writers on this topic. However, little attention has been given to interviewing both hotel employers and employees and comparing the results of the two opinions. Some authors have touched on some of the objectives that will be researched in chapter four in this study but there has been no concrete research into each objective in a

particular sector, i.e.: The West of Ireland. The researcher wants to only focus on the hotel sector in the West of Ireland because of originating from there and also to highlight the role hotels have played in keeping the industry moving during the boom.

The author has carried out considerable research into cultural diversity, diversity management and migration. In the author's opinion, these three areas are the areas that every hotel/HR manager should have a basic understanding of before hiring a huge influx of non-nationals. If they don't understand these key areas and how to manage employees from different cultures and backgrounds then it will lead to further problems down the line.

The author has read articles written by Irish, English and world-wide authors about the advantages/disadvantages of cultural diversity to hotels. It is true to say that some of the answers may be similar, but the author wants to find the reasoning behind these answers from the managers and employees who work in hotels in County Galway only. The author is going to separate what other authors has said in the past and only focus on this particular sector in the West of Ireland as non-national employees are so important to the industry, as this study will highlight.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study is to research how management engage with cultural diversity in the West of Ireland's hotel sector. Since the birth of the Celtic Tiger, cultural diversity has transformed the hospitality industry which will have long lasting effects for

a long time. This research study will focus on three objectives that will be looked at firstly in the literature review by assessing any previous research that has been done on each of the objectives up to date.

The author will be assessing how important it is for non-national workers to be able to speak English within the hotels in this sector. Issues such as does it matter what department of the hotel they work in if they need to have a good knowledge of the English language, and if they don't speak good English what difficulties does it cause them. Also methods of how hotel managers can help their employees to overcome the language barrier will be looked at.

Also, the author will be assessing do non-national employees get the same career progression opportunities as Irish workers within the hospitality sector. The reason why this objective is being researched is because the author has witnessed individuals in the past comment that non-national workers are not allowed to move up the ladder in this industry, so it was decided by the author that this would be a research objective.

The final objective the author will research is the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity to the hotels that will be interviewed as part of this research, which will hopefully bring the author to a general consensus on the topic from the findings of the research. The author is focusing specifically on the hotel sector in the West of Ireland so the primary research methods will only apply to the hotels researched in this area.

1.4 OUTLINE OF THESIS

The research question is concerned with how management engages with cultural diversity within the hotel industry in the West of Ireland. This study will focus on key areas of diversity management from both past and present, with chapters three and four concentrating on the research objectives which are stated above in the previous heading. The first chapter is simply an overview of the whole study.

The second chapter is the literature review where many topics that apply to diversity management are analyzed. The literature review analyzes all previous research on this topic from many different authors to gain their opinions and insight knowledge. The literature review gives the author an in-depth view into all research that has been carried out on how managers within the hospitality sector manage diversity. From this point on the author can focus on the questions that have not been answered and also on the research objectives that will apply to the West of Ireland's hospitality sector. This will be a very detailed chapter that covers a lot of aspects that needed to be highlighted for the reader.

The third chapter is the beginning of the empirical research. It examines and justifies all the research methods used to carry out this research. This chapter describes the data collection process, the size of the sample and how it was selected, and gives a brief description of how the data was analyzed including the method used.

Chapter four entails the research findings and an in-depth analysis of these findings. The author will look at all three groups of respondents and come to a conclusion based on the answers given. This is one of the most important chapters as it brings the actual research to a close and gives the author answers to the three objectives.

Chapter five is the final chapter of this research study. In this chapter the author talks about the findings and what conclusions can be made. This chapter discusses if the research questions have been answered adequately and what recommendations can be made by the author.

1.5 CONCLUSION

This research will focus not only on cultural diversity within hotels in the past but will also look at it today and what changes need to be made from the findings of the three research objectives being researched in this study. The author believes that all three of the research objectives are very important to understand as the language barrier, career progression opportunities and the advantages/disadvantages of cultural diversity are important to hotels all around the world as many of them employ a diverse workforce.

In the author's opinion Ireland has changed dramatically in recent years and diversity within all employments sectors will be here to stay. At Present, hotels are going through a very tough time due to the recession that has affected nearly every country around the world. Because of this global recession, the number of tourists coming into Ireland is continuing to decrease which is having a drastic impact upon the Irish Hospitality sector.

The author sincerely believes that the non-national workers who have previously worked or are still working within Irish hotels have played a substantial role in transforming the sector, making it more competitive and efficient. Without non-national workers the author believes that the hotel sector will find it hard to bounce back and be as successful as they previously were in recent years.

Chapter Two
Literature Review

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years Ireland has experienced a dramatic increase in immigration. This has resulted in a much broader diversity in the Irish workplace and in Irish society at large, where now people from more than one hundred and sixty countries are living and working in Ireland.⁸ Today different cultures, languages and religions are common in many organisations around Ireland. This chapter will focus on how cultural diversity has had an impact on the hospitality sector mainly here in Ireland but also from other countries around the world. This chapter will analyse all previous research that has been carried out on cultural diversity within the hospitality sector and also the topics of migration and diversity management.

Understanding why diversity management is so important for the growth and development of Irish hotels is vital. Each hotel has a different method of handling the way they manage their diverse workforce so it is important to highlight this and some of the existing research that has been carried out in the area of diversity management. This chapter will not focus on research in three key areas that the author intends to research in the upcoming chapter's three to five. The three questions that the author will be researching are: What are the advantages/disadvantages of cultural diversity within hotels in the West of Ireland? Do non-nationals have the same career progression opportunities as Irish workers within the hospitality sector? How important is it for non-national workers to be able to speak English within Irish hotels? These three questions will be answered in the upcoming chapters.

⁸ SIPTU website: Diversity in the workplace – a shop Stewards guide:
<http://www.siptu.ie/itut/DiversityintheWorkplace/>

2.2 CULTURAL DIVERSITY

(Cox, 1993) defines Cultural diversity as “the representation, in one social system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance”.⁹ Cultural diversity has come to the forefront of awareness in many countries in recent years as a result of high levels of mobility between and across continents, impacting upon lives in both an employment and wider social sense.¹⁰ Cultural diversity is important for the twenty-first century hotel industry due to high levels of mobility between and across continents which impacts both upon work and society (Baum, 2006).¹¹ It is felt that many hotels have ignored the benefits of cultural diversity, perhaps because it has not correctly anticipated the fast growth in labour migration.¹²

Hospitality is a diverse area of economic activity, within which precise scope and definition are elusive (Lashley and Morrison 2000).¹³ In recent years, the flow of migrant workers into Europe and into sectors such as the hospitality sector has been phenomenal. Failte Ireland (2005) reported that about 25,000 of the country’s hospitality workers are non-nationals.¹⁴ The equivalent figure for Northern Ireland is about 2000 (Jarman, 2004).¹⁵ What made these figures grow so high in Ireland and the UK was the accession of ten new member states to the EU in May 2004. Some commentators have used the term tsunami to convey the sheer scale of contemporary labour market flows,

⁹ Cultural diversity: implications for workplace management, By Donatus I Amaram, P1.

¹⁰ Human resource management for Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure, by Tom Baum, P149.

¹¹ Managing cultural diversity: opportunities for Northern Ireland Hoteliers, By Francis Devine, P120

¹² Managing cultural diversity: opportunities for Northern Ireland Hoteliers, By Francis Devine, P120

¹³ The implications of contemporary cultural diversity for the hospitality curriculum, By Niamh Hearn, P350.

¹⁴ The implications of contemporary cultural diversity for the hospitality curriculum, By Niamh Hearn, P351.

¹⁵ The implications of contemporary cultural diversity for the hospitality curriculum, By Niamh Hearn, P351.

especially into the hospitality industry.¹⁶ Hospitality professionals have had to figure out various methods on how to integrate their multicultural workforce effectively by embracing change. The most recent study by Devine et al, (2006), emphasises the need for further support of the integration and socialisation of international workers with local employees and indeed the wider community.¹⁷ The study highlights that managers need to do more to ensure that indigenous staff understand and respect the cultural differences of international workers. It remains a challenge For the hospitality industry to identify the right strategy in managing a diverse workforce. It is important to identify that much of the diversity – centred research published prior to 2004, relates to experiences in the USA and Australia, countries which have a more established tradition of managing cultural diversity.¹⁸ Cultural diversity in the workplace increases primarily when non – nationals are employed to meet labour shortages. The motivation is mainly economic migration, but humanitarian and social migrations also shape the multicultural workforce.¹⁹ Many of these immigrants are highly skilled or trained at a specific craft but two of the main industries they enter into are the hotel and construction sectors. The main reason why there is a growth of cultural diversity in the hospitality workforce results from a combination of global or international factors and conditions within the host country environment.²⁰ Some authors see cultural diversity as an attempt to create a common culture in which individuals from different nations and different cultures in an

¹⁶ The implications of contemporary cultural diversity for the hospitality curriculum, By Niamh Hearn, P351.

¹⁷ The implications of contemporary cultural diversity for the hospitality curriculum, By Niamh Hearn, P351.

¹⁸ The implications of contemporary cultural diversity for the hospitality curriculum, By Niamh Hearn, P351.

¹⁹ Managing cultural diversity: opportunities for Northern Ireland Hoteliers, By Francis Devine, P121.

²⁰ Managing cultural diversity: opportunities for Northern Ireland Hoteliers, By Francis Devine, P121.

organisation can comfortably work together and where differences are not felt (Duren, 1999).²¹

2.2.1 UNDERSTANDING NATIONAL CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

For us to identify and understand the various national cultural differences we must look at the frameworks that are already out there that identify and analyze this. Cultural diversity recognises differences between people and embraces those differences. Hofstede (1980) identified four key dimensions which impact on national cultural differences.²² These are as follows;

2.2.2 Individualism/Collectivism

Individuals value self-determination as opposed to their behaviour being determined by a group or organisation;

2.2.3 Power-Distance

In a low power-distance culture, employees seek to play key roles and have a desire for a participative management style. In a high – power cultured organisation, employees work in a particular way because they accept this is how the hierarchy of the organisation wants them to do so;

²¹ The cultural diversity phenomenon in organisations and different approaches for effective cultural diversity management: a literary review, by Oya Aytemiz Seymen, P304.

²² Overcoming the problems of cultural differences to establish success for international management teams, by Malcolm Higgs, P37.

2.2.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

In cultures which have high uncertainty avoidance, employees will look for clearly defined, formal rules and conventions governing their behaviour;

2.2.5 Masculinity/Femininity

In highly masculine cultures dominant values relate to assertiveness and material acquisition. In highly feminine cultures values focus on relationships among people, concern for others and quality of life.²³

2.3 ADVANTAGES OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY TO ORGANISATIONS

It is said that multicultural organisations have an advantage in attracting and retaining the best talent. Organisations that are able to attract and retain qualified minority group members and keep faith with them through fair and equitable career advancement treatments, gain competitive advantage and derive high quality human resource dividends.²⁴ Also a multicultural organisation is better suited to serve a diverse external clientele in a more increasingly global market. Such organisations have a better understanding of the requirements of the legal, political, social, economic and cultural environments of social nations (Adler 1991).²⁵ Williams (2005) considers the benefits of labour migration in terms of knowledge transfer, innovation and competitiveness, both

²³ Overcoming the problems of cultural differences to establish success for international management teams, by Malcolm Higgs, P38. (Point 1-4)

²⁴ Cultural diversity: implications for workplace management, By Donatus I Amaram, P4

²⁵ Cultural diversity: implications for workplace management, By Donatus I Amaram, P4

within the organisation and within the wider economy.²⁶ Cultural diversity may create wider benefits for the tourism industry, including improved innovation and a wider economic perspective (Failte Ireland, 2005).²⁷ The author believes that if hotels within the West of Ireland can adapt to being more aware of the benefits of cultural diversity, they will reap the benefits. This is not an easy change to adapt to and it does take time for the change to occur, but the author will highlight the different ways in which the hotel industry can make this change easier for themselves throughout this research study. Migrant workers do bring many skills with them into an organisation such as increased productivity and competitive edge. However, managers need to be sensitive to the cultural nuances that may affect the working relationship of different migrants. A major problem is the communication gap between Irish and international staff (Caball, 2005 cited in Saavedra, 2005).²⁸

2.4 DISADVANTAGES OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY TO ORGANISATIONS

Cultural diversity does have some drawbacks that can be identified. Diversity can make it harder to arrive at an agreement on a particular course of action, and can result in negative dynamics and cultural clashes that can create work disadvantages for women and minorities.²⁹ Traditionally, it is said that cultural conflicts between majority and minority group members are usually resolved in favour of the majority group. This, in

²⁶ Managing cultural diversity: opportunities for Northern Ireland Hoteliers, By Francis Devine, P122.

²⁷ Managing cultural diversity: opportunities for Northern Ireland Hoteliers, By Francis Devine, P122.

²⁸ Managing cultural diversity: opportunities for Northern Ireland Hoteliers, By Francis Devine, P122.

²⁹ Cultural diversity: implications for workplace management, By Donatus I Amaram, P4

turn creates significant barriers to full participation by minority members in potentially conflict situations.³⁰

2.5 CAREER PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES FOR NON-NATIONAL EMPLOYEES WITHIN THE IRISH HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Career progression opportunities for foreign workers within the hotel sector in the West of Ireland are one of the objectives the author will be researching. To date there is no previous research on the chances of non-national employees enhancing their careers within the Irish hospitality sector. The author believes that this is a vital area to research as the findings will prove if migrants are only brought in to fill low skilled and low wage jobs with no chances of being promoted to a supervisory position, or do Irish hotels offer foreign employees the same job opportunities as their Irish counterparts once they can prove they are prepared for the job. This objective will be focusing only on the hotels who will be interviewed in County Galway as part of this study as the author will be looking for a general theme in the answers provided by the respondents.

2.6 THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

The researcher has also decided to research the issues that surround the language barrier within Irish hotels and discuss how important it is for non-nationals to be able to speak English so that they can understand their duties and roles without misunderstandings. The researcher feels this research objective is very important and relevant for the topic

³⁰ Cultural diversity: implications for workplace management, By Donatus I Amaram, P4

being researched. The consequences of hotel managers hiring non-nationals with minimal or no understanding of the English language may create disadvantages for the hotel.

In relation to the five hotel managers being interviewed, it is the author's objective to research and document in the findings how important it is that their staff do not feel isolated because of the language barrier and it also feeds into the career progression objective as the author will be researching how important it is for any potential employee to be able to speak English before they are considered for promotion.

Also the author will look at ways that hotel managers can help their foreign staff to overcome any language difficulties they may incur while carrying out their duties. The author believes that it is vital for managers within any organisation, especially hotels to understand the issues surrounding the language barrier. Within Irish hotels each day non-national employees come into contact with customers who are not only staying in the hotel but also customers in the bar and restaurant. In the researchers opinion this is a very interesting research objective and may provide us with interesting findings and new recommendations.

2.7 MIGRATION

Migration is a permanent feature of the national and international economy. The movement of people who may be in search of work, escaping from oppression or simply wanting to make lifestyle changes is ongoing.³¹ Migrants are constantly on the move. In recent years we have seen huge numbers of migrants flow from Eastern to Western Europe, from Latin and South America to the USA etc. The tendency for high-performing economies to absorb increasing volumes of non-national workers from countries at earlier stages of demographic and economic transition has placed the management of labour immigration as a key issue in policy debates.³²

Prior to the 1990's economic growth phase, non – EU workers were largely associated with multinational corporations. However, with the increased realisation that labour shortages could retard growth rates, a concerted effort was mounted by government departments to attract relevant and skilled workers to Ireland. This included job fairs in Asia and South Africa, visits by government officials such as the then Tanaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) and Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Mary Harney, to potential migrant worker countries, as well as concerted by agencies such as FAS to recruit workers from particular occupations.³³ In many cases workers who are from the European Economic Area (EEA) countries do not need to have a work permit to work in Ireland. However, individuals who are from countries outside the EEA do require permission from the Irish government to work in Ireland, an example of this would be

³¹ Emerald journal: Migrant workers, migrant work, public policy and HR management, By Julia Connell, P412.

³² Emerald journal: Migrant workers, migrant work, public policy and HR management, By Julia Connell, P413.

³³ Migrant workers and the Irish hospitality sector, a Trinity Immigration initiative, By James Wickham, P 10.

workers from China. Before the accession of ten new member states in May 2004, the state's approach was largely open towards the immigration and employment of highly skilled migrant labour but somewhat more restrictive towards lower skilled immigration whereby immigrants were subject to labour market tests and employer led work permits.³⁴ In May 2004, Ireland opened its doors to all accession member states; they were only one of three EU member states to take this initiative. In effect, this has led to a marked increase in immigration from Eastern Europe, particularly in the hospitality sector. Since 1st January 2007, even though Romanian and Bulgarian citizens were EU nationals, they were required to have a permit to work in Ireland and will continue to be subject to a labour market needs test for two years.

With migration comes public policy debate over the potential displacement of local workers by migrant workers; the marginalisation of many migrant workers into low paid and precarious jobs; the driving down of wages and conditions; the ability of migrants to assimilate into local communities; and the impact of migration on training and skill development within organisations.³⁵ On the other hand governments in the developed world increasingly recognise the apparent benefits of labour migration to a country's economy. In the UK, home office research shows that in the UK over a single year, migrants (including asylum seekers and refugees) contributed £2.5 billion to the UK economy.³⁶

³⁴ Migrant workers and the Irish hospitality sector, a Trinity Immigration initiative, By James Wickham, P 10.

³⁵ Emerald journal: Migrant workers, migrant work, public policy and HR management, By Julia Connell, P413.

³⁶ Science Direct journal: Human resources in tourism: Still waiting for change, By Tom Baum, P1394.

Migrant workers can be beneficial to the economy in a multitude of ways; in particular, they are able to fill gaps in the domestic labour market and alleviate skills shortages (Schneider & Holman, 2005; Sriskandarajah et al, 2004) as well as increasing the levels of employment which, in turn, helps to raise gross domestic product.³⁷ Also because many migrants are young, they may use less in the use of services but contribute to the tax system which will help boost a country's economy. Migration usually only fills a short term skill shortage that is needed at any one time, this is seen to be the case in the hospitality sector. Workforce migration takes many different forms with regard to formality, legal status, duration, purpose, skills base and support mechanisms. In many of the advanced OECD economies there remain large flows of immigration into low skilled, low paid and poorly protected jobs (Taran and Geronimi, 2003).³⁸ Within many of these OECD economies, many of these migrants are engaged in tasks referred to by Athukorala (2006) as dirty, dangerous and demanding jobs that are shunned by local workers.³⁹ In today's climate this may be starting to change as many local workers across Ireland now have no choice but to fill any low skilled jobs that are vacant.

People, we are frequently told, are a critical dimension within the successful delivery of tourism services. "The story of successful tourism enterprises is one that is largely about people – how they are recruited, how they are managed, how they are trained and educated, how they are valued and rewarded and how they are supported through a

³⁷ Science Direct journal: Human resources in tourism: Still waiting for change, By Tom Baum, P1394.

³⁸ Emerald journal: Migrant workers, migrant work, public policy and HR management, By Julia Connell, P414.

³⁹ Emerald journal: Migrant workers, migrant work, public policy and HR management, By Julia Connell, P414.

process of continuous learning and career development” (Failte Ireland, 2005).⁴⁰ Also people are central to all aspects of the hospitality industry – in the creation, design, development and delivery of all its services (Lashley, 2001; Mullins, 2001; Failte Ireland, 2005).⁴¹ The hospitality industry in Ireland has become very competitive in recent years. The dynamic and rapidly changing environment that the hospitality sector now operates in has seen the need to become and stay competitive take on a new urgency (Blum, 2003).⁴² This is why people and their personal skills are so important within the tourism industry as Failte Ireland has highlighted.

2.8 DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

The concept of diversity emerged in the European debate in the 1990’s and as with many other organizational concepts and theories, it was imported from the United States.⁴³ In the late 1980’s and early 1990’s many writers predicted an increase of diversity in the workforce because of demographic changes in the population.⁴⁴ Shifts in demographics over the past decade combined with increasing internationalization are creating significant challenges for hospitality organisations.⁴⁵ Within all organisations the management now have to manage diversity among their workforce. Managing workforce diversity is a primary challenge in today’s hospitality industry.⁴⁶ One of the most influential and well-received definitions of diversity management in the UK was

⁴⁰ Science Direct journal: Human resources in tourism: Still waiting for change, By Tom Baum, P1383.

⁴¹ Emerald article: High performance work practices and competitive advantage in the hospitality sector, by Pauline Connolly, P201.

⁴² Emerald article: High performance work practices and competitive advantage in the hospitality sector, by Pauline Connolly, P201.

⁴³ Handbook of workplace diversity, by Alison M Konrad, Chapter 4, P95.

⁴⁴ Journal: Diversity management in practice, by Stefan Groschl, P262.

⁴⁵ Science direct: A deeper look at national culture and leadership in the hospitality industry, by Mark Testa, P468

⁴⁶ Human resources journal: Managing for effective workforce diversity, Kathleen Iverson, P31.



given by Kandola and Fullerton (1998): “The basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people consisting of visible and non-visible differences including factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and work style and is founded on the premise that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where all talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met.”⁴⁷ Bartz et al defines the concept diversity management as “understanding that there are differences among employees and these differences, if properly managed, are an asset to work being done more efficiently and effectively”.⁴⁸ As all organisations have become more diverse, some more than others it is important for all managers to recognise the importance of diversity management. Even though this is the case, managing diversity is still a relatively new management concept and diversity progress will depend on a range of different drivers including committed leadership, personal commitment and understanding.⁴⁹

Baum (2006) discusses the important role that, primarily southern Europeans played in developing the culture and character of hospitality operations in industrialised Europe in the 19th and much of the 20th centuries.⁵⁰ Diversity management was first taken up in the UK and the Netherlands, former colonial states with relatively large percentages of populations of ethnic minority background; it arrived to Scandinavia and other countries

⁴⁷ CIPD: Managing Diversity: words into action, Executive Briefing, P1.

⁴⁸ Science direct: Why diversity management fails: Metaphor analyses unveil manager attitudes, by Trude Furunes, P974.

⁴⁹ CIPD: Managing Diversity: words into action, Executive Briefing, P2.

⁵⁰ Emerald Journal: Cultural diversity in hospitality work, by Tom Baum, P230.

just around the millennium.⁵¹ In the Scandinavian context, diversity management was primarily conceived of as a means to integrate ethnic minorities in the labour market. It was taken up in a particular socio – historical moment, when countries that had very little experience of immigration suddenly faced the prospect of becoming multi-cultural societies.⁵² Today, widespread labour shortages and other labour market changes resulting from the impacts of a combination of, among others, demographic, globalisation and economic factors in Europe are leading hotel operators to hire new employees from a wide range of less developed and transition economy countries.⁵³

Over the last number of years Ireland has been faced with a number of diversity change dynamics. These changes centre on increased Equality Legislation (The Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000), a rise in the number of refugees seeking asylum in Ireland and higher levels of immigration during the “Celtic Tiger” era as well as expansion in the EU membership.⁵⁴ The new diversity change dynamics now present new challenges and also many opportunities for all organisations in every sector of the Irish economy. As iterated by Lewis (1999), “Diversity is not something that is going to go away tomorrow... enable us to plan our strategies on the assumption of mutual understanding”.⁵⁵ The hospitality industry, like many other industries in Ireland has been faced with many challenges and opportunities during the Celtic Tiger era. During 2003 the Department of Trade, Enterprise and Employment issued over forty –

⁵¹ Science Direct: Diversity management: Are we moving in the right direction? Reflections from both sides of the North Atlantic, P396.

⁵² Science Direct: Diversity management: Are we moving in the right direction? Reflections from both sides of the North Atlantic, P396.

⁵³ Emerald Journal: Cultural diversity in hospitality work, by Tom Baum, P230.

⁵⁴ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 1.

⁵⁵ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 1.

seven thousand work permits to migrant workers; this accounted for over eleven and a half thousand different employers and workplaces and according to IBEC, the hotel and catering sector is the largest employer of non-EU nationals with approximately 23% working in the sector.⁵⁶ With the Irish hospitality sector being so diverse, managers have to be able to deal with the different challenges that they may be faced with from these migrant workers, i.e. the language barrier. Achieving this requires diversity leadership, effective diversity organisational structures and the successful planning and implementation of appropriate and timely diversity decisions.⁵⁷ Mismanaged diversity can have long – reaching effects on employee satisfaction and productivity. Employees who perceive themselves as valued members of their organisation are more conscientious, involved, and innovative.⁵⁸ Mismanagement of diversity for example, in the form of denied access or unfavourable treatment can have negative work – place consequences, such as inhibiting workers’ abilities and motivation, thereby leading to diminished job performance.⁵⁹ Each organisation has a distinctive climate, atmosphere, or “feeling in the air” that characterises what it is like to work there. That so – called climate is the result of employee’s perceptions of the practices, procedures and rewards demonstrated by management.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 1.

⁵⁷ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 1.

⁵⁸ Human resources journal: Managing for effective workforce diversity, by Kathleen Iverson, P32.

⁵⁹ Human resources journal: Managing for effective workforce diversity, by Kathleen Iverson, P32.

⁶⁰ Human resources journal: Managing for effective workforce diversity, by Kathleen Iverson, P32.

2.8.1 An example of diversity management in practice within the UK hospitality sector

In 2008, the Marriott hotels in the UK were ranked in fourteenth place in the Sunday Times list of the top 20 big companies to work for. This was down to them having a strong sense of teamwork among employees and a positive and supportive management style.⁶¹ Employees who worked for Marriott also rated them for the strong sense of family spirit among the workforce and the fact that they all took pride in working for the company. The company's 151,000 employees hail from dozens of nations and between them are estimated to speak more than 50 languages.⁶² The Marriott hotel chain has a strong commitment to diversity issues. In 2003, they established a committee for excellence to set significant diversity objectives and monitor each level of progress in detail. The company claims that its workforce mirrors the demographic trends of the communities in which it operates. It prides itself on embracing the various talents, perspectives and backgrounds of all its employees. More than half its workforce is comprised of women and people from ethnic minorities.⁶³ The average length of time a general manager spends with the company is seventeen years – a statistic that underlines people's feeling of job security and the sentiment that they can make a valuable contribution to the firm's success. Also employee turnover within the Marriott chain is relatively low at 28% for the hospitality industry.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Human resource management digest: Marriott hotels stresses the spirit to serve, P26.

⁶² Human resource management digest: Marriott hotels stresses the spirit to serve, P27.

⁶³ Human resource management digest: Marriott hotels stresses the spirit to serve, P27.

⁶⁴ Human resource management digest: Marriott hotels stresses the spirit to serve, P26.

2.8.2 Diversity Management Research

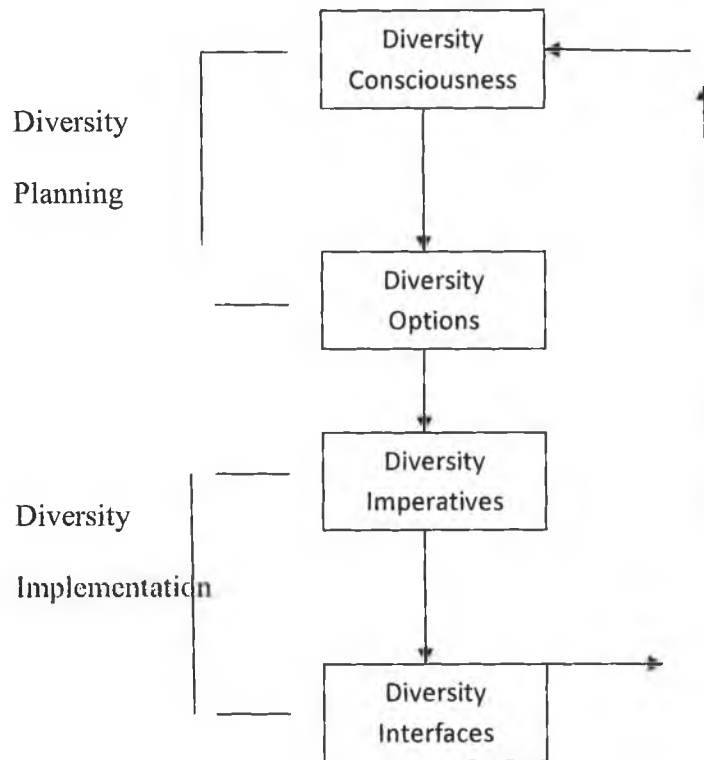
Various research has been carried out on the diversity issues that now face the hospitality sector as now diversity management is an important part for success in Irish organisations. Research which was carried out by the Irish hospitality institute into the diversity issues that are now facing the hospitality sector and assessing the extent to which there is a move within the sector to meet these challenges and opportunities and was carried out by a number of focus groups which were undertaken at various locations throughout Ireland.⁶⁵ These focus groups were made up of representatives from organisations that were connected to the hospitality industry. Many of the attendees were hotel owners, restaurateurs, hotel managers, catering managers, human resource managers, hotel and catering supervisors and students & lecturers from various hospitality colleges.⁶⁶ Initially this was a qualitative study but it was also supported by quantitative research in the form of surveys which was filled out by all the participants that were in attendance. The end result of this research employed a model called the Diversity Conscious Organisation as seen in table one. This framework evaluates the extent to which organisations are moving to meet diversity challenges through assessing both planning and implementation dimensions.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 2.

⁶⁶ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 2

⁶⁷ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 2

Table 1: The Diversity Conscious Organisation



Source of Data: Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section

2.9 DIVERSITY CONSCIOUSNESS

The research findings highlighted a number of issues with regards to Diversity Consciousness. While the hospitality sector do note the changes in diversity change dynamics, many participants in the focus groups seemed to be confused on certain key areas. For example, some research participants had problems identifying the nine grounds of discrimination while others could not detail the cultural make up of staff within their organisations.⁶⁸ The participants also highlighted their concerns with regards to identifying diversity opportunities from within the organisation. Many of the research

⁶⁸ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.1

participants felt that the hospitality organisation they work for had prevented the introduction of diversity programmes, e.g. training or policies to prevent discrimination. The results of the research also showed that while many hotels within the hospitality sector are trying to solve issues related to diversity on a reactive basis, they are not doing enough with regards to introducing more proactive measures. For example, some focus group participants described how their organisations had taken decisions and made changes after diversity incidents had already occurred.⁶⁹ One of the research participants quoted “We are doing mandatory training because we have already had a number of cases”.⁷⁰ One of the key points that came out of the research was that the participants felt not enough was being done by their managers to identify potential problems before they arise and deal with them in a professional manner.

2.10 DIVERSITY OPTIONS

With regards to diversity options a number of concerns were highlighted. Firstly, on a more positive note, the research did highlight that many hospitality organisations are beginning to take diversity decisions and choosing the right ones that will benefit the organisation and its staff. For example, some hospitality businesses are now employing diverse staff, engaging in appropriate diversity training and developing diversity policies.⁷¹ When important decisions are being made, it is important that many options and alternatives are considered so that the best option is chosen to suit the needs of both the employers and their employees. In the modern business world of today, it is

⁶⁹ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.1

⁷⁰ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.1

⁷¹ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.1

imperative that individuals understand each other as members of the same organisation.⁷² Hotels should look at other hotels so that they can see what diversity issues they may be faced with and how they responded. Another reason for implementing managing diversity in the hotel industry lies in the very nature of its offering. As society becomes ever more diverse, the challenge of responding to cultural diversity will heighten in the hotel industry because the service offering is a social experience that is culturally relative and defined (Christensen, 1993).⁷³

Finally, for there to be an effective diversity decision making process within all hotels, representatives from all areas of the organisation should be involved.⁷⁴ The research also highlighted that decisions in relation to diversity procedures with customers and non-national members of staff are not properly highlighted. For example, where a customer refuses to deal with a non-national employee the diversity policy may prescribe one course of action (that the customer be informed that this is discrimination and be given no option but to deal with the staff member).⁷⁵ Non-national employees should be treated with upmost respect not only from their fellow colleagues but also from customers whom they interact with. Overall, all organisations need to involve all of their staff when they are deciding on the range of diversity decisions that need to be taken. Managers need to be able to see things from their employee's perspectives before they decide on important decisions.

⁷² Emerald journal: The impact of cultural diversity on team performance: a South African perspective, by Desere Koko, P78.

⁷³ Emerald Journal: Managing diversity in the hotel sector: The emergence of a service quality opportunity, by G. Maxwell.

⁷⁴ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 4.2.

⁷⁵ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 4.2.

2.11 DIVERSITY IMPERATIVES

The research findings highlighted a number of problems with regards to Diversity Imperative issues. The research highlights that while many hospitality organisations are allocating responsibility to diverse workers, diversity is still mainly managed by the HR department and supervisors. One member of the focus group quoted “There can be a lack of awareness of diversity issues on the part of some members of management”.⁷⁶ The research participants also highlighted that there was not an effective reward and control structure around diversity. One of the participants commented “I do not receive support from senior management... however I am not sure if they see this as a major issue yet”.⁷⁷ It is vital that senior managers and HR staff reward their staff members when they are involved with diversity decision making or when they come up with a great idea that will benefit the organisation in the long run. Responsibility is the key, whereby it should be given to all staff members throughout the whole organisation. Once employees have been given their own responsibility and are in charge of their own tasks with regards to diversity decision making they should be evaluated on their performance to see if they are capable of making the right decisions.

2.12 DIVERSITY INTERFACES

In the final part of the Diversity Conscious Organisation table is diversity interfaces. In this part of the research, a number of issues were also highlighted by the focus groups participants. While some hotels are beginning to include their employees more in diversity decision making and the responsibility of making these important decisions are

⁷⁶ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.3.

⁷⁷ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.3.

not allocated to just one manager, the research participants felt that more could be done with regards to the development of effective diversity feedback and communication structures.⁷⁸ One of the group participants commented “Feedback is not encouraged because the attitude is the more you make people aware the more problems you create”.⁷⁹ Another participant commented “I have learned that communication is key... but it is not always easy among diverse groups of people”.⁸⁰ To comment on diversity interfaces it is vital that all hotels encourage feedback from their workforce. The HR manager should develop diversity decision making policies for the hotel but employees should be allowed to voice their opinions on these policies so that every employee in every department feels comfortable with what has been decided. By doing this the author believes that it will prevent many diversity related problems from arising in the hotel.

2.13 DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT RESEARCH IN THE UK HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

During the summers of 2005 and 2006, research was carried out in three research locations; Northern Ireland, the Lake District and Scotland. The research was carried out in various different hotels which comprised of small to medium in size, independent/family owned and also chain operated hotels. The participants in this study originated from many different countries which include the EU and the rest of the world. The researchers wanted to address a number of questions about migrant workers in the hospitality sector. These included the profile of these workers in the three study

⁷⁸ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.4.

⁷⁹ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.4.

⁸⁰ Cultural Diversity: A Roadmap for the Hospitality industry, Section 3.4.

locations, the nature of the work they do, perceptions held by migrant workers about the work they do within the hospitality sector, working conditions –including pay and training, the nature of integration by migrant workers in their workplace and finally what their aspirations are for the future. Many of the participants in this study were under 30, single and had no family responsibilities and many of the respondents were fairly settled in the region where the study was conducted.

2.14 RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

One of the main findings from this research was that many of the employees found out about the job they are in by word of mouth, e.g. through friends or family. Agencies were also a popular source for the migrant workers, where they paid the agency a fee in return for being provided with a job in one of the selected regions. In some cases though, the agencies did not prove to be a reliable source for providing their clients with a job that satisfied their needs. One of the respondents from Lithuania quoted “I saved every penny for four months to raise the equivalent of £400 pounds which I paid to an agency back home to get a job in the UK. I was ecstatic when I got a job offer and a week later, with little details on my forthcoming job, I was quick to arrange my travel to the UK. Upon arrival I was welcomed by a back breaking job which so far I have realised is not only physically draining but also pays very little to survive on in this country”.⁸¹

In terms of training opportunities, the ability to speak the English language was a main concern for the respondents. They consider the ability to speak English very important

⁸¹Emerald Journal: Cultural diversity in hospitality work, by Tom Baum, P232.

as it improves the chances of getting a better job elsewhere and it is important for use in the hotel they work in. In all three locations, over 80% of respondents had worked in their current hotel for less than one year, pointing both to the impact of seasonality and the degree of instability within the hospitality workplace in general. For over 60% of respondents, their current hotel is their first taste of work in this sector.⁸² Overall, most of the respondents were happy in the hotels they worked in across all the three regions. The majority of the respondents answered that they received no hostility from their managers or fellow colleagues. Of those that did experience forms of hostility, it was manifested through negative attitudes from management – having “little patience and informing the staff not to speak their native language among themselves in the workplace”.⁸³ More examples of hostility included “always being told what to do”, “shouted at due to impatience” and “misunderstandings in communication due to language difficulties”.⁸⁴

2.15 CONCLUSION OF THE RESEARCH

Overall this research highlights that Migrant workers do travel a long way from their home countries to find work in European shores, but one of the main industries they end up in is the hospitality industry. They seem to have been accepted and welcomed by their Irish counterparts within the three regions that this study consisted off and experienced minimal hostility especially in terms of racism and discrimination. An alarming factor in this study is that management don't seem to be able to keep their employees happy while they are carrying out their duties. Impatience, misunderstandings, and communication barriers seem to be the main issues that arose

⁸² Emerald Journal: Cultural diversity in hospitality work, by Tom Baum, P235.

⁸³ Emerald Journal: Cultural diversity in hospitality work, by Tom Baum, P235.

⁸⁴ Emerald Journal: Cultural diversity in hospitality work, by Tom Baum, P235.

between them both .As a result, employees will not be happy when they arrive to work as they will expect these problems to occur regularly. In the three regions, the Managers seem to be putting a lot of pressure on their foreign staff; this is not good for keeping them motivated and making them want to stay part of the company for a long period of time.

2.16 PROMOTING EQUALITY IN THE IRISH HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Within Ireland there is an agency called the Equality Mainstreaming Unit (EMU) in which their objective is to address labour market gaps for specific groups that are experiencing barriers to participation and employment, including those which are created by gender inequality and wider inequalities. In 2007, the EMU supported the Irish hospitality institute by supporting hotels in incorporating equality issues and employment practices. Together they launched an initiative aimed at supporting the integration of equality and diversity into employment and customer service in the hospitality sector. With this initiative taking place, it put the Irish hospitality sector at the forefront of placing equality and diversity at the top of its agenda. Together these organisations came up with ten steps that businesses can take to promote equality and diversity in their organisations.

2.16.1 Develop awareness and knowledge of equality and diversity issues

It is very important to raise awareness and understanding of equality and diversity within your organisation.

2.16.2 Develop a systematic approach to equality and diversity in your organisation.

If a hotel can develop a planned and systematic approach to equality and diversity it can achieve a positive business impact.

2.16.3 Create an organisational culture based on equality and diversity

Hotels need to make the strategic link with the business case for equality and diversity and to incorporate it in business planning and objectives.

2.16.4 Provide leadership from the top

In order to achieve this organisational change and to realise the potential benefits it can bring to hotels, managers from the very top need to give their employees their full support and portray their leadership skills.

2.16.5 Designate responsibility

The management of a hotel should assign responsibility for equality to designated staff members. The organisation may decide to allocate the employment equality role to a staff member of the HR function and the equality in customer service role to a member of the customer service section. For this to be successful, the equality officers must be supported by top management.

2.16.6 Develop an equality friendly recruitment process

Hotels need to ensure that their recruitment and selection practices are based on clear, objective criteria and do not incorporate any bias which would exclude certain individuals at this early stage in the employment process. They need to encourage a more diverse candidate base for positions that are vacant.

2.16.7 Promote equality through staff development and training

Training and development has a critical role to play in developing and supporting a commitment to equality and diversity in the organisation. Staff members may have had limited contact with people from diverse backgrounds and it is only through awareness raising, training and experience that they have the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and appreciation of the issues and engage with and commit to equality and diversity.

2.16.8 Develop and provide equality - friendly services

Equality and diversity initiatives need to focus on issues of service design and provision, extending beyond an employment and human resources focus to involve the organisation as a whole.

2.16.9 Develop a collaborative approach

The involvement and engagement of employees at all levels of the organisation is necessary, focusing on attitude change and awareness, in order to ensure that equality permeates the workplace culture.

2.16.10 What gets measured gets done – monitoring and evaluation

The process of measuring, monitoring and evaluating is very important to ensure that the actions undertaken are achieving a positive result. Monitoring also establishes whether the targets and objectives set out in the equality action plans in relation to employment or service provision are being achieved.⁸⁵

2.17 CONCLUSION

From the literature review, it would appear that there have been considerable research studies by many different authors on the topic of cultural diversity and diversity management in the Irish hospitality industry and also across the world. Diversity in the workplace is a very complex topic to understand leaving the issue wide open for discussions and debates. From the comprehensive research the author has carried out in this literature review, it analyses cultural diversity, diversity management research and migration in relation to the Irish hospitality sector.

Now the author has analysed the literature review, it is clear that cultural diversity within Irish organisations/hotels will be here to stay in Ireland. It is true to say that many thousands of migrant workers have returned home or have moved elsewhere to find work due to the economic downturn in Ireland. Many economic analysts say that Ireland may never return to the height of its economic prosperity that it was once in, but we will return to stability within the next few years. That is why it is important now for not just hotel managers, but for managers in all employment sectors who employ a diverse

⁸⁵ Steps (1-10) - The Irish hospitality institute PDF file: Promoting equality in the Irish hospitality sector, in conjunction with the equality mainstreaming unit.

workforce to look at how they performed this difficult task and see what ways they can improve their management skills for the future migrant workers who will come to our shores in search of work.

Having examined all relevant literature on this topic, the next chapter will look at the research methodology. This involves justifying and analysing the means by which the data is to be collected to answer the research objectives.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to detail the research methodology approaches that the author will be using while researching the topic of cultural diversity/diversity management within the hotel sector in the West of Ireland. Chapter two has already highlighted the existing research that has been carried out, but this chapter will focus on the research methods the author will use in gathering more up – to – date information on this topic. The author has chosen to elaborate on the motive for choosing the various research methods and to comment on the effectiveness of each tool. This chapter will reinforce the importance of how vital it is to choose the right research method to ensure that the most up – to – date and most recent information is gathered. The author acknowledges that the choice of research methodology is constrained by both the nature of the research and also other important considerations such as time and resources. The research process was carried out by using both primary and secondary research methods which will be highlighted in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is concerned with how the design is implemented and how the research is carried out. The methodology used often determines the quality of the data set generated. Methodology specifies;

- When and how often to collect data.
- Construction of data collection measures.
- Identification of the sample or test population.
- Choice of strategy for contacting subjects.

- Selection of statistical tools.
- Presentation of findings.⁸⁶

3.3 DEFINITION OF RESEARCH

The Oxford dictionary defines research as “A search or investigation directed to the discovery of some fact by careful consideration or study of a subject; a course of critical or scientific enquiry”.⁸⁷ Research is more than a set of skills; it is a way of thinking.⁸⁸ Research is not just a process of gathering information, as is sometimes suggested. It is about answering unanswered questions or creating that which does not currently exist.⁸⁹ As Leedy puts it, research is a “systematic quest for undiscovered knowledge” (Lee89). Good research is “systematic” in that it is planned, organised and has a specific goal. In many ways research can be seen as a process of expanding the boundaries of our ignorance.⁹⁰

3.4 OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet. Though each research study has its own specific purpose, we may think of research objectives as falling into a number of broad groupings⁹¹; outlined as follows:

⁸⁶ http://www.indiana.edu/~eduev520/lecture_slides/520pre_exp_designs.pdf (Page 1)

⁸⁷ <http://www.ncji.ie/msa/Useful%20Forms/What%20is%20Research.pdf>

⁸⁸ Research methodology: a step-by-step guide for beginners, by Ranjit Kumar, P2.

⁸⁹ Research methodology: An introduction by Wayne Goddard, Stuart Melville, P1.

⁹⁰ Research methodology: An introduction by Wayne Goddard, Stuart Melville, P1.

⁹¹ Research methodology: Methods and techniques, By Dr. C R Kothari, P2.

1. To gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it (studies with this object in view are termed as exploratory or formulative research studies):
2. To portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or group (studies with this object in view are known as descriptive research studies):
3. To determine the frequency with which something occurs or with which it is associated with something else (studies with this object in view are known as diagnostic research studies):
4. To test a hypothesis of a casual relationship between variables (such studies are known as hypothesis – testing research studies).⁹²

For this study, the author intends to find out the answers to three particular questions in relation to cultural diversity within the Irish hospitality industry. Point number one above would portray the way the researcher intends to achieve the stated objectives, as the researcher will gain an insight into the hospitality industry by using a literature search, and surveying certain managers and employees about their experiences.

When surveying people, exploratory research studies would not try to acquire a representative sample, but rather, seek to interview those who are knowledgeable and who might be able to provide insight concerning the relationship among variables.⁹³

⁹² Research methodology: Methods and techniques, By Dr. C R Kothari, P2.

⁹³ <http://www.quickmba.com/marketing/research/>

3.5 RESEARCH DESIGN METHODS

There are many definitions of research design but there is not one to justify the full range of important factors. Ragin (1994) gave a comprehensive definition of research design:

“Research design is a plan for collecting and analysing evidence that will make it possible for the investigator to answer whatever questions he or she has posed. The design of an investigation touches almost all aspects of the research, from the minute details of data collection to the selection of the techniques of data analysis”.⁹⁴

Practically all research topics and problems are unique, which means the researcher must take the appropriate measures to select the definitive set of approaches to the problem or topic being researched. Anyone setting out to conduct a form of research may find the task both challenging and complex. Some research topics can be solved by carrying out simple methods like interviews and questionnaires, while other topics may take a longer period of time to investigate and a case study/survey may be needed in order for the researcher to come to a conclusion. Market research/ research design can be classified into three categories;

- Exploratory research
- Descriptive research
- Causal research

⁹⁴ An introduction to qualitative research, by Uwe Flick, P128.

3.5.1 Exploratory research

Exploratory research has the goal of formulating the problems more precisely, clarifying concepts, gathering explanations, gathering insight, eliminating practical ideas and forming hypothesis.⁹⁵ Exploratory research can be performed using a literature search, surveying certain people about their experiences, focus groups and case studies. Exploratory research may develop hypotheses, but it does not seek to test them.⁹⁶ Exploratory research focuses on 'why' questions. For example, it is one thing to explain the crime rate in a country, to examine trends over time, or to compare the rates in different countries, but it is a different situation to develop an explanation to why the crime rate is as high as it is and why some types of crime are increasing and some other types are not.⁹⁷

3.5.2: Descriptive research

Descriptive research can be characterised as simply the attempt to determine, describe, or identify what is.⁹⁸ Descriptive research deals with questions of what things are like, not why they are that way. It includes a wide range of areas such as market research, public opinion polling, media research (ratings survey), and voter intentions studies.⁹⁹ Examples of descriptive research include government sponsored research such as the population census and employment and crime statistics.

⁹⁵ <http://www.quickmba.com/marketing/research/>

⁹⁶ <http://www.quickmba.com/marketing/research/>

⁹⁷ <http://www.nyu.edu/classes/bkg/methods/005847ch1.pdf>

⁹⁸ Research methodology in applied economics, by Don Erwin Ethridge, P24.

⁹⁹ Surveys in social research, by D.A. De Vaus, P18.

secondary data even though the research design might require the use of primary data.

The most common uses are:

- In some cases the information and the insights gained from secondary data are sufficient to answer the research question.
- Secondary data can provide the background necessary to understand the problem situation and provide an overview of the market dynamics.
- Secondary data can often provide exploratory information that can aid in the planning and design of the instruments used to gather primary data.¹⁰⁴

The most significant of the advantages of the secondary data are related to time and cost. In general, it is much less expensive to use secondary data than it is to conduct a primary research investigation.¹⁰⁵ Also the collection of primary data can be much more costly in comparison to the collection of secondary research which may make it impracticable to use. The table below highlights the main advantages and disadvantages of secondary research. Even though secondary research has some disadvantages as shown in table one below, secondary research data has proven invaluable to the author in terms of providing an insight into the Irish hospitality industry and providing a specific direction for the research questions that need to be answered.

At this stage of the research, the author has now advanced the study to the primary stage, using the secondary research that already has been gathered as a guideline. The researcher began the research with an extensive literature review of secondary data, such as books, journals and internet PDF files. By carrying out this detailed secondary

¹⁰⁴ Marketing research: Texts and cases, By B. Brenn, David L. Loudon, P64 (Points 1-3).

¹⁰⁵ Dissertation research and writing for construction students, By Shamil G. Naoum, P49.

research, it gave the author an in-depth insight into this topic and provided a broader knowledge. It also illustrated the range of conflicting arguments on this topic and most of all it highlighted the importance of this area of research.

Without carrying out an in-depth secondary research study, this study would have not been able to get to the primary research stage where the interviews/questionnaires were carried out. It was vital that the author read as much of the previous research that was carried out by different authors/researchers on this topic so that findings for new objectives could be achieved. Chapter two which is the literature review is very important for giving a concrete foundation to the research study. The purpose of the literature review is not only to convince the reader that the research question is valid and worthwhile, but to bring the reader up to date on the historic and current literature from which the research is launched. For this particular study, the researcher spent a lot of time researching secondary research from reliable sources such as books, journals from Emerald and online PDF documents so that only the most reliable and detailed up-to-date information can be documented in chapter two.

Table 2: Secondary research: Advantages and disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
Inexpensive	Not specific to topic
Multiple studies	Limited knowledge of research methodology and collection
Large studies	Conflicting viewpoints
Time to analyse	Lack of depth
Trusted source(S)	

Source of data: ¹⁰⁶

3.8 PRIMARY RESEARCH

Primary data may be defined as information that may be collected first hand, generated by original research tailor- made to answer specific, current research questions.¹⁰⁷ The principal methods for collecting primary data are observations, surveys, interviews and controlled experiments. The choice among these methods depends on the issues under study and the decisions that need to be made.¹⁰⁸ Primary data in its most basic form can be classified as either qualitative or quantitative. Both of these research types are very important to any researcher who is undertaking a study, but they both serve different purposes. The author has to review both of these methods to see which method would best suit this study so that the most appropriate design is pursued. The author has to decide upon the nature of the research and what questions have to be answered before a suitable form of research method can be chosen for this study. Below in table two, the

¹⁰⁶ Advertising and public relations research: By Donald W. Jugenheimer, P30.

¹⁰⁷ International marketing: analysis and strategy, By Sak Onkvisit, John J. Shaw, P216.

¹⁰⁸ Contemporary marketing, By Boone, David L. Kurtz, P239.

table shows a comparison between qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Distinguishing between both of these methods can justify and provide a clearer view on the research method the author has chosen.

3.9 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE METHODS OF RESEARCH

After discussing the three forms of research design, it is important for the researcher to discuss the two types of data that would be very important for gathering in-depth information on cultural diversity within the Irish hospitality industry in the West of Ireland.

3.10 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative approaches to data collection, analysis and report writing differ from the traditional, quantitative approaches. Use of purposeful sampling, collection of open – ended data, analysis of texts or pictures, representation of information in figures and tables and personal interpretation of the findings all inform qualitative procedures.¹⁰⁹

Qualitative data refers to people’s opinions, beliefs, attitudes, motivations and dispositions. Qualitative research is a type of scientific research. In general terms, scientific research consists of an investigation that:

- Seeks answers to a question.
- Systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question.
- Collects evidence.

¹⁰⁹ Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches, By John W. Creswell, P24.

- Produces findings that were not determined in advance.
- Produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study.¹¹⁰

Qualitative research is concerned with the opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals producing subjective data. Qualitative data are collected through direct encounters with individuals, through one to one interviews or group interviews or by observation.¹¹¹ One advantage of qualitative methods in exploratory research is that use of open – ended questions and probing gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, as quantitative methods do. Open – ended questions have the ability to evoke responses that are;

- Meaningful and culturally salient to the participant.
- Unanticipated by the researcher.
- Rich and explanatory in nature.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide: Qualitative research methods overview, P2. (1-5)

¹¹¹ Trent focus for research and development in primary health care: An introduction to qualitative research, By Beverly Hancock, P6.

¹¹² Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide: Qualitative research methods overview, P4.

3.11 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Quantitative research uses numbers and statistical methods. It tends to be based on numerical measurements of specific aspects of phenomena; it abstracts from particular instances to seek general description or to test causal hypotheses; it seeks measurements and analyses that are easily replicable by other researchers. (King, Keohane & Verba)¹¹³ Quantitative researchers hold the position that “truth” is absolute and that a single reality can be defined by careful measurement. To find truth, the researcher must be objective, which means that values, feelings, and personal experiences cannot enter into the measurement of reality.¹¹⁴ Quantitative researchers seek explanations and predictions that will generalize to other persons and places. In quantitative research, the researcher’s role is to observe and measure, and care is taken to keep the researchers from “contaminating” the data through personal involvement with the research subjects.¹¹⁵ An example of when it is a good time to use the quantitative research method is when a researcher is trying to discover how people intend to vote, a social survey could be used for this.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Blending Qualitative & quantitative research in theses and dissertations, By Robert Murray Thomas, P2.

¹¹⁴ Understanding nursing research, By Nancy Burns, P19.

¹¹⁵ Blending qualitative & quantitative research methods in theses and dissertations, By Robert Murray Thomas, P2.

¹¹⁶ Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analysing talk, text and interaction, By David Silverman, P34.

Table 3: Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative research approaches

	Quantitative	Qualitative
General Framework	<p>Seek to confirm hypotheses about phenomena.</p> <p>Instruments use more rigid style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions.</p> <p>Use highly structured methods such as questionnaires, surveys and structured observation.</p>	<p>Seek to explore phenomena.</p> <p>Instruments use more flexible, iterative style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions.</p> <p>Use semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups and participant observation.</p>
Analytical objectives	<p>To quantify variation.</p> <p>To predict causal relationships.</p> <p>To describe characteristics of a population.</p>	<p>To describe variation.</p> <p>To describe and explain relationships.</p> <p>To describe individual experiences.</p> <p>To describe group norms.</p>
Question format	Close - ended	Open - ended.
Data format	Numerical (obtained by assigning numerical values to responses).	Textual (obtained from audio tapes, video tapes and field notes).
Flexibility in study design	<p>Study design is stable from beginning to end.</p> <p>Participant responses do not influence or determine how and which questions researchers ask next.</p>	<p>Participant responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next. Data collection and research questions are adjusted according to what is learned.¹¹⁷</p>

¹¹⁷ Table - Qualitative research methods: A data collector's field guide: Qualitative research methods overview, P4.

3.12 TECHNIQUES FOR COLLECTING DATA

For the subject of this research, the author is going to design and use a questionnaire to gather the information that is needed. The questionnaire will be designed in an open – ended/unstructured format which will be for employers, employees and the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) to answer. The author is going to interview all three groups of respondents, in which they will each have a different questionnaire to answer but will be asked similar questions on the topic of cultural diversity/diversity management issues to see what their opinion is and if there are any conflicting opinions on this subject. The longest questionnaire will be designed for the employers, as this study is about how managers engage with cultural diversity as a whole within the hotel industry in the West of Ireland. The author also wants to get the opinions and views of employees who work in these hotels, aswel as the Irish Hotels Federation to see what impact cultural diversity has had on the hospitality industry.

3.13 TYPES OF QUESTIONNAIRES

There are three different types of interview situations which in turn require three different types of questionnaire. The table below summarises the three classifications of questionnaire.

Table 4: A classification of questionnaires

Type of questionnaire	Areas of use of questionnaire	Administration of questionnaire
Structured	Used in large interview programmes (typically over 200 interviews). Used where it is possible to anticipate the responses closely.	Telephone/ face-to-face/self-completion.
Semi-structured	Used widely in business – business market research where there is a need to accommodate widely different responses from companies. Also used where the responses cannot be anticipated.	Face-to-face/telephone
Unstructured	The basis of many studies into technical or narrow markets. Used in depth interviewing and group discussions. Allows probing and searching where the researcher is not fully sure of the responses before the interview.	Group discussions/face-to-face interviews/depth telephone interview. ¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Market research: A guide to planning, methodology & evaluation, by Paul N .Hague, P107.

3.14 FORMS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Designing an effective questionnaire seems like an easy task, but when a researcher is looking for specific answers to emerge from the research study careful consideration and effort should be taken from the very start. If the questionnaire is poorly designed from the beginning it will lead to complications and problems when analysing data for the predetermined research or survey. The questionnaire must contain simple but straight forward directions for the respondents so that they may not feel any difficulty in answering the questions.¹¹⁹ The appropriate form of questions depends on the nature of information sought, the sampled respondents and the kind of analysis intended. The researcher must decide whether to use closed or open-ended questions.¹²⁰ The two main types of questions that can be used when designing a questionnaire are open-ended questions and closed – ended questions.

3.15 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Open – ended questions encourage clients to respond with full statements and at deeper levels of meaning.¹²¹ Open – format items can provide a far greater “richness” than fully quantitative data. The open responses can offer graphic examples, illustrative quotes and can also lead us to identify issues not previously anticipated.¹²² Open-ended questionnaires provide the researcher with more information than could be obtained from a closed – ended questionnaire. The interviewee can give a descriptive answer on

¹¹⁹ Research methodology: Methods and techniques, by Dr C. R. Kothari, P118.

¹²⁰ Research methodology: Methods and techniques, by Dr C. R. Kothari, P118.

¹²¹ Crisis intervention strategies, By Richard K James, P23.

¹²² Questionnaire’s in second language research: construction, administration and processing, by Zoltan Dornyei, P47.

the question that has been asked and this can be recorded by the interviewer. There are also some drawbacks with open – ended questionnaire's which include:

- Respondents frequently find it difficult both to recognise and to articulate how they feel. This is particularly true of negative feelings, so that asking open – ended questions about what people dislike about something tends to generate a high level of “nothing” or “don't know” responses.
- Analysing the responses can be a difficult, time – consuming and relatively expensive process.¹²³

3.16 CLOSED – ENDED QUESTIONS

Closed – ended questions seek specific, concrete information from the client. They are designed to elicit specific behavioural data and yes or no responses.¹²⁴ Closed – ended questions can be helpful in a number of ways: They give the interviewer greater control; put certain applicants at ease; are useful when seeking clarification; are helpful when you need to verify information and usually result in concise responses.¹²⁵ Close – ended questions will provide the author with limited information on the questions that need to be answered. The main advantages of using closed – ended questions is that they are a lot easier for the interviewer to administer as well; instead of having to write out the respondent's answers, the interviewer selects from the lists of answers categories the

¹²³ Questionnaire design: How to plan, structure and write survey material for effective market research (second edition, by Ian Brace, P53. (points 1-2)

¹²⁴ Crisis intervention strategies: By Richard K. James, P53.

¹²⁵ Recruiting, interviewing, selecting & orienting new employees, By Diane Arthur, P155.

words, phrases, or statements that best match the respondent's answers.¹²⁶ The main types of closed – questions are;

- **Yes/No questions** - These are questions that simply ask the respondent to either say yes or no to a particular question, for example – “Do you enjoy working in this hotel?”

- **Multiple choice questions** – These are questions with a definite range of answers, for example - “Which of the following age groups do you fall into?”
 - Below 18,
 - 18-24
 - 24-35

- **Likert scale** – A rating scale gives a list of alternatives to the respondent in which they are asked to pick one answer that would rate/reflect their opinion about the question. For example, for the following statement “Brian Cowan is a good leader”, the respondent would be asked to state their degree of agreement/disagreement;
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Don't know
 - Slightly disagree
 - Strongly disagree

¹²⁶ How to conduct telephone surveys: By Arlene Fink, P88.

3.17 JUSTIFICATION FOR METHOD OF QUESTIONNAIRE USED

The researcher has decided to use an open – ended question format for carrying out this particular study. The reason why the researcher has decided to use open – ended questions in the questionnaire is because it will give the author more information and particular detail for the questions that the author would like to answer. The author will provide the respondents with yes/no options in some of the questions to the three groups of respondents, but there will be space provided underneath so that they can justify their answer and provide more detail and reasoning for their own opinions. The author would like to get a personal response on how they feel about the questions that are being asked and for them to give their honest opinions. If the questions are only asked in a closed – ended format, it would be very hard for the author to justify and expand on their answers and also come to any conclusion in the findings. Behind every Yes/No answer there is reasoning for the option that is chosen and with the interest the author has in this research a simple Yes/No answer would give no justification to the question. The whole point of this research is to get the opinions from three groups of respondents:

- Hotel managers
- Hotel employees
- The Irish Hotels Federation. (IHF)

By these three groups of respondents answering their own specific questionnaires, the author will be getting in - depth answers on all the questions being asked, but in particular the three questions that the researcher would like to answer which are;

1. What are the advantages/disadvantages of cultural diversity within hotels in the West of Ireland?
2. Do non-nationals have the same career progression opportunities as Irish workers within the hospitality sector?
3. How important is it for non-nationals to be able to speak English within Irish hotels?

As the author has already mentioned, it will be hard to document the results as there may be varying opinions from each interviewee and also as the author is not sure of the outcome of the answers before the interviews begins. It is important to remember that these interviews to the different respondents are opinion based and hopefully they will be answered in a professional and truthful manner. The author is very much interested in hearing how they feel about the questions put to them and getting an insight to this very interesting topic that has reformed the Irish hospitality sector since the Celtic Tiger began up until today.

It has to be acknowledged by the author that there could be a possibility of bias or maybe even prejudice given to particular questions in the study. That is one of the risks the author has highlighted by deciding to use open – ended questionnaires as the respondent has the freedom to write what ever they like and be biased depending on which category of respondents they fall into. In order to counteract this risk, the author has designed questions that will not give any of the respondents an opportunity to be biased, prejudiced or discriminative towards others. None of the questions ask any of the respondents to comment on their counterparts, colleagues or anyone they may have a

personal grudge on. The questions focus only on the objectives of this research. The questions are very important for this research study and the author is hopeful that the conclusions can help the respondents, (especially the hotel managers and the IHF) to understand the issue of diversity management and prepare for an influx of non-nationals into the hospitality sector if the situation ever happened again.

The author did consider using a closed – ended question format for interviewing both the hotel managers and employees. The reason why this form of questionnaire was considered was because it is easier to get decisive answers and come to a specific and decisive finding immediately. There would be no misinterpretation of answers as the respondents would not be giving a written answer and none of the respondents would be able to give their own opinions on the questions being asked of them. However, the author does believe that the open-ended questionnaire is definitely the right research method to use which will gather as much in-depth information needed to answer the objectives of this study.

3.18 DATA SAMPLING

Another step in the research design is to identify the target population and select the sample. The population consists of all the people about whom a study is meant to generalise, whereas the sample represents the subset of people from the population who actually participate in the study.¹²⁷ The author has to select a subgroup or a sample to interview for this study so that only people with knowledge of this subject can answer

¹²⁷ Research methods and statistics: A critical thinking approach, By Sherri L Jackson, P94.

the questionnaire. Hotel managers, employees and the Irish Hotels Federation were chosen as the three groups of respondents. Sampling is crucial for later analysis. The author takes into account that not everyone and everything can be studied and only a selected sample number can be used. Qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people, nested in their context and studied in – depth – unlike quantitative researchers, who aim for larger numbers of context – stripped cases and seek statistical significance.¹²⁸

Hotels were selected throughout Galway City and County all of whom were of similar size and would have had a lot of dealings with migrant workers. This was done to counteract any possibility of bias so that all respondents would give the author their honest and truthful responses. A target of five interviews for hotel managers was set, along with eight interviews for hotel employees, whom were a mix of the five different hotel's employees. While this would rule out a statistical approach to analysing the data, it would be a sufficient amount to represent the varied opinions regarding the variables across all the categories of the sample.

3.19 ACCESSING THE DATA

The research instruments are the methods by which the information required by the researcher is gathered. For this study, the main investigative technique used to gather the information was that of an interview. The author has previously mentioned that the method for gathering the objectives of this research is by using an open-ended

¹²⁸ Qualitative data analysis: an expanded source book, by Matthew B.miles, A.M Huberman, P27.

questionnaire. However, it is acknowledged that in order to get more detailed responses from the participants and also to make this research progress faster, a face-to-face interview was the best method to use for conducting the questionnaire. The only respondent that the author didn't interview face – to – face was the IHF. The author e – mailed the questionnaire to them and they wrote their response back in the lines provided to answer the questions in a Microsoft word document. It is acknowledged that there are pros and cons to using this method but the main advantage for using this interview method with the IHF is that they can write exactly how they feel within the space provided to answer and also as the author was under a time constraint it was very hard to find the time to travel and interview the IHF respondent personally.

Kvale defines the qualitative interview as “An interview, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena”.¹²⁹ The author recognises that there are many interview techniques so care is needed when deciding this method as each option has its advantages and disadvantages. Interviews are used to collect observations from respondents. Face –to - face interviews are in contrast with other forms of interviewing, because they give much greater freedom to the respondent to answer in his or her own terms compared to postal and telephone surveys etc.¹³⁰ The author has to ensure that while writing down the answer as the respondent speaks, there must be no misinterpretations and only the question being asked is answered.

¹²⁹ Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research, C. Cassell and G. Symon, P2.

¹³⁰ The SAGE dictionary of Criminology, by E. McLaughlin and J. Muncie, P425.

The principal underlying structured interviews is that different individuals should be presented with 'equivalence of stimuli', thereby facilitating comparability of responses across the sample in the belief that the procedures of the research have not affected the responses.¹³¹ Face-to-face interviews have many advantages;

- **Flexibility** – The interviewer can ask the respondent the specific questions one at a time and obtain a detailed response. Also the interviewer will know if the respondent feels comfortable answering the question and may use it to an advantage in terms of getting honest and new answers.
- **Response rate** – The interviewer knows exactly who to target and can organise to meet the respondent at a time that suits them. If the questionnaire was posted out to them it may never come back and if it does the questions may not be properly answered.
- **Honesty** – The respondent is more likely in an interview to be more focused and serious while answering the questions. They will acknowledge the fact that the interviewer is serious about the questions being asked and will only want a truthful and detailed response.

3.20 JUSTIFICATION FOR USING THE FACE – TO –FACE INTERVIEW METHOD

From the moment the researcher decided to use open-ended questions for conducting this research, it was decided that the most effective method of carrying out these questionnaires was by carrying out face – to –face interviews with the respondents. The

¹³¹ The SAGE dictionary of Criminology, by E. McLaughlin and J. Muncie, P425.

author has already justified some of the reasons why this was the chosen method and these are stated in the paragraph above. The main aim of this research is to answer three objectives from the responses given to the researcher from the respondents.

The author believes that in order to get three detailed and precise answers to answer the research objectives, the only way to achieve these objectives is to use the interview as the main research method of communication. By talking to a respondent one – on – one, it is a lot easier to get descriptive and honest answers to the questions rather than talking to them over the phone or simply sending them the questionnaire by post.

The two most important groups of respondents in this study are the hotel employers/HR managers and the hotel employees. It is vital that they are interviewed personally by the researcher as there will be a comparison made from the answers they both give in order for the research objectives to be answered. What ever answers both sets of respondents give to the author will be only what is documented in chapter four which is the main findings, thus, this is why it is vital that the author takes the time and effort to interview both sets of respondents as the answers they give to the questions will decide the findings of this research.

Personal Interviews however do have their disadvantages. The main one being they can be more time consuming than carrying out other research techniques such as telephone interviews. The Interviewer will have to spend a certain amount of time interviewing each participant separately and will also have to travel to each participant as it is their participation in this study that will create the major findings.

Also when the interviewer is creating the questions that need to be answered, it is essential that the questions must be worded in a clear and concise manner, as if this is not done the respondent may not understand what exactly the question is asking of them which may lead to the wrong answer being given.

Overall, the researcher is in no doubt that this is the right method to choose in gathering effective responses from the open – ended questions in the questionnaire. The researcher will feel more comfortable using this research method technique as a date can be set for all interviews to be completed so that the findings can be highlighted in chapter four. Also by the researcher personally interviewing the respondents all the answers can be noted instantly and documented concisely

3.21 THE RESEARCH TIMELINE

Prior to conducting the interviews, a pilot interview was conducted to ensure the questions were clear about what they were asking and also to give the interviewer practice at asking questions clearly so that the interview itself is easily understood by both sets of participants. Also the questions that were to be asked were checked and verified by the author's supervisor for mistakes and discrepancies before the respondents could be interviewed.

Once the interview structure and the relevant hotel managers were identified to be interviewed, each respondent was contacted by telephone. Five different hotels were selected in County Galway and Galway City which were to be interviewed. One

manager from each hotel was contacted personally and was asked if they would have the time to be interviewed by the researcher about this topic of research. Thankfully, all five respondents were very helpful and agreed to being interviewed with no problems at all.

As for the eight hotel employees who were interviewed, the author aimed to randomly select the employees from each of the five sample hotels. This however did not go to plan and the ten employees were interviewed from two of the five hotels. This was down to a time constraint as the author did not have the time or resources to visit the five hotels on two separate occasions as only the manager of each hotel was interviewed on five separate occasions, then the employees were interviewed at a different time. The reason why the hotel employees were interviewed at a separate time was because the researcher had to ask the permission of their manager before they could carry out the survey. This boiled down to common courtesy as the managers were very willing to participate in this study so it was only right that their permission was asked before any employees were interviewed.

The researcher did get a feeling of the managers that the employee questionnaire may give the employees an opportunity to voice negative opinions about the hotel being surveyed so it was vital that the researcher assured the managers that the questionnaire was not aimed at any negativity towards the hotel at all and all three research objectives were explained in great detail to assure the hotel managers about their concerns.

Even though eight employees from only two hotels were interviewed, this ensured that no biases or ambiguity's occurred. By using more than one hotel to interview the

employees this ensured that the employees could not work together on their answers and all give the same response. If this had happened the findings of the research objectives in chapter four would have been misleading.

Finally at the end of each interview the author had to assure each respondent of the confidentiality agreement that was in place for this research. Confidentiality of the responses to the interview was guaranteed, helping to ensure maximum participation of the respondents. The author did notice that some of the respondents felt a little uneasy at the beginning of each interview in case they gave an answer that may cause future reprisals. Also the author offered to send a copy of the findings to each respondent if requested.

3.22 METHOD OF ANALYSIS

After the data was collected it was organised and analysed. The process of analysing the open – ended responses will involve thorough familiarisation of answers from the respondents (Hotel managers and employees). Then the researcher will have to look for common themes in answers if they arise and document any answers that may stand out from the rest. The researcher acknowledges that all of the questionnaires will have to be analysed in great detail and only the answers that the respondents give will be documented in the findings.

As all three respondents will be completing an open-ended questionnaire, it is not possible to represent graphically the data obtained. There will be a comparison made of

the answers from the managers and employees to get more interesting and detailed findings for the three research objectives. Also, by comparing the two sets of respondents, it will make this research more enjoyable for the reader.

The IHF were also sent an open – ended questionnaire to get their opinion on this research. The reason why the author wanted to get their opinion on the three research objectives was because the author was really interested to get their opinion on the issues which will give stronger clarification in the findings. In some ways the IHF can be seen as an expert in this area of research as they will be non – judgemental and will not be bias towards either of the other two respondents.

To summarise on how the author is going to analyze the results of the questionnaires, each of the respondents answers will be carefully scrutinised so that there will be no misinterpretations of answers. Once the author can generate a general theme or pattern then each objective will be documented in detail, which will create new findings for this research topic. As all of the respondents will be completing an open-ended questionnaire during a face to face interview, none of the findings will be represented graphically or statistically.

3.23 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the research design and methodology used to obtain the answers of the study objectives. The researcher gave specific detail of the primary and secondary research methods used to carry out this research. This included that the use of an open-ended questionnaire will be the main method for gathering information and also the use of face to face interviews will be used to conduct these questionnaires as it is the most relevant and reliable source for gathering the answers of the research objectives.

The researcher also gave a detailed description of how the method of analysis will be carried out, which involved finding emerging themes from the respondent's answers and elaborating further on any new findings. An analysis and interpretation of the empirical data collected through these methods will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Research Findings

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As stated, the primary objective of this study is to research how management engage with cultural diversity in the West of Ireland's hotel sector. The author will investigate three research objectives under this heading as previously mentioned in chapter one. The author believes these three objectives are vital for managers of hotels to understand;

- As the language barrier can cause great difficulties for non-nationals if it is not managed correctly.
- Offering your non-national employees the same career progression opportunities as Irish staff can maximise motivation in the workforce and most certainly increase their job satisfaction.
- If managers can understand the benefits of cultural diversity for hotels then they can use it to their advantage by focusing on them and building a strong multi-cultural workforce.

During the field research, a total of fourteen interviews were conducted. The first group of respondents were the managers who made up five of these interviews. Secondly, the employees who made up eight of these interviews and lastly the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF). Before the results of these questionnaires are provided, the author is going to highlight the limitations to this research. Secondly, the objectives stated in chapter one will be discussed from the findings of the questionnaires. Then there will be a general discussion of other questions that were answered by the managers and employees on

how they feel management managed diversity in general. It is important to recognise that all the findings are opinion based from all of the respondents.

4.2 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

In chapter three, the author briefly touched on the research limitations to this research study, in particular the time limitation.

4.2.1 Time & Cost Restraints

Both time and cost restraints limited the amount of responses to this study. Limited time proved to be a huge limitation for the researcher, but overall the amount of respondents will certainly be sufficient for answering the research objectives.

4.2.2 Confidentiality

The author was aware that the respondents were hesitant to reveal any data they may feel would cause them trouble once the findings were published. Even though the questions were not aimed at negativity in any way towards the hotel, some of the respondents were not sure on how to respond to the questionnaire, especially as the questions were open-ended.

The researcher was very conscious of this doubt the respondents had and assured them of utmost confidentiality. The researcher explained to all participants that their names would not be mentioned in the study and only the researcher's supervisor would have access to these names. It is important for the author to note that none of the questions

were designed to be negative or bias to any particular groups of respondents and the author feels all participants knew that once all of the questions were clearly explained to them this was the case. It was mainly the employees who had the greatest concerns answering the questionnaire as they hail from different countries and was a little confused about the study before the author explained the significance of it to them and why it was being carried out.

4.2.3 Number of Respondents

The author is happy with the amount of respondents that the time and cost constraint allowed to be got for this study. However, it may be deemed that the sample size may be a little small and more respondents could have been included in the study. The number of respondents that were interviewed answered the questions honestly, which will give interesting findings for the author.

4.2.4 Opinion Based Answers

The author would like to highlight the fact that the three groups of respondents who each have a different questionnaire to answer are all answering open-ended questions. Even though in the majority of questions they can choose from a Yes/No option, the main findings of this study will be emerging from the written responses they will be giving to the author in the space provided in each question. This will mean that the author has no say in the findings and what ever answer they write in the space provided is the answer that will stand for each objective.

4.3 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

As previously mentioned in chapter three and again at the beginning of this chapter this research study will consist of fourteen participants in total. The respondents are broken up into three sub-groups, which are;

- Hotel managers.
- Hotel employees.
- The Irish Hotels Federation.

The hotel managers were selected at random but each manager helped the researcher to get the next interview in place by informing their colleagues about this study and would they be able to take the time to be interviewed for a short period of time. It is important to note that the author did not interview all HR managers as some were not available at the time. Restaurant managers also played a part in these interviews as they would have very close contact to foreign employees and had a good knowledge about the questions the author was asking.

As for the hotel employees, they consisted of two of the five hotels that were interviewed. The author had no preference at all on where the employees were from, only that they did not come from Ireland. Also their age and gender had no influence to play on this study. The author simply wanted a non-national male or female that has worked, or is currently working in a hotel in the West of Ireland.

The last group of respondents, the Irish Hotels Federation were approached firstly by e-mail, with the author explaining what this study was about and would they be able to take the time to complete the questionnaire. The manager of Strategic Issues kindly responded to the author explaining that they would be glad to help.

4.4 THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives consist of three different questions that were put to both the hotel managers and employees. Both sets of respondents were asked similar questions on the three research objectives questions. By them giving their own personal response on each question it is easy for the author to make a comparison on how they answered each objective. In answering each objective the author is going to start with the responses from the hotel managers first, and then the responses from the employees will follow. Finally, the author will give a brief conclusion on each objective. Before the findings of each objective are documented, the author would like to give a brief introduction on each of the respondents.

4.4.1 The Hotel Managers

Four out of five respondents has worked as a manger in their hotel for over two years, the other working for less than one year. They all said they enjoy working with non-nationals and four of them believe that non-nationals were important for the growth and development of hotels in the West of Ireland. Two of the respondents believed they were important for the growth and development of Irish hotels because Irish staff looked down on hospitality related jobs and it was hard to recruit Irish staff. The majority of

their employees hailed from Eastern Europe, especially Poland. They did also say that they had Irish staff members working for them. One restaurant manager commented that he hired only Asian chefs as he found them more professional and hard working. This information applied to questions one - four.

4.4.2 The Hotel Employees

The hotel employees surveyed in this study mainly fell into the 23-30 age bracket with five of the respondents ticking that box. The remaining three respondents fell into the 18-23, 30-55, and 55 + brackets respectively. Seven of the employees surveyed are from Poland and the last one is from Germany. Four of them have been working in their respective jobs for over two years, three of them one – two years and the last one has worked in their hotel from six months – one year. When they were asked by the author what their personal experience was of working in this hotel they all said it was good. All of the respondents commented that the management and staff are friendly in the hotels they work in, but two also said that they find their roles/duties very hard and the hours are very long.

4.5: OBJECTIVE ONE: HOW IMPORTANT IS IT FOR NON-NATIONAL WORKERS TO BE ABLE TO SPEAK ENGLISH WITHIN IRISH HOTELS?

4.5.1: Hotel Managers

Questions nine to fourteen apply for answering this research objective. (See Appendix A)

- When the managers are hiring new employees two of them responded saying yes the language barrier was an issue and two responded saying no it was not, with one saying sometimes it is an issue. All commented that all employees must have a basic knowledge of English for them to be hired. One respondent commented if Irish candidates applied with the relevant skills they would be better to hire because they have a better understanding of the English language.

- All five respondents also said that new employees would need to have a certain level of English to work in their hotel. There were varied opinions on why they all said yes. One respondent commented that they must be able to interact with customers; another said it depends on what department they work in, for example accommodation staff would not have as much interaction with customers as restaurant staff would. The last two respondents' claimed that it is very important that they understand safety signage and the training courses given to them, and

finally, the last respondent claimed they could choose from the best English speakers as so many people are looking for work.

- When asked do their employees need to be able to understand English so that they fully understand their roles/duties, three respondents answered strongly agree and the other two agreed. Of the two respondents that gave extra information, one commented that if they do not understand their roles/duties due to the language barrier it could create a burden on other staff members placing more work on them and also customers might not get the appropriate service they will expect from the hotel. The other respondent commented if an employee is not able to perform their roles and duties the way he wanted them to, then he will have to replace them.

- The respondents were also asked if they had ever experienced any communication issues with their staff members. Three said yes and two said no. The three yes respondents all commented that it was only over small issues such as misspellings of names, noting the wrong booking dates, or special guest requests, i.e.: if they ask for boiled eggs instead of scrambled eggs.

- Next the respondents were asked if guests had ever complained to them about their employees not being able to speak English. For this question, three responded yes and two responded no. When they were asked how they would respond if this incident happened the responses were mixed. One answered that guests need to be more patient and need to display more of an Irish welcome, one

commented they had a LISTEN model in place and would try to correct the problem immediately and explain the employee did not intently misunderstand. Another yes respondent claimed they could not get Irish staff to work for them so that is why it happened. The two no respondents said they generally recruit staff with a good level of English and the other said if it did happen in their hotel they would defend the employee and re-train them where necessary.

- The last question they had to answer for this particular research objective was what they felt the benefits were of their employees being able to speak other languages apart from English. All five respondents all stated that communicating with foreign tourists and tours was a huge advantage. The restaurant managers found this particularly helpful as they could explain the menus or even translate key words. When they were asked was there any drawbacks to this question for out of five said no. The last respondent said that they have groups of non – national employees speaking their own national language at work which they were not prepared to accept all the time, especially in front of Irish staff who may have been the minority.

4.5.2 Hotel Employees

Questions five to eight apply for answering this objective from the employee's questionnaires. (See Appendix B)

- The researcher firstly asked each employee how they would rate their level of English on a likert scale question type. Each respondent had to choose between

numbers one to five (1=excellent, 5=poor). Four of the respondents rated themselves at the number two level, two of them rated themselves at the number three level, and two rated themselves at the number four level. These answers inform the author that each employee has at least a basic understanding of the English language, while others are far more advanced and are nearly fluent English speakers.

- When the employees were asked if the language barrier causes difficulties for them at work, six respondents said no, and two said yes. All of the respondents said they have no problems completing their set tasks but if they were asked for something by a customer two of the respondents said they may have a difficulty understanding because they may not understand some of the various Irish accents. The author then went on to ask the yes respondents if their management did anything to help them support their language difficulties. Of the three that commented, one said this was not needed as she is a good English speaker, and the other two said that their managers were very helpful and were always available if needed to translate something they may not understand.

- Next each employee was asked if they felt the language barrier would hold them back from being promoted. This was a very interesting finding as four of them said yes, while the other four said no. The main finding for the yes respondents was that they all said that their English is not up to standard and they would not feel comfortable being promoted as they would constantly be in contact with their managers and customers. Also two of the yes respondents said they felt

there is a tendency for hotel managers to hire Irish staff instead of Non-Nationals. The four no respondents all claimed to be confident English speakers which they feel will stand by them if there is a vacancy for promotion. One of the respondents was a previous accommodation supervisor, while another has Polish friends working as supervisors in other hotels across Ireland.

- The last question each employee was asked to answer objective one was what ways they feel hotel managers could help migrant workers to overcome the language barrier. All eight respondents said that it was very hard to know. Four of them said that extra English classes may help them to improve their English. Others responded by saying their managers could explain their duties more clearly and slowly so that there will be no misinterpretations which will lead to mistakes being made. All eight of the respondents have a very basic knowledge of English, some better than others and they all agree that it is impossible for their managers to help them become fluent English speakers in a short space of time.

4.5.3 Conclusion on Objective One

Objective one is the largest objective in this particular study. It explores how important it is for managers to understand language barrier issues that their employees face on a daily basis in the hospitality sector. From the findings of this research objective, we can see that all employees must have a basic knowledge of English if they are going to work within Irish hotels because if they only speak their native language it creates too many misunderstandings which places a burden upon their fellow workers and also customers do not get the service they expect from the hotel. A positive finding is that six of the

employee's who were interviewed stated that the language barrier does not cause them difficulties at work as they can understand their roles and duties clearly.

4.6: OBJECTIVE TWO: DO NON-NATIONALWORKERS HAVE THE SAME CAREER PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES AS IRISH WORKERS WITHIN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR?

4.6.1: Hotel Managers

Questions eighteen and nineteen apply for answering this research objective.

- The hotel managers were firstly asked do they think that non-national employees get the same career progression opportunities as their Irish colleagues. Two respondents strongly agreed and two said they agree, with the last saying they were between agree/not sure. Even though there is mixed responses, all respondents' state that career progression depended upon the candidate as a person. They all answered that it depended on their work ethic, their motivation and especially how well they speak English, which was very much the common theme in the answer.

- Next the five respondents were asked if they had ever promoted any non-national members of staff to a higher position. All five said yes, they had promoted non-national members of staff to a supervisory level but not to a general management level. This was an interesting finding. When the respondents were asked can non-national staff members offer them any new skills or advantages in

comparison to Irish workers, three said yes they can. The reasons why they answered yes was the general theme of them having a stronger work ethic, they bring different skills and different ways of completing tasks and also that they work longer hours. The remaining two respondents said it all depends on the candidate as a person and think that Irish and non-national workers are capable of doing the exact same job. One respondent said that non-nationals may work harder because they are in a new country and have no choice but to try and make an impression.

4.6.2 Hotel Employees

Questions twelve to fifteen apply for answering this objective from the employee's questionnaire.

- Firstly, each employee was asked if they see the hotel sector as a full-time career option. Two of the respondents said yes, while the remaining six said no. The reasons why they chose this answer varied. One yes respondent said that because of the age and the difficulties she has with speaking English it would be hard for her to find another job. Of the six no respondents, the same reasons kept popping up, which is they feel that the work is too hard in the hospitality sector, which entails long hours and a lot of pressure. Three of the no respondents only see it as a short-term option to make what ever money they can while they consider other career options.

- All eight respondents ticked the no box when they were asked if there are any training opportunities they can avail of to help them increase their chances of securing a higher status job if the vacancy arose. The reasons why they chose no varied, with two of them responding that no training at all has been provided in this area. There was also a general consensus that a non-national would never be offered a general management's role as they may not be qualified enough or have the relevant English speaking skills. Another responded by saying she believed that if employees would like to be promoted they have to be prepared to work long hours and work incredibly hard for a long time before you are considered for promotion.
- Next the eight employees were asked do they believe Non-national employees get the same career progression opportunities as their Irish Colleagues. This answer created interesting findings as five of the respondents ticked the not sure box, two said they agreed and one said they don't know. The two employees who agreed with the statement said that many hotels have non-national employees working as supervisors in them and the other said within the hotel she works in, two of her Polish friends have previously worked as accommodation supervisors. The five employees who ticked the not sure box came up with some interesting responses. One commented that the language barrier would be a strong obstacle for non-national workers; they would have to have a good level of English to be promoted. Another commented that during the Celtic Tiger years, there were not too many Irish employees for hotel managers to progress. He also commented that his partner was promoted to a supervisory role in the accommodation

department. The last comment from the respondents on this question was that she had to work very hard each day for two years before she was promoted. She also commented that there are supervisory roles for non-nationals but it depends upon how many Irish candidates they have to choose from, otherwise they will have to hire non-nationals.

- Finally, the last question the researcher asked each employee was would they like to be promoted to a higher ranking job in the hotel they work in. Six of the respondents answered yes, while the remaining two said no. Four of the employees who said yes, they would like to be promoted chose this answer because they would like an increase in their wages. They all acknowledge that the disadvantages of being promoted are longer hours and more pressure to meet the standards set by the management. One of the respondents who has previously been promoted to a supervisory role said “She would of liked to of been promoted again to a management’s role but I wasn’t given the opportunity – the managers are long serving-members”. One of the no respondents said that he does not see it as a full-time career working in hotels; while the other no respondent said she felt she would not be capable due to her age and also because she is not a confident English speaker.

4.6.3 Conclusion on Objective Two

The most interesting finding in this objective is that the hotel managers that were interviewed for this study nearly all believe that non-national employees have the same career progression opportunities as their Irish colleagues, but the employees who were

interviewed all seemed very confused when they were answering this question. Even though many of the employees interviewed have non-national friends or know of others as supervisors in different hotels, they still believe that factors such as the language barrier would hold them back. Finally, another interesting finding that arose from this objective was that six of the employee respondents all said that they would like to be promoted to a higher position within the hotel they work in, while all eight of them also said that there is no training opportunities they can avail of to help them increase their chances of securing a higher status job if the vacancy arose. This shows that non-national employees are very ambitious and would love to be given the chance to be promoted if they were trained for the job.

4.7 OBJECTIVE THREE: WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY TO HOTELS IN THE WEST OF IRELAND?

4.7.1: Hotel Managers

Questions twenty-one and twenty-two apply for answering this objective from the managers questionnaire

- The researcher asked each of the five hotel managers what they thought the benefits are of hiring Migrant workers for Irish hotels. All five agreed that they bring new skills and efficiency, surprisingly none of the respondents selected the cultural option. All five managers commented that they feel non-national

workers have a positive attitude towards hard work and are very efficient. One respondent feels that Irish and Non-national workers are the exact same and does not see any differences between them as long as they are fully trained for the job. When they were asked if there are any drawbacks of hiring migrant workers, four reported that there were no drawbacks. Another respondent commented that there may be a drawback if they could not speak English which would lead to poor communication between the two parties.

- Finally the managers were asked are there greater benefits for the hotel if they hired Non-National employees over Irish employees. Two of the managers said yes, two said no, while the remaining one said they didn't know. Two of the yes respondents believe non-nationals have a better work ethic than Irish workers. One respondent in particular commented that when he had to hire chefs he would always recruit from Asia as he believes they are more professional than Irish chefs and have a stronger attitude towards work. The two no respondents believe that each employee is the same no matter where they are from once they are fully trained. One manager responded that if a non-national worker is not fluent in English there are no benefits at all to hiring Non-Nationals over Irish employees. He believes that he would benefit more hiring Irish workers.

4.7.2 Hotel Employee's

Questions nineteen and twenty applies for answering this objective from the employees questionnaire.

- The author asked each employee what benefits do non-national workers bring to Irish hotels. Three of the respondents ticked efficiency and cultural, and the remaining five just ticked efficiency. When they were asked to expand on this answer, all of the respondents emphasized that they are hard workers and willing to work longer hours than Irish workers, they believe they are prepared to the jobs Irish people are not prepared to do and generally do not complain. The three that ticked the cultural option selected it because they believe new cultures will change the atmosphere in the hotel.
- Next the author asked each respondent what are the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity to Irish hotels. The main advantages that were given to the author were that the Non-National employees who come to work in Irish hotels are generally hard working, efficient and they bring with them new skills. When they were asked what they feel the disadvantages are, one commented if there are too many non-nationals working in the hotel, it may cause tensions between them and the Irish staff. Another respondent commented that because of the language barrier, workers may feel isolated from the management and Irish staff.

4.7.3 Conclusion on Objective three

It is clear that both the managers and the employees both agree that non-national workers have a strong attitude towards hard work and that they are very efficient workers. From the respondents who participated in this study, the managers felt that new cultures to the hotel were not an advantage of cultural diversity, where nearly half of the

employee's said new cultures can have a positive impact upon Irish hotels. It also seems that hotel managers prefer to recruit non-national employees because of their strong work ethic and efficiency standards, but this is only the case if they have a sufficient level of English.

4.8 THE IRISH HOTELS FEDERATION RESPONSE TO THE THREE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The Irish Hotels Federation was contacted by the researcher to get their opinion on the three research objectives which are under investigation in this study. The researcher felt that it was very important for this study to get a third opinion on the research objectives in case any of the other two respondents were bias towards the outcome of the objectives.

4.9 OBJECTIVE ONE - THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

Questions four to six apply for this objective. (See Appendix C for the IHF'S Questionnaire)

- When they were asked if the language barrier is an issue for hotel managers when they are employing non-national staff they responded yes it was important. They responded, "Communication is the key in the industry and if staff cannot communicate effectively in the working language this brings difficulty of understanding what is asked of them and in carrying out basic duties – it can be frustrating for managers and employees".

- When they were asked do they believe non-national employees need to have a certain level of English to work in an Irish hotel, they responded yes they would. Then the researcher asked them would it depend on which department of the hotel they work in and they quoted, “Yes some departments would need a better level of English especially front line positions”. By this they were saying front line positions are reception, bar and restaurant staff. These employees would have more contact with English speaking customers.
- The last question the IHF answered for objective one was what Irish hotels can do for any of their non-national employees if they are struggling with the language barrier. They responded “Many hotels have facilitated language courses both in-house and externally for employees while others have translated documents such as contracts and procedures manuals for overseas employees”.

4.10 OBJECTIVE TWO – CAREER PROGRESSION

Question seven applies for this objective.

- The IHF were asked do non-national employees get the same career progression opportunities as their Irish colleagues and their response was ‘not sure’. Their response was, “It really depends on the hotel and the management structure in place. We have some instances where employees did very well and went right

through the ranks, up to and including management while it is not the same for all hotels”.

4.11 OBJECTIVE THREE – UNDERSTANDING THE ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY TO IRISH HOTELS

Questions two, three and eight apply for this objective.

- The IHF were firstly asked has cultural diversity had a positive impact on Irish hotels. They replied yes to this question and stated, “People of diverse cultures has brought great positive changes to the industry as they bring with them new skills and knowledge, and work practices which we may not be familiar with here”.

- Next the author asked the IHF what advantages cultural diversity brought to Irish hotels. Their response was that non-national workers from different cultures are usually very efficient. They also commented that they bring new skills and work practices with them. When they were asked what are the disadvantages of cultural diversity to hotels they responded by saying, “poor knowledge of the English language and in some cases poor work ethic can be portrayed by Non-National workers”.

4.12 FURTHER RESEARCH - A NEW FINDING

Question eleven applies for this finding.

Another important finding that the author would like to highlight is when the eight employees were asked what changes they would like to see within Irish hotels and how they are run with regards to Non-national workers a general theme appeared when they were answering this question. Five of the respondents said they would like their management to hold more staff bonding exercises. The general consensus between these five employees was that they believe Irish and non-national staff do not integrate as much as they should. One respondent in particular said that the two groups have a good relationship while at work but they never see each other after working hours. Another respondent believed if they had more staff nights out outside of work it would bring the two sets of workers closer together. It seems from the responses that there still is a barrier between Irish and non-national workers, whether it is a cultural or language barrier.

4.13 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In recent years, there have been many research studies into cultural diversity and diversity management. This study indicates that there is still confusion on many areas surrounding diversity in the workplace. From the findings of this study it is clear that non-national employees only see the hospitality sector as a short-term career option. There are a number of potential avenues for future research to explore the factual

reasons of why they see it as a short-term career option and what can be done to change this.

The language barrier objective certainly needs to be explored in greater detail. The author acknowledges that finding solutions to solving the issues surrounding this objective cannot be found in a short space of time. A study with a specific focus on ways to help non-national employees who may be struggling with the language barrier would be very useful, not only to the Irish hospitality sector but also many sectors around the world that employ a diverse workforce.

Finally, a case study focusing on career progression opportunities for non-nationals working within the Irish hospitality sector would be very beneficial indeed. From the findings of this study, it is clear that there are opportunities for non-nationals to be promoted but only as far as a supervisor's position. Also there could be further research of how to tempt more non-national employees into applying to be promoted. Some of the reasons that hold back non-nationals from applying to be promoted are the increased pressure that comes with the job and also intensive labour. From the findings the author can interpret that all three of the respondent groups agree that non-nationals are very efficient and hard working. That is why the author believes further research is vital for understanding how to make these employees use their talents within a management's role.

4.14 CONCLUSION

This chapter analysed the findings from the primary research that was carried out. The findings of the three research objectives helped the researcher to achieve the primary and secondary objectives.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 CONCLUSION

Since the 1990's economic growth phase, Ireland has seen many unexpected changes in a short period of time. In May 2004, when Ireland opened it's doors to ten accession EU member states, this led to a marked increase in immigration from Eastern Europe as described in the literature review. Due to the influx of these immigrant workers from Eastern Europe, Irish managers within each employment sector had to adapt to new practices and policies to suit the needs of these new workers and the cultures they brought to our shores. Also, it is important to note that workers from many other parts of the world also found themselves working in Irish employment sectors. These workers came from England, Central Europe, Africa, America and South America.

The literature review focused on key areas such as Cultural diversity, which includes the advantages and disadvantages, Migration and diversity management practices. As the author has highlighted in chapter one, the employment sector that this research study was focused on is the Hospitality sector in the West of Ireland, where these three areas of research in the literature review is vital to understand.

The study specifically deals with answering three research objectives as set out in chapter one under the heading;

“An empirical study of how management engage with cultural diversity in the West of Ireland's hotel sector”.

The study analysed the literature of the three research objectives that had to be analysed in order for them to be answered. The three research objectives that are mentioned in more detail in chapter four are on the language barrier, career progression opportunities and the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity to Irish hotels. As there is no previous research studies into the importance of Irish hotel managers understanding issues surrounding the language barrier and career progression opportunities the author could not go into specific detail of previous research done in these areas.

The empirical investigation concerned a sample of five hotel managers, eight hotel employees, and The Irish Hotels Federation. The chosen method of data collection involved designing three open-ended questionnaires', one for each group of respondents and then conducting face to face interviews with each respondent apart from the Irish Hotels Federation as previously mentioned in chapter three.

The findings from this study entail very mixed and interesting responses for the reader. In relation to objective one, it is clear that if non-national employees struggle with speaking English or only has a basic understanding of the language then this will limit their chances of getting a job in a hotel. It also seems from the findings that if hotel managers are prepared to hire non-national employees who cannot speak English, then they will most likely end up in the accommodation department where their duties are repetitive and they will not have as much customer interaction as the bar or reception staff will have. An interesting finding was that the majority of the employees who were interviewed for this study stated that they had a good understanding of the English

language, yet half of them would not feel comfortable in a supervisory position as they feel the language barrier would hold them back.

In relation to objective two, it is clear that the managers interviewed believe that they offer non-national employees the same career progression opportunities as their Irish counterparts. There is also evidence to back this finding up as all five managers have promoted a non-national employee within the hotel they run. From the employees perspective, it is clear that the majority of them do not see the hotel sector as a full-time career option, with long hours and hard work being the general theme in the findings. All eight employees also responded that no training opportunities have been offered to them to increase their chances of being promoted. An interesting finding in relation to this research objective is that six respondents said that they would like to be promoted to a supervisor's role, with the reasoning being that they would like to increase their wages, even if the hours are longer and the work is harder.

In relation to objective three, it is clear that both the managers and employees both view non-national workers as efficient and hard working. Also from the findings, the managers do not seem to recognise the importance of culture and what benefits new cultures can bring to Irish hotels. In the author's view, if managers recognised the different cultures they have in their hotels and find ways of integrating these cultures it will improve their employees job satisfaction and work ethic.

The three research objectives that were studied for this research study are vital for any hotel manager to understand if they are managing a diverse workforce. Now that the

author has researched these three objectives in great detail shows that they simply cannot be ignored. Hotel managers have to engage with these three research objectives so that they can keep their non-national workforce motivated. Helping their staff to overcome any language barrier difficulties, or offering every employee the same career progression opportunity is the key to success for the Irish hospitality sector. Also, if hotel managers can understand the advantages and disadvantages of cultural diversity for Irish hotels they can use this to their advantage. In order for this to work though, all managers within the hospitality sector have to embrace the various cultures they have within their hotels. By doing this, they will create a lot of respect from their non-national staff, which will benefit the hotels in many ways.

Even though many non-nationals have left Ireland since the downturn, there are however still many currently working in the various employment sectors. Even though no – one can predict if there will ever be an influx of non-nationals into Ireland like we seen during the boom years, diversity management is here to stay and it is important that all managers make the effort to manage their culturally diverse workforces, not only to benefit their staff but also the organisation.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In concluding this research study, the author would like to make some recommendations on the findings of the objectives that are highlighted in chapter four.

- In relation to objective one in chapter four, the language barrier objective, the author believes that hospitality managers must only hire non-nationals who have a good understanding of the English language. By them taking this initiative, it will be much easier for the employees to continuously improve their level of English if English classes are held for all non-national employees within the hotel. If a manager hires a non-national who cannot speak English, it will create many disadvantages for the hotel. It will take them longer to train the employee into their roles, they will not be able to interact with customers and finally they will feel isolated as they will not be able to communicate with their Irish colleagues.

- In relation to objective two in chapter four, the career progression objective, the author believes that regular training courses should be held for all employees who work within a hotel no matter where they are from. Management training for each department of the hotel should be held regularly. This would give each employee the chance to learn management skills and techniques so that if the vacancy arose for a supervisor's position all employees would be able to decide if a promotion to a higher paid and more responsible job would suit them. Not

only would this initiative give every employee the same career progression opportunity, but it would also improve their customer service skills also.

- Another finding from this research is that managers need to be more aware of the importance of different cultures within their hotels. The author believes that if they could initiate small steps such as celebrating “culture day” once a year within the hotel, this would make the non-national employees feel more valued which will increase their job satisfaction.

- The final recommendation for this research study is for hotel managers to organise more social events outside of work for their employees. A positive finding in this study was that non-national employees found their Irish colleagues very welcoming when they first came to the hotel and still today they are very friendly. The author believes that staff bonding exercises and social nights should be held so that all the employees working within a hotel will feel part of a team and will be willing to help each other to overcome any hurdle they may face while at work.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYERS

General Questions

1. How long have you been working as a manager in this hotel?

< 1 year 2 Years > 2 Years

2. Do you enjoy working with the foreign nationals in this hotel?

Yes No

3. Do you believe that foreign workers were important for the growth and development of hotels in the West of Ireland?

Yes No

4. What were the main Nationalities of these workers?

Irish/English Eastern European Central European African
Other

5. What changes internally did you have to make to cater for the needs of these migrant workers?

More training Language adaption Rules and procedures
Other

If other, please expand more on this question?

6. What challenges did you incur while trying to adapt to this changes?

7. Do you feel your daily workload increased to adapt to these changes?

Yes No

If yes, how? For example did the language barrier cause any problems among the workers and management?

HRM Activities

8. Tell me about your HR practices in terms of recruitment & selection, appraisal & promotion of migrant workers?

9. When you are hiring new employees, is the language barrier an issue for you?

Yes No

10. Would new employees need to have a certain level of English to work in this hotel?

Yes No

Can you expand on this question?

11. Would you say that your employees need to be able to speak English so that they fully understand their roles/duties?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree

12. Have you ever experienced any communication issues in this hotel with regards to the language barrier?

Yes No

If yes, can you expand?

13. Have any guests ever complained to you about your employees not being able to speak English?

Yes No

How would you respond if this happened?

14. What are the benefits of your employees being able to speak other languages apart from English?

Are there any drawbacks?

15. Does this hotel provide regular training & development to all their employees?

Yes No

Do you need to give foreign employees more training than Irish workers?

16. Please tell me about the hotel induction? Does it include a section on diversity issues?

17. Do you have a specific grievance procedure in place in dealing with complaints from foreign workers?

Yes No

How would you respond to a complaint from your employees based on the grounds of discrimination?

18. "Do foreign employees get the same career progression opportunities as their Irish Colleagues"?

Strongly agree Agree Not sure Do not agree

Can you expand on this answer?

19. Have you ever promoted any foreign members of staff to a higher position?

Yes No

Can they offer you any new skills or advantages in comparison to Irish workers?

20. Is feedback from all your employees on issues related to cultural diversity taken seriously?

Yes No

Do employees from all departments of this hotel give their opinion on cultural diversity to you?

Organisational Diversity policies

21. What are the benefits of hiring Migrant workers for Irish Hotels?

Cultural New skills Efficiency Other

Can you give me more information on this answer?

Are there any possible drawbacks?

22. Are the benefits greater to what you would get from hiring Irish employees?

Yes No

Can you give me more information on this answer?

23. Did you find your job more stressful when there was an influx of Migrant workers and in turn you had to cater for all their needs?

Yes No

24. How do you think this hotel coped with integrating Migrant workers with their Irish counterparts?

Excellent Good Poor

Were there any Culture clashes between them, or was it a smooth transition?

25. Were there any Bodies/Organisations that you could turn to for help? I.e.: The hotels federation for advice or training on cultural diversity?

26. Is teamwork an important element in this work environment?

Yes No

If Yes, Do any specific issues arise in fostering teamwork among a culturally diverse workforce?

27. In your opinion, what are the Advantages/disadvantages of Cultural Diversity to Irish hotels?

Advantages _____

Disadvantages _____

28. Has cultural diversity had a positive impact on productivity in this hotel?

Yes No

Can you explain how?

29. In your opinion, is there a future for migrant workers in the West of Ireland and will Migrant workers still play a key role as members of staff?

Yes No

APPENDIX B - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES

General Questions

1. What age are you?

18-23

23-30

30-55

55+

2. Where are you from?

Eastern Europe

Central Europe

Irish/English

Africa

Other

3. How long have you been working in this hotel?

<6 Months

6 months - 1 Year

1 - 2 years

>2

years

4. What is your personal experience working in this hotel?

Excellent

Good

Poor

Can you give reasons why you gave this answer?

HRM Activities

5. How would you rate your level of English?

1 2 3 4 5 (1=Excellent,
5=Poor)

6. Does the language barrier cause difficulties for you?

Yes No

If yes, did the management do anything to help you support your language difficulties?

7. Do you feel the language barrier would hold you back from being promoted in this hotel?

Yes No

Can you give reasons why you gave this answer?

8. What ways do you feel hotel managers could help migrant workers to overcome the language barrier?

9. Have you received any cultural diversity training?

Yes No

10. Have you experienced any negative experiences during your time working within the hotel sector?

Yes No

If yes, can you recall what happened? What was done to rectify the issues by the managers?

11. What changes would you like to see within Irish hotels and how their run with regards to migrant workers?

More staff training Staff bonding exercises Other

Can you please expand on these changes in more detail?

12. Do you see the hotel sector as a full - time career option?

Yes No

Please explain why?

13. Are there any training opportunities you can avail of to help you increase your chances of securing a higher status job within this hotel if the vacancy arose?

Yes No

Can you expand on this answer?

14. "Do you believe that foreign employees get the same career progression opportunities as their Irish colleagues"?

Strongly agree Agree Not Sure Do not agree

Can you expand on this answer?

15. Would you like to be promoted to a higher ranking job in this hotel?

Yes No

Can you expand on this answer?

Organisational Diversity Policies

16. How do you feel managers within the hotel sector could improve their HR skills with regards to foreign workers? Are there any recommendations you would like to give?

17. How would you rate your manager's performance in managing a multicultural workforce?

1 2 3 4 5 (1=Excellent, 5=Poor)

Can you expand on this answer?

18. Is there a grievance procedure in place if you have a problem to report?

Yes No

19. In your opinion, what benefits do foreign workers bring to Irish hotels?

Cultural New skills Efficiency Other

Can you expand on this answer?

20. What are the advantages/disadvantages of cultural diversity to Irish hotels?

Advantages

Disadvantages

21. Did you have any difficulties integrating with your Irish colleagues?

Yes No

If yes, can you state why?

22. Would you advise your friends and family back home to come to Ireland to work in this hotel or any other hotel in the West of Ireland?

Yes No

If no, can you state why?

**APPENDIX C - QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE IRISH HOTELS
FEDERATION**

1. What role does the Irish hotel federation play in terms of managing cultural diversity in the hospitality industry?

2. Has cultural diversity had a positive impact on Irish hotels?

Yes No

Can you expand on this answer?

3. What are the advantages/disadvantages of cultural diversity to Irish hotels?

Advantages

Disadvantages

4. Do you believe the language barrier is an issue for hotel managers when they are employing foreign staff?

Yes No

Can you expand on this answer?

-
-
5. Do you believe that foreign employees would have to have a certain level of English to work in an Irish hotel?

Yes No

Would it depend on which department of the hotel they work in?

6. What can Irish hotels do for any of their foreign employees if they are struggling with the language barrier?
-
-

7. "Do foreign employees get the same career progression opportunities as their Irish colleagues"?

Strongly agree Agree Not sure Do not agree

Can you expand on this answer?

8. Has the IHF witnessed evidence of foreign workers being promoted in the hospitality industry?

Yes No

9. What are the benefits of hiring migrant workers for Irish hotels?

Cultural New skills Efficiency Other

Can you give me more information on this answer?

10. How do you think Irish hotels coped with integrating migrant workers with their Irish counterparts?

Excellent Good Poor

11. In your opinion, what ways could Irish hotels manage cultural diversity differently if there was another economic boom/influx of foreign workers into the hospitality industry?

12. Do you believe Irish workers will now have more of a role to play within the Irish hospitality industry as many of the foreign workers have either left or are planning to leave Ireland?

Yes No
