

Managing diversity: Study of Staff Awareness of  
Cultural Workforce Diversity within an  
Organisation; a Case Study

by

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research study was to explore the benefits and limitations that cultural workforce diversity poses to organisations and employees; what are the perceptions of employees towards workforce diversity; are the findings of the research into employee perceptions of workforce diversity consistent with those of previous studies?

Increasing migration in recent times has brought about a demographics change in Ireland. According to (Foot and Hook, 1999), diversity is about 'obtaining innovative ideas by promoting the involvement of employees from a wide variety of backgrounds, working in teams.' (Cox and Blake, 1991) acknowledge that a firm that manages cultural diversity efficiently and effectively can create a competitive advantage. On the contrary, if workforce diversity initiatives are poorly managed, they can add less value than if they had not been implemented. In order to effectively manage diversity, it is necessary for managers to be aware of the perceptions of their employees towards workforce diversity and whether differences exist between different employee groups.

This research was based on a case study of a financial services organisation operating in Ireland. A quantitative methodology approach was implemented to conduct this study's primary research. The Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II developed by (Larkey, 1996) was utilized as the study's data collection instrument. The questionnaire assesses employee's levels of cultural diversity awareness. Statistical analysis was carried out on the data collected from the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II to produce research findings.

The findings of this study indicate that no workforce diversity awareness difference exists between Irish (majority) and non-Irish employees (minority). The results also stated that a workforce diversity awareness difference exists between gender groups.

## **Declaration**

The work being submitted for examination is wholly my own work and that all materials consulted and ideas garnered in the process of researching the dissertation have been properly and accurately acknowledged.

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## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

'When we use the term diversity, we are talking about differences among people, including their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, education, mental and physical disabilities, sexual orientation, and so on.' (Hitt, Black and Porter, 2009).

Over the last twenty years, there has been a high level of immigration in Ireland. This has led to significant increases of diversity within Irish society and therefore the Irish workforce. 'The effects of migration have been broadly positive. It has increased economic activity, enhanced skills and widened the range of services available.' (National Economic & Social Council, 2006). The ability for EU citizens to travel freely within the European Union is also a significant factor in increasing cultural diversity within the Irish labour market. 'Existing data shows that EEA nationals now constitute the bulk, around 85 per cent, of inward migration to Ireland.' (National Economic & Social Council, 2006). The Irish economy is predominantly a service economy. According to a 2014 estimate by the (Central Intelligence Agency, 2015) the services sector accounted for 71.4% of Ireland's GDP. 'In such an economy organisations are highly reliant on the knowledge, skills and attributes of their employees and on the new ideas that they generate.' (Monks, 2007).

A large number of foreign multinational companies have a presence in Ireland with most being located in the Dublin area. Globalisation is leading to multinational organisations having greater levels of diversity within their workforces. A shortage of highly skilled Irish workers within industries such as the ICT sector has led to many organisations recruiting overseas. A study conducted by (FIT, 2014) found that there were an estimated 7,000 vacancies in Ireland's ICT sector.

These factors have led to Ireland having a very diverse workforce. Managers must have the ability to successfully manage a diverse workforce in order for an organisation to benefit from having a diverse workforce.

This research will endeavour to explore the opportunities and challenges that a diverse workforce presents to organisations and build on existing research conducted in this area. The majority of researchers and academics are of the opinion that workforce diversity adds value to an organisation. Much research has been carried out in relation to workforce diversity; however, a limited number of studies have been conducted within an Irish setting. The primary goal of this research is to ascertain employee's workforce diversity awareness within a global financial organisation operating within Ireland. The benefits and limitations of having a diverse workforce from an organisational and employee perspective will also be investigated.

The research literature included in this document provides conclusive evidence that the issue of diversity in the workplace has been thoroughly researched. As a result of the research conducted on the chosen topic, there is justification to carry out a study that assesses the perceptions of minority and majority employees working for a multinational organisation in Ireland. The findings of this study will be compared to previous research surrounding workforce diversity to assess if employees' perceptions are consistent with those of previous studies.

## **Overall Research Objective**

Managing diversity: study of staff awareness of cultural diversity within an organisation; a case study.

In order to answer the above primary research objective, the following questions will also be answered.

1. What benefits and limitations does workforce diversity pose to organisations?
2. What benefits and limitations does workforce diversity pose to employees?
3. What are the perceptions of employees towards workforce diversity?
4. Are the findings of the research into employee perceptions of workforce diversity consistent with those of previous studies?

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

### **Workforce Diversity Defined**

‘When we use the term diversity, we are talking about differences among people, including their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, education, mental and physical disabilities, sexual orientation, and so on.’ (Hitt et al, 2009). ‘Workforce diversity can be defined as ‘an approach to workforce equality that draws its distinctiveness largely from its focus on equality through difference rather than sameness.’ (Gagnon and Cornelius, 2002).

‘The term organisational diversity refers to the range of differences between the individuals and groups among employees. The original concept is based upon individual differences, and since every individual is unique, organisations always have had diverse workforces. In modern terms, however, diversity also refers to differences between groups of ethnic backgrounds, religious groups, sexual orientation, sex and marital status.’ (Currie, 2006). According to (Foot and Hook, 1999), diversity is about ‘obtaining innovative ideas by promoting the involvement of employees from a wide variety of backgrounds, working in teams.’ On the word of (Carberry and Cross, 2013) diversity is defined as ‘all the ways in which we differ.’

### **Demographics Shift**

As stated by (Hitt et al, 2009), the demographics of the US have changed significantly since the 1980’s. By 2020 the minority workforce is set to double and the white working population is set to shrink by nearly twenty percent. According to Central Statistics Office (CSO) figures, Ireland’s immigrant population has increased by 853,500 from the year 2004 to 2014. This figure states that over the last ten years, Ireland has become a more culturally diverse nation. This has led to an increase in the

percentage of minority workers in the workforce and is of a similar nature to what (Hitt et al, 2009) are talking about in relation to the U.S., albeit on a much smaller scale.

As mentioned by (Hitt et al,2009), gender is another important aspect of workforce diversity. 'Despite their high participation rate in the workforce overall and in business in particular, women have been underrepresented in managerial positions. Some people refer to this phenomenon as hitting the "glass ceiling," meaning that women can "see" into the executive ranks, but an invisible barrier prevents them from being promoted in proportion to their representation in the workforce.' (Hitt et al, 2009). As stated by the CSO's 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter figures of 2014, men make up 54.41 percent of the Irish labour market, while women account for 45.59 percent. According to (Hitt et al, 2009), governments put laws in place to guard against workforce discrimination. Managers may have good intentions to employ minority workers but this is not always reflected in their actions.

Consistent with (Hitt et al, 2009), (Byrd, 1992) argues that there is an increasing demographic shift occurring in the U.S. and due to diminishing natural resources, organisations need to focus on developing their diverse workforces. Unlike other authors mentioned in this review, (Byrd, 1992) explains some of the secondary diversity dimensions such as geographic location, income, and marital status. He states that these are the dimensions of diversity that can be changed, primary diversity dimensions such as race cannot. Consistent with (Hitt et al, 2009) and (Byrd, 1992), (Currie, 2006) states that increased demographic shifts since the 1908's have had a significant impact on the labour market, from which employees are recruited. In line with (Hitt et al, 2009) and (Byrd, 1992), (Carberry and Cross, 2013) acknowledge the demographic shift which took place in the United States during the 1980's.

As reported by (Currie, 2006), increased immigration in the UK has helped to alleviate skills shortages. He mentions that diversity therefore facilitates

an organisation's recruitment success rate. Immigration has increased the size of the talent pool from which firms must source employees.

There has been significant change in the demographics of the Irish labour force over the last fifteen years. 'Immigrants, who come from more than 100 countries, have entered Ireland, bringing with them their own traditions that have led to the development of a multicultural society.' (Monks, 2007).

### **Managing Workforce Diversity**

Managing diversity can be interpreted 'as an approach to fair treatment that encourages employees to harness and value a wide range of visible differences in their employees.' (Foster and Harris, 2005).

The majority of academics agree that in order for an organisation to fully extract the potential of diversity within the workforce, it must be properly managed. (Bassett-Jones, 2005) argues that managers face a paradox in relation to diversity. Successful diversity practices can lead to increased innovation and creation, which in turn can create a competitive advantage for the firm. In keeping with (Basset and Jones, 2005) (Foster and Harris, 2005) make the point that an organisation can establish a competitive advantage brought about by successfully managing individual differences.

On the other hand, unsuccessful diversity initiatives can create poor quality, low morale, result in absenteeism and subsequently result in a loss of competitiveness. The advantages and disadvantages put managers of organisations in a paradoxical position. Should they continue to promote a homogeneous work environment and suppress diversity or should they risk the possibility of conflict by introducing diversity initiatives with the aim of developing a competitive advantage.

According to (Bassett-Jones, 2005) it is more beneficial for an organisation to experience growing pains associated with implementing diversity

initiatives for the first time, than miss out on future competitive advantage brought about by a diverse workforce. Managers must therefore overcome the paradox which are the positives and negatives associated with workforce diversity.

'In principle, diversity management encourages the development of more innovative HR policies and practices which offer greater reciprocity in the employment relationship by addressing individual needs.' (Foster and Harris, 2005).

A survey conducted by (Fullerton and Kandola, 1998) produced some interesting results. Fewer than ten percent of the 445 U.S. organisations surveyed provided diversity training for line managers. This number of organisations providing line managers with diversity training has increased as senior management are aware of the benefits associated with having a diverse workforce. The significant change in demographics in the Irish market due to the increase in immigration has also led senior management to provide diversity training for line managers.

In relation to workforce diversity and the firm's performance, (Hitt et al, 2009) mention that there has been significant research conducted in this area with mixed results. Some results have returned a positive correlation between diversity and organisational performance, while others have returned a negative relationship. (Hit et al, 2009) argue that managers must leverage a firm's diverse workforce in order to get the most out of it and limit any pitfalls that may arise from a diverse labour force.

'Not only are workforces becoming increasingly diverse, but globalization is increasingly causing multinational companies to hire a more diverse set of employees.' (Hitt et al, 2009). According to (Hitt et al, 2009), global expansion for companies is made difficult and complicated by diversity factors such as culture and language. How managers form diverse teams which can flourish and minimise conflict is another important issue mentioned by (Hitt et al, 2009).

As reported by (Wheeler, 1997), managing diversity is an important part of a manager's job. There is no magic formula for doing so and it must be done on a daily basis. In consonance with (Hitt et al, 2007), (Wheeler, 1997) believes that the value of workforce diversity cannot be overlooked. Workforce diversity, if not managed correctly can result in negative consequences for the organisation. 'We need to always go back to our business case, and emphasize the value and benefits of workforce diversity.' (Wheeler, 1997). Technology is the greatest asset managers have at their disposal in relation to managing diversity, according to (Wheeler, 1997). In consonance with (Wheeler, 1997), (Sia and Bhardwaj, 2003) mention that if diverse groups of employees are not managed in a correct manner, this may lead to certain consequences, with the end result being organisational ineffectiveness.

In keeping with (Hitt et al, 2009), (Wheeler, 1997) argues that managers must leverage workforce diversity for the firm to benefit from it while minimising any conflict that may arise. 'It is well established that, over time, heterogeneous groups outperform homogeneous groups. They are better at problem solving, better at decision-making, and better at generating creative ideas; different points of view engender better ideas as well as better approaches and methods.' (Wheeler, 1997). Studies performed by (McLeod, Lobel and Cox, 1996; Watson, Kumar and Michaelson, 1993) are consistent with (Hitt et al, 2009) that heterogeneous teams are better at making decisions than those which are homogeneous.

Several studies have been carried out which have returned some interesting results in relation to team cohesion. 'Race/ethnicity diversity effects in relation to performance yielded seven positive, eight negative and 20 null findings. Similar to Joshi and Roh's review, (Webber and Donahue (2001) in their meta-analysis of 24 studies found that demographic diversity (including race/ethnicity) had no relationship with team cohesion or performance.' (Shore, Chung-Herrera, Dean, Ehrhart, Jung, Randel and Singh, 2008). The findings of these studies suggest that

the true relationship between cultural diversity within teams and team cohesion may still be inconclusive. As with racial diversity, studies regarding cultural diversity within teams and whether it improves individual and team performance have also been inconclusive and inconsistent (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Early & Mosakowski, 2000; Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992). There has been much debate amongst academics as to whether cultural diversity has a positive or negative effect on organisational performance. The majority of academics and experts believe that workforce diversity adds value to an organisation while the minority argue that its benefits cannot be easily measured and/or negatives outweigh the benefits.

As mentioned by (Wheeler, 1997), a diverse workforce is more agile and better able to react to a constantly changing environment. (Wheeler, 1997) states that technology levels the playing field and can eliminate much of the negatives associated with diversity. He uses the example of an electronic meeting, when performed correctly can eliminate gender or race bias as each person is using their keyboard to type and cannot be seen by the other party. (Hennessey and Amabile, 1998) make the point that problem solving and creativity can be increased when individuals are aware of one another's strengths and weaknesses and establish a working relationship which is built upon sensitivity and trust. According to (Isaksen and Lauer, 2002) factors which contribute to increased problem solving and creativity are trust, team spirit, principled leadership, standards of excellence, team participation in decision making, recognition and external support.

According to (Wheeler, 1997), senior management need to make workforce diversity a priority and organisations should not employ managers who do not embrace it. 'The goals should be to get rid of, fix, or not hire leaders who cannot manage diversity.' (Wheeler, 1997). He mentions that diversity management skills may be instinctive, and in cases where it is not present, training should be made available. As reported by

(Wheeler, 1997), diversity awareness must be sponsored, the old culture of the firm that does not embrace diversity should be replaced with one that does. (Bassett-Jones, 2005) states that homogeneous organisations view successful HR practices by metrics such as employee retention rates, low employee voice and a willingness of the employee to go beyond their contract obligations. He notes that this suppresses diversity, unless senior managers who are conscious of the benefits of diversity implement HR subsystems that support diversity.

Consistent with (Wheeler, 1997), (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013) believe that managing a diverse workforce is a significant challenge for managers. In their opinion, managing workforce diversity has become an integral part of the management process. As with (Wheeler, 1997), they argue that leaders are an integral part of creating a culture of workforce diversity in an organisation. 'Leading organisations place significant emphasis on, and deploy multifaceted diversity management practices and strategies to address, workplace diversity.' (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013). Organisations tend to focus on diversity factors such as culture and gender according to Pradeepa and Rajendran's 2013 study. Although the organisations acknowledge the other factors of diversity such as age or sexual orientation, greater emphasis is put on the former diversity dimensions.

(Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013) state that there is a strong correlation between effective management of workforce diversity and organisational factors such as innovation, productivity, talent acquisition and retention, competitive advantage, customer satisfaction, and corporate reputation. (Knouse and Dansby, 2000) argue that organisations that embrace equal opportunity and diversity gain advantage through increased effectiveness, increased employee satisfaction, and increased employee commitment. 'All the organisations studied connect diversity with organisational effectiveness by establishing a clear business case for diversity. A positive and value-laden culture, productivity gains through a motivated workforce,

lower absenteeism and improved performance, better decision making and problem solving, improved innovation and creativity, an ability to function at a global level and enter into new markets, and positioning as a preferred employer, are all cited by most organisations as positive outcomes of diversity management.’ (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013).

Another beneficial factor of diversity in the workforce that (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013) mention is an organisation’s ability to tap into untapped talent pools. These untapped talent pools may be minority workers in the local community. By employing minority workers from the local community and workers that reflect the firm’s customer base, the firm will be better suited to fulfil the needs of its customers. According to (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013), a firm that employs local workers from the community in which it operates will benefit from increased corporate reputation and recognition.

In consonance with (Wheeler, 1997), (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013) also acknowledge that in order to have a successful, efficient, and productive, diverse labour force, senior management must embrace and have a passion for diversity. They must promote diversity in the workplace through employee training and awareness programs. If performed in a correct manner, these programs will enable the organisation to build an organisational culture that has diversity at its core. (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013) state that the twenty organisations studied in their report, build diversity policies and practices into their key organisational strategies.

(Iverson, 2000) is in agreement with (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013), that workforce diversity enables an organisation to take advantage of an expanding talent pool. ‘Mismanaged diversity can have long reaching effects on employee satisfaction and productivity. Employees who perceive themselves as valued members of their organization are more conscientious, involved, and innovative.’ (Iverson, 2000). According to

(Iverson, 2000), in instances in which an employer ignores the importance of diversity in the workplace or fails to acknowledge its existence, conflict is likely to occur. (Iverson, 2000) echoes the sentiments of (Wheeler, 1997) and (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013) by reporting that an organisational culture which embraces and encourages diversity is essential for managers attempting to implement diverse workforce strategies.

'Managing diversity seeks to build on many of the good initiative undertaken under the banner of equal opportunities. However, the concept goes beyond equality of opportunity on the basis of ethnic origin and gender and considers other issues such as age, personal work preferences and personal corporate background.' (Gill, 1996). In line with (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013), (Gill, 1996) mentions that the heterogeneous nature of a diverse workforce makes managing diversity more labour intensive than traditional forms of management. However, if organisational strategies that incorporate diversity are successfully implemented by managers, the firm will benefit from increased employee motivation and a reduction in employee turnover. This is consistent with (Gill, 1996), who states that as a result of reduced employee turnover, the firm will incur less recruitment costs and management will therefore need to commit less time in the recruitment process.

In line with (Wheeler, 1997), (Byrd, 1992) mentions that organisations that have diversity ingrained in their culture, are more capable of implementing and responding to change than those that do not embrace change. According to (Byrd, 1992), the majority of the Fortune 500 companies in the United States such as Apple, have organisational strategies that include diversity policies, and that these policies have led to increased productivity.

According to (Currie, 2006), diversity is an important factor in the recruitment process. In line with (Hitt et al, 2009), (Currie, 2006) mentions

that legislation is in place in the majority of developed countries regarding workforce diversity and the recruitment process.

As indicated by (Currie, 2006), organisations that embrace diversity in their recruitment process benefit from increased employee motivation and commitment, greater employee retention, and a wider range of ideas. This view is consistent with (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013).

As stated by (Carberry and Cross, 2013), when organisations manage diversity properly, this should lead to work being performed more efficiently and effectively. (Carberry and Cross, 2013) point out that good diversity management leads to benefits for both the organisation and its employees. They imply that there are three reasons as to why organisations decide to manage diversity. They are values-driven diversity management, productive diversity management and compliance-driven diversity management.

‘As well as engaging in diversity management for different reasons, employers can be active, proactive or reactive in relation to how they deal with diversity.’ (Carberry and Cross, 2013). According to (Carberry and Cross, 2013), employer benefits of diversity management programs include: improved employee relations, improved innovation, more satisfied customers, better public image and more public sector contracts. They point out that there are also challenges and limitations of diversity management programmes. These include: increased training costs, increased incidents of conflict, decreased productivity and claims of reverse discrimination.

(Cox and Blake, 1991) acknowledge that a firm that manages cultural diversity efficiently and effectively can create a competitive advantage. They argue that social responsibility goals of firms are only one area that benefit from the management of diversity. (Cox and Blake, 1991) claim that there are six other areas where successful diversity management can create a competitive advantage. These areas include cost, resource

acquisition, marketing, creativity, problem solving and organisational flexibility. According to (Cox and Blake, 1991), five key components are needed to transform traditional organisations into multicultural ones. These components are: leadership, training, research, analysis and change of culture and human resource management systems, and follow up.

(Moody, Beise, Woszczynski and Myers, 2003) have conducted studies into diversity from an IT industry perspective. The findings of these studies are not unique and are relevant to other industries. 'With IT facilitating a global marketplace, employers are increasingly aware that their organizations can benefit from having a workforce that is as diverse as their expanded customer base.' (Moody et al, 2003). As stated by (Moody et al, 2003), a study comprised of students from the Silicon Valley area of the United States found that students perceived careers in Information technology as being populated by boring and socially awkward individuals. According to (Moody et al, 2003), primary diversity dimensions such as gender, ethnicity, age and disabilities are accompanied by secondary diversity dimensions such as marital status and sexual orientation. This view is consistent with (Byrd, 1992) that managers must effectively manage both primary and secondary diversity dimensions.

(Moody et al, 2003) make the point that 'given that much of the IT professional's work will be performed in teams composed of these diverse representatives, the recruitment and management of the IT workforce creates new challenges and opportunities.' As reported by (Moody et al, 2003), there is a requirement for diversity in the workplace and additional research needs to be carried out to determine the lack of interest of those who could bring diversity to the Information technology sector.

(Moody et al, 2003) assess the impact that four aspects of diversity have on team performance. These aspects are gender, ethnicity, age and disability. (Moody et al, 2003) state that in addition to the four aspects of

diversity covered, 'the diversity of perspectives will be a factor in the composition, outcomes, and management of IT teams.' (Moody et al, 2003) claim that research conducted found that while certain aspects of diversity such as education, enhanced team performance, other aspects such as age did not. 'Other research has shown that debates due to social categories such as gender, ethnicity, and age tend to be destructive while debates based on diversity in education, functional position, and experience tend to be constructive.' (Moody et al, 2003).

(Moody et al, 2003) stresses the importance of diversity in the workforce. 'Without women on IT development teams, technology pursuits may focus more on doing things faster, and less on doing new things.' (Moody et al, 2003). This statement relates to the different traits that men and women possess. 'Culturally diverse IT teams are certainly necessary, as globalization becomes reality in today's workplace.' (Moody et al, 2003). This is consistent with the (Hitt et al, 2009) view that globalisation is causing organisations to hire a more diverse workforce.

'If equality and diversity initiatives are to be successful, they cannot be introduced as stand-alone policies and practices that are left to either a human resource department or line managers to implement.' (Monks, 2007). According to (Benschop, 2001) if diversity is implemented in this way, the organisation will most likely not benefit from having a diverse workforce and may enhance the negative aspects of diversity such as increased levels of conflict within teams. As stated by (Monks, 2007) an organisation's diversity initiatives must be consistent with its strategy and culture if it is to succeed. A report published by (Hofthuis et al, 2013) found that employees that are exposed to a strong diversity climate within the organisation perceive a more positive than negative view of diversity. In keeping with (Monks, 2007) (Shore et al, 2008) state that organisations introduce formal diversity policies and procedures as a starting point for developing a climate. They also note that there are many other structural and process changes that must be made on multiple organisational levels

in order for a diversity framework to be of benefit to the firm. (Gagnon and Cornelius, 2000) and (Wheeler, 1997) are in agreement with (Monks, 2007). They determine that a business case rationale must be the driving factor behind the implementation of diversity initiatives and not driven by legal obligations.

As reported by (Monks, 2007) there is evidence that firms are adopting diversity initiatives due to ethical and legal reasons and not just to increase the bottom line. 'Policies and practices in relation to equality and diversity fit with an organisation's views on its corporate and social responsibility and thus become embedded in the values underpinning the way in which the organisation does business.' (Monks, 2007).

According to (Monks, 2007) companies that have a history of investing in diversity initiatives have signalled to their employees that diversity and equality is valued within the organisation. These firms have therefore built a stable base for expanding and enhancing their diversity initiatives. This is consistent with Monks' previous statement that a firm's diversity initiatives must be consistent with its strategy and culture if it is to succeed. This bares consonance with the sentiments of (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013; Byrd, 1992; Hofthuis et al, 2013; Wheeler, 1997). Organisation's that have a history of fostering diversity have created a culture in which it can thrive. 'Managing diversity and equal opportunities are linked in practice, with a managing diversity initiative developing and complimenting approaches to equal opportunities.' (Maxwell, 2003).

As mentioned by (Monks, 2007) companies that simply react to diversity and equality legislation, may find that their pro-active diversity initiatives fail. They are more prone to failure as the infrastructure that supports diversity and the culture within the organisation is not present for them to succeed.

On the word of (Becker, Gerhart and McDuffie, 1995) firms tend to have greater success with diversity and equality initiatives when they are

combined to create a synergistic effect. Organisations that implement diversity initiatives without the adequate support infrastructure may in fact create the opposite effect of creating a 'deadly combination.' (Becker et al, 1997). This could cause future resistance to the implementation of diversity initiatives and be seen as the company only being concerned with improving the bottom line.

The Equality Authority has set out its vision for an inclusive workplace. According to the authority, organisations that promote an inclusive workplace have the following characteristics:

- 'Are free from discrimination, sexual harassment, and victimisation, and are taking steps to prevent such experiences for employers and customers.
- Acknowledge, value, and accommodate diversity, making adjustments and providing facilities to take account of the practical implications of difference and, in particular, meeting their obligation to make reasonable accommodations for employees and customers with disabilities.
- Are proactive in their pursuit of equality, seeking and realising tangible outcomes including through positive action as allowed under legislation.' (Equality authority, submission to the forum of the future of work).

The authority is in agreement with (Becker et al, 1997) that the realisation of workforce equality will require the organisational infrastructure that can support diversity and equality initiatives.

### **Rationale for assessing employee perceptions of diversity**

In addition to an organisation having a history of investing in diversity initiatives, for the implementation of such initiatives to be successful, (Hofhuis, Van der Zee and Otten, 2013) state that employees' attitudes towards diversity must also be understood. 'It has become apparent that

diversity attitudes and/or perceptions of employees may be a strong predictor of diversity outcomes, such as social identification patterns, team cohesion, employee well-being and performance.’ (Hofthuis et al, 2013). The attitudes of the critical mass of employees within an organisation will most likely determine whether a diversity initiative succeeds or fails.

According to (Hofthuis et al, 2013) a minority groups attitudes or behaviour may be strongly influenced by a majority group. ‘Empirical studies have shown that the majority’s attitude towards diversity is a strong predictor of minority members’ sense of acceptance, and that a positive attitude is beneficial for intergroup contact.’ (Hofthuis Van der Zee and Otten, 2012; Tropp and Bianchi, 2006; Tropp, Stout, Boatswain, Wright and Pettigrew, 2006). As stated by (Thomas and Plaut, 2008) a company attempting to implement diversity initiatives or policies is a form of change and can therefore be a source of conflict.

(Harrison, Kravitz, Mayer, Leslie and Lev-Arey, 2006) research suggests that some of the most prevalent diversity initiatives in use, may have a negative impact on majority workers attitudes towards diversity within an organisation. The research also suggests that as with most change initiatives, the ability of the management to communicate and justify the need for diversity initiative effectively, the greater the chance that the initiative will be implemented successfully.

(Hofthuis et al, 2013) report that in order to overcome resistance to future diversity policies and initiatives by majority employees, the perceptions of these staff members towards diversity must be understood. When this information has been attained, it should be used by the organisation to shape future diversity strategies. As mentioned by (DeLancey, 2013) employee performance and satisfaction may be affected if employees perceive diversity policies negatively.

## **The Business Case for Investment in Diversity and Equality**

The shrinking traditional labour pools have meant that organisations have been in competition with one another for the brightest talent. Organisations must therefore look to a more diverse range of employee to fill their human resource needs. As reported by (Jamieson and O'Mara, 1992) changing demographics within the workforce has seen a significant increase in the number of minority workers in the UK economy. Ireland has also seen a significant increase in the number of migrants from both inside and outside the European Union. (Jamieson and O'Mara, 1992) argue that the increase of minority purchasing power makes a credible business case for organisations to strive for increased levels of workforce diversity.

'The globalisation of markets brings contact with increasingly diverse customer bases which require understanding of diversity within and across cultures and leads to opportunities to increase market share. In addition, a diverse workforce can assist organisations in designing products that appeal to this diverse customer base.' (Monks, 2007). This statement is consistent with (Ely and Thomas, 2001) which mention that an organisation's markets and stakeholders are inherently culturally diverse. In theory, it should be easier for a firm with a diverse workforce to gain knowledge from and access to minority customers within the market. This can increase a firm's customer base as its culturally diverse workforce be aware of the product preferences and tastes of people in their different communities. The 'understanding of diverse groups can be seen as the first benefit of cultural diversity.' (Hofthuis et al, 2013).

'Equality and diversity provides new sources of ideas leading to enhanced creativity and innovation and higher quality problem solving in teams.' (Monks, 2007). This statement is in keeping with (Hofthuis et al, 2013) who mention that research has provided evidence that diverse teams benefit from increased innovation and creativity. Reduced groupthink may also be another positive attribute of diverse teams according to (Fay,

Borril, Amir, Haward, West, 2006; Nakui, Paulus, Van der Zee, 2011; Nijstad and De Dreu, 2002; West, 2002). The increased diversity of a team also leads to a greater ability to problem solve (Brodbeck and Greitemeyer, 2000; Collins and Geutzkow, 1964). According to (Janis, 1982) cultural diversity in the workforce reduces groupthink. As reported by (Robinson and Dechant, 1997) there are marketing and HR benefits which are related to diversity. They note that workforce diversity enables the organisation to maximise available talent, creates new business opportunities, and can facilitate the organisation in entering new cultural markets.

‘Equality and diversity initiatives can result in improved service delivery by altering work patterns and including more part-time and flexible work schedules.’ (Monks, 2007). Employees of organisations with diverse workforces and good diversity initiatives in place benefit from a better overall work life. This in turn leads to greater employee job satisfaction and commitment which results in better employee performance. According to (Monks, 2007) organisations that have solid diversity initiatives in place will significantly reduce the risk of incurring legal costs from employment equality claims

(Shipton et al, 2005) argue that ultimately, the entire organisation will benefit from higher effectiveness due to the increased flexibility, creativity and innovation which a diverse workforce brings. (Hofthuis et al, 2013) state that increasing the creative potential within organisations can therefore be seen as the second cluster of benefits from diversity. They state that the third benefit of cultural diversity that the organisation’s benefit from is its image of social responsibility.

The organisation’s reputation and image within the community as a company that employs a diverse workforce and provides equal opportunities for minority workers will help it attract and retain the best and brightest employees while reducing absenteeism levels. This will enable

the organisation to reduce costs. In her research (Monks, 2007) also found that corporate and social responsibility become linked with diversity and equality. Therefore encouraging and enhancing ethical behaviour. Several of the organisations stakeholders benefit as a result, these include shareholders, employees, customers, and potential employees. (Hofthuis et al, 2013) are in agreement with (Monks, 2007) that the organisation's image towards the outside world is improved when it employees a diverse workforce. A socially responsible firm which provides equal opportunities is therefore implied.

Speaking to the Black Collegian, Mitch Thomas, who was responsible for recruiting minority employees at Walt Disney World Company was quoted as saying the following in relation to diversity: 'Diversity adds value. It strengthens your workforce, because you have a diverse group of people coming to the table. It's going to affect your bottom line.' (Soloman, 1994). (Foster and Harris, 2005) mention that organisations that portray an image of a firm that is an inclusive place to work will find it easier to attract the best talent in the market. By having a strong diversity culture which promotes inclusiveness, the organisation can become an employer of choice.

(Shore et al, 2008) argue that diversity creates positive outcomes for companies, adding value and improving team outcomes. They have listed the following positive diversity attributes: enhanced problem solving ability, constructive conflict and debate, increased information, increase creativity and innovation, higher quality decisions, and better understanding of different cultures/ethnicities. These positive attributes are in keeping with (Wheeler, 1997), (Hennessey and Amabile, 1998), (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013) and (Brodbeck et al, 1964),

According to (Ely and Thomas, 2001) one of the reasons an organisation invests and encourages cultural diversity is for moral reasons with the aim of ending historic discrimination. 'An organization could promote cultural

diversity as seen as a resource for learning.’ (Shore et al, 2008). (Foster and Harris, 2005) state that organisations may benefit from increased employee retention, reduced employee turnover and absenteeism as employees will be more committed to their jobs. A study conducted by (Richard, Barnett, Dwyer and Chadwick, 2004) found that cultural diversity, relating to race and gender had a positive effect on the organisation.

### **Threats associated with diversity from an organisational perspective**

(Bassett-Jones, 2005) mentions that increased innovation and creativity can be a by-product of diversity and enable a firm to establish a competitive advantage. As stated by (Hofthuis et al, 2013) diversity can also produce undesired negative effects that can cause conflict and loss of productivity. This section will discuss diversity threats with reference to the organisation.

While the majority of academics acknowledge that diversity within the workforce has a positive effect, academics such as (Ely and Thomas, 2001; Ibaarra, 1993 and Kanter, 1977) have the opposite opinion. ‘They argue that diversity damages cohesiveness, reduces communication and produces in-groups and out-groups.’ (Basset-Jones, 2005). As a result, there is a drop in customer and market focus, distrust amongst employees, and ultimately poor quality and performance.

Speaking to the Black Collegian, Bruce Wallace, a management recruiter for Bob’s Stores was quoted as saying the following in relation to the main threat of workforce diversity: ‘Any company will tell you that the biggest problem is not going out and sourcing people of color. It really is in the retention. It really is in perpetuating a culture that is conducive to everybody’s growth.’ (Solomon, 1994). ‘Diversity based on nationality potentially poses greater challenges when compared with ethnicity

because cultural differences among team or organizational members tend to be larger.’ (Snow, Snell, Davidson and Hambrick, 1996).

### **Threats associated with cultural diversity from an employee perspective**

Stephan and Stephan’s Integrated Threat Theory (ITT) is a commonly cited framework that analyses the different types of threats associated with a culturally diverse workforce. According to ITT there are three types of threat that employees may face in a culturally diverse workplace. The three threats are realistic threats, symbolic threats, and intergroup anxiety.

Realistic threats comprise of perceived negative effects of diversity to one’s career, power, status or influence. Majority workers perceive that the increased attention that minority workers receive through diversity initiatives will have a negative impact on majority workers. (Antwi-Boasiako, 2008) state that majority employees feel that their career chances will be negatively affected as a result. They also suggest that these negative feelings may increase during times when the organisation is undergoing a change initiative. Previous studies conducted by (Lowery, Unzueta, Knowles and Goff, 2006) have shown that there is a correlation between realistic threats and lower support for diversity initiatives.

Symbolic threats are the second dimension of diversity related threat according to (Stephen and Stephen, 2000). These threats pertain to the culture within the organisation and the threat that minority workers pose to it. ‘This threat is a result of (perceived) differences in norms, values, beliefs and attitudes between cultural groups.’ (Hofthuis et al, 2013). As reported by (Greenberg, Pyszczynski and Solomon, 1990) the introduction of employees from different cultural backgrounds into the organisation leads to less certainty and predictability and therefore induces a sense of fear. In an organisational setting, symbolic threats can be seen as a resistance by staff to cultural change (Thomas and Plaut, 2008). The

culture of the majority group usually determines the culture of an organisation. 'As a result of increased diversity, established norms and values may change to incorporate some of the minority's cultural background, thus inducing symbolic threat in majority employees.' (Hofthuis et al, 2013).

The third threat that is associated with cultural diversity is intergroup anxiety. (Curseu, Stoop and Schalk, 2007) define intergroup anxiety as the negative feeling that members of the majority group have when they anticipate or experience contact with members of the minority group. According to (Hofthuis et al, 2013) majority employees may be reluctant to help or interact with minority employees as they may be embarrassed by the interaction or fear that they may say something that may be viewed as inappropriate in that person's culture.

(Hofthuis et al, 2013) state that there is a fourth diversity threat, that of the potential for loss of team effectiveness. This can be termed as a threat of productivity loss. Many academics such as (Monks, 2007) argue that when diversity is managed correctly, the organisation should benefit from an increase in productivity and team performance. On the contrary, research conducted by (Jehn, Bezrukova, 2004; Thomas, 1999) has found that under certain conditions, diversity can also cause a decrease in team performance.

Managers must deal with and manage all the threats outlined above if diverse teams are to be effective. It can therefore be deduced that diverse teams are more difficult to manage than homogeneous teams. When diversity within teams is not managed effectively, conflict may arise. (Van der Zee and Paulus 2008; Paulus and Nijstad 2003) state that reduced innovation and creativity will result in conflict caused by diversity. 'As such, inclusion of minority employees may be perceived as a potential risk to team effectiveness.' (Hofthuis et al, 2013).

(Shore et al, 2008) state that there are many theories that suggest that due to human nature, people judge one another on surface level characteristics, such as race. People do this without knowing any additional information about the other person. People relate to the similarities that they share with another person. Majority employees may form their own group. Minority employees will find it difficult to be accepted into that group and may have to form their own group. Subsequently, in-group and out-groups are formed. A member of an in-group would be a majority worker, whereas, a member of an out-group would be a minority worker.

### **The Legal Obligations Surrounding Equality**

There is significant legislation dealing with employment equality and discrimination in Ireland. Discriminatory factors such as race, gender, marital status, family status, age, religion, disability and membership of the traveling community are prohibited under The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2004 and the Equality Status Acts 2000-2004.

An employer found to be in breach of these acts can face significant litigation costs and damage to their reputation. 'It is therefore vital that employers have comprehensive anti-discrimination, sexual harassment and harassment policies and procedures in place and that these are properly applied and updated.' (Monks, 2007).

## **Chapter 3. Methodology**

### **Introduction**

This section outlines the data which was required to answer the research questions that have been outlined, the methodology chosen to enable these data to be captured, the rationale for choosing the type of methodology, and how the data was analysed.

The aim of this study was to investigate staff awareness of workforce diversity, and explore its documented benefits and limitations. The quantitative research methodology was chosen for this study. (Saunders, Thornhill, and Lewis, 2007) state that a researcher needs to choose between two different types of research approach, deductive or inductive. The deductive approach involves gathering the relevant subject matter theory based on literature that is available. Hypotheses are then created surrounding what should happen in certain conditions. Data is then collected and analysed with statistical tools to make an inference as to whether the null hypothesis can be accepted or rejected. The theory which has been created from current literature is then used to support the findings of the research study. According to (Saunders et al, 2007) quantitative research is more likely to follow a deductive approach. The results from a quantitative approach are 'more readily analysed and interpreted'. (Hughes, 2006). The researcher chose to use a quantitative approach as the constructs of cultural workforce diversity had already been established in prior research. By utilising Larkey's Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II, the researcher was able to assess the workforce diversity constructs on a larger sample size than would have been possible with a qualitative approach. A quantitative approach was necessary to answer to prove or disprove the study's research hypothesis. The researcher was able to make objective findings rather than those that were of a subjective nature.

'Qualitative research aims to achieve 'depth' rather than 'breadth'. (Blaxter, Hughes, Tight, 1996). 'It has been used to make sense of the subjective experience of the individual within natural settings.' (Saunders et al., 2007). With the qualitative approach, the researcher uses the findings from their research such as data gathered from interviews to identify larger constructs. The researcher then tries to understand the different relationships that exist between these constructs. Qualitative research is seen as a 'bottom up' approach while quantitative research is acknowledged as a 'top down' approach.

To ascertain employees' awareness of cultural diversity a questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. The data from the completed questionnaires was then analysed to determine if there were differences between groups of gender and ethnicity in relation to cultural diversity.

## **Population**

It was deemed appropriate that an organisation with a diverse workforce would be chosen to conduct the primary research. The firm chosen is a multinational international financial services organisation. The company has an inclusive diverse workforce and believes that workforce diversity adds value to the organisation through increased innovation and creativity.

The research was conducted in one of the company's Irish premises. The sample consisted of employees from 'Department A' within one of the organisations premises. A combination of majority and minority employees participated in the study. The sample consisted of employees with different roles, seniority levels, and years of service.

## **The Company's Background**

It was deemed appropriate to conduct the research in the chosen organisation as the company understands the importance of having a diverse workforce and the value that such a workforce can add. There

were a number of different departments operating at the location in which the research was conducted. The roles were primarily financial positions but also ranged from information technology to human resources. The demographics of the company comprised of 46.7% female and 53.3% male employees. 46.7% of the company's workforce was of Asian, African, and Eastern European origin. The company manages workforce diversity through diversity initiatives which support one of their organisational objectives, which is having a diverse workforce that can add value to the business.

### **Research Sample**

For this study, a non-probability sampling methodology was used. A purposive sample was chosen due to its convenience and access to the sample. 'Purposive sampling is described as a random selection of sampling units within the segment of the population with the most information on the characteristic of interest.' (Guarte and Barrios, 2006). The sample comprised of 79 individuals from the "Division A" of one of the organisation's Dublin offices. The entire population sample comprised of full time, permanent employees, and interns. The rationale for choosing this form of sampling methodology was due to the diverse nature of the population. The questionnaire was distributed in a digital format which resulted in minimal financial constraints. By choosing an online survey tool, the researcher was able to achieve a larger sample size than would have been possible with a physical questionnaire. As a result practical constraints were kept to a minimum. By using the purposive sample methodology, the researcher was able to save time, money, and resources.

The research sample consisted of minority and majority employees. The diverse nature of the sample included employees with varying years of service. This enabled better informed answers from the participants of the

study, as employees with longer lengths of service have experienced diversity related issues within the company over a longer timeframe.

Of the 79 questionnaires distributed, 58 completed responses were collected along with 7 partially completed responses. Partially completed responses were classified as non-respondents. The questionnaire response rate was 73.41% based on the sample size of 79 individuals. All individuals in the sample were sent a link to the questionnaire via the company's internal instant message application. The message described the research being conducted, why it was being carried out, and explained that all responses would be confidential.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The objectives of the study were to gain an understanding of workforce diversity, the benefits and limitations that workforce diversity poses to organisations and employees, and employee's awareness of workforce diversity.

The research in this study set out to address the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a difference in the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II (WDQ II) score of male and female employees.

H01: There is no difference in the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II (WDQ II) score of male and female employees.

H2: There is a difference in the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II (WDQ II) score of Irish and non-Irish employees.

H02: There is no difference in the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II (WDQ II) score of Irish and non-Irish employees.

The hypothesis were designed to answer one of the study's primary research questions, which aimed to determine if there was a difference in the attitudes of employees towards workforce diversity.

## **Research Instrumentation**

The primary research was conducted using a quantitative methodology approach. A message containing the questionnaire link was distributed to “Division A” of the ‘Organisation X’ via the company’s instant message application. The message introduced the researcher and briefly described the research being conducted, and why it was necessary. Participants were made aware of the confidential nature of the questionnaire and were not requested to provide their names or any confidential information. Participants had a one week window to complete the questionnaire. The researcher had contact with many of the sample individuals and was able to answer any additional questions that they had.

Limesurvey was chosen as the survey application as it provided an excellent platform to build and distribute the researcher’s questionnaire. As the application was free, the researcher did not incur a financial cost. The application’s functionality meant that the questionnaire could be built promptly, results data stored securely and exported in a format that was compatible with the data analysis application SPSS.

The questionnaire that was used in the research was the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire (Larkey, 1996), which she developed from her research into cultural workforce diversity. The researcher chose to use this questionnaire as the basis to retrieving the required data as it has been peer reviewed and accepted as a valid tool to measure workforce diversity. Permission was sought and granted from the author for the use of her questionnaire in this research.

Larkey decided on the questionnaire metrics by taking a qualitative and quantitative approach. ‘The construct validity was tested utilizing the Component Factor Analysis, which included a sample of 280 from a population of 1083, resulting in a 26% response rate.’ (Larkey, 1996). The qualitative approach comprised of a series of open ended interviews with thirty five diverse workforce employees. This set out to establish

employees and management's perceptions of diversity within the workforce. On the completion of these interviews, Larkey analysed the results and compared them to previous research that had been conducted on the topic.

Following the analysis, a questionnaire was built that encompassed the main dimensions of diversity. The questionnaire was constructed of dimensions: inclusion/exclusion, valuing diversity, positive/negative evaluations, and understanding. Larkey's Workforce Diversity Questionnaire has reliability alpha coefficients ranging between .69-.80.

The questionnaire comprises of 30 questions categorised into 5 sections shown in Table 1:

WDQ-II Question Number	Dimension Type	Diversity Management Construct
1-7	Inclusion/Exclusion	Equal Opportunity
8-14	Valuing Diversity	Overall Diversity Awareness
15-21	Positive/Negative Evaluations	Affirmative Action
22-28	Understanding	Discrimination, Overall Diversity Awareness
29-30	Positive/Negative Evaluations	Overall Diversity Awareness

*Table 1. Dimension Type vs. Diversity Awareness Constructs for WDQ II Questions*

The questionnaire uses a six point Likert Scale to assess a participant's question responses. The scale ranges from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'.

(Copy of Research Questionnaire Attached – See Appendix 1)

## **Protection of Human Subjects**

In order to conduct the research within the chosen research company, internal procedures needed to be followed. An email was sent to the ethics and HR departments, outlining the study which would be carried out. It was stated in the email that the research study was voluntary and confidential. The company would remain anonymous as its name would not be published in the final research document. An electronic and printed copy of the questionnaire was made available to the company. Prior to completing the research questionnaire, employees were made aware of the voluntary and confidential nature of the questionnaire. Confidentiality of employees was maintained by not requesting the names of those who took part in the questionnaire.

When the online survey was closed and the required data had been captured, the researcher began data analysis. The data stored in the Limesurvey tool was exported in Microsoft Excel format .xlsx. This file was then imported into the SPSS application for analysis. The anonymous nature of the data collection ensured that there was no risk to questionnaire participants.

## **Data Collection**

A message was sent to each participant via the company's internal instant messaging application (IM). A link to the online survey was included in the message along with a brief description and the nature of the study. It was decided to contact potential participants through the IM for a number of reasons. The reason for this was the very high volume of work that staff in the chosen research organisation had to undertake on a daily basis. Each member of the sample population received several hundred work emails per day. As well as receiving emails that were addressed directly to them, staff received many emails that their work group/team was copied on. As a result staff would generally scan through emails, paying most attention to

those that were addressed to them. Employees placed emphasis on those emails and therefore less on emails that did not contain information that was necessary for conducting their work. The researcher felt that the more informal and personal nature of contacting people directly through the IM would lead to an increased response rate.

It was for the reasons mentioned above that the researcher decided to distribute questionnaires in a digital format. The primary concern being that if questionnaires had been distributed in a digital format via email, they may have been overlooked by the sample population. This may have led to a lower number of questionnaires being completed by staff which in turn may have led to an insufficient sample size.

Section one of the questionnaire required the participant to state their gender and ethnicity background. This was a requirement, as in order to analyse the responses and answer the primary research question, it was necessary to determine if participants that took part in the research were majority or minority employees. The ages of participants was also requested but was not used in the analyses as the sample size was deemed too small.

Before data collection could be conducted, the researcher carried out the following:

1. Permission to conduct the study was sought from the company's Human Resources and Ethics departments.
2. When permission was granted, the researcher sent a message via the company's instant messaging application. The message contained a greeting, identified the researcher, described the research being conducted, the nature of the questionnaire, and a link to the questionnaire.
3. Participants were notified that the questionnaire would be live for one week.

4. A thank you message was displayed following completion of the questionnaire.
5. The researcher made himself available to provide questionnaire results to interested participants.

## **Data Analysis**

The Workforce Diversity Questionnaire measures four diversity dimensions and constructs. These dimensions are inclusion/exclusion, valuing diversity, positive/negative evaluations, and understanding. Diversity management constructs comprise of equal opportunity, overall diversity awareness, affirmative action, and discrimination. Table 1 provides a good illustration of how the different WDQ II questions are categorised into the different dimensions and diversity constructs.

The entire thirty questions of the WDQ II were used to score participants on their overall diversity awareness. Analysis was also conducted on each dimension and construct which made it possible to establish which groups scored higher than others in each dimension.

Hypothesis 1 (there is a difference in the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II (WDQ II) score of male and female employees) was analysed by conducting a 2-tailed t test and Mann-Whitney U test.

Hypothesis 2 (there is a difference in the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II (WDQ II) score of Irish and non-Irish employees) was analysed by conducting a 2-tailed t test and Mann-Whitney U test. An inference of both hypotheses was made from the scores of these tests. The dependent variable was the total score of the WDQ II. The four diversity dimensions acted as independent test variables. This enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of how different test groups scored against these diversity dimensions.

## **Secondary Research**

Secondary research was conducted to examine the existing research which surrounds the topic of workforce diversity. This research primarily focused on academic peer reviewed journals, academic research papers, government publications, and statistics from government agencies such as the Central Statistics Office.

In order to gain a sufficient understanding of the topic, it was necessary to conduct secondary research. This research provided the author with numerous definitions of workforce diversity. By using this collection method, the author was able to gain an insight into the various benefits and limitations that workforce diversity can bring to an organisation. There have been many studies carried out to evaluate these benefits and limitations and there is no consensus among academics and experts in the field as to whether workforce diversity adds value to an organisation.

## **Results**

The aim of this research study was to examine employee's perceptions of workforce diversity. The study's research instrumentation consisted of the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire which was developed by Larkey in 1996. The study's methodology used the Mann-Whitney U test, 2-tailed t test, and descriptive statistics to make inferences about the study's hypotheses. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to determine the levels of normality which the different groups possessed. As all the groups tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The statistical software application SPSS was used to analyse the data collected from the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II. 58 questionnaire responses were collected which represents a response rate was 73.41% based on the sample size of 79 individuals.

In this section, the study's results will be broken down into the different diversity constructs which, when combined, form diversity awareness. The statistical results, precondition requirements, and characteristics of these constructs and overall diversity awareness scale will be presented.

### Scale Reliability Results

This subsection presents the reliability results of the five scales which were utilised in this study. The four diversity scales documented are: positive/negative evaluations, valuing diversity, inclusion/exclusion, and understanding. These combine to form the diversity awareness scale.

### Inclusion/Exclusion Construct Sub-Scale Reliability Results

Table 2 and 3 below present the reliability test results for the Inclusion/Exclusion Construct Sub-Scale. The sub-scale comprised of 60 valid responses across 7 items that contributed to the overall Inclusion/Exclusion Construct Sub-Scale. A Cronbach Alpha score of .821 was produced.

**Case Processing Summary**

		N	%
Cases	Valid	60	92.3
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	5	7.7
	Total	65	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

*Table 2: Inc/Ex Scale Case Summary*

**Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.821	7

*Table 3: Inc/Ex Scale Reliability Results*

## Valuing Diversity Construct Sub-Scale Reliability Results

Table 4 and 5 below present the reliability test results for the valuing diversity construct sub-scale. The sub-scale comprised of 58 valid responses across 7 items that contributed to the overall valuing diversity Construct Sub-Scale. A Cronbach Alpha score of .630 was produced.

		N	%
Cases	Valid	58	89.2
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	7	10.8
	Total	65	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 4: Valuing Diversity Scale Case Summary

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.630	7

Table 5: Valuing Diversity Scale Reliability Results

## Positive/Negative Evaluations Construct Sub-Scale Reliability Results

Table 6 and 7 below present the reliability test results for the positive/negative construct sub-scale. The sub-scale comprised of 58 valid responses across 9 items that contributed to the overall positive/negative evaluations Construct Sub-Scale. A Cronbach Alpha score of .599 was produced.

		N	%
Cases	Valid	58	89.2
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	7	10.8
	Total	65	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 6: Positive/Negative Evaluations Scale Case Summary

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.599	9

Table 7: Positive/Negative Evaluations Scale Reliability Results

## Understanding Construct Sub-Scale Reliability Results

Table 8 and 9 below present the reliability test results for the understanding construct sub-scale. The sub-scale comprised of 58 valid responses across 7 items that contributed to the overall understanding construct sub-scale. A Cronbach Alpha score of .708 was produced.

		N	%
Cases	Valid	58	89.2
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	7	10.8
	Total	65	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 8: Understanding Scale Case Summary

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.708	7

Table 9: Understanding Scale Reliability Results

## Diversity Awareness Construct Scale Reliability Results

Table 10 and 11 below present the reliability test results for the diversity awareness Construct Scale. The scale comprised of 58 valid responses across 7 items that contributed to the overall diversity awareness construct scale. A Cronbach Alpha score of .780 was produced.

		N	%
Cases	Valid	58	89.2
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	7	10.8
	Total	65	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Table 10: Diversity Awareness Scale Case Summary

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.780	30

Table 11: Diversity Awareness Scale Reliability Results

## Workforce Diversity and Gender Differences

The research study instrumentation comprised of the WDQ II which has 4 constructs. To gain a greater understanding of how participants scored in overall diversity awareness, the researcher deemed it necessary to break down the results into the 4 constructs. The WDQ II score that a participant achieves can be viewed as overall diversity awareness. This section presents the results of analyses of whether there are differences in employee diversity awareness depending on gender.

### Inclusion/Exclusion and Gender Differences

A total of 60 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the inclusion/exclusion construct of the study. Of these employees, 39 were males and 21 were females. A case summary is presented in Table 12. Histograms representing the inclusion/exclusion composite score and frequency of both males and females are shown in Figure 1 and 2 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure 1 illustrates that of the 39 males which took part in the study; 4 achieved a composite score of 20.

**Case Processing Summary**

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
InclusionExclusionCompositeScore	Male	39	95.1%	2	4.9%	41	100.0%
	Female	21	87.5%	3	12.5%	24	100.0%

*Table 12: Gender Inclusion/Exclusion Composite Score*

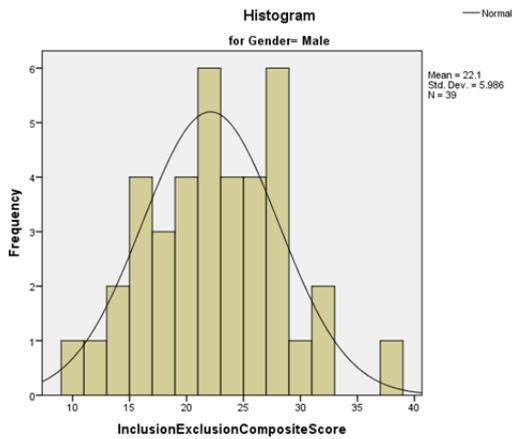


Figure 1: Inclusion/Exclusion Male Distribution

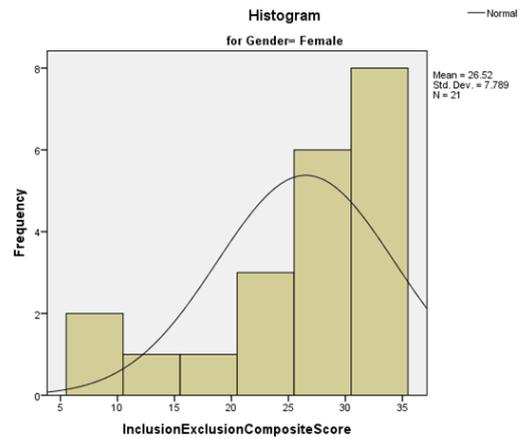


Figure 2: Inclusion/Exclusion Female Distribution

Table 13 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for inclusion/exclusion sample distributions of males and females.

Descriptives					
Gender		Statistic	Std. Error		
InclusionExclusionCompositeScore	Male	Mean	22.10	.959	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	20.16	
			Upper Bound	24.04	
		5% Trimmed Mean	22.06		
		Median	22.00		
		Variance	35.831		
		Std. Deviation	5.986		
		Minimum	10		
		Maximum	37		
		Range	27		
		Interquartile Range	9		
		Skewness	.125	.378	
	Kurtosis	-.132	.741		
	Female	Mean	26.52	1.700	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	22.98	
			Upper Bound	30.07	
5% Trimmed Mean		27.08			
Median		29.00			
Variance		60.662			
Std. Deviation		7.789			
Minimum		8			
Maximum		35			
Range		27			
Interquartile Range	7				
Skewness	-1.316	.501			
Kurtosis	.863	.972			

Table 13: Gender Inclusion/Exclusion Descriptive Statistics

Table 14 illustrates the tests of normality for gender inclusion/exclusion. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the gender groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{MALE}} = .990$ ,  $df = 39$ ,  $p = .979$ ), ( $W_{\text{FEMALE}} = .837$ ,  $df = 21$ ,  $p = .003$ ).

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
InclusionExclusionComp ositeScore	Male	.060	39	.200 <sup>*</sup>	.990	39	.979
	Female	.244	21	.002	.837	21	.003

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 14: Gender Inclusion/Exclusion Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of the male and female groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 15 and 16. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists significant differences between the mean rank of males (**Mdn=25.81**) compared to females (**Mdn=39.21**), (**U = 226.500**,  $p = .005$ ) with regards to inclusion/exclusion.

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
InclusionExclusionCompositeScore	Male	39	25.81	1006.50
	Female	21	39.21	823.50
	Total	60		

Table 15: Mann-Whitney Test-mean

	InclusionExclusionCompositeScore
Mann-Whitney U	226.500
Wilcoxon W	1006.500
Z	-2.840
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.005

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 16: Grouping Variable: Gender

## Valuing Diversity and Gender Differences

A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the valuing diversity construct of the study. Of these employees, 38 were males and 20 were females. A case summary is presented in Table 17. Histograms representing the inclusion/exclusion composite score and frequency of both males and females are shown in Figure 3 and 4 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a particular composite score. Figure 3 illustrates that of the 38 males which took part in the study; 6 achieved a composite score of 30.

Gender	Cases						
	Valid		Missing		Total		
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	
ValuingDiversity	Male	38	92.7%	3	7.3%	41	100.0%
	Female	20	83.3%	4	16.7%	24	100.0%

Table 17: Gender Valuing Diversity Composite Score

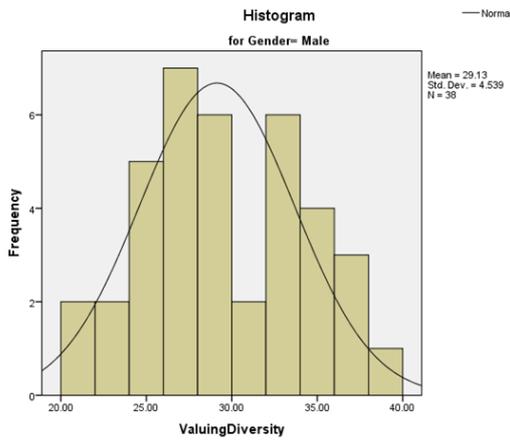


Figure 3: Valuing Diversity Male Distribution

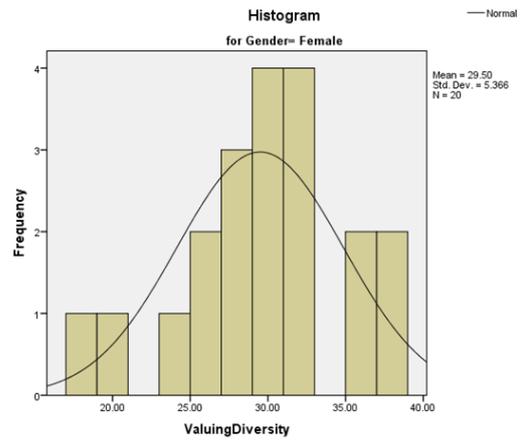


Figure 4: Valuing Diversity Female Distribution

Table 18 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for valuing diversity sample distributions of males and females.

Descriptives					
Gender		Statistic	Std. Error		
ValuingDiversity	Male	Mean	29.1316	.73635	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	27.6396	
			Upper Bound	30.6236	
		5% Trimmed Mean	29.1140		
		Median	28.0000		
		Variance	20.604		
		Std. Deviation	4.53915		
		Minimum	21.00		
		Maximum	39.00		
		Range	18.00		
		Interquartile Range	7.25		
		Skewness	.192	.383	
		Kurtosis	-.751	.750	
		Female	Female	Mean	29.5000
95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound			26.9888	
	Upper Bound			32.0112	
5% Trimmed Mean	29.6667				
Median	30.0000				
Variance	28.789				
Std. Deviation	5.36558				
Minimum	18.00				
Maximum	38.00				
Range	20.00				
Interquartile Range	5.50				
Skewness	-.403			.512	
Kurtosis	.060			.992	

Table 18: Gender Valuing Diversity Descriptive Statistics

Table 19 illustrates the tests of normality for gender valuing diversity. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the gender groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{MALE}} = .968$ ,  $df = 38$ ,  $p = .335$ ), ( $W_{\text{FEMALE}} = .962$ ,  $df = 20$ ,  $p = .594$ ).

Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ValuingDiversity Male	.151	38	.029	.968	38	.335
Female	.140	20	.200*	.962	20	.594

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 19: Gender Value Diversity Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of the male and female groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 20 and 21. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no differences between the mean rank of males ( $Mdn=28.67$ ) compared to females ( $Mdn=31.08$ ), ( $U = 348.500$ ,  $p = .605$ ) with regards to valuing diversity.

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
ValuingDiversity	Male	38	28.67	1089.50
	Female	20	31.08	621.50
	Total	58		

Table 20: Grouping Variable: Gender

	ValuingDiversity
Mann-Whitney U	348.500
Wilcoxon W	1089.500
Z	-.517
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.605

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 21: Grouping Variable: Gender

## Positive/Negative Evaluation and Gender Differences

A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the positive/negative evaluation construct of the study. Of these employees, 38 were males and 20 were females. A case summary is presented in Table 22. Histograms representing the positive/negative evaluation composite score and frequency of both males and females are shown in Figure 5 and 6 respectively. The in both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a particular composite score. Figure 6 illustrates that of the 20 females which took part in the study; 4 achieved a composite score of approximately 42.5.

	Gender	Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
PositiveNegativeEvaluations	Male	38	92.7%	3	7.3%	41	100.0%
	Female	20	83.3%	4	16.7%	24	100.0%

Table 22: Gender Positive/Negative Evaluation Composite Score

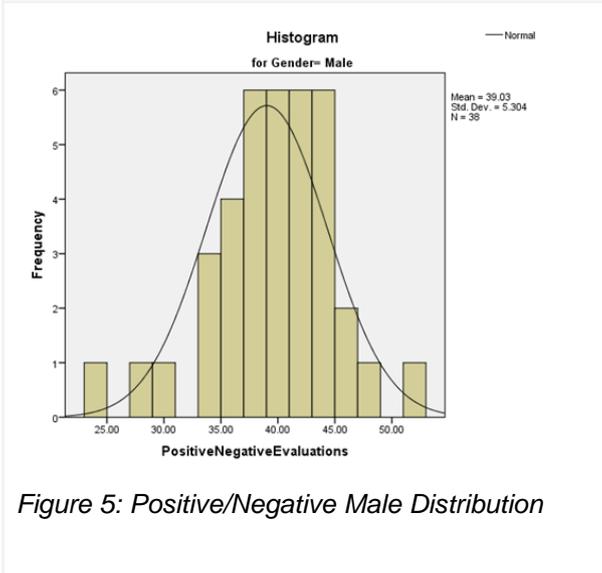


Figure 5: Positive/Negative Male Distribution

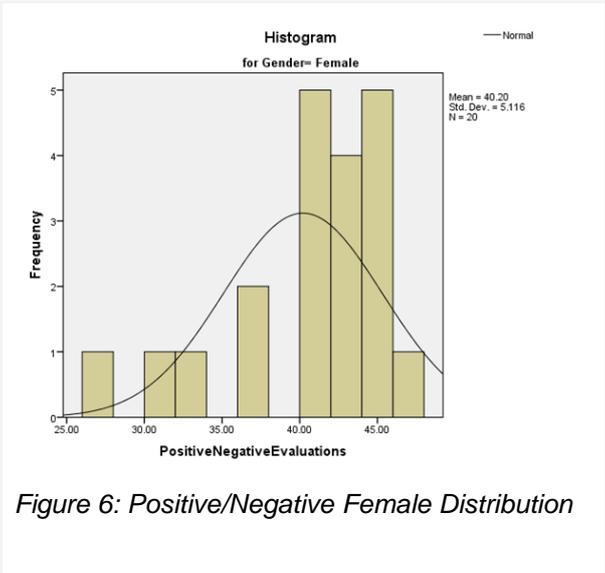


Figure 6: Positive/Negative Female Distribution

Table 23 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for positive/negative sample distributions of males and females.

Descriptives							
Gender			Statistic	Std. Error			
PositiveNegativeEvaluations	Male	Mean	39.0263	.86045			
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	37.2829			
			Upper Bound	40.7698			
		5% Trimmed Mean	39.1959				
		Median	39.0000				
		Variance	28.134				
		Std. Deviation	5.30419				
		Minimum	24.00				
		Maximum	51.00				
		Range	27.00				
		Interquartile Range	7.00				
		Skewness	-.582	.383			
		Kurtosis	1.155	.750			
		Female	Female	Mean	40.2000	1.14386	
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	37.8059	
					Upper Bound	42.5941	
				5% Trimmed Mean	40.6111		
Median	41.5000						
Variance	26.168						
Std. Deviation	5.11551						
Minimum	27.00						
Maximum	46.00						
Range	19.00						
Interquartile Range	7.00						
Skewness	-1.277			.512			
Kurtosis	1.110			.992			

Table 23: Positive/Negative Evaluation Descriptive Statistics

Table 24 illustrates the tests of normality for gender positive/negative evaluation. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the gender groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{MALE}} = .969$ ,  $df = 38$ ,  $p = .336$ ), ( $W_{\text{FEMALE}} = .867$ ,  $df = 20$ ,  $p = .010$ ).

Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.	
PositiveNegativeEvaluations	Male	.107	38	.200*	.969	38	.356
	Female	.234	20	.005	.867	20	.010

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 24: Gender Positive/Negative Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of the male and female groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 25 and 26. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no differences between the mean rank of males ( $Mdn=27.57$ ) compared to females ( $Mdn=33.18$ ), ( $U = 306.500$ ,  $p = .228$ ) with regards to positive/negative evaluations.

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
PositiveNegativeEvaluations	Male	27.57	1047.50
	Female	33.18	663.50
Total	58		

Table 25: Grouping Variable: Gender

	PositiveNegativeEvaluations
Mann-Whitney U	306.500
Wilcoxon W	1047.500
Z	-1.205
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.228

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 26: Grouping Variable: Gender

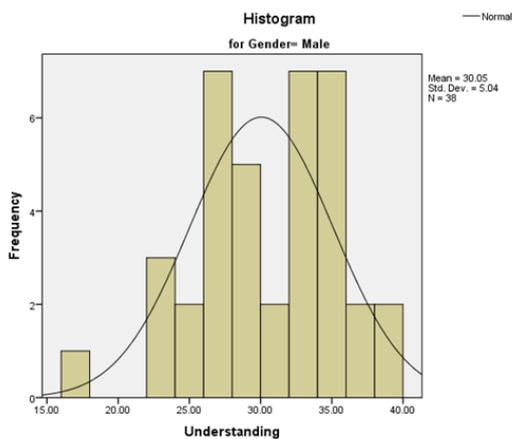
## Understanding Diversity and Gender Differences

A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the understanding construct of the study. Of these employees, 38 were males and 20 were females. A case summary is presented in Table 27. Histograms representing the understanding composite score and frequency of both males and females are shown in Figure 7 and 8 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure 7 illustrates that of the 38 males which took part in the study; 2 achieved a composite score of 25.

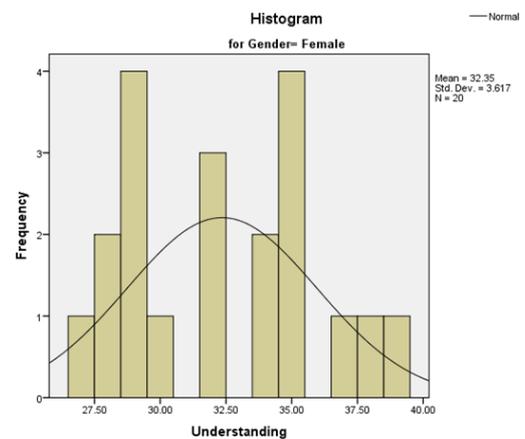
**Case Processing Summary**

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Understanding	Male	38	92.7%	3	7.3%	41	100.0%
	Female	20	83.3%	4	16.7%	24	100.0%

*Table 27: Gender Understanding Diversity Composite Score*



*Figure 7: Understanding Male Distribution*



*Figure 8: Understanding Female Distribution*

Table 28 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for understanding diversity sample distributions of males and females.

**Descriptives**

Gender			Statistic	Std. Error	
Understanding	Male	Mean	30.0526	.81761	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	28.3960	
			Upper Bound	31.7093	
		5% Trimmed Mean	30.1491		
		Median	31.0000		
		Variance	25.403		
		Std. Deviation	5.04010		
		Minimum	17.00		
		Maximum	39.00		
		Range	22.00		
		Interquartile Range	8.25		
		Skewness	-.297	.383	
		Kurtosis	-.246	.750	
	Female	Mean	32.3500	.80875	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	30.6573	
			Upper Bound	34.0427	
		5% Trimmed Mean	32.2778		
		Median	32.0000		
		Variance	13.082		
		Std. Deviation	3.61685		
Minimum		27.00			
Maximum		39.00			
Range		12.00			
Interquartile Range		6.00			
Skewness		.219	.512		
Kurtosis		-1.123	.992		

Table 28: Understanding Diversity Descriptive Statistics

Table 29 illustrates the tests of normality for understanding diversity. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the gender groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{MALE}} = .969$ ,  $df = 38$ ,  $p = .372$ ), ( $W_{\text{FEMALE}} = .935$ ,  $df = 20$ ,  $p = .189$ ).

**Tests of Normality**

Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Understanding Male	.124	38	.147	.969	38	.372
Understanding Female	.173	20	.119	.935	20	.189

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 29: Gender Positive/Negative Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of the male and female groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 30 and 31. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no differences between the mean rank of males (**Mdn=26.66**) compared to females (**Mdn=34.90**), (**U = 272.00, p = .076**) with regards to understanding diversity with an alpha value of 0.05. The null hypothesis would be rejected with an alpha value of 0.10. It could be inferred that with an alpha value of 0.10, differences exist between males and females in relation to understanding diversity.

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Understanding	Male	38	26.66	1013.00
	Female	20	34.90	698.00
	Total	58		

Table 30: Grouping Variable: Gender

	Understanding
Mann-Whitney U	272.000
Wilcoxon W	1013.000
Z	-1.775
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.076

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 31: Grouping Variable: Gender

## Diversity Awareness and Gender Differences

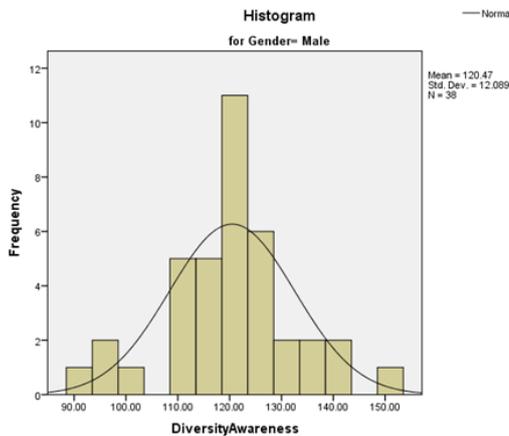
Diversity awareness encompasses the four diversity constructs. A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the diversity awareness construct of the study. Of these employees, 38 were males and 20 were females. A case summary is presented in Table 32. Histograms representing the diversity awareness composite score and frequency of both males and females are shown in Figure 9 and 10

respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure 9 illustrates that of the 38 males which took part in the study; 11 achieved a composite score of 120.

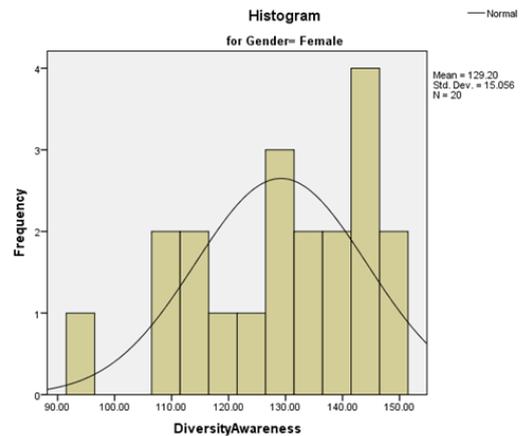
**Case Processing Summary**

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
DiversityAwareness	Male	38	92.7%	3	7.3%	41	100.0%
	Female	20	83.3%	4	16.7%	24	100.0%

*Table 32: Gender Understanding Diversity Composite Score*



*Figure 9: Diversity Awareness Male Distribution*



*Figure 10: Diversity Awareness Female Distribution*

Table 33 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for diversity awareness sample distributions of males and females.

**Descriptives**

Gender		Statistic	Std. Error		
DiversityAwareness	Male	Mean	120.4737	1.96112	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	116.5001	
			Upper Bound	124.4473	
		5% Trimmed Mean	120.4912		
		Median	122.0000		
		Variance	146.148		
		Std. Deviation	12.08917		
		Minimum	91.00		
		Maximum	152.00		
		Range	61.00		
		Interquartile Range	12.50		
		Skewness	-.083	.383	
		Kurtosis	.980	.750	
	Female	Mean	129.2000	3.36671	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	122.1534	
			Upper Bound	136.2466	
		5% Trimmed Mean	130.0000		
Median		131.5000			
Variance		226.695			
Std. Deviation		15.05639			
Minimum		94.00			
Maximum		150.00			
Range		56.00			
Interquartile Range		25.75			
Skewness		-.708	.512		
Kurtosis		-.107	.992		

Table 33: Diversity Awareness Descriptive Statistics

Table 34 illustrates the tests of normality for diversity awareness. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the gender groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{MALE}} = .973$ ,  $df = 38$ ,  $p = .471$ ), ( $W_{\text{FEMALE}} = .943$ ,  $df = 20$ ,  $p = .279$ ).

**Tests of Normality**

Gender	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
DiversityAwareness Male	.110	38	.200*	.973	38	.471
Female	.121	20	.200*	.943	20	.279

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 34: Gender Diversity Awareness Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of the male and female groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 35 and 36. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists significant differences between the mean rank of males (**Mdn=25.67**) compared to females (**Mdn=36.78**), (**U = 234.500, p = .017**) with regards to diversity awareness.

	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DiversityAwareness	Male	38	25.67	975.50
	Female	20	36.78	735.50
	Total	58		

Table 35: Grouping Variable: Gender

	DiversityAwareness
Mann-Whitney U	234.500
Wilcoxon W	975.500
Z	-2.382
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.017

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Table 36: Grouping Variable: Gender

## Workforce Diversity and Ethnicity Differences

This section presents the results of analyses of whether there are differences in employee diversity awareness depending on ethnicity. The ethnicity groups that were tested were Irish and non-Irish.

## Inclusion/Exclusion and Ethnicity Differences

A total of 60 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the inclusion/exclusion construct of the study. Of these employees, 33 were Irish and 27 were non Irish. A case summary is presented in Table 37. Histograms representing the inclusion/exclusion

composite score and frequency of both Irish and non-Irish are shown in Figure 11 and 12 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure 12 illustrates that of the 27 non Irish which took part in the study; 3 achieved a composite score of 20.

**Case Processing Summary**

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
InclusionExclusionCompositeScore	Irish	33	94.3%	2	5.7%	35	100.0%
	Non Irish	27	93.1%	2	6.9%	29	100.0%

Table 37: Inclusion/Exclusion Composite Score

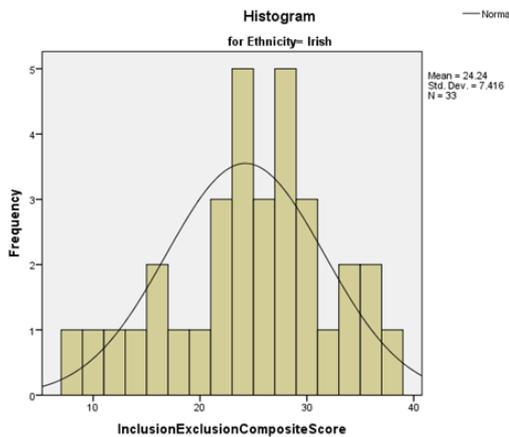


Figure 11: Inclusion/Exclusion Irish Distribution

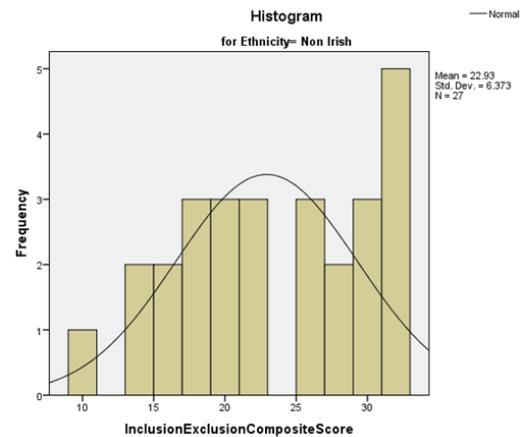


Figure 12: Inclusion/Exclusion non Irish Distribution

Table 38 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for inclusion/exclusion sample distributions of Irish and non-Irish.

**Descriptives**

Ethnicity		Statistic	Std. Error		
InclusionExclusionComp ositeScore	Irish	Mean	24.24	1.291	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	21.61	
			Upper Bound	26.87	
		5% Trimmed Mean	24.44		
		Median	25.00		
		Variance	55.002		
		Std. Deviation	7.416		
		Minimum	8		
		Maximum	37		
		Range	29		
		Interquartile Range	10		
		Skewness	-.453	.409	
		Kurtosis	-.308	.798	
	Non Irish	Mean	22.93	1.226	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	20.41	
			Upper Bound	25.45	
		5% Trimmed Mean	23.10		
		Median	22.00		
		Variance	40.610		
		Std. Deviation	6.373		
Minimum		10			
Maximum		32			
Range		22			
Interquartile Range		11			
Skewness		-.172	.448		
Kurtosis		-1.120	.872		

*Table 38: Inclusion/Exclusion Descriptive Statistics*

Table 39 illustrates the tests of normality for inclusion/exclusion. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the ethnicity groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{Irish}} = .968$ ,  $df = 33$ ,  $p = .434$ ), ( $W_{\text{non Irish}} = .940$ ,  $df = 27$ ,  $p = .121$ ).

**Tests of Normality**

Ethnicity	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.	
InclusionExclusionComp ositeScore	Irish	.100	33	.200 <sup>*</sup>	.968	33	.434
	Non Irish	.126	27	.200 <sup>*</sup>	.940	27	.121

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*Table 39: Ethnicity Inclusion/Exclusion Normality Results*

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of Irish and non-Irish groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 40 and 41. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no difference between the mean rank of Irish (**Mdn=32.08**) compared to non-Irish (**Mdn=28.57**), (**U = 393.500, p = .439**) with regards to inclusion/exclusion.

	Ethnicity	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
InclusionExclusionCompositeScore	Irish	33	32.08	1058.50
	Non Irish	27	28.57	771.50
	Total	60		

Table 40: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

	InclusionExclusionCompositeScore
Mann-Whitney U	393.500
Wilcoxon W	771.500
Z	-.774
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.439

a. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

Table 41: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

## Valuing Diversity and Ethnicity Differences

A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the valuing diversity construct of the study. Of these employees, 33 were Irish and 25 were non Irish. A case summary is presented in Table 42. Histograms representing the valuing diversity composite score and frequency of both Irish and non-Irish are shown in Figure 13 and 14 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure 13 illustrates that of the 33 Irish which took part in the study; 6 achieved a composite score of approximately 33.

**Case Processing Summary**

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
ValuingDiversity	Irish	33	94.3%	2	5.7%	35	100.0%
	Non Irish	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	29	100.0%

Table 42: Valuing Diversity Composite Score

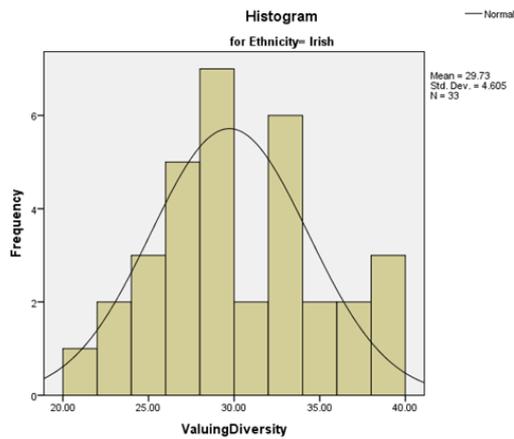


Figure 13: Valuing Diversity Irish Distribution

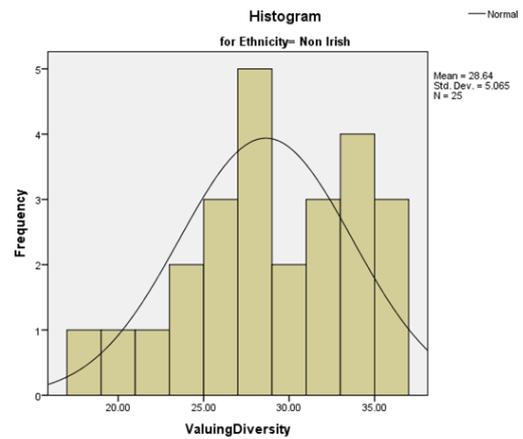


Figure 14: Valuing Diversity non Irish Distribution

Table 43 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for valuing diversity sample distributions of Irish and non-Irish.

**Descriptives**

Ethnicity		Statistic	Std. Error		
ValuingDiversity	Irish	Mean	29.7273	.80160	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	28.0945	
			Upper Bound	31.3601	
		5% Trimmed Mean	29.6751		
		Median	29.0000		
		Variance	21.205		
		Std. Deviation	4.60484		
		Minimum	21.00		
		Maximum	39.00		
		Range	18.00		
		Interquartile Range	5.50		
		Skewness	.319	.409	
		Kurtosis	-.526	.798	
	Non Irish	Mean	28.6400	1.01305	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	26.5492	
			Upper Bound	30.7308	
		5% Trimmed Mean	28.8000		
		Median	28.0000		
		Variance	25.657		
Std. Deviation		5.06524			
Minimum		18.00			
Maximum		36.00			
Range		18.00			
Interquartile Range		8.00			
Skewness		-.375	.464		
Kurtosis		-.662	.902		

Table 43: Valuing Diversity Descriptive Statistics

Table 44 illustrates the tests of normality for valuing diversity. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the ethnicity groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{Irish}} = .967$ ,  $df = 33$ ,  $p = .391$ ), ( $W_{\text{non Irish}} = .963$ ,  $df = 25$ ,  $p = .472$ ).

**Tests of Normality**

Ethnicity		Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ValuingDiversity	Irish	.131	33	.162	.967	33	.391
	Non Irish	.106	25	.200 <sup>*</sup>	.963	25	.472

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 44: Ethnicity Valuing Diversity Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of Irish and non-Irish groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 45 and 46. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no difference between the mean rank of Irish (**Mdn=30.62**) compared to non-Irish (**Mdn=28.02**), (**U = 375.500, p = .560**) with regards to valuing diversity.

Ethnicity		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
ValuingDiversity	Irish	33	30.62	1010.50
	Non Irish	25	28.02	700.50
	Total	58		

Table 45: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

	ValuingDiversity
Mann-Whitney U	375.500
Wilcoxon W	700.500
Z	-.583
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.560

a. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

Table 46: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

## Positive/Negative Evaluations and Ethnicity Differences

A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the positive/negative evaluation construct of the study. Of these employees, 33 were Irish and 25 were non Irish. A case summary is presented in Table 47. Histograms representing the positive/negative evaluation composite score and frequency of both Irish and non-Irish are shown in Figure 15 and 16 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure

15 illustrates that of the 33 Irish which took part in the study; 3 achieved a composite score of approximately 39.

**Case Processing Summary**

		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
PositiveNegativeEvaluations	Irish	33	94.3%	2	5.7%	35	100.0%
	Non Irish	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	29	100.0%

Table 47: Valuing Diversity Composite Score

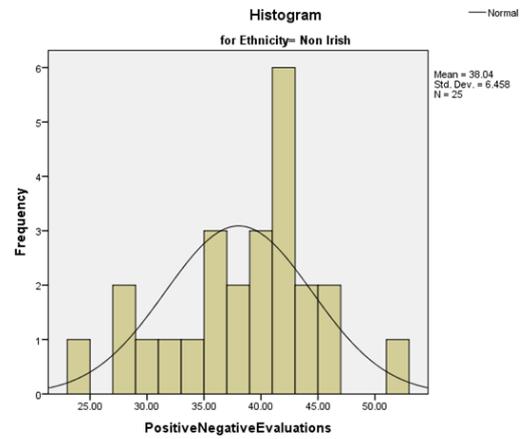
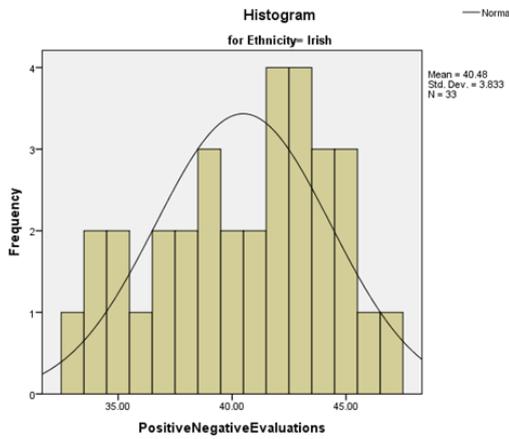


Figure 15: Positive/Negative Evaluations Irish Distribution

Figure 16: Positive/Negative Evaluations non Irish Distribution

Table 48 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for positive/negative evaluation sample distributions of Irish and non-Irish.

**Descriptives**

Ethnicity		Statistic	Std. Error		
Positive/Negative Evaluations	Irish	Mean	40.4848	.66731	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	39.1256	
			Upper Bound	41.8441	
		5% Trimmed Mean	40.5387		
		Median	41.0000		
		Variance	14.695		
		Std. Deviation	3.83342		
		Minimum	33.00		
		Maximum	47.00		
		Range	14.00		
	Interquartile Range	6.00			
	Skewness	-.344	.409		
	Kurtosis	-.878	.798		
	Non Irish	Mean	38.0400	1.29161	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	35.3742	
			Upper Bound	40.7058	
		5% Trimmed Mean	38.1222		
		Median	39.0000		
		Variance	41.707		
		Std. Deviation	6.45807		
Minimum		24.00			
Maximum		51.00			
Range		27.00			
Interquartile Range	7.50				
Skewness	-.467	.464			
Kurtosis	-.001	.902			

Table 48: Positive/Negative Evaluation Descriptive Statistics

Table 49 illustrates the tests of normality for positive/negative evaluation. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the ethnicity groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{Irish}} = .958$ ,  $df = 33$ ,  $p = .226$ ), ( $W_{\text{non Irish}} = .960$ ,  $df = 25$ ,  $p = .413$ ).

**Tests of Normality**

Ethnicity	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk			
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.	
Positive/Negative Evaluations	Irish	.139	33	.109	.958	33	.226
	Non Irish	.138	25	.200 <sup>*</sup>	.960	25	.413

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 49: Positive/Negative Evaluation Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of Irish and non-Irish groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 50 and 51. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no difference between the mean rank of Irish (**Mdn=32.38**) compared to non-Irish (**Mdn=25.70, (U = 317.500, p = .135)**) with regards to positive/negative evaluations.

	Ethnicity	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Positive/Negative Evaluations	Irish	33	32.38	1068.50
	Non Irish	25	25.70	642.50
	Total	58		

Table 50: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

	Positive/Negative Evaluations
Mann-Whitney U	317.500
Wilcoxon W	642.500
Z	-1.495
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.135

a. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

Table 51: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

## Understanding Diversity and Ethnicity Differences

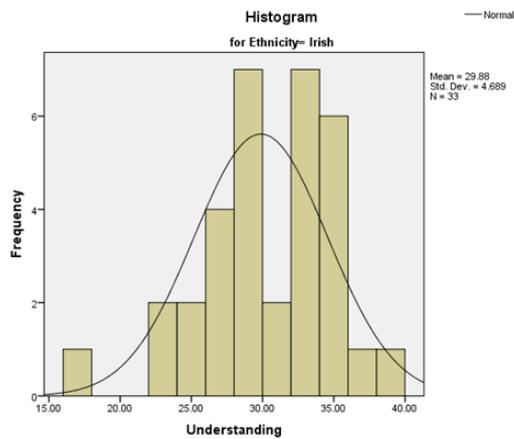
A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the understanding diversity construct of the study. Of these employees, 33 were Irish and 25 were non Irish. A case summary is presented in Table 52. Histograms representing the understanding diversity composite score and frequency of both Irish and non-Irish are shown in Figure 17 and 18 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure

17 illustrates that of the 33 Irish which took part in the study; 6 achieved a composite score of 35.

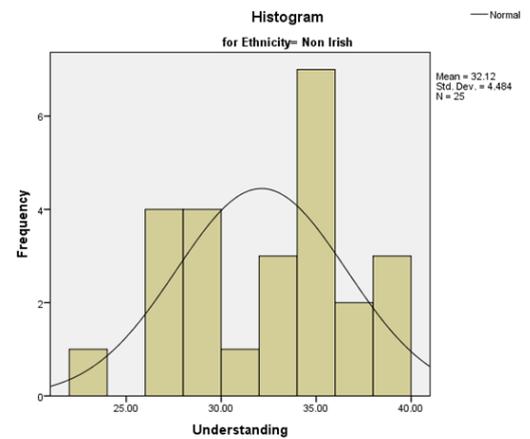
**Case Processing Summary**

Ethnicity		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Understanding	Irish	33	94.3%	2	5.7%	35	100.0%
	Non Irish	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	29	100.0%

*Table 52: Understanding Diversity Composite Score*



*Figure 17: Understanding Irish Distribution*



*Figure 18: Understanding non Irish Distribution*

Table 53 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for understanding diversity sample distributions of Irish and non-Irish.

**Descriptives**

Ethnicity				Statistic	Std. Error
Understanding	Irish	Mean		29.8788	.81622
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	28.2162	
			Upper Bound	31.5414	
		5% Trimmed Mean		30.0219	
		Median		30.0000	
		Variance		21.985	
		Std. Deviation		4.68880	
		Minimum		17.00	
		Maximum		39.00	
		Range		22.00	
	Interquartile Range		7.00		
	Skewness		-.492	.409	
	Kurtosis		.486	.798	
	Non Irish	Mean		32.1200	.89688
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	30.2689	
			Upper Bound	33.9711	
		5% Trimmed Mean		32.2111	
		Median		33.0000	
		Variance		20.110	
		Std. Deviation		4.48442	
Minimum		23.00			
Maximum		39.00			
Range		16.00			
Interquartile Range		7.00			
Skewness		-.264	.464		
Kurtosis		-.939	.902		

*Table 53: Understanding Diversity Descriptive Statistics*

Table 54 illustrates the tests of normality for understanding diversity. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the ethnicity groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{Irish}} = .974$ ,  $df = 33$ ,  $p = .607$ ), ( $W_{\text{non Irish}} = .951$ ,  $df = 25$ ,  $p = .266$ ).

**Tests of Normality**

Ethnicity	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Understanding Irish	.129	33	.178	.974	33	.607
Non Irish	.142	25	.200*	.951	25	.266

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

*Table 54: Understanding Diversity Normality Results*

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of Irish and non-Irish groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 55 and 56. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no differences between the mean rank of Irish (**Mdn=26.12**) compared to non-Irish (**Mdn=33.96**), (**U = 301.000, p = .079**) with regards to understanding diversity with an alpha value of 0.05. The null hypothesis would be rejected with an alpha value of 0.10. It could be inferred that with an alpha value of 0.10, differences exist between Irish and non-Irish in relation to understanding diversity.

	Ethnicity	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Understanding	Irish	33	26.12	862.00
	Non Irish	25	33.96	849.00
	Total	58		

Table 55: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

	Understanding
Mann-Whitney U	301.000
Wilcoxon W	862.000
Z	-1.759
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.079

a. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

Table 56: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

## Diversity Awareness and Ethnicity Differences

A total of 58 employees from 'Division A' of 'Organisation X' took part in answering the diversity awareness construct of the study. Of these employees, 33 were Irish and 25 were non Irish. A case summary is presented in Table 57. Histograms representing the diversity awareness composite score and frequency of both Irish and non-Irish are shown in Figure 19 and 20 respectively. In both figures, the horizontal axis represents the composite score of employees. The vertical axis depicts the number of employees that achieved a certain composite score. Figure

17 illustrates that of the 33 Irish which took part in the study; 7 achieved a composite score of 120.

**Case Processing Summary**

Ethnicity		Cases					
		Valid		Missing		Total	
		N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
DiversityAwareness	Irish	33	94.3%	2	5.7%	35	100.0%
	Non Irish	25	86.2%	4	13.8%	29	100.0%

Table 57: Diversity Awareness Composite Score

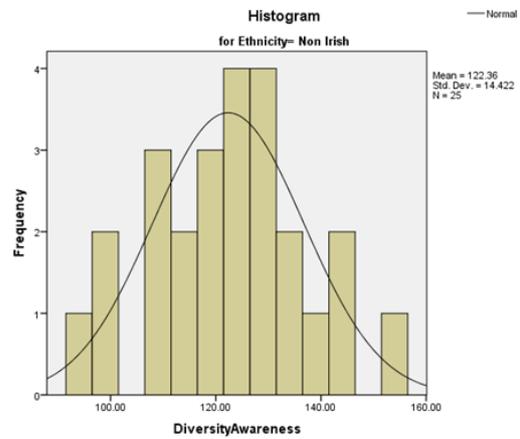
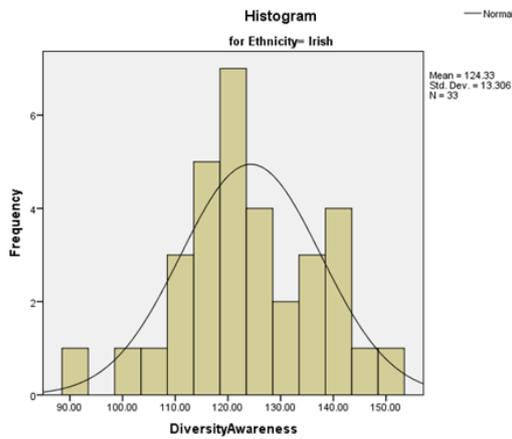


Figure 19: Diversity Awareness Irish Distribution

Figure 20: Diversity awareness non Irish Distribution

Table 58 shows all relevant descriptive statistics for diversity awareness sample distributions of Irish and non Irish.

**Descriptives**

Ethnicity		Statistic	Std. Error		
DiversityAwareness	Irish	Mean	124.3333	2.31623	
		95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	119.6153	
			Upper Bound	129.0513	
		5% Trimmed Mean	124.5404		
		Median	123.0000		
		Variance	177.042		
		Std. Deviation	13.30570		
		Minimum	91.00		
		Maximum	150.00		
		Range	59.00		
		Interquartile Range	19.00		
		Skewness	-.070	.409	
		Kurtosis	.057	.798	
		Non Irish	Mean	122.3600	2.88437
			95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	116.4069
	Upper Bound			128.3131	
5% Trimmed Mean	122.3667				
Median	123.0000				
Variance	207.990				
Std. Deviation	14.42186				
Minimum	94.00				
Maximum	152.00				
Range	58.00				
Interquartile Range	19.00				
Skewness	-.171		.464		
Kurtosis	-.099		.902		

Table 58: Diversity Awareness Descriptive Statistics

Table 59 illustrates the tests of normality for diversity awareness. As the group tested had a Shapiro-Wilk significance score of greater than 0.05, it was deemed that the ethnicity groups were not normal. Non-parametric tests were chosen as they are used when groups are deemed not to be normal and heterogeneous. The results indicated that both groups deviated significantly from normality ( $W_{\text{Irish}} = .980$ ,  $df = 33$ ,  $p = .796$ ), ( $W_{\text{non Irish}} = .978$ ,  $df = 25$ ,  $p = .842$ ).

**Tests of Normality**

Ethnicity		Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
DiversityAwareness	Irish	.087	33	.200*	.980	33	.796
	Non Irish	.115	25	.200*	.978	25	.842

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Table 59: Diversity Awareness Normality Results

As the groups deviated from normality, it was deemed appropriate to rely upon the Mann-Whitney U test. This test was used to see if there were significant differences between the mean ranks of Irish and non-Irish groups. The null hypothesis attributed to the Mann-Whitney U test being that no difference exists between the mean ranks of the groups. The results of the test are displayed in Tables 60 and 61. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicate that there exists no difference between the mean rank of Irish (**Mdn=30.15**) compared to non-Irish (**Mdn=28.64**, (**U = 391.0**, **p = .736**) with regards to diversity awareness.

	Ethnicity	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DiversityAwareness	Irish	33	30.15	995.00
	Non Irish	25	28.64	716.00
	Total	58		

Table 60: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

	DiversityAwareness
Mann-Whitney U	391.000
Wilcoxon W	716.000
Z	-.338
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.736

a. Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

Table 61: Grouping Variable: Ethnicity

## Chapter 4. Discussion

In this section, the findings of this research study will be discussed. Where possible, links will be made between the findings of this study and the literature present in the literature review of this paper. Important findings will be emphasised and discussed with relation to previous studies and knowledge in the subject area. Inferences will be made in relation to whether the study findings are support, contradict or indeed disprove previous literature and research surrounding workforce diversity. The study research limitations and possible future research will also be presented in this section.

'When we use the term diversity, we are talking about differences among people, including their age, gender, race, religion, cultural background, education, mental and physical disabilities, sexual orientation, and so on.' (Hitt, Black and Porter, 2009). The primary research of this study was to explore staff awareness of workforce diversity within one division of an organisation's premises.

The primary research instrumentation used in the study was the Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II. The questionnaire comprises of four constructs which represent a cultural workforce diversity dimension. As this research study primarily focused on cultural workforce diversity, a discussion on the findings of employee workforce diversity awareness and ethnicity differences will be emphasised. The findings will be linked back to previous research which has taken place. The study findings for the individual constructs of the WDQ II will initially be discussed, followed by overall diversity awareness. Following this, the study results for overall diversity awareness and gender differences will be discussed.

## **Diversity Awareness and Ethnicity Differences**

Managing diversity can be interpreted 'as an approach to fair treatment that encourages employees to harness and value a wide range of visible differences in their employees.' (Foster and Harris, 2005).

The study results state that no workforce diversity awareness difference exists between Irish (majority) and non-Irish employees (minority). This may be due to several factors, one of which being the inclusiveness and positive workforce diversity culture that exists within the research organisation. (Currie, 2006) states that increased immigration has increased the size of the talent pool from which firms must source employees. It can be argued that 'Organisation X' is capitalising on increased immigration of skilled workers entering the Irish labour force. (Currie, 2006) states that increased migration has helped alleviate skills shortages.

According to (Wheeler, 1997), (McLeod, Lobel and Cox, 1996; Watson, Kumar and Michaelson, 1993), (Carberry and Cross, 2013), and (Hitt et al, 2009) workforce diversity is a positive force which increases innovation, creativity, and ultimately adds value to the organisation. To the contrary (Shore, Chung-Herrera, Dean, Ehrhart, Jung, Randel and Singh, 2008) found that studies into workforce diversity concluded that there were more negative findings than positive findings. 'Race/ethnicity diversity effects in relation to performance yielded seven positive, eight negative and 20 null findings. Similar to Joshi and Roh's review, (Webber and Donahue (2001) in their meta-analysis of 24 studies found that demographic diversity (including race/ethnicity) had no relationship with team cohesion or performance.' (Shore, Chung-Herrera, Dean, Ehrhart, Jung, Randel and Singh, 2008). The findings of these studies suggest that the true relationship between cultural diversity within teams and team cohesion may still be inconclusive. As with racial diversity, studies regarding cultural diversity within teams and whether it improves individual and team

performance have also been inconclusive and inconsistent (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Early & Mosakowski, 2000; Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992).

The findings of this study suggest that employees from both ethnicity groups feel that workforce diversity enables them to perform better within their team. Increased productivity within workgroups should inevitably lead to greater organisational performance. As well as benefiting from increased performance, the organisation may also benefit from reduced costs due to a reduced turnover of staff. This is consistent with (Gill, 1996) and (Pradeepa and Rajendran, 2013), who state that as a result of reduced employee turnover, the firm will incur less recruitment costs and management will therefore need to commit less time in the recruitment process. The findings of this study suggest that there is no difference between workforce diversity awareness and ethnicity. It can be interpreted that employees are satisfied with workforce diversity in the organisation. This should result in reduced employee turnover as mentioned above.

According to (Hofthuis et al, 2013) a minority groups attitudes or behaviour may be strongly influenced by a majority group. 'Empirical studies have shown that the majority's attitude towards diversity is a strong predictor of minority members' sense of acceptance, and that a positive attitude is beneficial for intergroup contact.' (Hofthuis Van der Zee and Otten, 2012; Tropp and Bianchi, 2006; Tropp, Stout, Boatswain, Wright and Pettigrew, 2006). As both ethnic groups scored highly in the inclusion/exclusion diversity construct it can be assessed that majority employees of 'Organisation X' are accepting and inclusive. According to (Hofthuis et al, 2013) the attitudes of the minority employees will reflect the attitude of the majority employees. Majority employees of 'Organisation X' are not concerned with the perceived threats that workforce diversity poses to them as stated by (Antwi-Boasiako, 2008). As stated by (Antwi-Boasiako, 2008), majority employees may feel that an increased level of majority employees poses a threat to career progression.

The majority of research conducted into workforce diversity has found that it adds value to the organisation. As mentioned above, there are academics which feel that workforce diversity does not add value or its effects are too complex to measure to provide conclusive answers.

### **Inclusion/Exclusion Construct**

The study results of the inclusion/exclusion diversity construct state that there is no difference between the perceptions of Irish and non-Irish employees.

The questionnaire results state there is no difference between Irish and non-Irish groups. Irish participants had a mean score of 24.24 while non-Irish participants had a mean score of 22.93. The maximum score for the inclusion/exclusion construct was 42 with a lower score being more praising of the organisation for the construct. As both groups mean scores were neutral in nature, it can be determined that both groups were satisfied with the inclusive nature of the organisation.

The research organisation is a global company which has operations in many countries around the world. 'Not only are workforces becoming increasingly diverse, but globalization is increasingly causing multinational companies to hire a more diverse set of employees.' (Hitt et al, 2009). It can be argued that 'Organisation X' has vast experience when it comes to managing culturally diverse workforces. As reported by (Wheeler, 1997), managing diversity is an important part of a manager's job. There is no magic formula for doing so and it must be done on a daily basis. In consonance with (Hitt et al, 2007), (Wheeler, 1997) believes that the value of workforce diversity cannot be overlooked. Workforce diversity, if not managed correctly can result in negative consequences for the organisation. As the mean score for both ethnicity groups imply satisfaction with the inclusion/exclusion construct, it can be argued that management are adequately managing workforce diversity.

'Department A' within 'Organisation X' has three non-Irish junior managers which can be classified as minority employees. These managers have been promoted from within the company. This sends out a strong message to staff that employees, whether majority or minority have the same prospects and that a meritocracy is in place. Organisations that have a history of fostering diversity have created a culture in which it can thrive. 'Managing diversity and equal opportunities are linked in practice, with a managing diversity initiative developing and complimenting approaches to equal opportunities.' (Maxwell, 2003).

### **Valuing Diversity Construct**

'It is well established that, over time, heterogeneous groups outperform homogeneous groups. They are better at problem solving, better at decision-making, and better at generating creative ideas; different points of view engender better ideas as well as better approaches and methods.' (Wheeler, 1997). Studies performed by (McLeod et al, 1996; Watson, et al, 1993) are consistent with (Hitt et al, 2009) that heterogeneous teams are better at making decisions than those which are homogeneous.

The maximum score for the valuing diversity construct is 42 (7 questions each with a highest possible score of 6). The higher a participant scored in this construct, the more they felt that workforce diversity adds value. Employees mean scores in the valuing diversity construct were 29.72 (Irish) and 28.64 (non-Irish). Employees surveyed therefore acknowledge that workforce diversity adds value to workgroups and ultimately the organisation. The perceptions of employees are in keeping with previous research conducted by (Bassett-Jones, 2005) and (Foster and Harris, 2005). (Bassett-Jones, 2005) argues that managers face a paradox in relation to diversity. Successful diversity practices can lead to increased innovation and creation, which in turn can create a competitive advantage for the firm. (Foster and Harris, 2005) make the point that an organisation

can establish a competitive advantage brought about by successfully managing individual differences.

By promoting minority workers, 'Organisation X' is portraying a message of valuing workforce diversity and building an inclusive workforce. It can be argued that the primary reason the organisation is building a diverse workforce is due to the potential benefits mentioned by (Wheeler, 1997; McLeod et al, 1996; Watson et al, 1993; Hitt et al, 2009).

As 'Organisation X' is aware of the benefits of having a diverse workforce, it could be argued that the company has set about hiring more minority employees. As the organisation has such a diverse labour force in the research location, the ratio of majority and minority employees has been reduced and may be classed as insignificant. By having a very diverse workforce, the 'Organisation X' may be perceived as promoting equality. 'Workforce diversity can be defined as 'an approach to workforce equality that draws its distinctiveness largely from its focus on equality through difference rather than sameness.' (Gagnon and Cornelius, 2002). Employees may see themselves as all being equal in the working environment. This is the primary aim of workforce diversity according to (Gagnon and Cornelius, 2002).

### **Positive/Negative Evaluations**

The study results stated that there was no difference between the two ethnicity groups relating to positive/negative evaluations of diversity. The mean score for Irish participants was 40.48 and 38.37 for non-Irish participants. This questionnaire construct consisted of nine questions. Six of the questions were positive statements about the employee's workgroup or organisation. The remaining three questions were negative statements of the same nature. As both groups scored highly in this construct, it can be stated that they feel the positives of workforce diversity outweigh the negatives. A report published by (Hofthuis et al, 2013) found

that employees that are exposed to a strong diversity climate within the organisation perceive a more positive than negative view of diversity.

### **Understanding Diversity**

The study results stated that there was no difference between the two ethnicity groups relating to understanding of diversity. The mean score for Irish participants was 29.87 and 32.12 for non-Irish participants. The understanding diversity construct consisted of seven questions. Participants that scored highly were considered to have a greater understanding about workforce diversity. Both ethnicity groups scored highly which states that they have a good understanding of workforce diversity. This states that majority employees are willing to learn about other cultural backgrounds within their workgroup. They understand that increased awareness of cultural norms may enable them to be more effective at their job.

### **Diversity Awareness and Gender Differences**

As mentioned by (Hitt et al,2009), gender is another important aspect of workforce diversity. 'Despite their high participation rate in the workforce overall and in business in particular, women have been underrepresented in managerial positions. Some people refer to this phenomenon as hitting the "glass ceiling," meaning that women can "see" into the executive ranks, but an invisible barrier prevents them from being promoted in proportion to their representation in the workforce.' (Hitt et al, 2009). The results of this study's test into employee workforce diversity awareness and gender found that there was a significant difference between males and females.

(Moody et al, 2003) stresses the importance of diversity in the workforce. 'Without women on IT development teams, technology pursuits may focus more on doing things faster, and less on doing new things.' (Moody et al,

2003). This statement relates to the different traits that men and women possess. 'Culturally diverse IT teams are certainly necessary, as globalization becomes reality in today's workplace.' (Moody et al, 2003). This is consistent with the (Hitt et al, 2009) view that globalisation is causing organisations to hire a more diverse workforce.

In the inclusion/exclusion diversity construct, there existed a significant difference in the mean scores of males (22.10) and females (26.52). These results state that women feel that 'Organisation X' is more inclusive than their male counterparts. No difference existed between males and females for the other three diversity constructs. The inclusion/exclusion construct focuses on discrimination. Males feel that more discrimination is present in the organisation than females.

According to (Miller, 1986; Morrison, White & Von Velsor, 1987) women may perceive that organisations create barriers such as the "glass ceiling" and a culture in which women find it difficult to get a promotion. (Fierman, 1990; Sayers, 1995) mention that women generally feel that the organisation is less inclusive because their male counterparts are paid more and hold positions which command greater power. This is not the case with female employees of 'Organisation X'.

Other studies into employee perceptions of workforce diversity have contradicting results to this study's findings. A similar study into this topic conducted by (Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkman, 1998) found differences in the perceptions between gender groups. 'Men perceived the organizational dimension more favorably (more fair and inclusive) than did women, whereas women viewed the personal dimension more favorably (more value in diversity programs) than did men.' (Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkman, 1998). With respect to ethnicity, 'Caucasians saw the organization as more fair and more inclusive of women and ethnic minorities than did all other groups, with African Americans viewing the organization least favorably of all other groups.' (Mor Barak, Cherin and

Berkman, 1998). These findings contradict the results of this study. This study's finding stated that no workforce diversity perception difference existed between ethnic groups.

It can be argued that each organisation is unique and therefore there may not be consistency between the findings of different research studies on this topic. The research conducted by (Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkman, 1998) took place in an electronics organisation and encompassed the entire organisation. There may have been a greater number of minority employees in lower roles than majority employees which may have influenced the study's findings. This study took place in 'Division A' of 'Organisation X', a financial services company. All employees within 'Division A' were carrying out similar roles which may have meant employees felt that they were all equal and therefore workforce diversity had less significance. Perhaps the workforce diversity perceptions of staff will change depending on the sector and roles that are being carried out.

### **Research Limitations**

Although the research study achieved its goals, there were a number of limitations that the research had to overcome. There were significant time constraints that the researcher faced while conducting this research study. The researcher had initially chosen a different organisation which was in a different industry. After it became apparent that it would not be possible to conduct the research study in the initial organisation, the researcher began the task of searching for an alternative organisation. Significant time was lost due to the researcher awaiting approval which did not come to fruition.

Additional time was lost while attempting to gain research approval in 'Organisation X'. The bureaucratic nature of the organisation meant that approval needed to be sought from various levels of management and departments within the wider organisation. Permission was granted for

'Division A' only, a productivity loss being sighted as the reason the sample was constrained to this division. Due to time limitations, it was not possible for the researcher to conduct a pilot study.

A larger sample size would have been preferred as this would have ensured more consistent findings. In the initial questionnaire draft, the researcher requested that employees state if they held a managerial position with the aim of using this as a grouping variable. This request was declined and the questionnaire was amended to request the gender, age group, and ethnicity of participants.

The effects of the limitations faced by the researcher may have been reduced if additional organisations were targeted as potential research organisations. The probability of acceptance would have increased and time constraints that were incurred may have been alleviated.

## Chapter 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this research study was to explore the benefits and limitations that workforce diversity poses to organisations and employees; what are the perceptions of employees towards workforce diversity; are the findings of the research into employee perceptions of workforce diversity consistent with those of previous studies? Employee perceptions of workforce diversity are potentially influenced by the organization's culture and how it manages diversity.

The main benefits of workforce diversity that were discovered were increased employee creativity, innovation, and problem solving. When diversity is correctly managed, the organisation should benefit from increased performance. On the contrary, workforce diversity, when not managed correctly can create conflict within the organisation and be of less benefit than if the workforce diversity initiative was not implemented. The significant findings of this study were that no workforce diversity awareness difference existed between the ethnicity groups and a difference existed between the gender groups. The findings of this study were compared with those of previous studies. This study's findings contradicted those of previous studies which lead the researcher to conclude that as both studies were case studies, different results were highly possible. This is because all organisations and workforces are unique.

The findings of this research study may be of benefit to 'Organisation X' as it would give them a good insight to their employee awareness of workforce diversity. The organisation could conduct this study in its other global locations. A better understanding could lead to an improved diversity management strategy. Financial implications would include a productivity loss as employees would have to take approximately ten minutes of their time to complete the questionnaire. The organisation

would also need to seek permission from Larkey for the use of the WDQ II and may have to pay a fee. By improving its diversity management, the organisation could potentially benefit from reduced staff turnover, which would lead to increased cost saving as recruitment and training are costly. The data from this study may be of benefit to other researchers and academics that are conducting research into this topic.

There are future research possibilities on this topic. The Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II could be used in a much larger diversity awareness study. A large scale study could be conducted, one in which the population sample consisted of multiple large organisations within Ireland. A study of this nature could yield valuable findings surrounding workforce diversity. Legislators could potentially be able to determine whether current equality and discrimination legislation is adequate or a new approach is required.

# Appendix

## Workforce Diversity Questionnaire II

8/29/2015

C.R.I.L.T Surveys - Understanding Workforce Diversity

### Understanding Workforce Diversity

This survey is being conducted as part of an MSc in Management dissertation focusing on workforce diversity. The aim of the survey is to assess employees' perceptions of workforce diversity.

This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The survey comprises of 6 sections and a number of sub-questions. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

There are 8 questions in this survey

#### Respondent Details

This short section will ask you to provide your: gender; age and ethnicity.

##### 1 [ITM1] Please specify your gender: \*

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Female
- Male

##### 2 [ITM2] Please specify your age: \*

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- 18 - 25
- 26 - 35
- 36 - 45
- 46 - 55
- 55+

##### 3 [ITM3] Please specify your ethnicity \*

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- White Irish
- White non Irish
- Black Irish
- Black non Irish
- Asian Irish
- Asian non Irish
- Mixed race
- Other

## Section 2 of 6

### 4 [ITM4] Please indicate your response to the following questions: \*

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
People in some groups are disrespectful because they are different.	<input type="radio"/>					
Sometimes people who talk and act differently are treated like they aren't capable or smart.	<input type="radio"/>					
There are people in our group who have a hard time accepting ideas when they are offered by someone who is different.	<input type="radio"/>					
When people begin working on a problem from different cultural perspectives, they have a hard time seeing each other's point of view.	<input type="radio"/>					
When people from different backgrounds work together in groups, some people feel hurt and upset because their ideas are not acknowledged.	<input type="radio"/>					
People get ahead in this organisation by using connections and not based on what they know.	<input type="radio"/>					
Diversity issues keep some work groups from performing at their maximum effectiveness.	<input type="radio"/>					

### Section 3 of 6

#### 5 [ITM5] Please indicate your response to the following questions: \*

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
When people have a different culture, background, or style, they take time to explain and try to understand the other's point of view.	<input type="radio"/>					
When people in our group take offence or miscommunication occurs, they sit down and talk about the differences until they understand each other.	<input type="radio"/>					
Employees share their knowledge and expertise with other employees regardless of ethnicity or race.	<input type="radio"/>					
We all seem to learn and grow from our differences.	<input type="radio"/>					
When someone is timid or hesitant to state his/her idea, others will point it out and ask for his/her opinion.	<input type="radio"/>					
People in our work group don't notice culture or ethnicity differences because they think we are all the same.	<input type="radio"/>					
People's habits or ways of thinking may be different because of their background, but when it comes to working we're pretty much the same.	<input type="radio"/>					

## Section 4 of 6

### 6 [ITM6] Please indicate your response to the following questions: \*

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	slightly disagree	slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
People of the same ethnicity or cultural background tend to look out for each other.	<input type="radio"/>					
With many people from different cultural backgrounds, you don't know where you stand.	<input type="radio"/>					
If I were having difficulties, I know members of my work group would try to help me.	<input type="radio"/>					
Most of the people in my work group can be relied on to do what they say they'll do.	<input type="radio"/>					
I can trust people I work with to lend me a hand if I need it.	<input type="radio"/>					
I feel confident that my organisation will always try to treat me fairly.	<input type="radio"/>					
My organisation is honest in its attempts to understand employee's point of view.	<input type="radio"/>					

## Section 5 of 6

### 7 [ITM7] Please indicate your response to the following questions: \*

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel like it's up to me to adjust to others when their race or ethnicity presents differences in styles or characteristics.	<input type="radio"/>					
Working with employees from different cultural backgrounds makes me reconsider how I approach things.	<input type="radio"/>					
I go out of my way to learn about others' cultural backgrounds, traditions, and points of view.	<input type="radio"/>					
Knowing more about cultural norm and diverse groups would help me to be more effective in my job.	<input type="radio"/>					
I think that diverse viewpoints add value to our team, work group, and organisation.	<input type="radio"/>					
I can enjoy being with people whose race ethnicity, or cultural background is very different than mine.	<input type="radio"/>					
I believe employees of different cultural backgrounds should adopt the values and lifestyles of the main culture.	<input type="radio"/>					

## Section 6 of 6

### 8 [ITM8] Please indicate your response to the following questions: \*

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe that my organisation considers affirmative action, discrimination law, and diversity related literature in their decision making process.	<input type="radio"/>					
I believe that my organisation is affected by affirmative action, discrimination, and diversity related literature.	<input type="radio"/>					

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