



Griffith College

**The necessity for leaders to be inclusive and how they  
manage workplace diversity: a case study of McDonald's -  
Dublin**



Research dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of

**MSc in Accounting and Finance Management**

Griffith College Dublin

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**22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020**

## Candidate Declaration

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I certify that the dissertation entitled:

submitted for the degree of: **MSc in Accounting and Finance Management** is the result of the my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

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## **Dedication**

To God, who gave me this opportunity and wisdom to develop this Thesis.

To Saint Rita of Cascia, the saint of impossible cases.

To my mother, father and brother that even so far away, always are praying for me and sending positive thoughts.

## **Acknowledgments**

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## **Abstract**

### **The necessity for leaders to be inclusive and how they manage workplace diversity: A case study of McDonald's – Dublin**

*Fabíola Trindade Amorim Brito*

In recent years, there has been increased interest in the topic of diversity among large corporations across the globe. Some studies have focused on workplace diversity and inclusion, but research and literature concerning diversity management and inclusive leadership are still under development.

The purpose of this study was to explore how leaders are managing a diverse workforce and to highlight the importance of being an inclusive leader. This study examined in detail the diversity management practices of a McDonald's in Dublin, stressing the challenges faced by leaders and the positive benefits that a diverse workforce can bring to the organization.

The researcher carried out semi-structured interviews with nine respondents from the management team in McDonalds in Dublin.

The results demonstrated that the incorporation of LMX and Emotional Intelligence theory can be the key to managing diversity successfully. Other strategies are identified for McDonald's to improve their procedures and practices.

**Keywords:** inclusive leader, diverse workforce, diversity management, management practices, workplace diversity.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

The increase of diversity in workforces is visible around the world. People from different ages, cultures, genders, religions, and others are doing their tasks on the same platform. The diversity of the workforce has become a meaningful aspect of any organisation, as well as a challenge (Majid Makhdoomi and Ahmad Nika, 2017). In order to address this demand, it is crucial that diversity management is implemented in an organisation, to provide valuable support for inclusion, with the objective of providing equal access to employees (Pilati et al., 2015).

The accelerated globalisation in the modern world means that there is a need for dynamic approaches instead of rigorous and inflexible processes. A dynamic approach is the right approach. Bennis and Nanus (1997), as cited in Wuffli, (2015) affirm: “Managers are people who do things rights, while leaders are people who do the right things.” Based on this concept, leaders at the top of an organisation play a vital role (Wuffli, 2015). Leaders who are inclusive know to listen and accept suggestions from the employees and to demonstrate empathy for their team. Inclusive leaders are reporting better engagement scores than leaders who maintain traditional leadership styles (Moss, 2019).

The present research topic is as follows: “The necessity for leaders to be inclusive and how they manage workplace diversity: a case study of McDonald’s, Dublin.”

According to Forbes (2010), McDonald’s serves 56 million customers daily across 118 countries, and it has become a leader in terms of diversity to hiring and the retention of staff. In order to gain an understanding of the effect of diversity and inclusive leadership in an organisation, this research will take place at the world’s largest restaurant chain, McDonald’s, via a restaurant located in Dublin.

## **1.1 Research Purpose**

The research purpose is to investigate in detail which methods and processes leaders there are using to manage diversity in the workforce. It will evaluate the impacts of various styles of leadership that have been applying specifically to find out if they are considered inclusive leaders. This research has the potential to identify best practices in order to provide guidelines to leaders regarding how they can effectively be managing a team's diversity. The research questions should provide a framework to drive this research and will explore the relevant areas.

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

- 1) Why is it important for leaders to be inclusive in regard to diversity in an organisation?
- 2) How can leaders manage diversity successfully?
- 3) What are the challenges that leaders face when dealing with diversity in the workforce?

## **1.2 Significance of the Study**

In order to experience a major challenge in my life, as regards learning another language and facing all of the challenges posed by a new country and culture, in addition to building my career again, I decided to come to Dublin. I lacked English skills, and thus I could not immediately apply for jobs in my career. One of the challenges that I had overcome was to get a job without having English skills, starting in McDonald's, where I have been working since May of 2017. It consists with a study conducted by Hopkins (2012), due to the low levels of English language skills along with migrant workers, they are allocated by organization an a role that does not involve a great deal of responsibility and which does not require high levels of knowledge.

Although the survey suggests that 71% are “very satisfied” and a further with their migrant worker (Green et al as cited in Hopkins, 2012) firm confirms that the communication skills remains a dilemma. However, companies with low-skilled jobs attract people around the world to work there who speak only their native language.

I had the opportunity to be an employee in a multicultural workplace and to observe the impact of behavioral leadership when managing diversity among staff. I felt curious about this research topic and considered it fascinating to witness the challenges and issues that leaders face when dealing with workforce diversity, which has an impact on the organisation. Leadership as a concept goes beyond organisations; Jain (2018) mentions that leaders can change the world: “Good leaders change the world. Changing the world does not mean having a lofty goal like removing hunger from world; if that’s the case, I am glad but changing the world might mean changing the world of the community you live in, the world of your home or workplace, it can be big or small. But in both cases, a good leader is always required, and good communication skill is a prerequisite of being a good leader. And if we all do that, imagine the impact that can have. It is up to the reader to define the size and nature of the world and the kind of change. Think of a person who inspired you, who is your role model who listens to you, understands your viewpoint. That is, the heart of inclusive leaders does well”.

The significance of this study is crucial as it contributes valuable insights to provides a comprehensive understanding of a diverse workforce in the applicability of the inclusive leaders’ role. Companies are aware that to adapt to dynamic changes of the globalization, inclusive leaders need to learn to create a value out of diversity. The principal factor in Globalization is an increase in the transnational flow of people. Visitors connect in many ways in their countries that they are visiting, shopping, exchanging money, and others. However, the Migrants’ interaction goes beyond, they affect local job markets, and they experience and make cultural changes (Anton, 1995). Rogers *et al.*, (2014) conducted a study ‘The significance of small differences: Cultural diversity and broadcasting in Ireland’ and asserted that was possible to do the study, due the fact that Ireland has experienced a social transformation over the past two decades through the migration that is part of a global process. According to this study, makes Ireland a fascinating place to apply a case study here in order to explore diversity culture within the organization.

Shen *et al.*, (2009) conducted a study that developed a framework and shows the strategy for human resource management towards diversity management. Mills, Elmes and Prasad, (1997) assert, “Workplace diversity remains, therefore, a significantly under-researched and undertheorized phenomenon in the management literature.” It is in this context in management practices, but led by inclusive leaders and approaching diversity culture extending to age, gender, and physical disability as well, that is this research pretend to fill a gap of similar studies and literature through the evidences that this study provides on the next chapters.

The theoretical of the topic relates an understanding of methods that inclusive leaders are applying to manage diversity in a multicultural workplace. Also, it identifies the dilemma and opportunities in order to improve the diversity management practices provided in the literature in general scenario.

The practical application for this research is an in-depth investigation of the largest fast-food chain in the world for a better understanding of how inclusive leaders are managing diverse workforce in order to encourage new ways of thinking about the critical issues and find out the solution to solve it.

### **1.3 Research Objective**

Brett (2019) defines diversity: “Diversity, in essence, is variety. It is the foundation of all things in nature, where no two life forms are precisely alike. Humanity, likewise, as part of nature, is marked by forms various and diverse in all their aspects – race, gender, sexual orientation, physicality, cultural backgrounds and traditions, and others. As a concept, it is deceptively simple, and its societal advantages are obvious. However, diversity is also, by definition, difficult to quantify. It is difficult to place ‘diversity’ into discrete boxes that illuminate various aspects of it without violating the spirit of celebrating difference, and without, in a sense, ghettoizing diverse groups into separate corners.”

According to Wise and Tschirhart's, as cited in Pilati et al. (2015), the management of diversity goes beyond only affording the opportunity of employment, and it is not just for the benefit of workers; it represents a business advantage leading to organisational

growth and success on a global scale. Engelmeier (2014) comments that “The Era of Inclusion” has caused companies to review the insights and vision derived from their diverse workforces to build on the company’s internal and external advantages over competitors.

This dissertation aims to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) Identify the benefits of diversity for an organisation when there is an inclusive leader.
- 2) Provide strategies in order to guide leaders to manage diversity in the workforce.
- 3) Analyse the challenges faced by leaders in regard to diversity in an organisation.

#### **1.4 Structure of the Study**

This study is structured into five chapters, as follows:

1. Introduction: In this introductory chapter provides a brief explanation of the context of the study. In this section highlights the justification for the research and its significance, to complement it, there are objective and research questions.
2. Literature Review: In this chapter brings the critical literature review starting with inclusive leaders, managing diversity, and the challenges leaders face and benefit that diversity bring to organisation. These concepts are approached by relevant, diverse organization studies that contribute to validate the findings and discussion. The conceptual framework outlines the aspects of inquiry contained within the research project. The academic theories that will underpin this study are emotional intelligence, leader-member exchange (LMX) and game theory.
3. Methodology and Research Design: This chapter highlights the plan of research study through the methods and strategies used. The author outlines research philosophy, research strategy, primary collection data, access and Ethical issues and approach to data analysis.

4. Presentation and Discussion of Findings: This chapter displays the findings from the interview applied in the case study at McDonalds. The objective of the methods used in this section is to answer the three research questions from this study.
5. Conclusion: the last chapter presents the general overview of the essential contributions of this study, limitation, and the recommendation for practice and for future studies on this topic.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Overview

This chapter presents concepts, and relevant theories addressed to the research questions of this study. The literature review focuses on analysing the importance for a leader to be inclusive and how they manage a diverse workforce. This research is structured under specific ideas appointed in the conceptual framework.

The literature review consists of three parts: the first part address to inclusive leadership model, the second part covers diversity in terms of age, nationality, gender, physical disability, and practices to managing diversity—finally, the challenges and benefits to handle diverse workforce.

### 2.2 Leaders can drive inclusion

Inclusive leadership has a strong relationship with communication skills, which makes leaders outstanding in their field. Communication is one of the strategies that allow inclusive leaders to be able to listen to people from different backgrounds, cultures, and points of view, including them in an organisation (Jain, 2018). Dillon and Bourque (2016), as cited in Mickahail and Tasso Eira de Aquino (2019), refer to six attributes of leaders that show how they can embrace individual differences:

- **Commitment:** Even though they face a challenge as regards being an inclusive leader, they are committed to diversity due to their values and sense of fairness.
- **Courage:** Leaders are not afraid to show humility; if they are experiencing difficulty in some tasks, they will seek help from others.
- **Cognisance of bias:** They are aware that bias can narrow their decisions to achieve the objectives; therefore, they seek to implement policies and processes to avoid organisational biases.

- **Curiosity:** They have an open mindset that allows them to listen to other ideas that can contribute to their decision making and enable them to listen without judgment.
- **Cultural intelligence:** They cultivate knowledge from other cultures, and they are willing to adapt their leadership style in response to different cultural norms.
- **Collaborative:** They motivate their team members to share their perspectives in order to ensure successful collaboration.

Vohra et al. (2015) mentions that empirical research has shown that leaders can create inclusion through their behavior by treating each employee as an individual instead of applying behaviors uniformly to all staff. Thus respecting their differences and being open to dialogue that can contribute to building a work climate that facilitates psychological safety. Ye et al. (2019) highlighted in their study that took place in China, with data collected from 206 employees, the effect of inclusive leadership. It was the key to enhance employees' psychological safety in order to learn with their errors once that leaders offer their employees enough freedom to perform their work, thus increasing employees' psychological safety.

Sugiyama et al., (2016) conducted a study comparison between two programs called general leadership development programs (GLDPs) and women's leadership development programs (WLDPs) to understand which one fulfills an inclusive leadership. GLDPs is represented by masculine leadership, tended to emphasize leadership for business performance, focus on increasing productivity to achieve the profit. On the other hand, WLDPs indicate leadership for interrelation performance. Meaning they are performing through the relationship with their team with a focus on spending much more time motivating them, giving and receiving feedback to encourage them to perform at their best and achieve the company's outcome. Even though the WLDPs show that women tend to be more inclusive, it was not fully highlighting the management of interconnected nature of social, as race, gender so on. Therefore, this study stated that both could do more to be inclusive in order to develop leaders to deal with different behavior to embrace diversity.

### ***2.2.1 What strategies boost inclusive leadership?***

Dow (2017) states: “inclusive leader is a mentor and champion for his or her team members and actively promotes and reinforces an environment of trust, transparency honesty, and confidence to understand all diverse perspectives.” To complement the understanding of inclusive leaders, Dow (2017) also mentions the story of Steve Jobs and his neighbor, who provoked him to a leadership analogy using a rock tumbler. The old ugly rocks can turn into splendidly beautiful polished stones when their interaction creates the relationship and friction. Applying this case on the scenario with leaders, the conventional follow the leader's teams will probably fail when they are under pressure of an uncertain, fast-moving environment. An inclusive leader can identifies and exploits the experience and knowledge that each team member brings to the company in order to achieve the strategic objectives and to overcome the expanding challenges faced right now and the next few years.

Ziska, (2016) states that leaders play an essential role within the organization. One of the success factors is good leadership when the leader can create a favorable environment and influence employees to share their thoughts without fears that contribute to the generation of new ideas, products, services.

What are the strategies in order to achieve diversity success? What strategies boost inclusive leadership?

In order to contemplate leadership abilities, Dow (2017) highlights six aspects to follow:

#### **1) Be self-aware**

Self-awareness is essential regardless of the size of organisation the leaders work. They need to have a perception of how they think, decide, and act in order to understand how to influence the organizational culture. “Do I let my experiences and biases limit how I make decisions or devalue the views of others? Do I have too much desire to control, influence, or determine the outcome? Do I focus too much on low-hanging fruit (quick wins) at the expense of making the right decision with the help and input of others? Do I

allow the fear of failure to distract me from trusting others? Your image counts!'. Its link with the leader's overall reputation and their behavior apprise the perceptions others have about them. Victor Vroom and Philip Yetton (1973) as cited in Robbins, (2001) developed "a *leader participation model* that associated leadership behavior and participation to decision making." Due to the varying demands that contain task structures concerning routine and non-routine activities, those researchers believe that to fulfill these tasks, structure leaders must adjust their behaviors.

According to Salovey, Brackett and Mayer (2004) self-awareness is one of component of Emotional Intelligence (EI). EI is a psychological theory developed by Peter and John Mayer to understanding and manage one's own and other's emotional states and to solve emotional problems. Daniel Goleman was the first who applied the concept of Emotional Intelligence to business. He grouped the competencies into five categories:

- **Self-Awareness:** is the ability to recognize and understand emotions, moods, how their feeling affect them, other people, and their job performance.
- **Self-Regulation:** is the peoples' ability to be in control of their feeling and impulse.
- **Motivation:** a passion to work, people, look for challenges, and like to learn.
- **Empathy:** the ability to understand how others are feeling, and it help to respond appropriately to the situation.
- **Social Skills:** ability to managing relationships with others.

Effective leaders stand out with a high degree of emotional intelligence (Salovey, Brackett, and Mayer, 2004). A study conducted by McElravy and Hastings (2014) through the survey with 157 participants confirmed that emotional intelligence is a "strongest predictor of self-perceived leadership skills."

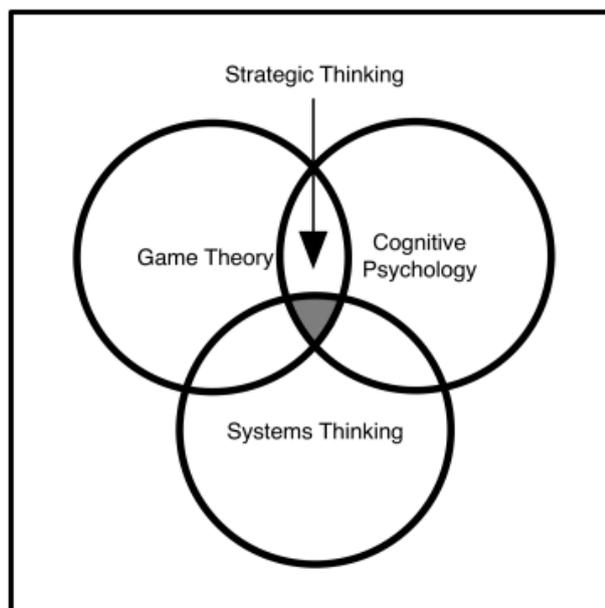
## 2) **Have a strategy for leading**

Dow (2017) continues explaining; a limited strategic leadership capacity will hinder the leader's ability to achieve organizational goals and overcome challenges. Inclusive leaders are strategic thinkers, they know who they are and where they want to go,

however, they go beyond it, they are known as “bridge builders” because they inspire and invite others to join them on the journey.

K. Olson and Simerson, (2015) complements that when effective leaders leading with Strategic Thinking is clear to understand what they do differently. The objective is to explore the vital relationship between strategic thinking and leadership from the academic perspective; strategic thinking displays a system that has an interconnection of three areas: cognitive psychology, systems thinking, and game theory. Even though these are all academic fields, they approach the practice that happens in the real world.

***Figure 1: The three Components of Strategic***



**Source: (K. Olson and Simerson, 2015)**

**Cognitive Psychology:** refers to the study of perception, decision making, thinking, and creativity. The practical applications of Cognitive Psychology help leaders manage their biases to make an effective decision and do not lose any opportunities. Council *et al.*, (2012) contribute to the explanation that Cognitive Psychology can also be used to address requirements for task that structure the basis for job design and selection criteria. It also, can design the training content and apply the performance appraisal before and after training.

**Systems Thinking:** is considered the key element of strategic thinking, and its focuses on figuring out how systems behave, influence each other, and interact with their environment. Unfortunately, most people do not think in the way to reflect and understand the complexity of matters that they are involved in. Given this challenge, K. Olson and Simerson (2015) stress that checklist mentality is the way that some individual demonstrates to deal with events. The implication that comes from a checklist mentality is people just considering the direct factor linked with the event to think about; therefore, they exclude the impact of indirect factors and influences. Richmond (1990) as cited in K. Olson and Simerson, (2015) recommends having progressive thinking in order to have open-minded to be able to explore and understand any factors involved in a given situation.

**Game Theory:** is related to decision making when involving the decision-maker and opponent. This theory encourages leaders further to reflect the complexity of their decisions and social interactions, guide them to deal with competition. Game theory sustains strategic thinking due to the detailed analysis performing under decisions are being made, and actions are being taken. (K. Olson and Simerson, 2015). Hatfield, (2012) highlights in his study that game theory may also provide the capacity to foresee a probable future. It evaluates which type of strategic the participant can use in an interaction in the current environment and predict how things will be in the future. Theoretical debates applying a game theory among leaders and their follower is underresearched. A study conducted by de Brito and Martinho (2018) shows that despite the adoption of Moodle by schools, leadership members (teacher and directors) lack of technical skills to manage this potential tool that provide advantages on management of information through this system. Game theory's main result is a necessity for leadership members at school to adopt a cooperative behavior to accept the technology even in some of them are resistant. The method used for data collection was through a questionnaire and two semi-structured interviews. Game theory is based on the assumptions that interest from multiple stakeholder may differ, however at the end they come up with available alternatives (K. Olson and Simerson, 2015).

The purpose of this theory applied in the study is to make a slight contribution focusing on strategic thinker leaders towards their behavior with followers without going so far within a conceptual theory.

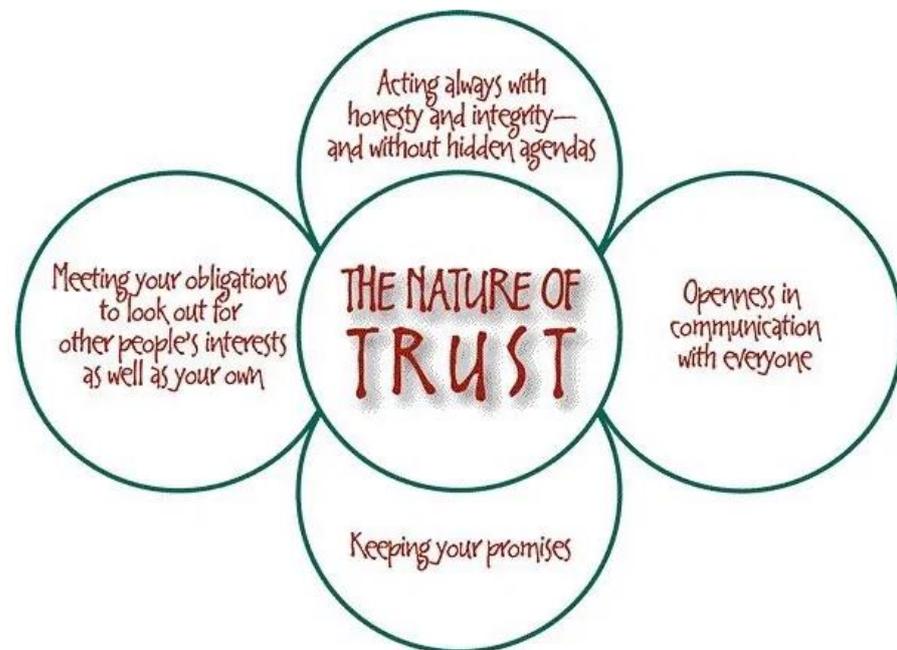
### 3) Model courage

Inclusive leaders design a model courage and inspire their followers to have a courageous behavior as well. According to Bill Treasure as cited in Dow, (2017) studies confirm that employees who demonstrate to be courageous, their performance is higher than those who do not display courageous behavior. Dow (2017) suggests taking challenges projects to model courage and trust in others that they definitely will put their effort into doing the job better than expected. Courageous leaders are aware of the dangerous situation they face; nonetheless, they are ready to go forward and take the risk for action (Johnson, 2019).

### 4) Trust and respect

Dow (2017) creates The Nature of Trust, which contain four essential elements that build a trusted relationship:

*Figure 2: The nature of Trust*



**Source: (Dow, 2017)**

Kelly Hannum as cited in Dow, (2017) affirms that when people show interest in understanding others, listening to their perspective and thoughts, it creates a strong

relationship between them, respect, hence building trust. The author states that leaders can raise the respect with their followers recognizing and appreciating the effort and all the contribution they put into work.

Dow (2017) emphasis that to achieve inclusive leadership, leaders must be willing to consider others point of view instead always defend and priorities their ideas. The opposite thoughts do not indicate that they will impair the decision that must be taken; different ideas should take into consideration because it maybe can be an innovation and opportunity.

Hernandez, Long and Sitkin, (2014) conducted a study realized in a real organization context exploring how leaders influence trust. The empirical findings demonstrated that the interpersonal exchange between leaders and their follower's influence in the development of employees' trust. These findings emphasize the importance of relational leadership behavior where the follower can recognize that their communication and consideration are reciprocal.

### **5) Self-control**

Dow (2017) points out: "Inclusive leaders refrain from getting emotionally hijacked." Executive coach Scott Eblin as cited in Dow, (2017) states that many executives, especially those who work in a large company, are required to deal with different people that have different skills. However, they are working towards a common objective. Therefore, some situations make executives angry, sad, or annoyed. When the executive is into this environment, Executive coach Scott Eblin as cited in Dow, (2017) creates the expression "silencing your itty bitty committee." Meaning that the executive can follow some ways that will help to deal with this situation. One of them is "know your trigger," analyzing the situation that triggers it by taking notes, will be useful to cease it on the next time before start.

Dow (2017) continues saying: "We have two ears and one mouth and discerning the proper time to open the one versus use the two takes practice but can be the determining factor in our ability to lead successfully."

## **6) Stop assigning blame**

Inclusive leaders are focused on fixing issues than blaming them. Ben Dattner, as cited in Dow (2017, brings some strategies to help leaders stop assigning blame:

- Focus on improving your knowledge and skills in order to be a high performing leader. Therefore, maybe fewer people will blame you.
- Looking the future instead back to the past to restate the issues. Taking lessons from past issues is essential, but be aware of do not assign the blame.
- Attract people that are not selfish and do not make an assumption about others.

On the other hand, the previous research conducted by Derek, Scott, Kristin & Miguel (2003) as cited in Ayad, (2016) demonstrate that, regarding the success or failure of an organization, the lead role belongs as high-level position tend to be assigned a more significant blame than acknowledge credit. Other side, a lower position is assigned more credit than blame. Leading organisations goals to achieve this in today's market is a complex task to do due to the external factors such as fluctuations rates and market changes making the economy uncertain. Leadership responsibilities are associated with a higher risk in the company once the leader is entitled to guide the organization.

### ***2.2.2 How Leader-member Exchange (LMX) will be Helpful***

Another theory within leadership literature is leader-member exchange (LMX). LMX theory is considered the unique approach within the leadership that focuses on the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers. Unlike other theories that emphasize the characteristics of the leader as Emotional Intelligence discussed already in this chapter. LMX has contributed to the understanding of the leadership process. The LMX theory highlights the importance for leaders to recognize the existence of two groups: in groups and out-groups. Members from the in-group are usually engaged in their job and are willing to do more than what asked of them. On the other side, the out-group, are members that only do the job that required to them. Leaders will approach their followers individually from two groups to understand their needs (Northouse, 2010). A study conducted by Nishii and Mayer (2009), as cited in Shore et al. (2011), has made

an essential contribution to showing the importance of inclusion. They report that, in general, if an inclusive leader has a high level of LMX, this will create a good relationship with staff, thus increasing employee satisfaction and decreasing staff turnover in diverse groups. Likewise, a study conducted by Acquavita et al., as cited in Shore et al. (2011), confirmed that inclusion is link with job satisfaction and turnover intention. It describes the impacts when leaders fail to understand diversity in the workplace, including its effects on the morale of employees, to decrease and increase the rates of turnover and absenteeism. Another study directly relevant to LMX conducted by Lloyd, Boer, and Voelpel (2017) revealed the evidence that supervisor listening is the key to fostering strong LMX. Two hundred and fifty German employees from different companies contributed to answering the survey.

### **2.3 Diversity**

Ayad (2016) creates a metaphor to explain diversity illustrated in Figure 3. The meaning of melting pot is everybody is the same when is development and implementation of equal opportunities. The concept of melting pot represents the different backgrounds, ages, gender, cultures “come together to create a unified texture where all ingredients lose their uniqueness to create a new taste. The salad metaphor, on the other hand, proposes a new taste by keeping the uniqueness of the original ingredients”. The purpose of using a metaphor “soup” and “salad” is to take a concept of clearly understanding that how diversity is complex in reality, and both methods can use to guide leaders into different models of diversity. From a business standpoint, it is necessary to acknowledge diversity and inclusion as a source of talent retention from similarities and differences employees to improve the bottom line.

**Figure 3: Integration vs Assimilation Models – Melting pot & Mosaic**



**Source: (Ayad, 2016)**

A. Hays, (2012) says: “Diversity is unavoidable, and that is a good thing.” Workplace diversity comes in different dimensions, including age, gender, nationality, physical disabilities, among others.

### **2.3.1 Age**

Shamsul Nahar Abdullah and Ku Nor Izah Ku Ismail, (2013) conducted a study that examined board diversity within of 100 non-financial Malaysian firms and underlines that age diversity is an important variable to consider of aboard. The older directors have a higher level of experience, while younger directors bring new and relevant perspectives towards an organization fit the future. On the assumption that the director of a board is the same age as the group, maybe the decision making by the director could have biased due to the level of experience and information they would have. The data were hand collected from the sample firms’ 2007 annual report. Parry and Tyson, (2010) agree and complement that age diversity is crucial for the organization to increase the learning and development process to be innovative for marketing reasons.

### **2.3.2 Gender**

Gatrell and Swan (2008) assert that the legislative amendment was to support equality of opportunity and diversity in order to increase the possibilities for everyone to be

employed regardless of their gender, age, race, or background. Saeed et al., (2019) critically examined 294 firms, and the results showed a significant number of women holding a board position. The finding concluded that women director has the potential to increase the monitoring is a specific weak regulatory environment. It consists of prior studies conducted by Shamsul Nahar Abdullah and Ku Nor Izah Ku Ismail, (2013), that identified in their literature review, the board composed with more women, they are more detail hence pay more attention in audit. Focus on social responsibilities and would help organization to attract and retain valuable female workforce.

### **2.3.3 Nationality**

Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, (2011) identifies the phenomenon of diversity increased in most societies. The term “multicultural” is being recognized by society due the globalization has disseminated information and made the migration process much more manageable. Brezigar, (2015) complements that diversity concerning a national culture brings the concept of language and nationality. When employees have different nationalities, they bring different perspectives, attitudes towards acting, thinking, and relating to others. Based on this case, individual attention and approaches addressing to the leadership in the organization. Dennissen, Benschop and van den Brink, (2018) highlights the impact of mixing nationalities: “is accompanied by shedding-off of their political and social structures. Thus ranging from voluntary cooperation to self-management, always keeping in mind that preserving dignity for ourselves should be matched with similar efforts concerning the other.”

### **2.3.4 Physical Disability**

Physical Disability is a condition that limits a physical body in motor actions (Tan, 2017). The types of disability appear the different stereotypes and discrimination; some disabled people can be seen by society as lazy or very brave. Some of disable people emphasize that brain working is more advantageous than have some limitations in their body as being in a wheelchair, for instance: “At least there is nothing wrong with my

mind!” (Pulrang, 2020). Kanigel, (2018) underpins this concept that disable people can do good work, mentioning that people with physical disabilities produced great journalism. The National Center on Disability and Journalism (NCDJ) at Arizona State University provides support and guidance for reporters who has a physical disability and those interview with disabilities. The director from NCDJ own disability, and it was a motivation to develop academic research: “how the media cover people with disabilities and disabilities issues” (NCDJ, 2020).

## **2.4 Diversity Management Practices**

The basic concept of managing diversity is to create a climate that enables all employees to feel valued, regardless of their different attributes such as sex, age, race, disability. Emphasize that their effort contributes to organisation’s goals (Fullerton and Kandola 1994 as cited in Fulop and Linstead, 1999).

Fullerton and Kandola (1999) set up a MOSAIC model affording a vision of the diversity-oriented organisation, for organisations that are already dealing with diversity. The components of the model guide organizations are first to find out where they are in order to identify the priority areas to develop an effective strategy on diversity. For instance, analyzing the Individual focus, diversity-oriented focus in provide for all employees the training to develop them according to their needs instead just afford it to a specific group, as women. The company will be able to see where the gap is and find ways to cover it.

**M**ission and values

**O**bjective and fair processes

**S**killed workforce: aware and fair

**A**ctive flexibility

**I**ndividual focus

**C**ulture that empowers.

Many organizations operate now in a global economy dealing with a diverse workforce, especially people from other countries that bring different cultures, ethnicity, experience, and attitudes toward work. The company sees this multicultural environment as advantages; hence organizations are seeking for methods to attract and retain this diverse workforce. The key to achieve it is through efficient strategies for managing people (Cornelius, 2002). Widestedt (2008) conducted an empirical study with six media companies that adopted diversity policies as one of the strategies to managing diversity and disclose in the websites the policy statements on diversity and gender equality. However, the study concluded that achieving the goal of both diversity and gender equality is not a simple matter, even with the policy within the company.

In contrast, there is a company that used a policy to help to identify and overcome barriers to inclusion (E. Mor Barak 2011). The company is called Sanlam that developed an employment equity policy as required by the country's 1996 Employment Equity Act. When it identified that diversity management was not progressing as expected, the bonus for the management's performance link with their diversity management's performance.

Ayad (2016) used empirical data and narrative to create a guideline to aid leaders in managing diversity in order to be able to see diversity as a competitive advantage as well. The author highlights seven essential capabilities to the development of leaders towards managing diversity:

- **Managing Self Competency**

It refers to self-recognition of strengths and weaknesses, creating and being persistent to achieve professional and personal goals, be open mind to develop or change skills, attitude, and behavior.

- **Managing Diversity Competency**

It is the ability to respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities presented by diversity. Value each member of the team and respect their characteristic, their talent, and contribution for the results.

- **Managing Ethics Competency**

It is the set of principles, rules, and values that define what is right from wrong related to behavior and decision making.

- **Managing Across Cultures Competency**

It is the ability to recognize and embrace the similarities and differences among cultures, be curious and open to learning a new way of managing people from different culture.

- **Managing Team's Competency**

It is the ability to support, lead and delegate effectively, matching people with tasks and clearly explaining to the team what their task is to achieve the organization goals.

- **Managing Change Competency**

It is the ability to change management practices successfully, an overview of the implementation requirement to revise and adapt structures, plan, methods, strategies even people.

- **Managing Communication Competency**

It is the ability to understand others and be understandable to transmit the information to the receiver verbally, in written form, and other methods.

Purdy and Manning (2015) contribute with the study supported by examples of implementation of cultural practices in an organization to solve the problems in a multicultural workplace, particularly in North America. They are emphasizing that communication and culture play an essential role in managing diversity. One of them is that leaders are developing strong communication skills. In order to promote the opportunity to better understanding, leaders will have a focus on communication styles and channels to make sure that all employees understood the information about outcomes and objectives. Therefore, they will listen and give feedback on their behavior. Usually, one of the problems in a deal with diversity is a lack of listening from leaders and its impact in a productivity engagement and motivating employee. Another factor the author mention on the impact on management diversity is to interpret meaning based on each culture. Leaders should be self-aware to take the responsibility

to understand the cultural differences; people listen through the filter based on their cultural expectations, leading a high level of misunderstanding.

## **2.5 Challenges for leaders and Benefit for organization**

### **2.5.1 *Bias***

More than 1.59 billion people use Facebook monthly, based on this data justifies the main reason that Facebook has a strong focus on cognitive diversity. To fulfill the perspective and desire from clients around the world, employees with different backgrounds, cultures, viewpoints, experiences will contribute to innovation and solve problems. As a result of creating diversity, one of the challenges faced by Facebook managing diversity is overcoming the Unconscious bias. Facebook is working on that providing a program called “Managing Bias” to senior leadership that affords a guideline to them to identify and eliminate the hidden biases (Williams, 2016).

### **2.5.2 *Complexity***

Ayad (2016) point out that managing diversity can be seen a complex task when leaders consider a challenge to create a personal and professional interactions with team members with different age, gender, language, culture, religions, and ethnicities. Complexity is that organizations are putting professionals workers in a leadership role that requires comprehension toward the innovation and inclusive that occur through the diverse workforce. The knowledge required to fulfill the complex issue of valuing and celebrating diversity usually are not considered in the content of business. In general organization narrowly views about discrimination law and provide Equality environment, it will be discussed on the Figure 4 next section.

According to Colvin (2016) as cited in A. Scandura and Mouriño (2017) to have success in the organization nowadays into the future, they need to seek a leader with social

skills, emotional intelligence that improve the engagement with their team increasingly diverse workforce.

### 2.5.3 Discrimination

The main issue that can come from Diversity, according to Figure 4 is discrimination. Sometimes people do not want to spend their time and energy getting to know about other cultures and see diversity as a threat in their security job. (E. Mor Barak, 2011).

*Figure 4: The Inclusive Workplace: The Practice Model for Level I*

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Prejudice</li> <li>• Perception of threat to job security</li> </ul>	<p><b>Individuals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to advancement and job promotions</li> <li>• Improved income and benefits</li> <li>• More decision-making power</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organization</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business growth and productivity</li> <li>• Cost savings (e.g., lower turnover, less absenteeism)</li> <li>• Positive image with employees, customers, and financial institutions</li> </ul>

**Source: (E. Mor Barak, 2011)**

In 2011 Thompson family went to Denny’s (a famous American restaurant chain) to celebrate the Rachel Thompson birthday. After waiting for a long time seated, they told the waitress that was Rachel’s birthday, and as usual from the restaurant, she would get a free meal according to Denny’s birthday promotion. Thompson presented the baptismal certificate that was rejected by the waitress, and she went to ask her manager. Unfortunately, the manager rejected the baptismal certificate and said that they would accept the school ID. When Mrs. Thompson promptly show it, he started annoying the family, rejected, and asked for a baptismal certificate again. In response, Mrs. Thompson simply slid over to the manager, and it was the reason that she started screaming and accused her of throwing things at him. To sum up, the Thompsons left

the Denny's without eating anything. (Store recounted from Adam, 2000 as cited in E. Mor Barak, 2011).

Denny's was fined \$ 54 million due to the discrimination the company had and built a bad reputation for rejecting the service to African Americans. Afterward, they learned a lesson from their mistake and faced a hard task to change this behavior approaching the methods to manage diversity in order to overcome it. Their efforts were valued, and they got some awards for it. A study conducted by Brezigar, (2015) in Slovenia between 2007 and 2013 underpin the discrimination context faced by immigrants and ethnic minority employees. The employees asserted that there is an absence of sensitivity regarding ethnicity and other minorities. They suggest that a company should build a system to embrace diversity. On the other side, the organization does not recognize that they need to make some adaptations to deal with diversity workforce. The study summarizes that the organization in Slovenia did not accurately approach the issue of cultural diversity. Also, there is a lack of training courses for companies that could optimize the problematic situation involving diversity that leaders are not prepared to handle. The investigation undertaken in the past suggested that organizations maybe have a low level of knowledge concerning diversity; therefore, they cannot take the advantages that diversity can afford.

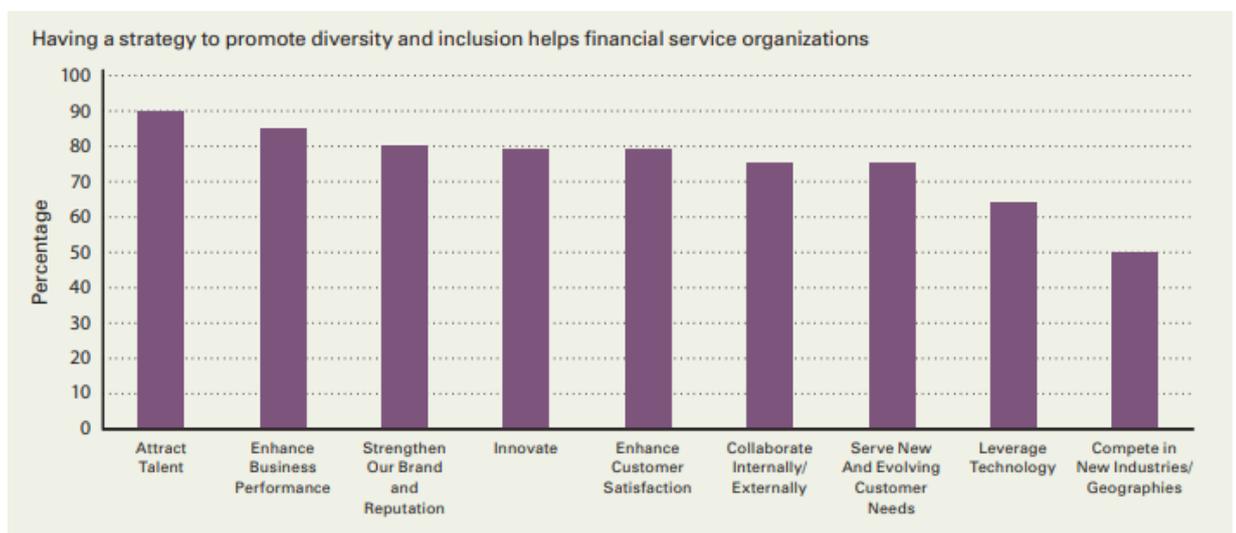
#### **2.5.4 Benefit**

Following the Figure 4 moving the view toward of Benefit of Organization side, Vohra et al. (2015) conducted a study at Wipro Ltd, the organisation adopted the inclusion culture. In their vision statement confirm that diversity in a multicultural workplace leads a many a potential competitive advantage in the marketplace providing to the company a wide range of ideas to raise innovation and customer satisfaction which boost the outcome from the company.

Tucker III and Jones (2019) appointed a PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) global survey of 410 financial services CEOs in 62 countries found that how is essential the necessity the value diversity to improve the business performance, increase customer satisfaction and boost innovation. To achieve success and competitiveness in the marketplace, it depends on the ability to embrace, managing diversity, and recognise the benefit. When

the organization assess diversity issue and set a plan to handle it, is reporting multiple benefit, such result displayed in Figure 5 below from the survey applied by PwC. The benefit appointed are: “Attract talent, Enhance business performance, Strengthen our brand a Reputation, Innovate, Enhance Customer Satisfaction, Collaborate Internally/Externally, Serve New and Evolving Customer needs, Leverage Technology and Compete in New Industries/Geographies.”

**Figure 5: Benefit of Diversity**



**Source: PwC 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Global CEO Survey – key talent findings in the financial services sector as cited in (Tucker III and Jones, 2019).**

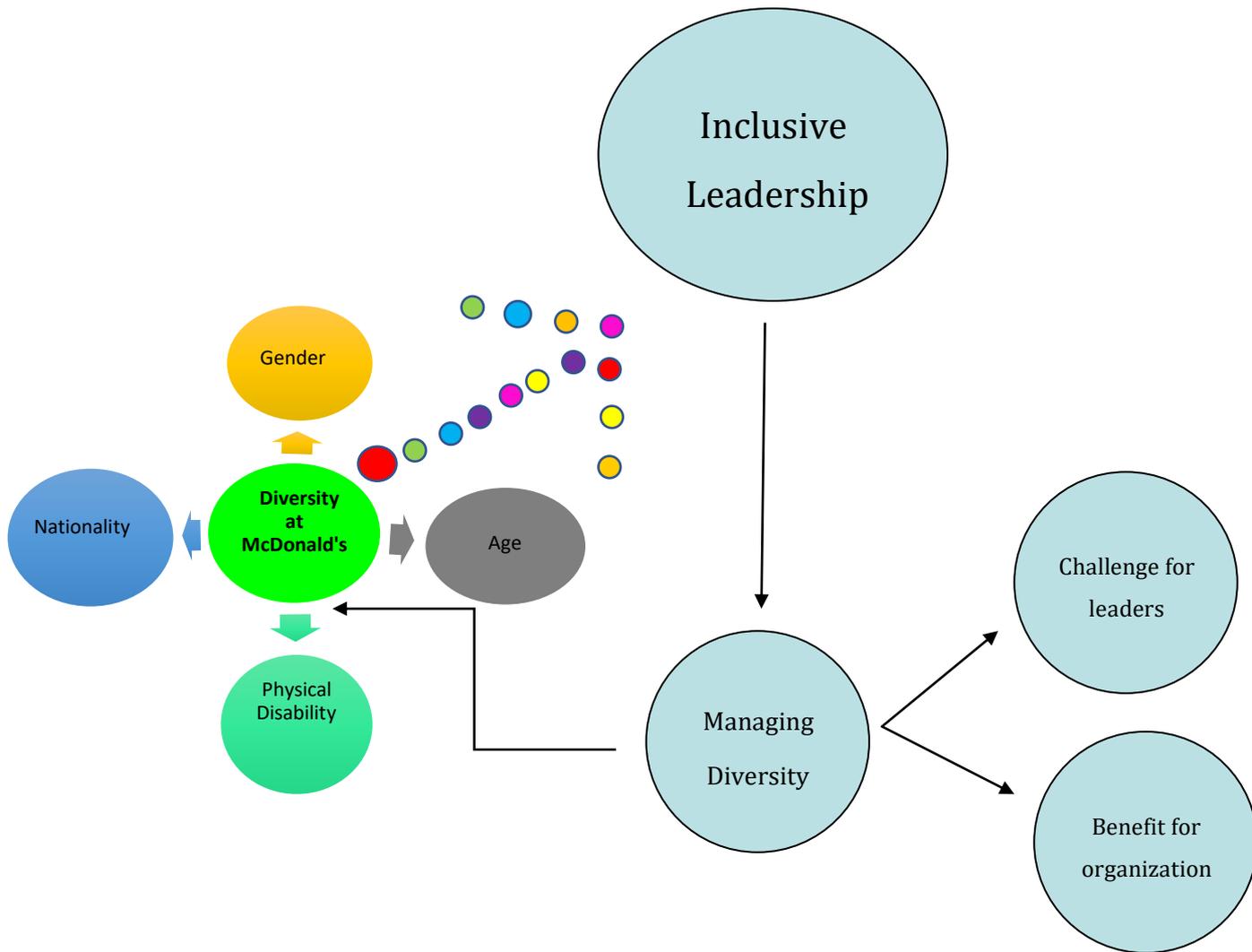
## 2.6 Conceptual Framework

Jabareen (2009) defines a conceptual framework as a “plane” or network that interlinks concepts from multiple bodies of knowledge. According to Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 440) as cited in Celfyn and John, (2019), a conceptual framework is defined as “lays out the key factor, constructs, or variables, and presumes relationships among them.”

The conceptual framework is the author’s comprehension of how the factor in her research are associated with one another.

Based on theories and data retrieved from books and articles, including empirical data, the figure 6 below depicts the conceptual framework built for this research in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

**Figure 6: Conceptual Framework**



**Source: Assembled by the author**

Concerning the components linked with diversity at McDonald's, the four chosen were as follows: age, gender, nationality, and physical disability. The survey was conducted by the researcher to measure the components, as demonstrated under the 4.2.2 Diversity at McDonald's.

This conceptual framework displays how each process, such as Diversity at McDonald's, Inclusive Leadership, and Diversity Management are interrelated, also dependent on each other to achieve the company's result. Inclusive leadership can achieve the organizational goal. When leaders are open to embracing diversity, positive feedback comes from a diverse workforce, and it leads to positive decision-making, reflected in positive results for the organization. Some relevant academic theories used on the prior studies displayed on the literature review underpin the concept of Inclusive leadership. However, it is not easy to deal with people who hail from diverse ages, cultures, which leads to challenges for leaders. The challenges highlighted in the literature review were bias, complexity, and barrier linked with discrimination. Also, diversity workforce brings benefits for the organization seen as a potential advantage.

The research questions are using as a basis for the structure of the conceptual framework. The first question focuses on identify the necessity of inclusive leaders in a diverse environment and why it is essential. In the second question, given the diversity scenario, the objective is to figure out the improvement in managing diversity successfully. The last question is to understand the challenges that leaders are facing dealing with a diverse workforce.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The purpose of this literature review was to gain an understanding of the impact of the phenomenon diversity on organisation and how inclusive leaders are handling it.

The literature review provided strategies and practices for a leader be inclusive and how it affects a diverse workforce. Leadership plays a vital role in the organization that affect employees and organization performance.

The diversity was briefly approached by the researcher, in four areas, age, gender, nationality, and physical disability, following diversity appointed through a survey at McDonald's.

Leadership is the most critical factor in the organization. However, it is getting more robust when it is related to diversity management. Another important area covered in

this literature review was the barriers faced by leaders from diversity. Some aspects involved in challenges were highlighted by literature and studies such as bias, complexity, and discrimination.

Diversity also was displayed as serving a resource to create a competitive advantage for the organization.

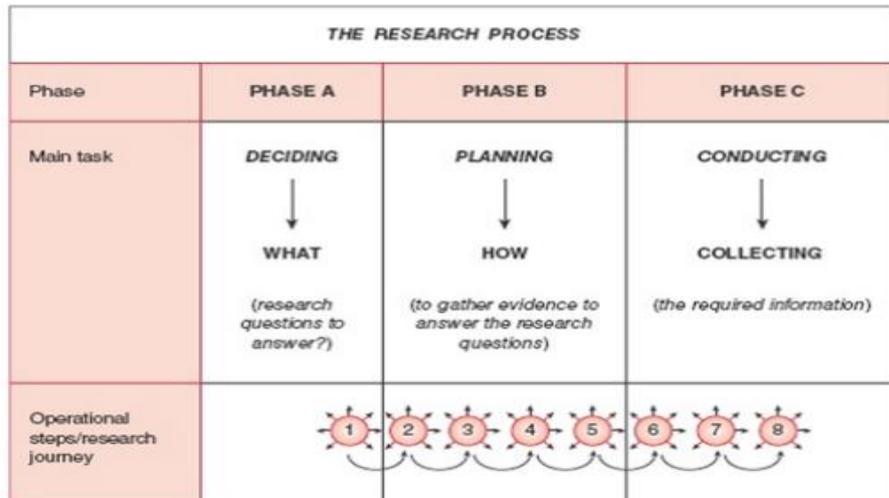
## **3 Methodology and Research Design**

### **3.1 Overview**

This chapter aims to describe the method used in the current study. Kumar (2014) simplifies the understanding of the research process through of “research journey” displayed in Figure 7. Research splits into two parts: first, set up the research questions that seem appropriate in “what” researcher needs to find out and “how” her go to find their answers. The concept of research methodology is the way to find the answer for research questions through the techniques that refer to methods used by researchers in performing research operations. Kumar (2008) complements that research methodology goes beyond the research methods; it refers to the logic behind the methods that should assess and explain why the author should choose the particular methods. In order to have efficient research is crucial to select the best-suited method among a variety of procedures, models, and techniques.

Primarily the research philosophy and approach will be presented, following the research strategy giving the reason why choosing the specific method. Afterward, under the section of collecting primary data will be presented the criteria used to interview McDonald's and the Ethics forms used by the researcher to conduct the interview and ending with data analysis.

**Figure 7: The Research Journey**



**Author: (Kumar, 2014)**

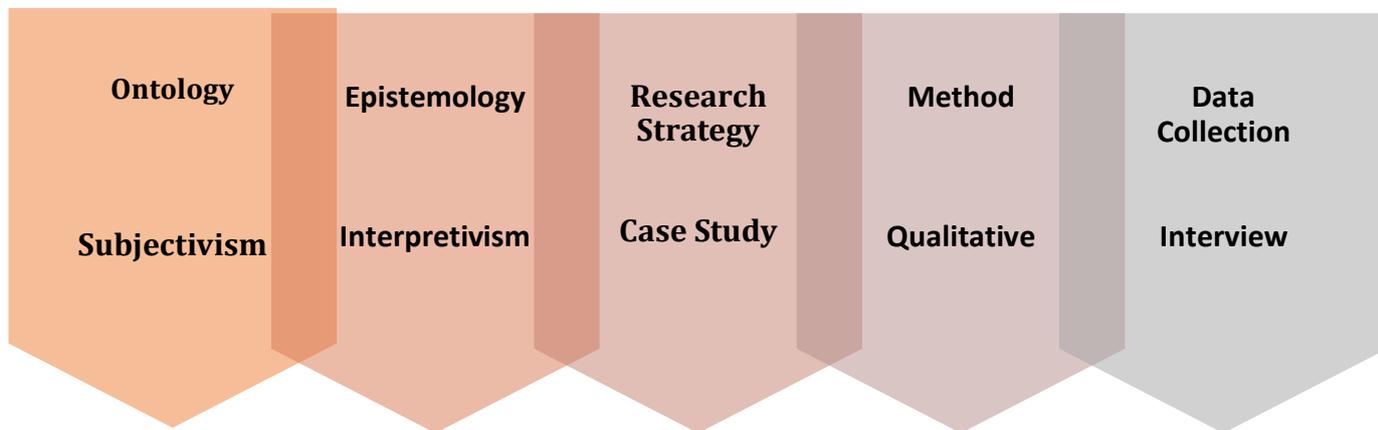
### 3.2 Research Philosophy and Approach

Research philosophy is associated with the source, nature, and development of knowledge.

Pasian (2016) confirms: “paradigms can be defined as our basic belief system or worldview and thus direct the research epistemologically and ontologically”. Research philosophy emphasis the critical assumptions which stress the research design, research strategy, and research methods. Saunders (2012), as cited in Pasian, (2016) complements explaining ontology and epistemology as two different viewing a research philosophy. Ontology refers to the researcher’s assumption on the nature of reality. It divides into two aspects: objectivism and subjectivism. “Objectivism portrays the position that social entities exist in reality external to social actors concerned with their existence.” Subjectivism refers to the interaction between individual and social phenomena. Levers, (2013) clarifies the definition of subjectivism make a comparison with an interpretation of the image of a Rubin Vase. Rubin Vase is known as an ambiguous figure in which stimulus to see in two-dimensional form. The figure can be seen as a white vase, either two people facing each other in the black background. The perception of this image depends on the way that people perceive, “there is no wrong

and right image.” “The goal of subjective research is to develop understanding, increase sensitization to ethical and moral issues” Levers, (2013). Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009) still explaining: “epistemology concerns what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a field of study.” Also, it can discern each other, which are positivism, realism, and interpretivism. In research terms, this is the way that a researcher views the world and of the knowledge will influence the interpretation of data.

**Figure 8: Research Design**



**Source: Assembled by the author**

The objectives of this dissertation are to find out the necessity for leaders to be inclusive and how leaders deal with diversity in the workforce and the challenges faced by them. Each leader has his/her personality, skills, role models, and experience that influence his/her behavior and affect the relationship with staff in different ways. However, a variety of factors related to diversity in the workforce, including culture (nationality), age, physical disability, and gender of staff, will also impact on a leader’s reactions and decision making. Based on this assumption, each relationship between leaders and their followers is uniquely shaped. As the subject matter of the dissertation relates to leadership and human behavior, the research philosophy chosen to fulfill the objectives was interpretivism epistemology. Carson et al. (2001) explain interpretivism as an approach that provides an understanding of what is happening in a specific reality concerning different actors’ perspectives and interpretations of data. Also, includes

consideration of researchers' involvement in order to have experience in what they are studying. The researcher, as a social actor, needs to appreciate the different points of view. The author also developed this research under the subjectivism ontology in order to understand the leader's perception of diversity. Following the context of subjectivism approached in the beginning, this section, "there is no wrong and right" answer.

Based on the topic of this research, in order to find out how leaders manage diversity in the workforce and the impacts of diversity, the objective is to gain an understanding of the meaning humans add to events through investigating leaders' current practices. As a result, it is more appropriate to undertake an inductive approach. According to Saunders et al. (2007), an inductive approach can be described as appropriate when seeking an understanding of why something is happening. Otherwise, the approach should be deductive when describing what is happening. Qualitative research generally uses an inductive approach, which permits a more flexible structure.

Qualitative research was applied by the author, to investigate the subject from different people's points of view. Qualitative data links with concepts that provide the opportunity to explore a matter in as real a manner as possible (Robson (2002) as cited in Saunders et al. (2007)).

### **3.3 Research Strategy**

The most suitable approach for this research is a case study (via a single case dimension), involving the organisation where the researcher is working at present, in order to obtain a depth of knowledge of the techniques used and the impacts on the relationship between leaders and diversity of the workforce. A case study is related to a social phenomenon that focuses on finding an explanation for social processes involving people's opinions, perceptions, controversies, decisions, and values (Swanborn, 2010). It is essential to understand that a single case research design (SCRD) is not a case study in which the researcher will evaluate only one participant after collecting primary data using qualitative methods. A SCRД refers to each participant involved in the process through behavioral analysis (Ledford and Gast, 2014).

As already mentioned, this study followed the qualitative data collection methods through the interview with leaders at McDonald's in Dublin.

### **3.4 Collection Primary Data**

As mentioned early in this study, Ireland has become ethnically diverse over the past number of years. To extent diversity in another field as age, gender, and physical disability, as well, to investigate how leaders are performing toward a diverse workforce, a case study was conducted by the researcher at McDonald's located in Dublin.

In an informal conversation with first assistant manager that has been working in McDonald's for twenty-eight years, was investigated the possibility of permission to conduct a study there. Afterward, she granted the permission, in a preliminary informal conversation with some leaders at McDonald's about the topic of this research, it was possible to verify the potential information they would provide for this research.

The interviewees were leaders and managers who are the focuses of this research interview; the management team those who deal directly with a diverse workforce.

The author developed the research questions for a qualitative interview with a focus on meaning and experience from the respondents in order to understand the people's lives in the context (King and Horrocks, 2010).

Among several types of interviews, the researcher has chosen an individual interview that fits the narrative approach. A narrative interview aims to provide an opportunity for the interviewees to give details in a narrative form about their particular event and experience. This method is not just life stories, but narrative encourage participant to tell stories about disturbing episodes that they faced as well (Smith, 2003).

### 3.4.1 Sources

A method of primary data was used in this research through semi-structured interviews within a scenario of qualitative data in order to develop an explanation of human activity and interaction. Wass and Wellss (1994) as cited in Saunders et al., (2007) mentions: “Semi-structured interviews may be used to explore and explain themes that have emerged from the use of your questionnaire.” This concept underpins the objective from this author, not just to understand the ‘what’ and ‘how, but also emphasize ‘why’. In order to seek new insights and find out what is happening in reality, this research classifies an exploratory study in-depth interview. The exploratory research questions aim to examine in detail a topic that is not completely clear, and a little is known about it, in order to provide information into the process in which cause-effect relationship operates (Sim and Wright, 2000).

**Figure 9: Main forms of remote interview**

<i>Remote interview form</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Data type</i>
Telephone	Synchronous	Verbal
Remote video (Video-conferencing and webcams)	Synchronous	Verbal (plus visual)
E-mail	Asynchronous	Written
Instant messaging	Synchronous	Written

**Author: (King and Horrocks, 2010)**

According to Figure 9 the researcher used a remote interview due to the availability of participants. By doing this method, the author gives time to participants to answer the questionnaires without pressure and their convenience in order to have quality data.

King and Horrocks, (2010) point out that the most common method used by researches is the e-mail interview, where respondents can answer the questions sent by the interviewer in their time, but respecting the deadline.

The researcher sent the e-mail interview to participants in March/2020 and set in advance five days to collect data to ensure that participants are committed and for the facility management of this study.

**Figure 10: Nature of data**



**Source: Assembled by the author**

### **3.4.2 Access and Ethical Issues**

Getting access to the organization to collect information is a critical issue that many students face at the stage to develop their dissertation (Saunders et al., 2007). Some strategies can be helpful for students to obtain physical access to appropriate data as ensure to be familiar with an organisation before making contact (Saunders et al., 2009).

As the author has been working at McDonald's in Dublin and is familiar with managers, leaders, and crew members, it is an advantage to gain access to collect data. The manager has allowed the researcher to interview with leaders and managers there. However, the ethical concerns should be taken into account to conduct the entire research project.

In order to follow the ethics code, the researcher adhered to the highest ethical standard form afforded by Griffith College Ethics Committee (GCEC).

Confidentiality is an agreement between interviews and respondents in how the information related to a collect data will be kept. Anonymity refers to do not identify the name from respondents to keep their privacy (Kanuka and Anderson, 2007).

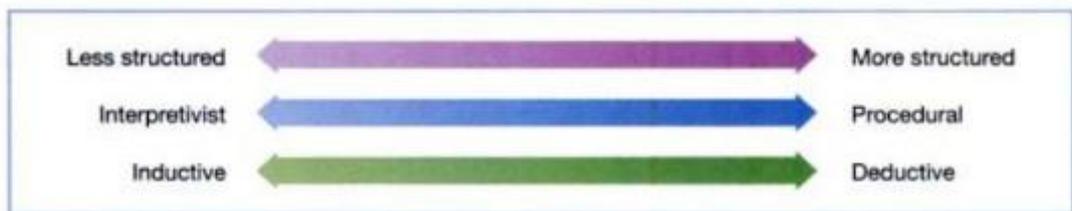
In order to protect the privacy of the human subject, the author will treat the information under ethical practices as confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher informed the participants through e-mail that the information collected would be kept strictly confidential, and their names would not be disclosed.

### 3.5 Approach to Data Analysis

Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012) suggest that it is crucial to develop an analysis plan before collecting the data. Analysis plan ensures that the researcher will collect the necessary data to cover the research questions and will efficiently affect the analysis strategy.

Due to a variety of types of qualitative studies outlined in Figure 11, it shows the different quality analysis. As there is no standard to analyse the qualitative data, many strategies are undertaken by the researcher to deal with collect data (Saunders et al., 2009). As cited already in this research by the author, this study fits the approach highlighted on the left side, less structured (semi-structured), Interpretivist and Inductive according to the image below:

*Figure 11: Dimensions of qualitative analysis*



**Source: (Saunders et al., 2009)**

Boyatzis, (1998) asserts that thematic analysis is a type of process usually adopted in qualitative analysis. According to Guest, MacQueen and Namey, (2012), thematic analysis requires more involvement and interpretation from the researcher in order to examine the data to identify common themes – pattern, the topic that comes up repeatedly. Boyatzis (1998) complements with a definition: “thematic analysis is a process for encoding qualitative information.”

In order to code data after collecting data through an interview in a written form, the data can be separated by coding. After coding, the word can be categorized and organized through themes (St. Pierre and Jackson, 2014).

The methods used for this research was thematic analysis (TA), and the researcher tried to follow the four stages of TA suggested by Boyatzis, (1998):

- “1. Sensing themes - that is, recognizing the codable moment
2. Doing it reliably – that is, recognizing the codable moment and encoding it consistently
3. Developing codes
4. Interpreting the information and themes in the context of a theory or conceptual framework – that is, contributing to the development of knowledge.”

The objective of undertaking this analysis is a useful process that, after categorized by themes, will help the author to link it into the theoretical framework in order to conclude. The advantage of using code is improving the reliability and building a structure about themes and essential definitions.

CAQDAS – Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis is a software that provides tools that assist the researcher to code, manage and organize the data in the qualitative data analytic process (Saldana, 2012). After collecting data, the researcher used Microsoft Excel to apply the thematic analysis procedures.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This chapter aimed to examine the methods used in this research. The most appropriate approach concerning research philosophy was based on subjectivism ontology and interpretivism epistemological, which focus on participant perceptions that play the role of social actors within a social phenomenon.

A case study was chosen to study a social phenomenon in order to investigate a social process carried out by participants involved in the system. In order to gain an understanding in a real-life field, McDonald's (Dublin) was the place chosen that contribute as an empirical study.

Initially, the researcher was guided by the research question afterward was developed a more precise questionnaire with an open question using data source as an interview to collect data from the management team.

The finding of this case study will be explored in the next chapter Presentation and Discussion of the Findings. This chapter will provide a vast diversity of participants perceptions from different positions held by the management team.

## **4 Presentation and Discussion of the Findings**

### **4.1 Overview**

In McDonald's, Dublin, in Ireland was conducted this research. There are two sources of data examined in this chapter. There was an interview with nine managers and leaders through the questionnaire opened questions and a survey at McDonald's involving all employees to identify the type of diversity existent at the workplace to link the matters.

It is first focusing on understanding the importance of inclusive leadership in a diverse workplace.

The second objective is to investigate how leaders are managing diversity through the management procedures and, at the same time, identify the strategy to boost diversity management.

Third, it aims to examine the impact of a diverse workforce through the challenges faced by leaders and the benefit of an organization.

### **4.2 Findings and Discussion**

#### **4.2.1 *Participants***

The researcher applied the interview to the management team. Table 1 provides a summary of the participant's profile. The team management at McDonald's consists of 10 people. Voluntarily everybody agreed to participate in this research, except one person who informally justified the researcher that she is not good at writing. Maybe due English does not be her native language. Participants were coding by sequential numbers according to the sequential order of the interviews that they sent to the

researcher. The 9 participants included five women, three men, and one anonymous. Participant P9, who belongs to the management team, did not identify himself in the first part of the interview, which consists of personal details. Their ages ranged from 20 until 44. One had secondary school, two had to leaving certificate, one is finishing undergraduate, two had bachelor’s degrees, and one is doing Masters. The majority of participants are Irish (8) and 1 Chinese. The management team is composed of 3 leaders, 4 managers, and 1 first assistant. The length of this service in leadership/management is between 6 months until 28 years.

**Table 1: Participants’ gender, age, education, nationality, position, length of this service in leadership/management.**

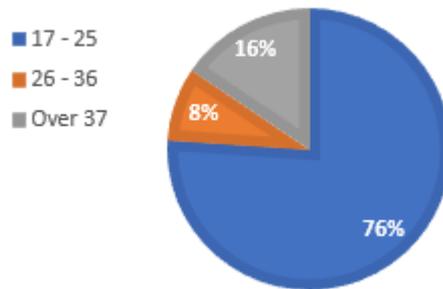
Respondent	Gender	Age	Education	Nationality	Position	Length of this service in leadership/m anagement
R1	Female	21	Final-Year Undergraduate Student	Irish	Area Leader	6 months
R2	Female	20	Leaving Certificate	Irish	Area Leader	6 months
R3	Male	23	Bachelor of Arts (level 8), pursuing a level 9	Irish	Shift Leader	1 year
R4	Female	21	Professional Masters in Primary Education, DCU	Irish	Shift Manager	6 years
R5	Female	44	Secondary School	Irish	1st Assistant Management	28 years
R6	Male	28	Retail Management, NCI	Irish	Shift Manager	9 years
R7	Male	23	Leaving Certificate	Irish	Shift Manager	2 ½ years
R8	Female	44	College	Chinese	Shift manager	15 years
R9						

**Source: Assembled by the author**

#### **4.2.2 Diversity at McDonald’s**

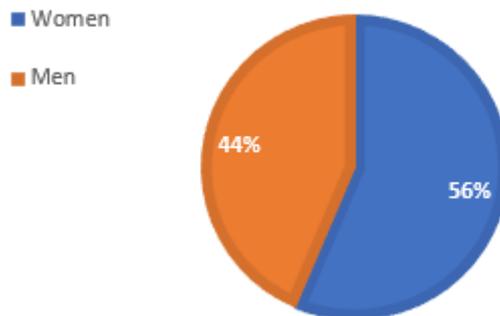
A survey was conducted in order to identify the diversity in the workforce. The result from this survey showed 4 types of diversity among 71 employees: age, gender, nationality, and physical disability illustrated on statistical method represented by percentage on the Figure 12,13,14,15 below:

**Figure 12: Diversity in terms of age among staff in McDonald's**



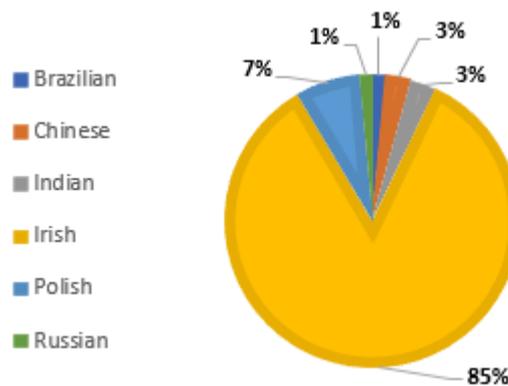
**Source: Assembled by the author**

**Figure 13: Diversity in terms of gender among staff in McDonald's**



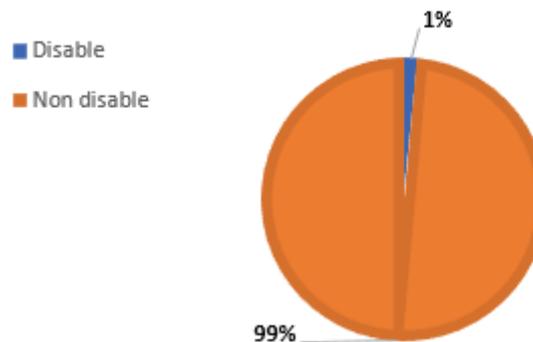
**Source: Assembled by the author**

**Figure 14: Diversity in terms of nationality among staff in McDonald's**



**Source: Assembled by the author**

**Figure 15: Diversity in terms of Physical Disability among staff in McDonald's**



**Source: Assembled by the author**

#### **4.2.3 Understanding the needs to be an inclusive leader toward diversity environment**

This section presents the findings based on sub-themes components that emerged from data analysis that was placed under the theme “the importance to be an inclusive leader.”

*Table 2: The importance to be an inclusive leader*

The importance to be an inclusive leader	Respondent
allow to understanding diversity	R1
improve connection	R2
create a positive work environment	R3
treat equally	R4
treat individually fairly	R5
performance will be better	R6
strong bond	R7

**Source: Assembled by author**

#### *4.2.3.1 Positive work environment and strong bond*

Most leaders and managers interviewed are aware of the importance of inclusiveness. For instance, Respondent 2 disclosed that it is essential to be an inclusive leader in improving the connections among colleagues, and it facilitates a better understand the behavior of people.

“involves everyone in their shift and can create a happy workplace and a strong bond between the managers and crew.” (Respondent 7)

This finding demonstrated that Respondent 7 emphasizing that investing in relationships with employees, making the workplace more enjoyable. The Respondent 3 complemented mentioning the benefit to be an inclusive leader:

“creates a positive work environment and a good atmosphere for everybody in the store.” (Respondent 3)

The three respondents R2, R3, and R7, according to table 2, displayed that an inclusive leader forms positive interactions and relationships that compose the social environment at work. It is known as social skills, that is important for leaders to help themselves to build, maintain, and grow relationship with colleagues. As previously mentioned in the literature by Colvin (2016) as cited in A. Scandura and Mouriño (2017) to have success

in the organization nowadays is crucial to have a leader with social skills to improve the engagement with the workforce. Also, social skills are one of component emotional intelligent popularized by Daniel Goleman mentioned already in the literature review by Salovey, Brackett, and Mayer (2004). However, Goleman (2009) contradicts saying that sometimes social skills show itself in another way that other components of emotional intelligence do not. For instance, socially skilled people are seen chatting and joking around. It shows that they are not working at work.

In another response from the Respondent 1, she also complemented statement on improving the relationship between the leadership team and follower “creates better social bonds,” additionally, she could associate the impact of inclusive leader in diverse workforce:

“as I am their leader, they can trust to report any issues to me.” (Respondent 1)

This reflection outlines how motivated Respondent 1 is to developing a good relationship with her follower. The objective is to build trust to have feedback from them of any situation that can happen. It consists of LMX theory (Northouse, 2010) that shows how dyadic relationship influences the leadership process. A variety of empirical studies shown in this literature review that a high level of LMX creates a good relationship between leader and follower and increases job satisfaction (Nishii and Mayer (2009), as cited in Shore et al. (2011)). Dow (2010) asserts that trust and respects are the ability that leaders should have to build a trusted relationship among the leader and their followers.

The results demonstrate that leaders can create a good relationship, thus a positive environment for the development of inclusiveness. Several evidences have supported the association of leadership with employee behavior. However, more attention should be addressed among the relationship leader to follower, to put on the balance the level of social skills for not to exceed the required at work. Because the result also contradicts the claim of Goleman (2009) that socially skilled people can be seen just enjoying chatting too much at the workplace.

#### *4.2.3.2 Treating everyone fairly and equally*

Another point that should be taken into consideration being an inclusive leader is the perception from respondent 5: “Include and treat every individual fairly.”

In the same line to Respondent 5, Respondent 6 complemented the result of treating everyone fairly: “the entire team performance will be better.”

The excerpts “treat every individual fairly” is related to empathy. Empathy is another component of emotional intelligence. Empathy does not mean that leaders should adopt other people’s emotions and trying to please everybody. Goleman (2009) contributes with an example within the organization field to clarify when the leaders show empathy. When two companies merged, they created a job redundant. The first leader from one division told all the team that some of them would be fired soon. The second leader from another division approached his team differently. He showed his worry and confusion about the decision to be taken. However, he said that he would keep everyone updated with this matter and treat everyone fairly. The difference between the two leaders was empathy. The first leader did not take into consideration the impact of his speech on the team’s feelings. The second leader could understand intuitively in what their team was feeling, and he acknowledged their fears measuring his words. Empathy plays a vital role in the retention of talent in today’s organization. Leaders have always needed empathy to keep good people.

While the two previous interviewees mentioned the term “treat every individual fairly,” Respond 4 emphasizes is: “everyone is treating equally and the same” and states:

“No one should be treated differently as a result of a personal belief, characteristic, or ethnicity.” (Respondent 4)

Respondent 4 identified that regardless of the differences of people hold, they should be treated equally. It seems that the term used by her “equally” refers to equality in the workplace where ensuring everybody has an equal opportunity and is not treated differently or discriminated against because of their characteristics. However, it is essential to analyze the dimension of the term “everyone is treating equally, and the same” is being applied. Treating everyone “the same” is the opposite of treating everyone “fairly.” Treating everyone the same contradicts the LMX theory. LMX is a

good reminder for leaders to be equal and fair in how they approach each of their followers. No relationship is equal. LMX theory reflects that leaders treat followers differently (Northouse, 2010).

The findings show that treating fairly each individual is crucial to ensure a positive team performance and another way to leverage inclusion. Another aspect related to inclusiveness pointed out by leaders was the term “equally.” This word, which must be carefully applied by a real context it is possible to have ambiguity as to its meaning. The leaders should treat equally everybody to have the same opportunity. However, each individual should be approached differently by leaders to understanding and respect their needs, according to LMX (Northouse, 2010).

Equality is one of the sub-theme identified in the findings that will discuss in the next section on Managing diversity at McDonald’s.

#### ***4.2.4 Managing diversity at McDonald’s***

The second analysis was to investigate in how leaders are managing diversity to demonstrate the practices and identify the strategy to boost managing diversity.

##### ***4.2.4.1 Understanding diversity***

The majority of leaders and managers interviewed understood what diversity means. They could acknowledge the differences among individuals. However, as mentioned in this research through the survey conducted at McDonald’s, it was detected four types of diversity, and the manager just said one:

“Diversity to me means working with people of different nationalities”  
(Respondent 9).

Maybe for him, it is not clear yet the whole concept of diversity. Some of them go beyond and understand the leader’s role in diversity management: “Treating everyone equally and showing everyone respect is how to deal with a diverse workforce

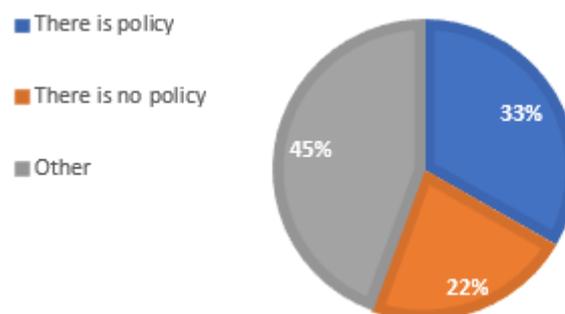
effectively (Respondent 6).” It is consistent with Dow (2017) that asserts trust and respect is one of strategy to achieve diversity success.

Most leaders are aware that diversity represents similarities and differences among employees. Afterward, when leaders link diversity with inclusiveness, they could find ways that best suit diverse workforce management.

#### **4.2.4.2 Policy at McDonald’s**

The term “equally” was identified in several responses from the interview. Some policies prevent discrimination and promote equality. Legislation requires companies to check the policies and procedures to assess if people from a particular group had been excluded or discriminated against (Gravells and Simpson, 2009). According to the study cited in the literature review by Widestedt (2008), even when they adopt the policy in the organization, they still have some issues towards diversity. A contrast study by E. Mor Barak (2011) had shown that policy in the organization had a positive impact on overcoming barriers. To understand if McDonald’s had adhered policy towards diversity, one specific question in this matters had asked for the management team and the findings below:

**Figure 16: Policy at McDonald's**



**Source: Assembled by author**

According to Figure 16 there are discrepancies among responses from the management team to diversity policies. The evidence from this chart show that 22% represented by 2 people had confirmed that there are no diversity policies at McDonald's. In contrast representing 33% they had established that there are policies and the Respondent 7 mentioned: "Religious Beliefs, Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation, Physical Disabilities, Political Beliefs." In conclusion, a large proportion of leaders and managers represented by 4 people answered "other," that means they are not sure about the policies. The other was composed of one empty answer, N/A, one answer that does not relate with the police and another below:

"McDonald's has been recognized and rewarded for best place to work and acknowledged for being a diverse employer." (Respondent 5)

The fact of McDonald's rewarded did not answer the question if it is due to the diversity policies, and it could impact. Therefore, it concludes that they do not know if diversity policies applied at the store. It is not clear for the management team.

To underpin the term equality a strategy to manage diversity, one manager complimented:

"Equality for me is the main strategy.", "there should be no job or shift that is a "male" shift; for example, men work nights women work mornings." (Respondent 6)

What can be seen by this finding is that McDonald's is prioritizing women given morning shifts and men working at night, maybe due to the hard work required, when the store is closed, and everything should be cleaned and washed. On the other hand, an empirical study conducted by Ansari *et al.*, (2016) demonstrated evidence that gender neutrality had applied in a large organization in Pakistan. All respondent males and females said that there was no gender discrimination by the company, and the organizational practices were "gender-neutral." This study was applied a qualitative method with semi-structured interviews.

Generally speaking, these findings confirmed that not all team management even be aware of management diversity policies at McDonald's. The response from Respondent 6, seems that the employment shift has not been distributed equally regarding gender. What can be seen is that the person in charge of setting up the shift is giving preference for women working in the morning and men at night. As a manager pointed, this matter

is also necessary for understanding if it was an issue mentioned by employees that maybe can feel discriminated by gender and maybe is not getting shifts that he or she wanted.

#### **4.2.4.3 Training**

Participants also indicated training as a good strategy for effective diversity management:

“Educating us is the most important way to help. Showing us ways to deal with diversity and diversity issues that may arise, along with providing support” (Respondent 1).

On the other hand, the managers asserted that McDonald’s provide the training and course; also, a policy had adopted to help the manager to deal with diversity:

“Excellent training program which includes this topic at junior management level. We introduced a policy of speaking only English while working due to the number of different nationalities in the workplace.” (Respondent 5)

Respondent 9 complement: “McDonald’s provide course to help manager to become better leaders. We also have online modules we can complete”.

What can be seen is that McDonald’s already has some procedures to assist the management team in dealing with diversity. Nevertheless, it seems that the strategies implemented by McDonald’s are not covering yet the dimension of diversity. Maybe the training on leadership does not include diversity to help team management cover the issues. For instance, the training perhaps is being afforded “how” a leader can communicate. Still, they do not focus on “ what to do” that it is what Respondent 1 pointed out, “showing us a way to deal with diversity.” Therefore, it displays some gaps in managing diversity in the workplace. As mentioned in the literature review, a study conducted by Brezigar (2015) showed the lack of training for leaders to handle diversity and harmed immigrants and ethnic minority employees.

Leaders had showed empathy one more time that consist of Goleman (2009). Respondent 6 advises that the importance to consider the individual needs as language barriers and physical disabilities. He highlighted that more support must be provided for

those to ensure that they are comfortable. Another leader suggested that the strategy to McDonald's would be an investment on training for employees to facilitate the communication of the procedures between leaders and their followers:

“Using training flyers with pictures etc. Is a very effective way to deal with a diverse workforce in terms of language barriers” (Respondent 3)

Interestingly, some participants had done the analysis of themselves as leaders and pointed out some aspects that depend on them to be improved. Knowing themselves is critical to be an effective leader to managing diversity:

“I might use my normal ‘informal’ sort of language when talking to them/ asking them to do something, but they might not understand. If I work it differently, in more formal, simple language, I find that they will understand better.” (Respondent 1)

Along the same line Respondent 3 highlighted:

“To be inclusive in my management, I will treat everybody the same or from time to time I will adjust my tone of voice or the language I use to communicate clearly with somebody whose first language is not English. Managing diversity in my opinion means to adapt your methods to suit those around you.” (Respondent 3)

What can be seen is that the respondent 3 has not the inclusive leadership style yet. However, he is willing to be inclusive; also, he had analyzed his performance towards employees and identified what should be changed. Both leaders are using another component of emotional intelligence self-awareness. They are self-aware (Goleman 2009) that there are people from other nationalities, and they do not have English as the first language. This reflection confirms with Ayad (2016) had said in managing change competency. Also, Purdy and Manning (2015) highlighted that self-awareness is interconnecting with communication that allows the leader to understand the cultural difference. Nevertheless, also, this performance by a leader, where he reflects his behavior social interaction to an employee and adapt his method, consist of game theory (K. Olson and Simerson, 2015). These findings consist of another study conducted by de Brito and Martinho (2018), where evidence the necessity for leadership members at school adapts their cooperative behavior to deal with technology.

Providing a similar narrative to Respondent 3 within the communication context, Respondent 4 mentioned that “positive communication” is the primary strategy to handle diversity in the workplace” also the impact on it:

“ensure crew are comfortable in reporting any queries or issues to the management and set clear deadlines.” (Respondent 4)

The training provided by McDonald’s seems that it has some gaps according to response cited by respondent 1. She mentioned that more support directed in “what” leaders could do to when facing some issues from diversity. Other leaders suggested that training should be given to the diverse workforce as well to help their management. From another leader’s perspective, communication plays a vital role in underpinning managing diversity, and leaders can facilitate this process, giving explicit instruction to their team.

Communication skills remain a dilemma, and it can impair the managing diversity that will be discussed in the next section barrier and benefit for accepting a diverse workforce.

#### ***4.2.5 Barrier for accepting diverse workforce***

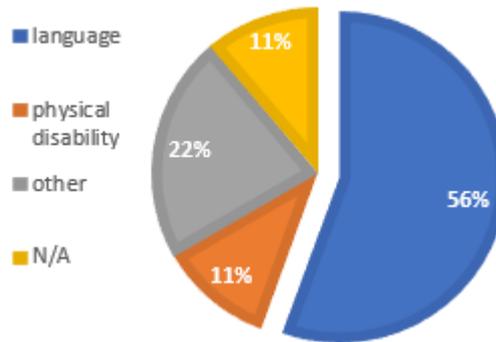
The third analysis was the challenges encountered in diversity management. Most managers and leaders interviewed felt that diversity “was not a big issue” at McDonald’s. However, were highlighted some concerns and difficulties in their point of view:

“I would never want to offend or disrespect anyone from a diverse background. I would be afraid that perhaps Irish humor or language in the workplace could be interpreted falsely” (Respondent 1)

The most common language barrier arises when two people do not speak the same language. If one person speaks English and the receiver speaks only Chinese, both will face a significant obstacle to understanding each other. However, even within a single language, a particular phrase and humor may not mean the same thing from one person to someone else (Ricketts and Ricketts, 2010).

The figure 17 displays the challenges faced by leaders at McDonald’s Dublin.

**Figure 17: Challenges faced by leaders**



**Source: Assembled by author**

Over half leaders represented by 5 leaders and managers said the language barrier is a challenge to managing diversity at workplace:

“Often, language barriers can be an issue. However, I have learned that once you have broken it down to the purest form and give clear, direct instruction and the follow up, it is a lot more effective. (Respondent 4)

The result is consistent with Neal, Dawson, and Madera (2011) that were identified multiple communication barriers due to employees speak a language other than English at the workplace. Besides, employees that do not have English as their first language often experience discrimination from English speakers and feelings of isolation in the workplace (Castro and others 2006 as cited in Neal, Dawson and Madera, 2011).

Surprisingly, the Respondent 4 could identify through self-awareness (Gloeman 2009) the strategy applied to reduce the ineffective communication to increase the cohesion in the workplace.

Physical disability was the challenged point out by Respondent 6:

“McDonald’s requires much physical movement. If someone has a physical disability, it can get in the way of their job as all areas require movement and is quite a busy environment.” (Respondent 6)

This result contrast with Kanigel (2018) confirmed that people did great journalism with physical disabilities. In comparison, what can be seen by this response is that some

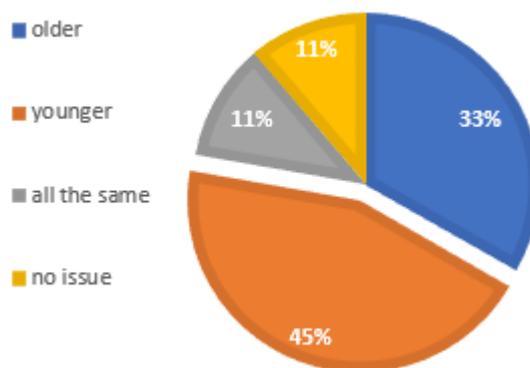
issues arise when people with physical disabilities face a job that requires fast-paced. The performance will be slower and less accurate due to the impairment of movements.

From the pie chart, figure 17, with twenty and two percent were allocated to others because the answers from two participants were misunderstood and were not related to challenges to a diverse workforce. One of them was mentioned already in the strategy section on this research about the policy introduced at McDonald's and another response; the manager chose a language barrier as challenges to deal with customer instead workforce.

The only eleven percent pointed an N/A represents one manager that did not answer the question.

Another aspect investigated toward diversity refers to ages. The management team responded to what is the most difficult: managing younger or older employees and why. The result below:

**Figure 18: Managing younger and older employees**



**Source: Assembled by the author**

According to the figure 18 illustrating the findings where a large proportion of leaders said younger people are more difficult to manage and gave the reasons:

“I feel it is harder to manage younger people as I am quite young myself and feel like I do not get the respect I should be getting as a manager.” (Respondent 7)

The majority staff member working at McDonald’s are young, according to the survey displayed in figure 12. Although younger employees tend to be difficult to manage, on the other hand, having a young workforce holds many advantages, according to Shamsul Nahar Abdullah and Ku Nor Izah Ku Ismail, (2013).

Managing older employees represents three manager or thirty and three percent:

“Being a young girl in a position of power can be difficult”, “once you act professionally and treat each crew member equally and fairly, you will run into fewer issues.” (Respondent 4)

Some conflicts can arise when the team is composed of some older employees, and the leader is young. One case occurred in McDonald’s competitor, Starbucks, to young managers and older employees. According to Bunny (2007) as cited in Resources (2018), there was an older former barista that was a victim of age discrimination at Starbucks. She had some disagreement with her younger supervisor, who felt intimidated by her, and in the end, the older employee was fired. Some young manager finds difficulties in managing older employees because they feel intimidated.

Surprisingly, eleven percent on the chart is related to one answer from the manager that “there is no issue” to managing either:

“I have been a manager 6 years now, so I have many different strategies that work for dealing with everyone. It is important to be considerate and fair to all employees.” (Respondent 6)

It concludes that his leadership experience could develop effective strategies for managing diversity. A strategic leader is one who makes the decision and take the actions through the learning process with strategic thinking to improve effective strategic planning (Hughes, Beatty and Dinwoodie, 2013).

The another eleven percent refers to a response from the Chinese manager with a vague answer “all the same.” Maybe she did not have arguments due the English is not her first language to describing more and answer the full question.

This study shows that the biggest challenge faced by a leader in the language barrier. It is the result of people from diverse nationalities working in the same environment.

According to the results from the survey conducted at McDonald's showed in figure 14, displays of seven different nationalities where people have their native language that differ from each other. The most difficulty pointed out was managing younger employees. According to figure 12, the large proportion of McDonald's consists of age between seventeen and twenty-five years old, and it increases the probability of having more challenges to handle.

#### 4.2.6 *Benefit for the company*

Despite the challenges of diversity, the diverse workforce can afford benefits for the organization. Benefits are what makes a diverse workforce attractive in the global environment. Companies are discovering that workplace diversity is something worth striving to achieve by supporting and promoting a diverse workforce to gain benefits. The leaders from McDonald's identified the benefit displayed in table 3: Benefit for company.

*Table 3: Benefit for the company*

Benefit for the company	Respondent	Literature
Good reputation	R1,R3	Reputation
Learn whith others	R4,R5,R7	Profitability
Innovative	R6	Innovative/ customer satisfaction
Diminishes discrimination	R4	Encountered discrimination

**Source: Assembled by the author**

The two most commons aspects identified within the diverse workplace to benefit the company from the majority leader perspective were a good reputation and learned with others. Innovative also was mention by them. Reputation and innovation are benefits consistent with Tucker III and Jones (2019) that mentioned a survey conducted at PWC.

The term “learn with others” that means leaders are learning with diverse employees and vice versa pointed by a leader as a benefit for company, is doubtful whether any empirical studies have examined it before.

While the result indicated that most leaders highlighted the benefit of the company as a good reputation and learning with others, companies mentioned in the literature review go beyond and sees diversity as a severe competitive advantage related directly to the company’s bottom line. Diversity is bringing more profitability and inventiveness (Philips, 2014, as cited in Varghese, 2016). At Facebook, diversity is a key to drive the innovation in their product “we see the differences as assets” (Williams, 2016). From the business perspective, retain diversity is the key to improve the bottom line (Aya 2016).

Surprisingly, one leader said that “the more diversity the company, it diminishes discrimination”:

“The more diverse the company, the more it will benefit you, in my opinion, as it diminishes discrimination and accepts every individual”. (Respondent 4)

Interestingly, because this finding contradicts what literature shows about discrimination, when the company tries to build diverse teams, discrimination arises in the workplace. According to Brezigar (2015) demonstrated that discrimination the immigrants and ethnic group faced in their integration into Slovenian society. Hinsdale (2015) as cited Gebert, Buengeler, and Heinitz (2017) asserts: “discrimination is still widespread.”

This finding demonstrates that leaders did not measure the potential of diversity on the result of McDonald’s in comparison with literature. The result found learning with others as a benefit of diversity and is not sure if there are prior studies that examined it.

Another surprising aspect pointed out by leader that contradict literature was that more diversity workforce diminishes discrimination.

### 4.3 Conclusion

The first objective of this study highlighted the importance for a leader to be inclusive towards diversity workplace. The inclusive leadership link with the benefit the company can have that will be discussed on the last objective. The leaders from McDonald's know the impact of inclusive leadership in their style of leadership. There is no inclusive leadership theory; however, there are some leadership theories that assist leaders in being inclusive. The leaders demonstrated to use the components of emotional intelligence that provides relationship management skills to make them inclusive in reality. The LMX theory could be associated with inclusion through the several studies shown. Also, the result found that LMX was identified between relationship leaders and each employee when they mentioned "to treat everyone fairly." However, at the same time, the leaders contradict LMX theory when highlight everyone should treating the same. The theory highlights to treat each member independently rather than collectively treating all members.

The second objective was to investigate what were the practices and, at the same time, identify the new strategies to effectively managing diversity. There is a lack of clarity if there is any diversity management policy. However, it did not impair the leader managing diversity. McDonald's afford the course and training for leaders, but it showed that it did not cover all issues from diversity.

The third objective focuses on identifying the challenges faced by a leader when dealing with diversity also the benefit the diversity brings to the company. However, it is crucial to understand that benefit from diversity is related to inclusive leadership. If a leader did not try to be inclusive, it would be harder to retain diversity workforce. The results showed that there were detected challenges for leaders under all four types the diversity identified on the survey at McDonald's: age, gender, nationality, and physical disability.

On the other hand, the benefit from diversity mentioned by leaders is more related to social relationships, reputation the company instead of a business performance and impact on profit. The study indicated that leaders are not aware and probably did not measure the potential advantage to have a diverse workforce, and it can positively affect the bottom line.

## **5 Concluding Thoughts on the Contribution of this Research, its Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

### **5.1 Implications of Findings for the Research Questions**

This research aimed to determine the impact of inclusive leadership in diversity management, along with the challenges faced by leaders and the benefits for McDonald's when there is a diverse workplace. It sought to generate findings regarding a case study at McDonald's, thus answering the three research questions.

- 1) Why is it important for leaders to be inclusive regarding diversity in an organisation?

The findings not only show that inclusive leadership assists leaders in managing diversity, as predicted in the literature and supported by emotional intelligence and LXM theory. They also empirically demonstrate that an inclusive leader is the key to managing diversity successfully, underscoring the significance of interpersonal exchanges through dyadic interactions and communication between leaders and followers.

Leaders at McDonald's have recognised the importance of being inclusive, understanding that it plays a vital role in the workplace. These findings indicate the need to retain a diverse workforce, thus reaping the benefits that diversity offers. The majority leader concluded that the benefit gained from a diverse workforce includes learning from others, and the literature is not sure if any studies have identified it yet.

Surprisingly, another benefit pointed out by leaders that contradicted literature was that the more diverse a workforce is, the more likely it is to diminish discrimination and lead to the acceptance of every individual.

## 2) How can leaders manage diversity successfully?

This work has found that leaders developed strategies on their own through the self-awareness components of emotional intelligence to effectively manage a diverse workforce. However, this may have occurred due to the gap revealed by this study in relation to diversity policies. It was not clear for all of the management team whether there were diversity policies at McDonald's, and in most cases, diversity management is practised informally by leaders at McDonald's who make sense of their leadership role by reflecting on the social expectations of their staff.

The study found a lack of agreement between leaders about the training and courses provided by McDonald's as a strategy to assist them with managing diversity. This leads to the impression that McDonald's should restructure its training in order to address all of the issues experienced by leaders relation to diversity. The results also revealed a strategy suggested by leaders to improve the process of managing diversity: through training flyers with pictures distributed to a diverse workforce.

## 3) What are the challenges that leaders face when dealing with diversity in the workforce?

The language barrier was the main challenge, while physical disability was the second most significant challenge faced by leaders. Meanwhile, regarding the most difficult age group of employees to handle, younger employees were selected as the most difficult. Regarding the language barrier, leaders found strategies to handle it, but more needs to be achieved in relation to managing people with a physical disability. McDonald's should revise its procedures as regards whether it can still hire disabled people to work, as all of the areas mentioned by leaders require fast movement. Managing younger employees also requires plenty of attention to McDonald's in order to develop practices which assist leaders.

## 5.2 Contributions of the Research

This study contributes to the inclusive leadership and managing diversity literature in several ways. Firstly, this research supports previous studies that suggested a positive impact on employees' performance when the leader has a high level of LMX. Nevertheless, some components of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness and social skills, also appeared in some studies, strengthening the relationship between leaders and followers. These results highlight that components of emotional intelligence are leadership skills that deserve more attention in research and work life. Most importantly, we incorporated LMX theory, which is a unique approach focusing on dyadic relationships between leaders and followers, as well as emotional intelligence theory, which emphasises the characteristic of a leader. The empirical findings revealed that emotional intelligence is a contributing part of leader-follower interactions that, when combined, lead to a strong relationship helping leaders to be inclusive, thus clearly indicating ways in which to managing diversity successfully. The results also identified some strategies highlighted by leaders that can be implemented by McDonald's to improve management practices aimed towards a diverse workforce.

*Table 4: Contributions to the managing diversity and inclusive leadership literature*

<b>Contributions to the literature concerning the management of diversity and inclusive leadership</b>
<b>Brief summary of existing findings in the literature</b>
There is a positive impact on employees' performance when the leader has a high level of LMX.
Some components of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, social skills strengthening the relationship between leaders and followers, improve employees' performance.
<b>Contribution of the empirical findings of this research</b>
Components of emotional intelligence, including leadership skills, deserve more attention in the research and in work life.

Incorporation of LMX theory (focusing on dyadic relationships between leaders and followers) and emotional intelligence theory which emphasises the characteristics of a leader.

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Emotional intelligence is a contributing part of leader-follower interactions that, when combined, facilitate a strong relationship which enables leaders to be inclusive.

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This research established that there are various means of managing diversity.

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Strategies highlighted by the leaders could be implemented by McDonald's to improve management practices to cultivate a diverse workforce.

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## **5.1 Recommendations for Practice**

According to the findings of this research, the following recommendations for practice in McDonald's stores and specifically for management teams were identified to improve diversity management and the relationships between leaders and followers:

- Invest more in training with regard to specific elements which promote diversity, emphasising what a leader can do to deal with issues related to diversity.
- Leaders suggested training flyers with pictures to a diverse workforce.
- Some leaders had developed a self-analysis of their leadership style, and this could be adopted by others in order to improve their management to diversity.
- McDonald's can afford training focusing on social skills to assist leaders with improving their relationships with employees and becoming socially competent.
- McDonald's should review its practices to its diversity policy, which is currently not clear for all management teams. Policies devised by the company will make management leaders accountable for improving their practices as regards dealing with a diverse workforce.

## **5.2 Limitations of the Research**

The researcher identified that there are several limitations to this research. Firstly, the results presented in this paper concern one company used as a single case study. Diversity at McDonald's is based on measuring only age, gender, nationality, physical disability. Diversity could be measured across other variables, such as religious belief, personal and professional background, sexual orientation, etc. The author does note that there are more dimensions to diversity, depending on the organisational context. Another limitation is the inability to collect responses from two managers due to their issues in relation to expressing themselves through written English. One of these managers was Polish, and he did not participate in the interview, while the questionnaire from the Chinese manager contained vague answers. Conducting remote interviews could potentially ensure good answers from participants due to the fact that they would not be under pressure to respond. The researcher was somewhat restricted from collecting additional valuable information. For example, one manager stated that there was no issue concerning managing older and younger employees because of strategic planning in place. However, the researcher was unable to obtain elaboration on this point. In addition, the researcher was not able to clarify the meaning of the questions for participants when they misunderstood or answered about something that was not entirely relevant to the question asked. One leader, for example, referred to the challenges associated with diverse customers instead of a diverse workforce.

## **5.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

Several avenues for future research have been identified due to the limitations of the current research. Future research should empirically test through detailed case studies that could be carried out at the organisational level to identify barriers encountered by the management regards diversity management and work-life balance initiatives. Given the fact that Ireland has become a more culturally diverse society, more studies focusing on multicultural workplaces in terms of their diversity could offer many opportunities.

In order to enrich the knowledge in this area, futures studies could incorporate in-depth interviews carried out face to face environments. This research also contributes to providing new insight into diversity by suggesting that a more diverse workforce diminishes discrimination, which contradicts the findings in the literature. In order to thoroughly understand game theory towards leadership, future scholars should explore the application of this theory, emphasising the relationship between leaders and followers, which at present is underresearched. However, it has the potential to discuss, and maybe it can be the strategy implementation by the organisation in their management team. Lastly, future research could incorporate surveys with members of diverse workforces to obtain their views regarding the performance of managers, rather than focusing only on managers' views, thus determining whether the adversity management strategies adopted have a positive impact on employees.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A – Interview

# Interview



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### *Personal Details*

Gender:

Age:

Education:

Nationality:

Position/Job title:

Length of this service in leadership/management:

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### *General Questions*

- 1) What does diversity mean to you? How do you think to be an inclusive leader/manager is important to deal with diverse workforce?
- 2) What is your understanding about “managing diversity”?
- 3) What is the most difficult for you: managing younger or older employees and why?
- 4) In what way do you think diversity can benefit for the company?
- 5) What is the most challenging situation that you have had when dealing with diversity and how did you handle it? (Communication, language, cultural, gender, etc)
- 6) Describe your understanding of inclusive leader/manager and why it is important for your position.

- 7) Explain what do you believe that can be an effective strategy to deal with a diverse workforce.
- 8) What are your concerns you have about working with diverse workforce?
- 9) In your opinion what can McDonald's does to help leaders to deal with diversity?
- 10) Is there any diversity management policy in McDonald's? If yes could you discuss a little about it?

## Appendix B – NOTIFICATION FORM FOR LOW-RISK PROJECTS



GRIFFITH COLLEGE DUBLIN

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**Griffith College Dublin**

**RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

### **NOTIFICATION FORM FOR LOW-RISK PROJECTS**

**Application No.** *(office use only)*

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#### **Section A: Applicant Details**

<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>	"The necessity for leaders to be inclusive and how they manage workplace diversity: a case study of McDonald's - Dublin"
<b>APPLICANT NAME:</b>	Fabiola Trindade Amorim Brito
<b>SCHOOL/UNIT:</b>	
<b>APPLICANT EMAIL:</b>	fabiola_trindade@hotmail.com
<b><i>If a student applicant, please provide the following additional information:</i></b>	
Programme of Study:	
Supervisor Name:	Patrick Mulcahy
Supervisor Email:	patrick.mulcahy@griffith.ie

**Section B: Questions**

**1. Notification Review is reserved for low-risk social studies that fall under the following classifications. Please indicate your project type below:**

<b>Please mark as appropriate:</b>	
<b>x</b>	Anonymous Survey (the topic will not elicit significant difficulties for participants)
	Observation (without audio or visual recording) of a public setting
	Questioning participants regarding their opinions on products or services
	Questioning students about standard educational practices
	Study will monitor the impact of participants' daily activities
	Questioning public figures/professionals in their professional capacity regarding their professional activities
	Analysis of existing anonymised data which has been provided to the researcher by a third party
	Collection of biological samples which are anonymised and do not require invasive techniques (e.g. hair, nails).
	Other <b><i>Please explain:</i></b>

**2. Please provide a justification for why your study is considered to be low-risk?**

I will be questioning leaders in a fast food company and I will not disclose who they are in my dissertation. It is considered low risk because the names of participants will not be disclosed.

### 3. Please describe how your participants will be recruited?

I will do questionnaire available in a written form and send it individually to them by e-mail. Doing this method, I will give time to leaders answer the questionnaires without pressure.

### 4. Informing your participants – Plain Language Statement

*A Plain Language Statement (PLS) should be used in all cases. This is written information in plain language that you will be providing to participants, outlining the nature of their involvement in the project and inviting their participation. The PLS should specifically describe what will be expected of participants, the risks and inconveniences for them, and other information relevant to their involvement. Please note that the language used must reflect the participant age group and corresponding comprehension level – if your participants have different comprehension levels (e.g. both adults and children) then separate forms should be prepared for each group. The PLS can be embedded in an email to which an online survey is attached, or handed/posted to individuals in advance of their consent being sought. A copy of the PLS should be attached to this application. See link to sample templates on the website: [http://www4.dcu.ie/research/research\\_ethics/rec\\_forms.shtml](http://www4.dcu.ie/research/research_ethics/rec_forms.shtml)*

Dear respondents,

My name is Fabíola Trindade Amorim Brito, I'm student from Griffith College doing Master's in accounting and Finances Management. I'm conduct a research with a topic "The necessity for leaders to be inclusive and how they manage diversity in a multicultural workplace: fast food case study"

The objective of my research is to gain an understanding of the effect of diversity and inclusive leadership in an organization.

The outcome of this research will provide insights to the company that has a diversity workforce to review their process in order to improve to embrace diversity.

The questionnaire will consist in some questions and should approximately do not exceed 20 minutes to answer.

Every effort will be made to respect responses anonymity. In order to protect the privacy of human subject, I will treat the information under ethical practices as confidentiality and anonymity.

Please answer the question truthfully, there are no correct and wrong answer. All accomplished questionnaire will be destroyed after the competition of the research.

Participants involvement in this research is totally voluntary. You have the right to withdraw of the research at any point without any penalty on that.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at any time through +353838747054 or [fabiola\\_trindade@hotmail.com](mailto:fabiola_trindade@hotmail.com)

Thank you!

Regards,

Fabíola Brito.

*Please confirm whether the following issues have been addressed in your plain language statement for participants:*

	YES or NO
Introductory Statement (PI and researcher names, school, title of the research)	Yes
What is this research about?	Yes
Why is this research being conducted?	Yes
What will happen if the person decides to participate in the research study?	Yes
How will their privacy be protected?	Yes
How will the data be used and subsequently disposed of?	Yes
What are the legal limitations to data confidentiality?	Yes
What are the benefits of taking part in the research study (if any)?	Yes

What are the risks of taking part in the research study?	<b>Yes</b>
Confirmation that participants can change their mind at any stage and withdraw from the study	<b>Yes</b>
How will participants find out what happens with the project?	<b>No</b>
Contact details for further information (including REC contact details)	<b>Yes</b>

***If any of these issues are marked NO, please justify their exclusion:***

How will participants find out what happens with the project?	<b>No</b>
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I will ask the participants first if they have interest to see the outcome from my research.

### **5. Capturing consent – Informed Consent Form**

*In most cases where interviews or focus groups are taking place, an Informed Consent Form is required. This is an important document requiring participants to indicate their consent to participate in the study, and give their signature. If your participants are minors (under 18), it is best practice to provide them with an assent form, while their parents/guardians will be given the Informed Consent Form. In cases where an anonymous questionnaire is being used, it is enough to include a tick box in the questionnaire (underneath the information section for participant), where the participant can indicate their consent. See link to sample templates on the website: [http://www4.dcu.ie/research/research\\_ethics/rec\\_forms.shtml](http://www4.dcu.ie/research/research_ethics/rec_forms.shtml). **A copy of the Informed Consent Form should be attached to this application.***

**Note – IF AN INFORMED CONSENT FORM IS NOT BEING USED, THE REASON FOR THIS MUST BE JUSTIFIED HERE:**

The participants that I will send the questionnaire will be adults, there is no people underage. I do not need to apply the Consent form. I will use the qualitative method though questionnaire. The participants will not be identifiable I only will get the information from their answer to add in my research. First of all, the participants will receive my Plain Language Statement and will be free to choose if they would like to participate.

### **Important Notes:**

- **Please ensure you attach any additional relevant documentation to your application: E.G.** copy of Survey/Questionnaire, copy of Interview/Focus Group schedule, copy of permission/approval from external sources (i.e. approval to access individuals in an organisation, school, community group)
- **The application should consist of one electronic file only.** The completed application must incorporate the plain language statement, informed consent form and all supplementary documentation
- **All sections of the application form must be answered.** The completed application must be proofread and spellchecked before submission to Research Ethics Committee
- **Your application must be submitted on Turnitin by week 9 as separate submission. Student applicants must e-mail their supervisor on that–** this applies to *all* student applicants (masters and postgraduate). **The form should be approved and signed by the supervisor in advance of submission to Griffith’s ethics committee.**

**Applications which do not adhere to these requirements will not be accepted for review and will be returned directly to the applicant.** The administrator to the Research Ethics Committee will assess, on receiving such notification, whether the information provided is adequate.

Please note: Project supervisors have the primary responsibility to ensure that students do not take on research that could expose them and the participants to significant risk, such as might arise, for example, in interviewing members of vulnerable groups such as young children. In general, please refer to the Research Ethics Guidelines (REC) for further guidance on what research procedures or circumstances might make a higher level of ethical approval necessary.

**DECLARATION BY PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)**

**In the case of student applicants the Principal Investigator is their supervisor.**

*The information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate. I have read the University's current research ethics guidelines, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the procedures set out in the attached application in accordance with the form guidelines, the REC guidelines, the Colleges policy on Conflict of Interest, Code of Good Research Practice and any other condition laid down by the Griffith College Research Ethics Committee. I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations and the rights of the participants.*

*If there exists any affiliation or financial interest for researcher(s) in this research or its outcomes or any other circumstances which might represent a perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest this should be declared in accordance with Griffith College policy on Conflicts of Interest.*

*I and my co-investigators or supporting staff have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached application and to deal with any emergencies and contingencies related to the research that may arise.*

**Electronic Signature(s):**

*Principal investigator(s):*

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*Print Name(s) here:*

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*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

