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The importance of Mediation as an Alternative Method of Conflict Resolution in a Workplace Conflict caused by Cultural Diversity

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ABSTRACT

Conflicts in the workplace are extremely common in our daily lives. We know that they can occur for several different causes, since employees have different thoughts, values and life experiences that can impact the work environment. The aim of this research is to identify the perception of individuals with work activity in Ireland about conflicts in the workplace and the influence of cultural differences in these conflicts. This is a quantitative analytical and cross-sectional study, survey type. The target population of this research is people residing in Ireland who are working in the country in a Multicultural environment. This type of sampling is a form of non-probabilistic sample, which uses chains of reference, where the dissemination of the instrument through the contact network is envisaged in its stages. For data collection, a questionnaire was developed based on other studies. Among the 130 participants in the survey, the results showed that it is a young adult audience with a high level of education and the vast majority of non-European origin. In relation to conflicts, a significant part of the respondents sees and perceives in their work relations influences of cultural diversity. None of the participants had real experiences with mediation, even so they believe that they would be comfortable with the participation of a third party in the conflict resolution process. Most employers do not use either traditional or alternative methods of conflict resolution. Regarding the classification of conflicts, all of them are characterized as intragroup conflicts.

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INTRODUCTION

Conflicts in the Workplace have been extremely common since the Ancient times. We know there are several reasons that can cause conflicts, since employees have different personalities and values. However, sometimes these conflicts have as their main cause the cultural difference between them. These main differences bring a series of positive benefits; Apart from that, it can also bring negative points, since constant conflicts can hinder a company's daily life. It is considered a complicated and challenging task to deal with these differences since a series of variables is involved.

The conflict in the work environment, according to the literature can be characterized as a disagreement in different levels of importance, between two or more members of a work team, which can generate negative and positive impacts. The negative ones being pointed out as discord and dislikes in the team and the positive continues the spectrum of generating stimuli for better results (GRIFFIN, 2007), although other authors point out that the conflict could be a much more negative than positive bias and must be avoided at all costs (RAHIM, 2001). The conflict can also be seen as an element that generates a dispute between what is considered to be personal interest versus organizational interests (MARRAS, 2009).

Communication is one of the main instruments that should be used as an ally both in the prevention and in the treatment of these situations. Thus, for a good communication to take place, it is necessary that the spoken and written word is well understood, that is, verbal communication, non-verbal and written plays an important role in this problem (MARRAS, 2009). However, when we speak of an environment that encompasses people of different nationalities and, consequently, with different languages, problems in this context can emerge.

With globalization, migration of people is something that has become common today. Therefore, cultural diversity is something that grows day by day in companies as a result of

that. In this way, conflicts in the Workplace due to Cultural differences have become bigger than in the past and it is really important to know how to deal with them as well as what are the essential steps to follow to guide the situation in the most correct way.

The phenomenon of cultural diversity in the literature tends to have an ambiguity of views, once one part argues that cultural differences generate problems and different types of misunderstandings and, consequently, conflicts, and that therefore these negative aspects are very superior to any positive effects (STAHL, MAZNEVSKI, VOIGT, JONSEN, 2010; STAHL, TUNG, 2014). In contrast, others point out that cultural diversity promotes creativity and innovation (BOUNCKEN, BREM, KRAUS, 2016).

Through contact with people of different nationalities we can identify that cultural differences in the workplace are often the causes of conflicts. It is also evident that the lack of preparation of current leaders and companies in dealing with conflicts between people of different cultures, directly impacts the organizational climate. After recognizing all these important issues, it is possible to realize the importance of Mediation as a way to minimize these impacts within the organization.

The aim of this research is to identify the perception of individuals with work activity in Ireland about conflicts in the workplace and the influence of cultural differences in these conflicts. The objectives of this research:

1) To identify the types of conflicts that have arisen by the participants that have resulted from cultural differences.

2) To clarify the impacts and deleterious effects of the presence of conflicts in the workplace due to cultural differences.

3) To analyse the advantages of using Mediation as an Alternative Method of Conflict Resolution in the workplace in those cases.

CHAPTER 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Conflicts in the Workplace

In this chapter, we will briefly address the concepts related to the emergence of conflicts within the work environment and how they can be classified, outlined or characterized according to the literature.

1.1.1 Definition of Conflict

Analysing the etymology itself of the word conflict, which derives from the Latin *conflictu* (confrontation of those who fight), it implies a disagreement between parties, a clash of forces. In the organizational environment, it is common in these situations to be more frequent when a person is more involved in the proposed activities, in this sense, senior positions in different areas of operations tend to conflict (MARTINELLI and ALMEIDA, 2011).

Conflict can be characterized as the expression of dissonance between people, groups or organizations, which can be caused not only by dissenting ideas, but by dissenting feelings as well (COSTA and MARTINS, 2011; SALES et al, 2007).

Companies have a high power of influence over the psychic states of individuals who are under their management. Thus, they have the potential to be positive or negative regarding to their effects on them. Conflicts tend to make the environment hostile and generate impact direct the quality of life of individuals and in their work process, since their mental state impacts their creativity and potential developer and innovator (KANAANE 1999).

On the other hand, Ahrens (2012) believes that the conflict is a chance for the organization to obtain growth, since the shock of opinions can generate new possibilities of motion, the author affirms that the problem is not the disagreement itself, but the way to deal with it that

can be harmful to the work environment.

The literature has constantly brought a new approach on the conceptualization of conflict and as a manager they must perceive and understand this issue, the development perspective of the process of growth and improvement of leadership also appears with recurrence in the literature, according to Cloke and Goldsmith (2011):

> A new concept of conflict, based on personal leadership and organizational learning, creative problem solving, collaborative negotiation, satisfaction of interests, and a view of conflict that can promote personal and organizational transformation. This creative model is replacing a limited approach to conflict that seeks to suppress, avoid, or compromise issues rather than resolve the underlying reasons that gave rise to them (CLOKE and GOLDSMITH, 2011, p.10).

1.1.2 Characteristics and factors involved in determining a conflict

Coleman and Ferguson (2014) in their research on conflicts showed that the processes and results of conflict are most affected by three main components: 1) Level of conflict intensity; 2) Conflict structure; 3) Conflict transparency. That is, in general, according to the authors, conflicts can alternate from easy to impossible to manage, which is also related to other variables such as: history between the parties, the level of emotion, time of conflict, its complexity, the importance of the concerns and issues involved, as well as whether the personal and cultural characteristics of the individuals were involved, and according to these variables, it is possible to spend more or less energy on a resolution process. Conflicts can vary consisting of purely cooperative or purely competitive objectives, when conflicts are more competitive, they result in the destructive effects of the relationships involved. The more transparent or explicit a conflict is, the easier it is to resolve it in a positive way.

In relation to the influence of these factors on the effect of the conflict, intensity is the biggest predictor of the types of behaviour between the parties, the higher the level of intensity, the more hostile behaviours tend to be (COLEMAN and FERGUSON, 2014).

We need to consider that individuals have plural values, behaviours and interests and this forces organizations to program themselves with strategies that embrace this reality, already foreseeing conflict and taking precautions with management policies. Conflict can be harmful to the institution when it involves a divergence between the individual's vision and values in favour of those of the organization, one of the biggest challenges for leaders is to provide an environment that has a tolerant and flexible spirit (MOREIRA, 2012).

1.1.3 Conflicts classification

Regarding the classification of types of conflict, it is possible to identify that in the literature we have some types of conflicts and their classification varies according to a plurality of factors. Conflicts can occur internally in relation to the individual. They can occur between two individuals, between leaders and followers, as well as between the leaders themselves.

As previously discussed, conflicts have a positive and, also a negative bias, so it is important that your approach is the one that best benefits the organization, they must be treated well in order to bring benefits to the organization. A significant amount of time can be spent in the conflict resolution process and, therefore, organizations need to plan in order to deal with these issues, and for that, determining the type of conflict makes its management more limpid (CHAND, 2010). There are several approaches to the possible classifications of conflicts, which can be characterized in connection to their levels, directions and organizations.

1.1.3.1 Intrapersonal

This type of conflict has an internal origin, its origin is in the conflictual individual itself, it

occurs at the moment when his desires are not performed or when a person, the individual himself, needs to deal with a decision that he does not consider internally adequate or correct. In general, they are conflicts related to values, where there is no accordance between their role (in the organization) and their values and beliefs (CHAND, 2010).

It is possibly what is most known and popular in terms of prevalence, that is, it is what people most understand as "conflict" in an organization (GREEN, 2012). It can also happen due to differences in the objectives and goals of organizations. The origins of this kind of conflict are in general: differences in personality, perceptions, opposite values and interests, differences in power and status, in addition to lack of information, stress and fear (WHETTEN and CAMERON, 2011).

According to Russo (2013), these types of conflicts are related to the emotional side of the individual, their experiences, and usually tend to manifest themselves within teams or in the organization as a whole. On the other hand, there is also the idea of the conflict of the attraction where the person deliberately chooses between the two objectives of equal value to him, always implying a renunciation, where someone must sacrifice himself for the common good.

In accordance with Marques (2014), the so-called emotional or affective conflicts tend to involve a series of negative emotions and attack the individual's personal identity and self-esteem, which implies a decrease in levels of productivity, satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

1.1.3.2 Intragroup

Intragroup conflict takes place when a person in a group works to achieve a different goal than the other group in the organization, this type of conflict occurs at the organizational level. A member may have social needs that compel him to stay within his group, which does

not prevent him from simultaneously disagreeing with his group's goals and the methods they have used to achieve those goals. It is also likely to happen between members of the same group (CHAND, 2010).

The literature points to a subdivision between intragroup conflicts: those of relationship, task and process conflict (AMASON and SCHWEIGER, 1994; JEHN, 1995; PINKLEY, 1990).

For Dirks and Parks (2003) there are relationship conflicts, when the individual of the same group has interpersonal incompatibilities, such as stressful situations, animosities, annoyances and personality clashes, they also mention the task conflicts that occur when there are differences in relation to the content of tasks and work objectives, including in this category disagreements in opinions, points of view and divergence about the method by which a task should be performed.

Other authors corroborate this classification. According to Dimas and Lourenço (2011), as well as to Costa and Martins (2011), intragroup conflicts are divided into two major orientations, task or cognitive conflicts and social-affective or emotional conflicts. Still, as believed by this author, the task conflict or cognitive conflict arises from the perception of disagreement between members of a group about the content of their decisions, which may involve differences between points of view, ideas and opinions, whereas the relationship conflict or emotional conflict arises from the perception of interpersonal incompatibility, involving tension, irritation and anger among the members of the group considering its possible consequences for the group (COSTA and MARTINS 2011).

Russo (2013) also analyses what he calls a differentiation conflict, which where the divergence between group members occurs in favour of a certain task delegated to a group generating in the others the feeling that the organization does not consider them capable of carrying out.

1.1.3.3 Between groups

Organizations are made up of networks and departments, so-called intergroup conflicts are those that take place in different groups within the same organization. Individuals have a tendency to create several groups when there is a demand for it (GREEN, 2012).

Conflicts arise between different group functions within the organization due to their different objectives as well as due to several fundamental differences between various units of an organization within its operations, processes or structures.

There is also the possibility of this type of conflict between workers from different shifts, which tends to happen when one of them blames the other in case of lack of equipment, maintenance or process problems, or even pending between shifts (EVANS, 2013).

1.1.3.4 Intraorganizational

This typology in particular has four subtypes: vertical, horizontal, line personnel, and paper. The characteristics that differentiate them are as follows: those of the vertical type are those that occur between different organizational levels, generally they can be related to power structures. Line-team conflicts are how line departments are assisted by support departments and in most organizations these relationships, create conflicts because the line-team and managers have different personal characteristics (KINICKI and KREITNER, 2008).

1.1.3.5 Interorganizational

They are those that take place between different organizations, which have a level of dependence on each other. In this case, we can exemplify how conflicts that may arise from the relationship between a government agency that regulates specific organizations and organizations that are influenced by this agency (JONES and GEORGE, 2008).

1.1.4 Cultural diversity as a motivating factor for conflicts at work

Nowadays, it is not new that cultural diversity has been discussed in different environments, including the corporate one, handling the differences between social groups from different cultures has become essential to the process of immigration and globalization (HOLCK, MUHR, VILLESECHE, 2016).

It is necessary to understand that individuals have different ways of expressing themselves in the world, and to understand how cultures manifest themselves in the work environment. The individuals carry their cultural signifiers as values, principles, behaviours that are learned throughout life, thus it becomes intangible that the institutions disregard this context, not paying attention to these aspects can imply risks of performance and efficiency of the company (KOKT, 2003; BEDI, LAKRA, GUPTA, 2014).

Cultural diversity, which can be framed as any difference, such as gender, sexuality, age, professional experience, among others, or just at the threshold of what is called national culture (TROMPENAARS, HAMPDEN-TURNER, 1998; HOGAN, 2002).

Coleman and Ferguson (2014) in their book leave a question that has been the subject of research for a long time: "Why do some conflicts go terribly wrong while others go very well?" The answer to that question has yet to be fully answered. The greatest theorists and philosophers in the world have tried to contemplate the possible answers that surround this question.

However, after so many years, the path to this answer lies in the capacity for a plurality of behaviours and significant assimilations that individuals are able to absorb throughout their lives. Personality, the environment, history, culture and all this miscellany of factors combine and tend to affect how the outcome of conflicts in which individuals are involved. In this bias, there is no way to disregard that environment with people from different cultures, it is likely to have different types of results, sometimes positive, sometimes negative.

According to Coleman and Ferguson (2014):

[…] The circumstances of a specific place—cultural norms and rules, laws, the presence of authorities or other third parties, the prevalence of rules, laws, the presence of authorities or other third parties, the prevalence of violence, availability of weapons, codes of honour, temperature, and so on—also impact how a conflict will unfold there. But what really matters is how these two things, people and place, interact. For instance, think of how you might react to a conflict with a traffic policeman in your hometown versus a border-patrol officer at a checkpoint in the West Bank in Palestine. And compare that with how one of your more impulsive, volatile colleagues might respond to the same situations. What will determine the direction of the conflict is how the natures of the people involved interact with the specifics of the situation (COLEMAN and FERGUNSON, 2014, p17).

There is no way to determine a definitive way, why people can be inflexible with individuals from other cultures, however, in Cottle's (2006) work on media coverage on conflicts, it brings in its paradigms an important construction on how the media ends up having an influence on that issue.

The author elucidates that for the theoretical structuring of the study of mediatized conflicts, focusing on the issues of culture and cultural mediation. He points out how the media challenges the seemingly inevitable logic of the construction consent paradigm, but does so by investigating the complexities of popular culture and how media culture permeates everyday life and identities and influences them, and in this relationship the consumption of media from places where there are concentrations of economic and symbolic power located within the cultural industries, implies a growing process of global domination and relationship with centres of Western and American political hegemony, approaches within this paradigm also observes the multiple resistances, pleasures and discourses (COTTLE,

2006).

In this regard, it is clear that there is a considerable portion of influence on the behaviour of people guided by the significant findings captured in the media consumption process, as it is in this process of observing how different positions of the individual - age, gender, ethnicity, national identity, as well as class - became publicly represented and contested in the media sphere. In any case, Cottle's paradigm argument elucidates the social bias of how we are influenced to see the identity of others.

1.1.4.1 Intercultural communication

Another point that needs to be considered are the barriers that result from communication, among them the linguistic barrier. When we talk about territorial boundaries, we refer to a physical marker, however, there is a greater breadth of significance in terms of the fact that this space also determines and represents identities and, consequently, the people who transit through it. Thus, there is no way to talk about migratory flows and territorial expansions without mentioning that along with this process, it carries much more than its habits and beliefs, its language, when people move, languages move together (OLIVEIRA and SILVA, 2017).

When it comes to intercultural communication, in the same way as a culture, as a classifiable object, the communication that is necessary to make it understood among peoples has also been provoking the interest of several researches. In this regard, we consider that communication is the process of transmitting and sharing meanings of symbols in their various expressions. However, to understand that individuals can communicate on many levels and for many reasons, and still with many people and in many ways.

According to Trompenaars (1994), there are many problems related to the process of communicating across cultural boundaries. If we consider that communication is an exchange

of information through words, ideas or emotions of a sharing system, the message is a symbolic form of this Code that manifests itself between people, the act of coding has a means (expression) for the receiver, translating or deciphering it (assimilation).

As per Fred, Casmir & Nobleza (1989), intercultural communication is a process by which symbolic interaction takes place between person and groups that have cultural differences recognized in their most diverse forms of perceptions, forms and behaviours, which can significantly affect the result of the action of exchange. Also, it is precisely in this sense that interculturality is directly related to cultural diversity.

Interculturality can be understood as the interrelationship between different cultures in their different dimensions, individual/individual, individual/group, group/group, group/nation (FRAGA, 2000). In this movement of relating different experiences in the cultural context, when they occur in an authentic way, that is, when they are not conflicting, when they do not generate cultural dominance or suffer dominance from other cultures, it is an enriching movement for the parties.

Culture has an impact on how well a person adapts to live and work in a foreign country. Culture influences communication styles in a variety of ways, implicitly and explicitly. In verbal communication, the spoken word, in addition to the characteristics of speaking rate or humour, also has to consider the qualities of intonation of the voice, as people have different styles of conversation. Trompenaars (1994) exemplifies that for Anglo-Saxons, when A stops talking, B starts, because in their culture it is not a good form to interrupt the other speaker. In the opposite direction of this movement are the Latinos, who are very verbalized and communication end up being more integrated, whereas B will often interrupt A, and vice versa to demonstrate interest in what another is saying. On the other hand, we also have to consider the silence of communication from the Orientals, in one culture the silence may be due to fear while for another culture that silence may mean intense communication or

satisfactory communication.

Caution is needed in the use of colloquial expressions, in a language that is not native it is necessary to take care of the way that the message should be sent, because errors seem to be obvious, once they are pointed out. The language plays an important part in the socialization of the individual, since its natural importance is illustrated by his belief (MENDENHALL, PUNNET, RICKS, 1995).

According to Joly (1996), the particularities of language not only resemble regional origins, but also social origins. However, language, as the author states, marks social distances, because the moment we address a person, we must make a stand, so, as to avoid lack of respect on the part of our interlocutors.

Language barriers are the root cause of a number of problems in several areas such as: health, aviation, business and education. Buarqoub (2019) in his research brings a series of examples, such as the results of a Canadian research on the negative impact of language barriers on the quality of care and patient safety made it evident that the experiences in which language barriers contributed to assessments and incorrect diagnoses, in addition to causing late treatment or incomplete understanding of the complaints. Another example that it brings is about the failures in the Avian System due to communication failures. According to NASA's (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASAS), more than 70 of the first 28.000 reports received were considered to be related communication problems. In this perspective, the author exposes that ineffective communication is a global threat to aviation security. The third example that has increased globalization is forcing an increasing number of business managers and employees to interact outside their borders, forcing a multicultural and multilingual framework.

A German study demonstrated that language barriers have effects of multinational corporations with effects on employees' emotions, creation of social identity, creation of the

trust as well as power relations (TENZER and SCHUSTER, 2017).

Language barriers, lack of communication and communication failure are the main causes of accidents with ships. As an example, we can mention the incidents due to communication noises between a Master and a Pilot. The Irving Nordick landed on the St. Lawrence River suffering structural damage.

The Yugoslavian Malfnska also happened because although the Pilot and the Commander calculated the position of the ship, neither consulted the other, and the master did not know the pilot's intention. The examples cited only serve to corroborate how there is a strong negative impact arising from language barriers in our lives (BUARQOUB, 2019).

1.2 Conflict resolution methods in Organizations

This chapter will briefly discuss the concepts related to the processes that are included in the list of procedures used to resolve conflicts, as well as address the definitions of mediation and their characteristics.

1.2.1 Framework of procedures used by Organizations

Collective conflicts between employers and employees considerably increase the costs of organizations and, therefore, most countries around the world offer different third-party interventions and mediation services to resolve these conflicts. In addition, there is a preventive perspective, in the form of training and facilitation and conciliation processes. In Europe, a culture of promoting these initiatives has already been established, with a view to promoting social dialogues (EUWEMA et al, 2019).

Across the Anglo-American world, organizations have been exposed to a range of endogenous and exogenous influences encouraging them to rethink traditional conflict management practices. The greater use of performance management and teamwork end up

being responsible for generating an increase in conflicts related to interpersonal opposition, and even inconvenient situations such as harassment. Together, these pressures are encouraging more individualized forms of conflict in the workplace and this conformation are not easily resolved by traditional conflict management practices (TEAGUE et al, 2019).

Teague et al (2012, p.581) point out, the 'management of conflict is a core part of the management of the employment relationship'.

When traditional methods are mentioned, formal organizational complaints and disciplinary procedures, which usually involve successive hierarchical levels, fall into this context, and these complaints can evolve into legal acts. However, the data shows that on average about a third of the court's allegations are dropped before a court hearing. The rights-based judgment approach offered by the courts is less than effective when compared to other methods of resolution (HANN et al, 2016).

In this context, we have the emergence of the concept of resolution through mediation, where mediation uses a method based on the interests of the parties, in order to restore existing relationships and develop sustainable results for the organization (LATREILLE and SAUNDRY, 2014).

For Cloke and Goldsmith (2011):

> To move toward the center of our conflicts, we need to change the way we think about our disagreements, and how we behave in their presence. We cannot succeed in the long run by avoiding confrontation, or by simply ceasing to communicate with our opponents—these responses will not resolve anything. Instead, if we recognize that every conflict contains hidden lessons that can fuel our growth, change, learning, awareness, intimacy, effectiveness, and successful relationships, we will not be frightened of moving toward their center. As we do so, we may be able to see, hidden deep in our conflict, signs

of the emergence of a new paradigm, indications of a desire for a better working relationship, a detailed guide to what is not working for one or both of us, and an implicit request that we work together to make things better. Paradoxically, we may engage in conflict because we do not believe it is possible to resolve our disputes, and therefore become more aggressive in order to avoid feeling defeated. Sometimes we fight because we need to express strong feelings or beliefs about an issue, or we are trying to remedy an injustice. Perhaps the other side has refused to listen or negotiate, and conflict seems to offer a welcome antidote to stagnation and apathy. Being aggressive is sometimes the only way we believe we can spark communication and honest dialogue—not because it is right, but because we feel it is the only way we can get the other person or the organization to listen. Yet hidden in the allure of our principled opposition is the price we pay for having an enemy. (CLOKE and GOLDSMITH, 2011, p.23).

Hann et al (2016) demonstrates in a very illustrative Chart of his study all the ways of conflict resolution commonly used in organizations, as we can see in Figure 1.

Currently, most countries have conciliation and mediation as a prerogative of good practices in the resolution of workplace conflicts, which are even part of the national conflict management system, before the judicialization of cases. There is a global movement of greater use of Alternative Dispute Resolution Systems (ADR), where the individuals involved are properly assisted to reach a point of agreement, this happens as an alternative means of the judicial system. Governments - inside and outside the European Union - have encouraged and promoted the creation of institutions that offer conciliation or mediation, ways that facilitate the resolution of collective conflicts and can prevent further damage to the System, such as those generated by strikes and the like (BROWN, 2014).

Therefore, it is clear that there is a movement in search of reducing the process of judicialization of conflicts in foreign countries, despite the different economic and political origins of each country. The tendency of European countries in their preference for voluntary approaches is visible, as also encouraged by the European Commission in the year 2000. (EUWEMA et al, 2019).

In this way, it is possible to observe a process of expansion of the voluntary procedures such as conciliation, mediation and arbitration for the resolution of disputes, which generate as benefits to the parties a process with a lower cost, faster resolution and focusing on the viability and maintenance of relations in a long term.

Category	Practices
Traditional Practices	• Formal written *disciplinary* procedures, involving progressively higher levels of management in resolving disputes • Formal written *grievance* procedures, involving progressively higher levels of management in resolving disputes
ADR –Mediation	• Use of professional mediation (e.g. collaborative problem-solving with an impartial third party, with a focus on the future and rebuilding relationships, rather than apportioning blame)
Public ADR	• Use of ACAS early, in a proactive manner to assist in reaching settlement or to prevent deadlock in discussion or negotiation within the company • Resort at final stage in procedure, where deadlock remains, to ACAS • Use of external arbitrators (other than ACAS) to adjudicate disputes • Use of professional mediation (e.g. collaborative problem-solving with an impartial third party, with a focus on the future and rebuilding relationships, rather than apportioning blame)
Private ADR	• Use of formalized open-door policy • Use of employee 'hotline' or email-based 'speak-up' service (such as SpeakUp or Expolink) • Use of HR manager(s) as employee advocate(s) • Use of review panels comprised of managers or employees' peers • Use of company ombudsperson • Intensive formal communication regarding impending change with groups of employees with a view to avoiding disharmony or conflict • Use of problem-solving and related techniques to solve problems or resolve disputes • Use of coaching • Use of personal development plan • Use of formal interest-based ('win-win') bargaining techniques to resolve disputes

Figure 1: Types and models of conflict resolution at work. Source: HANN et al, 2016, p.9

Doherty and Guyler (2008) clarify that the organizational culture originates from the expression of work relationships and mediation operates from the attitude and position of life described as 'I am OK - you are fine'. In this perspective, managers need to change this attitude from "I am OK - you are not well" position (inherent in hierarchical command and control) to the "I am well - you are well" life position involving genuine respect, listening and research, in order to engage with its huge potential for creative realization. In Table 1 it is possible to see in a schematic way some of the possibilities.

In relation to	'Command and control' 'I'm ok – you're not ok'	'Co-entrepreneurial' 'I'm ok – you're ok'
Employee role	Specified by function, by job description and by directives from those in authority – sustained through performance monitoring.	Multi-functional roles, more fluid and dictated by the balance of business need and maximization of individual talent, skill and potential.
Authority	Driven by rank and power held by a small number of people who operate clearly 'top down' within strict parameters and permissions.	Based on cooperative and consensual decision making and driven by personal authority, by expertise and by business need rather than by rank or seniority.
Structure	'Hierarchical pyramid' and supporting multi-layers of management and bureaucracy.	'Flat' structure with very few management layers – operates with cross-functional teams and more direct decision making.
Executive power	Resides within layers of management and functional control and is clearly demarcated and prescribed.	Resides within the whole enterprise and is accessible to all based on needs and outcomes – often by team consensus.
Working relationships	'Dictatorial' or 'patriarchal' manager to-employee relationships – 'Parent to Child'	'Egalitarian' – equal and mutually respectful and creative relationships – 'Adult to Adult'
Operating style	Business plan and strategy is dictated 'from the top' and governed by centralized policy and procedures; any clashes of functional interest are arbitrated by senior management.	Flat structures – favour 'bottom-up' planning, procedures and improvements. The enterprise is seeking 'synergistic' working with shared planning and operation in cross-functional teams.
Motivation	The employee is expected to be self-motivated but controls are applied through performance management monitoring and PRP.	Motivation tends to come from satisfaction, control over work, and due reward; also from values in the direction of 'self-actualization' through satisfying work.

Rewards	Tend to be allocated and proportional in line with authority, qualifications, role and seniority.	Tend to be allocated more equally and in relation to individual or team contributions and business results and profits.
Suppliers and co-producers	Will act from a position of dominance and dictate the terms, price and relationship.	View suppliers as allies and as sharing the collaboration and hence the profits.
Customers	Traditionally able to dictate to customers – but now risk losing markets and ignore customers at their peril.	The operation is 'customer-led' and the enterprise is engineered and positioned 'from the customer' back to the service delivery, design, marketing and production.

Table 1 - Comparative relationships and cultural effects of corporate 'life-positions'. Source: DOHERTY and GUYLER, 2008, p.179

1.2.2 Mediation as a viable Alternative in a Conflict Resolution

1.2.2.1 Definition of Mediation

Much has been said about mediation, but in terms of definition, how can we conceptualize mediation? Doherty and Guyler (2008) addresses the following definition:

> Mediation is a structured process whereby an impartial mediator facilitates communication between those in dispute in order for them to understand each other better and for them to come up with mutually acceptable solutions that will improve the working relationship in the future (DOHERTY and GUYLER, 2008, p.21).

From this perspective, mediation is nothing more than a structured process, which aims to guide a situation. In this way, it is established as a process and therefore predetermined, and it is not by chance that mediation is used, whose objective is to rebuild the relationship and a consequent agreement.

1.2.2.2 Mediation characteristics

Mediation is a mutually acceptable conflict resolution process, in which the third party, who

has no authority to make binding decisions for the disputants, intervenes in a conflict to help the parties improve their relationships, and their communication. Mediation is usually initiated when the parties to the dispute are unable to initiate the agreement on their own (MOORE, 2014).

According to Moore (2014) improving relationships involves helping parties to assess the types and quality of connections and interactions they want or need to each other during the negotiation process to effectively address areas of disagreement in the future, moving on ahead to achieve your goals. There are several types of relationships, including power, that can be established between the parties and each has different qualities, common interactions, substantive and procedural objectives and emotional facets (MOORE, 2014).

In accordance with Doherty and Guyler (2008), mediation is governed by six stages, which are: 1) Introduction and ground rules; 2) Hearing what has happened and summarizing back; 3) Identifying and discussing the issues; 4) Mutual understanding and communicating feelings; 5) Idea-storming and exploring win–win solutions; 6) Signing the voluntary agreements and arranging a follow-up meeting.

Another point pointed out by the authors is the fact that mediation has very specific characteristics, among them: being voluntary, that is, those involved need to agree to the mediation. It is a process focused on the solution and where the parties need to expose their own solutions. The mediator's impartiality needs to be guaranteed as well as the confidentiality of the process.

Cloke (2001), when addressing conflict mediation, describes a sensitive eye on the subject and on the role of the mediator:

> I believe our role as mediators is not simply to settle conflicts or fashion agreements, but to create choices. I believe the choice of whether to agree or settle a dispute belongs to the parties, not the mediators. At the same time, I

recognize that people in conflict have difficulty comprehending the full range of choices available to them. They may not have genuinely listened or revealed themselves to each other. They may have failed to look deeply enough into themselves. They may have been blinded, hypnotized, and seduced by their conflicts and unable to see them clearly. As mediators, we help people choose to surrender the illusions, mirages, and fantasies they have accepted about themselves, about others, and about their conflicts. We encourage them to recognize a diversity of truths and to clarify and infuse their conflicts with meaning. We allow them to abandon stories that cast themselves as victims and others as demons. We assist them in recognizing their interconnectedness. We support them in overcoming theirs fears. We address their subconscious beliefs that if they admit their fears, they will be standing alone, naked, unprotected, and unsupported; that their compassion will lead them nowhere; that they will be unloved and unlovable. We aid them in moving to the center of their conflicts, where they can discover that reaching the center anywhere in their lives allows them to locate the center everywhere (CLOKE, 2001, p.14).

Thus, it is evident that in the structure of the mediation process it is also necessary that those who are involved in the role of mediating a conflict have the necessary characteristics and skills to comprehend and manage this structure, understanding that the mediator is only a guide, the protagonists of resolution are the conflict individuals themselves.

Philips (2001) clarifies who should actually participate in mediation:

In commercial mediation, where litigation is in the picture, there seems to be general agreement that lawyers should participate or at least be close to the negotiation process. If you decide not to have lawyers participate, then it is important to ensure that any lawyer whose advice you are listening to at the

time be kept informed on the mediation. This means allowing the lawyer to advise you going into the mediation and perhaps having the lawyer on standby during the mediation, available to take your call if needed. It may mean having the lawyer attend when an agreement is reached, so that a proper memorandum can be drawn up. Others whose presence is desirable may include spouses and perhaps other members of the decision maker's family if they have substantial influence. Claims supervisors might be needed. Experts whose information or reactions are important may be needed in person or on telephone standby. Sometimes key witnesses are held in reserve, for possible telephone interview. With the decision about whose presence is needed comes the decision about whose presence is likely to be destructive. Sometimes a party's negotiating team includes an individual who will lose face if that side's position is compromised. To increase the chances of success, assess the liabilities as well as the assets of potential negotiating team members from your own and the other side as well. Making and unmaking a negotiation team is delicate business (PHILIPS, 2001, p.209).

1.2.2.3 Mediation models and structures

Also, according to Doherty and Guyler (2008), in Figure 2 it is possible to observe the path that mediation follows in its process so that it can fulfill the six steps that the authors place as a requirement for the execution of mediation.

Arranging a mediation

- Initial complaint or request for a mediation.
- Manager, HR person or mediation coordinator speaks to both parties to get their agreement to mediate.
- Mediator is selected – internally or externally.
- Parties receive 'mediation information' so they understand what to expect.
- A date for the mediation is agreed.

The mediation

- The mediator enters the scene.
- The mediator has individual meetings with each party.
- They are then brought together into a joint six-step structured mediation meeting/s with the mediator, which ends with the signing of the mediation voluntary agreements.
- A follow-up meeting with the mediator and the parties in the mediation takes place at some agreed time in the future in order to see how the agreements are working out; this marks the end of the mediator's role.

After the mediation

- It is up to the parties themselves to abide by the voluntary agreements they signed up to.
- If any further problems arise, they can either request another facilitated mediation meeting or other organisational means are employed to deal with the situation.

Figure 2: The overall sequence of a Mediation. Source: DOHERTY and GUYLER, 2008, p.41

In addition to the formal six-step mediation model, for the use of the underlying skills, in this way, we have mediation for the broader skill base of managers and allows its use by everyone making its application softer. It cannot be considered a formal mediation, as it is more flexible. There is no obligation to use the word "mediation". It deals with the conflict intervention Brief Mediation ™, whose clear objective is to focus on problems and direct communication so that the agreements are viable, the Brief Mediation ™ model is structured as described below, in the Figure 3.

INTERVENE

LISTEN AND SUMMARIZE

CLARIFY THE ISSUES

ENCOURAGE WIN–WIN SOLUTIONS

CONFIRM THE AGREEMENTS
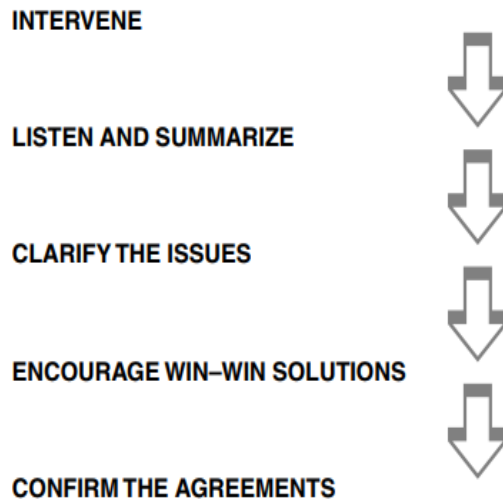
Figure 13.1 The Brief Mediation™ model for managers
An effective and speedy conflict intervention approach for everyday work
conflicts or differences
© 2004 PMR Ltd

Figure 3: The brief Mediation. Source: DOHERTY and GUYLER, 2008, p.179

When we talk about applying mediation for collective conflicts, it is possible to observe the model proposed by Munduate, Bollen and Euwema (2016), the 3-R model of mediation in the workplace, which basically refers to three different dimensions, which should be considered fundamentally when opting for mediation: Regulations, Functions and Relations. These three dimensions form a structural pyramid of the process, which we can see in Figure 4.

Figure 4: The 3-R Model. Source: Euwema et al, 2019, p.21

Mediation can be implemented in three moments: 1) before a problem has yet fully emerged, in a kind of assisted negotiation, 2) after the conflict has occurred, using a conciliatory approach, 3) or investigative, seeking to ascertain the situation. These approaches depend on a guarantee of confidentiality and the voluntary participation of those involved (LATREILLE and SAUNDRY, 2014).

1.2.2.4 Mediations schools

According to Moore (2014) over the past few years, a series of mediation "schools" have been developed, especially in places where mediation has become a field of professional and academic practice. As a rule, there are three orientation paths with more emphasis: process, relationship, or substantive, although there is a significant level of diversity and overlap. However, there is no simple use of an orientation, but in mediation elements of the different orientations are present.

At the School focused on the Process, according to the author, facilitating mediation takes place. Where there is a focus on mediators who are attentive to the process and provide

assistance for it. In this orientation, it is clear that mediators should focus mainly on improving the negotiation process. This focus is determined by a number of factors, including the belief that the parties are often better informed about the substantive questions at issue than any third party could be, so only those involved know and are able to make the best decision for the circumstances in which they find themselves. They also support the idea that the parties need help only in the process and that the commitment to the fulfillment of what has been agreed will be optimized if these parties make the important decisions for themselves. They also believe that a focus on the process and an impartial position on the content helps to build trust between the mediator and the disputants, which consequently minimizes the risks.

In schools with a focus on relationships, there is a focus on improving procedures to rate the mutual and understanding of the parties, with regard to their psychological and relational reactions, in order to manage emotions in favour of interactions and promote the establishment of positive and respectful relationships between the people involved.

In accordance with Moore (2014) there are a range of sub-schools with this focus - therapeutic. The mediators of this approach are based on psychotherapy and social work. It basically consists of addressing dysfunctional relationships, transforming them, there is a focus on the communication process. The process is often used to help resolve and interpersonal disputes in the context of family relationships. Therapeutic mediation is often framed in the context of a healing paradigm.

The transformative mediation, on the other hand, supports a mediation process where a third party works with the parties in conflict to guide the quality of their conflict. Therefore, the role of the mediator is to help the parties to make positive changes, supporting changes in training, and supporting changes in recognition by encouragement.

Originally developed to help participants resolve family disputes, especially divorce, this

approach has already been used in contexts such as disputes - employee conflicts in the workplace, in schools, in multiparty conflicts - and is being explored as a means of addressing conflicts ethnopolitical.

The transformative mediators are generally fully open to the parties to talk about everything they believe or feel. Professionals give the parties little or no advice about the substance or the process. They believe that counselling disrupts the goals of the parties and the mediator to change from weakness to strength and empowerment, and to be autonomous decision makers.

Narrative Mediation, on the other hand, focuses on the context of its individual and collective construction of social reality. Narrative mediation has already been applied in a number of contexts and types of conflicts: family disputes, employment disputes and small businesses, the resolution of interethnic differences between members of majority cultures and indigenous communities, restorative justice initiatives as well as in multiparty and public disputes.

People who practice the process believe that the conflict arises because of the social and cultural experiences shared by people, forces and power relations, rather than their internal impulses or interests. The disputants are trapped in a cycle of conflicts and incompatible positions because of their life experiences, which can sometimes be culturally conflicting. The competition or mastery of the stories of some parties over others is seen as an influence on the power relations between them (MOORE, 2014).

Also, according to the author, in the narrative mediation, the mediator's task is to help people to overcome the division of a conflict, working with the stories in which the conflict is located, instead of pursuing an objective reality. They help parties to remove restrictions from unproductive stories that restrict them and keep them in conflict and then develop new stories.

We also have restorative justice and victim-offender mediation, where the focus is on

improving relations between victims, criminals and their communities. In addition to acting on the resolution of conflicts related to antisocial behaviour characterized as a process in which the parties affected by an injustice have the opportunity to discuss how they were touched by this injustice and then have subsidies to decide what should be done to repair the damage (BRAITHWAITE, 2004).

Last but not least, we have schools focused on substance. This approach involves a series of procedures in which the mediator offers forms of substantive assessment, this involves a review and assessment of the disputants' issues, needs or interests; their arguments for or against the merits of each other's case; analysis of the parties' best alternatives for a negotiation, agreement; or advice for understanding. There are several sub-schools in this substantive-oriented school.

Advisory mediation, which involves an acceptable intermediary, with reliable perception or other forms of knowledge or wisdom relevant to the resolution of a dispute, offers the parties some form of advice on effective negotiation procedures related to the disputed issues. Advisory mediators can be technical experts. Even with the fundamental objective of providing important contributions on the limited issues in question, they can on occasion make suggestions on how to deal with a broader, institutional or community related, such as solving a business problem or improving a business relationship (RISKIN, 2003).

We also have evaluative mediation, which focuses on an assessment of legal issues and rights of the parties. The procedure was originally developed in the United States in the 1980s, courts begin to forward legal disputes into an assessment process by knowledgeable third party who conducted legal case assessments or mediation as a means of promoting an early settlement, avoiding long and expensive process like litigation. Evaluative mediators also often perform tests with the parties to discover understanding gaps, clarify weaknesses in the arguments, identifying where the law or previous legal cases will not support the views

(MOORE, 2014).

There is also the mediation and resolution of habitual or religious-based disputes whose resolution and mediation procedures are more used in societies whose habitual or religious authorities are regulators of relationships. The procedures are practiced in a variety of forums and contexts, both informally in communities with little social stratification (MOORE, 2011).

CHAPTER 2 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and explain the research methodology adopted for this study, in order to identify the perception of individuals with work activity in Ireland about conflicts in the workplace and the influence of cultural differences in these conflicts.

This is a quantitative analytical study, in which data are collected and analysed from an average sample of people working in Ireland in a multicultural environment. The data will be provided through an online questionnaire, where the author contacts the target audience via email, social media, WhatsApp. This approach then creates an excellent opportunity to obtain a deeper understanding within the areas of interest.

Given the nature and limitations of this study, the type of investigation strategy chosen was survey type, as it is characterized as a type of investigation where the data collection and information happen from the characteristics and opinions of groups of individuals, using a quantitative strategy in order to evaluate the results based on statistical analysis.

As a result of the limited time for the elaboration of the thesis, working with a cross sectional approach method would be more appropriate. Also considered that, the author seeks to explain an event in a certain location at a given time, thus making this approach more pertinent for this study.

2.1 Study population and sample

The target population of this research is people residing in Ireland who are working in the country in a Multicultural environment. Thus, as it is a large group, and due to the objective of the research that contemplates specific situations, we will not be able to identify all the elements of this population. In this way, we will use the non-probabilistic sampling as an approach, using a chain sample, of the snowball type, due to the researcher's place of residence and the need to contact the study's target audience.

This type of sampling is a form of non-probabilistic sample, which uses chains of reference, where the dissemination of the instrument through the contact network is envisaged in its stages.

For this study, based on the outlined premises, we will use as inclusion criteria people over eighteen years of age who have been living and working in Ireland for more than three months. Regarding the exclusion criteria: questionnaires with the items referring to the first and second part of the questionnaire with more than 30% incomplete answers, as well as questionnaires with answers on the Likert scale filled out with the same alternative will be considered. As a non-inclusion criteria, the questionnaire does not apply to Irish people, since the questionnaire has specific targeted questions aimed at comparing the respondent's country of birth and the respondent's current country of residence, Ireland.

2.2 Data Collection

As already mentioned in this chapter, data will be collected using an online questionnaire. This method was chosen because of the possibility of collecting a larger number of responses more efficiently. The questionnaire used was designed based on other studies with similar objectives, a hybrid instrument with closed questions and an open question.

The questionnaire consists of a first part with sociodemographic and work identification variables, a second part with variables related to the presence of conflicts whose dimensions related to the conflicts were built on a third point Likert scale (Disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Agree) to classify the affirmations. As well as a third part about the resolution initiatives adopted by companies for those who have had some conflict in their company in the past, where the questions are closed on yes and no and there is an open alternative. The third part of the questionnaire allowed incompleteness, since it inquired about direct experiences with conflicts, a fact that not all participants had.

The questionnaire was conducted with people who reside and work in a multicultural environment in Ireland. The total period for answering the questionnaire was ten days. The recruitment of participants was carried out via email, social networks (Facebook pages and groups) and WhatsApp.

The questionnaire will be digitally constructed on Google Forms, avoiding direct contact between researcher and participants, due to the pandemic period of COVID-19, which does not recommend face-to-face meetings for any purpose. The anonymity of the interviewees will be guaranteed and their answers will be protected.

To corroborate the data collected from the questionnaires, the author carried out the development of a literature review focusing on creating reliable, authentic and relevant information for the study. The material was obtained from specifically reliable and identified data, where the author correlated this information with the research questions within the scope, which includes: Books, Journals, newspaper articles.

2.3 Data analysis

For the purpose of this study, the author intends to use quantitative analysis to evaluate the results obtained, since quantitative analysis methods facilitate the performance of researchers by evaluating the data while using statistical tools (Treiman, 2014).

The responses to the questionnaires were collected using the Google Form tool and reported, processed and analysed through the resources of Microsoft Office Excel® version 2010, using tables, graphs and presentations, and further interpretations of the findings were made to establish a better understanding about the answers. This study carried out questionnaires and structured observation of the answers to obtain greater precision and reliability, where the researcher controlled the methods used to analyse the data by means of graphs and numerical representation. Also, descriptive statistics will be performed using frequency tables of

sociodemographic variables. Discourse analysis will be carried out for open answers.

Quantitative data analysis was chosen to be applied in this study as the survey method was employed to gather data forthwith, the interpretation of results in numbers would be effortlessly comprehended and presented in graphically form for a more comprehensible understanding of the data gathered.

2.4 Research Limitations

Using non-probabilistic sampling, we should note that the final results cannot be generalized to the entire population, since the individuals were chosen for convenience (questionnaires). Thus, the results do not reflect the attitudes, opinions or behaviour of the population as a whole.

CHAPTER 3 - PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the research carried out for this thesis. In order to analyse the data collected through questionnaires (Questionnaire available in Appendix 1) the data will be described in the body of the text, being explained according to the questions. Along with the research objectives, endorsed by the chosen research method and by the literature review, this chapter aims to present a clear understanding of the results of this research. The information presented is based on the responses to the questionnaires, as a way to facilitate the process of understanding and understanding the data, charts and tables were used.

The data collection instrument applied had a sample of 130 individuals, who performed some work activity in Ireland. The first part of the questionnaire addressed questions of a sociodemographic profile.

In relation to the declared gender, it is observed that most of the sample was composed of women, occupying 71% of the total of the research participants. It is important to highlight that even though a minority in the sample, 1% declared themselves to be non-binary, as can be seen in Chart 1.
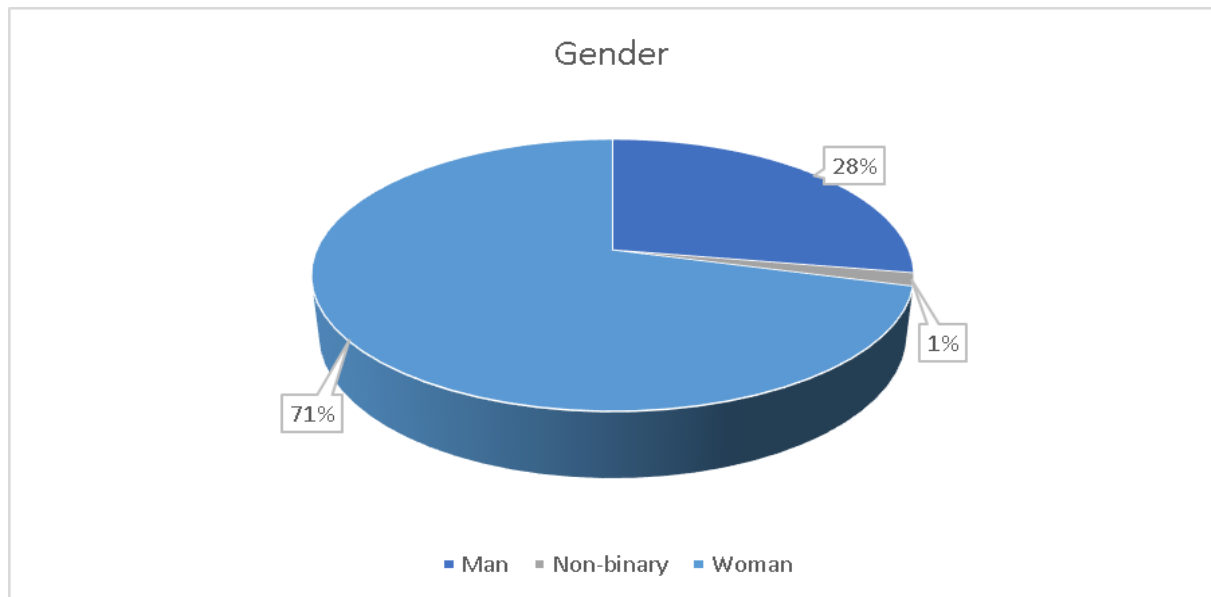
Chart 1 – Gender. Source: Author

Regarding the age group, it is possible to identify that the majority of the sample was composed of individuals characterized as young adults, the two groups with the highest frequency of occurrence are 25-31 years old (55%) and 32-38 years old (28%), respectively, as shown in Chart 2.
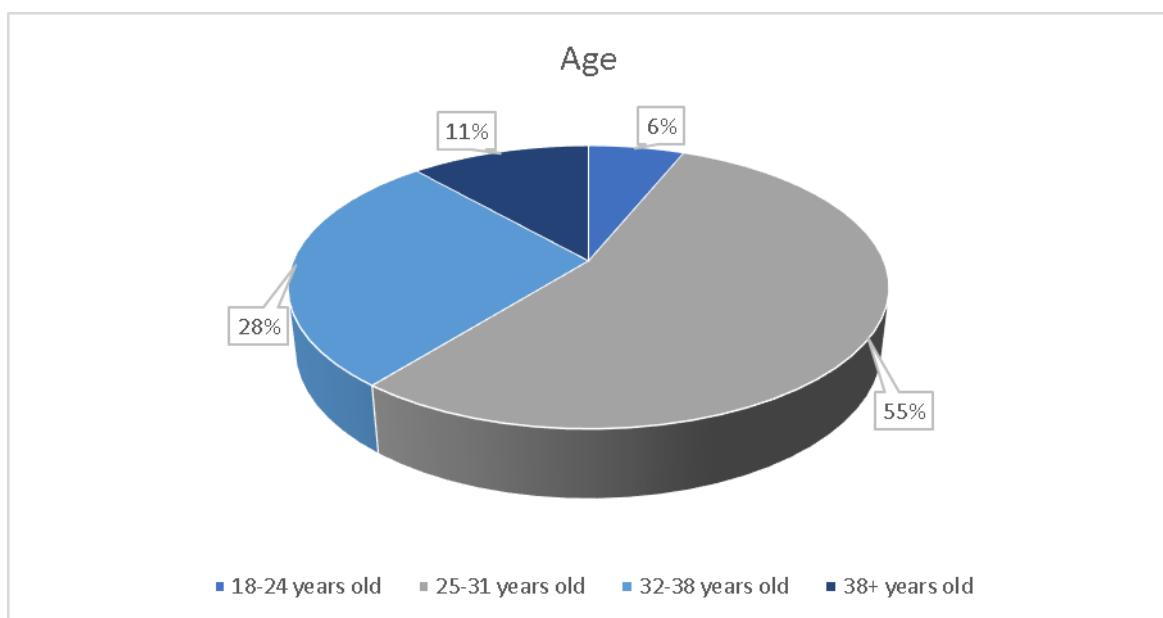
Chart 2 – Age. Source: Author

Relating to the participant's region of birth, it was identified that the sample was massively Non-EU (84%). However, most of them also lived in Ireland for more than 12 months

(91%), as we can see in Charts 3 and 4, respectively.

As we could verify, in relation to the respondents' English level as speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills, it was verified that an important part of the participants has an Advanced or Intermediate level in all questions, a small amount of the sample reported having a Beginner level in all questions, ranging from 2 to 5% of the total sample, the details can be seen in Chart 5.
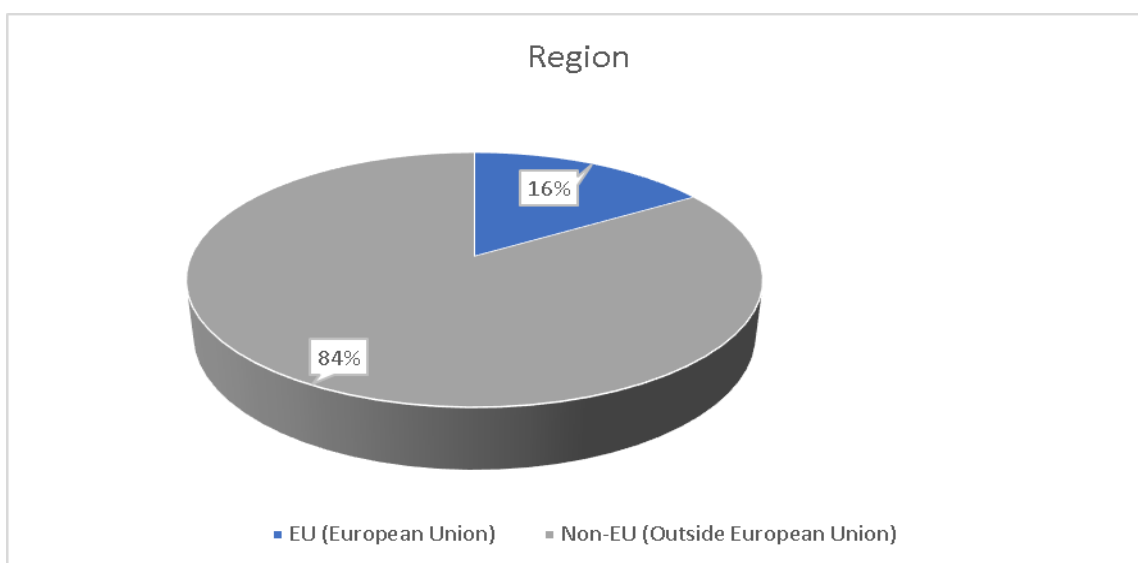
Chart 3 – Region. Source: Author
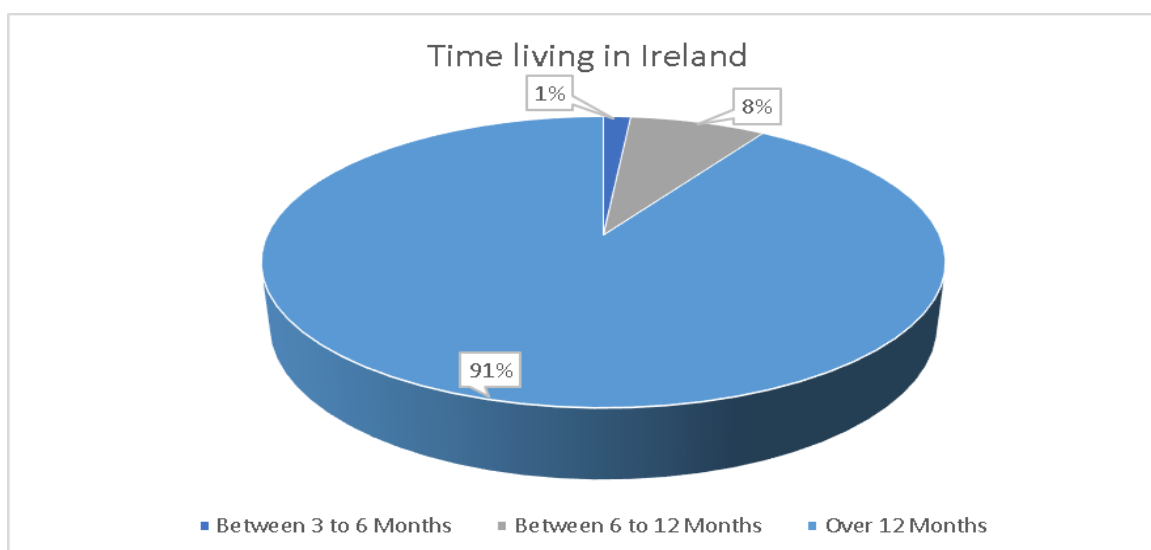
Chart 4 – Time living in Ireland. Source: Author
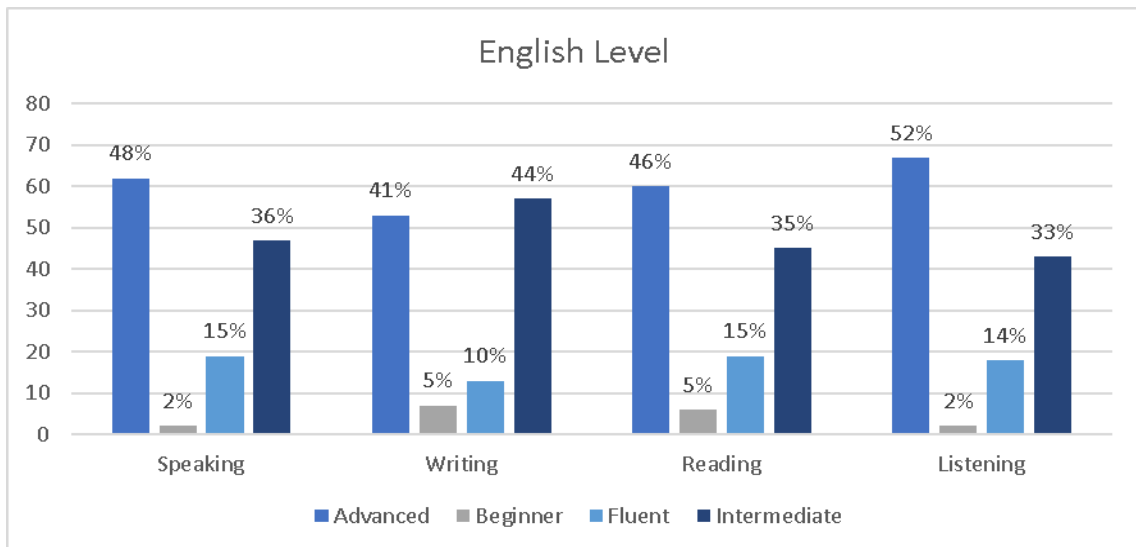
Chart 5 – English Level. Source: Author

The level of formal education of the participants was on a high level of education for the majority, as 32% has Bachelor's Degree and 45% Post-graduate Degree (Chart 6).

However, with regard to the work sector in which they operate in Ireland, there was a balance between the four sectors offered on the options: Industry (19%); Commercial (26%); Service supply/Service Provision (26%); Others (29%), as we can see in Chart 7.
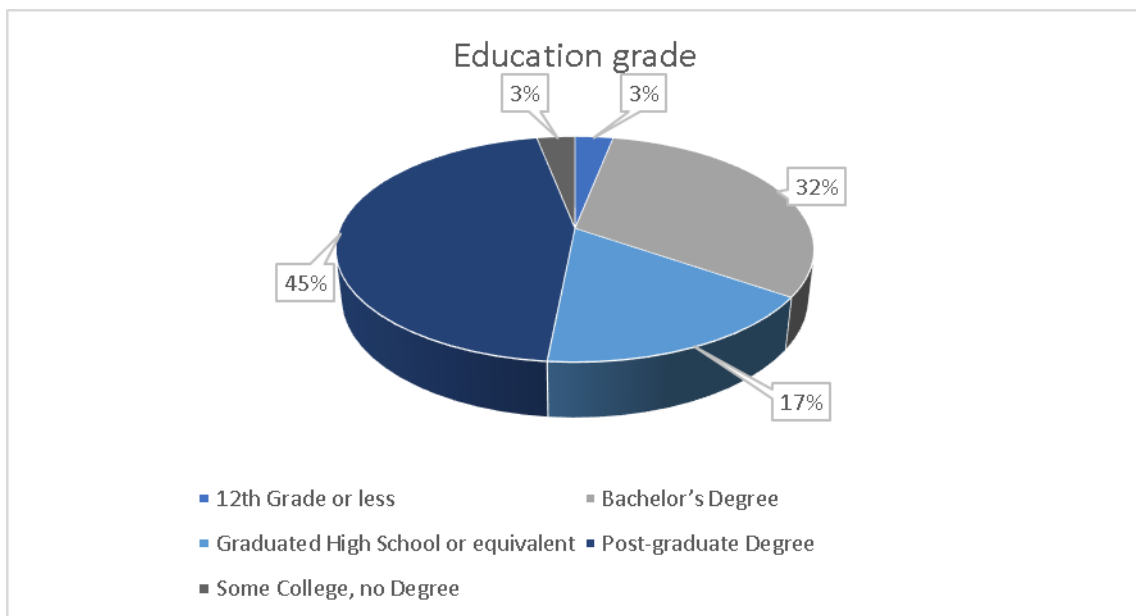
Chart 6 – Education grade. Source: Author
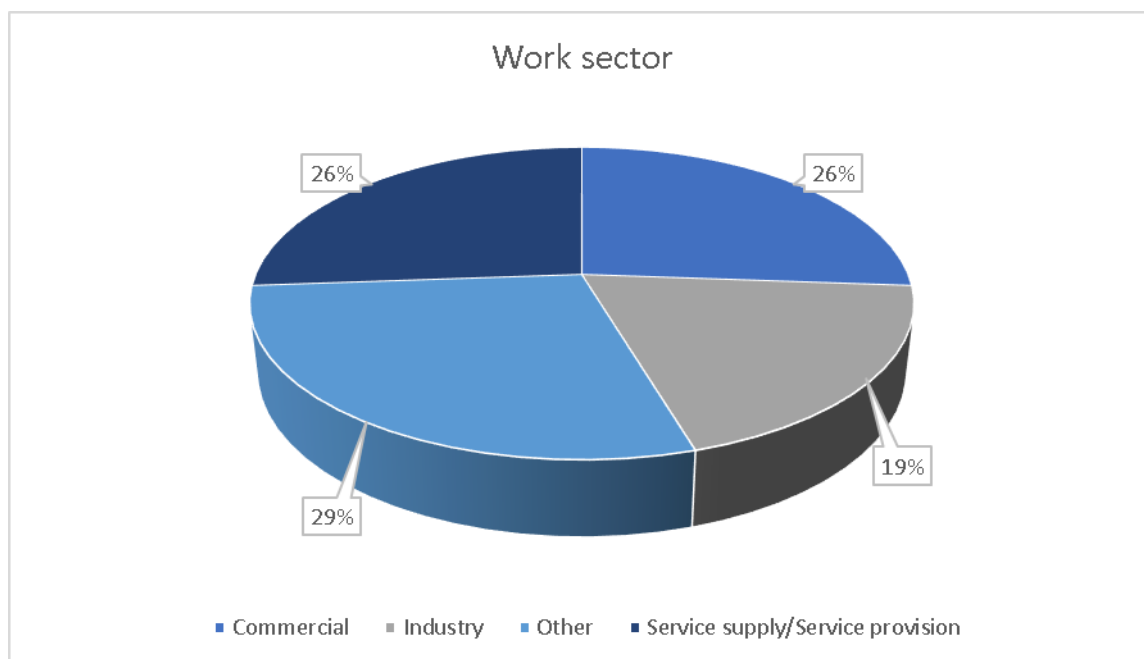
Chart 7 – Work sector. Source: Author

It was also questioned in the research, what profession/occupation, they exercised in Ireland and what profession/occupation they exercised in their countries of birth. The responses were grouped by frequency of work activity. In Table 2 it is possible to see the activities with higher frequencies, in total there were 57 different types of occupations carried out in Ireland, while this variety was bigger in their countries of birth, where it was possible to identify 62 different types of occupations.

In Ireland, the highest frequencies were General Operative (13.1%); Cleaner (10.0%); Sales assistant (6.9%); Barista (6.2%); Student (5.4%); Au pair/Babysitter/Childminder (4.6%) as well as in the country of origin (Table 3) the most frequent professions reported were Lawyer (13.8%); Student (5.4%); Accountant (2.3%); IT Engineer (2.3%); Sales analyst (2.3%); Sales manager (2.3%).

What is your occupation here in Ireland?		
Occupation	**n**	**%**
General operative	17	13.1%
Cleaner	13	10.0%
Sales assistant	9	6.9%
Barista	8	6.2%
Student	7	5.4%

Au pair/Babysitter/Chilminder	6	4.6%
Costumer service assistant	3	2.3%
IT Engineer	3	2.3%
Social Media Agent	3	2.3%
Waitress	3	2.3%
Care assistant	2	1.5%
Cashier	2	1.5%
Duty manager	2	1.5%
Health care assistant	2	1.5%
Hotel receptionist	2	1.5%
Laundrette assistant	2	1.5%
Machine operator	2	1.5%
Superior and Screening Associate	2	1.5%
Team leader	2	1.5%
Others (38 types of laboral activity)	40	30.8%
Total	130	100%

Table 2 – Occupation in Ireland. Source: Author

What was your occupation in your Country of Birth?		
Occupation	n	%
Laywer	18	13.8%
Student	7	5.4%
Accountant	3	2.3%
IT Engineer	3	2.3%
Sales analyst	3	2.3%
Sales manager	3	2.3%
Administrator	2	1.5%
Automation technician	2	1.5%
Banker	2	1.5%
Builder	2	1.5%
Engineer	2	1.5%
Entrepreneur	2	1.5%
HR analyst	2	1.5%
Manager	2	1.5%
Manager Assistant	2	1.5%
Mechanical technician	2	1.5%
No working	2	1.5%
Nurse	2	1.5%
Office assistant	2	1.5%
Public Relations Assistant	2	1.5%
Salesperson	2	1.5%
Solicitor	2	1.5%
Teacher	2	1.5%
Others (39 types)	59	45.4%
Total	130	100%

Table 3 – Occupation in the country of birth. Source: Author

Participants were also asked whether they currently held any leadership positions and 82% (106) said they did not, and only 24 (18%) said they held a leadership position.

In the second part of the questionnaire, assertive questions constructed on a third-point Likert scale were addressed, evaluating the level of agreement by the participants regarding the situations and perceptions at work on conflict bias. The questions were grouped into categories for reading the results from the perspective of the macro-objective of the testimonies.
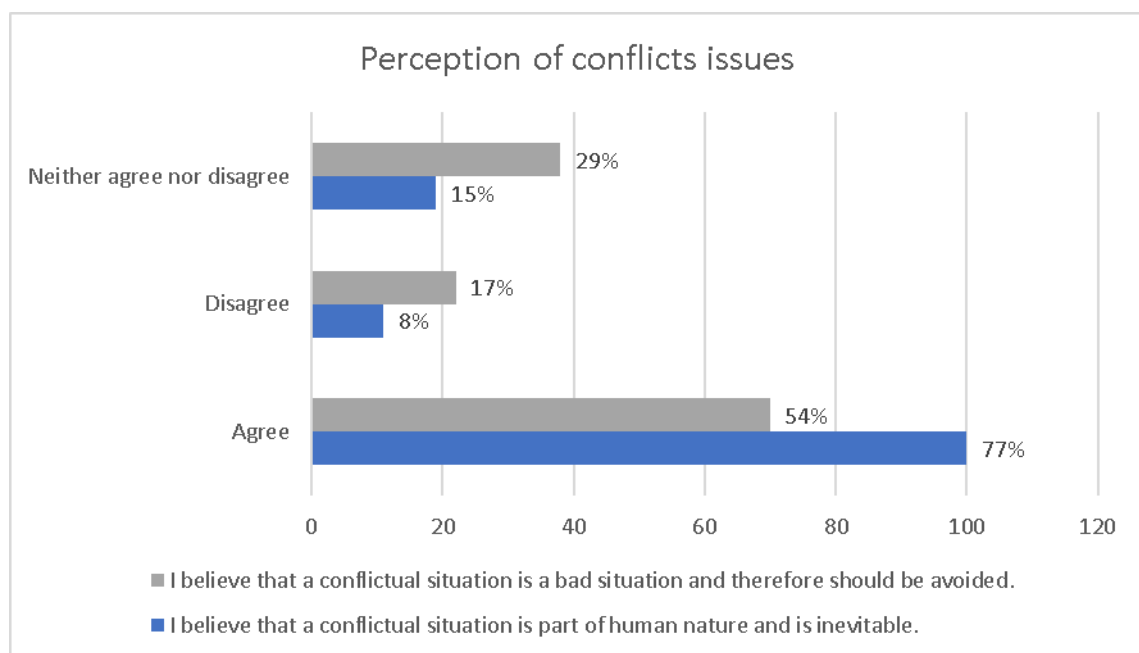

Chart 8 – Perception of conflicts issues. Source: Author

In the first group (Chart 8) it is possible to identify the perception about the conflict, in the first statement, it is observed that 54% believe that conflicts should be avoided and in the second statement it is identified that 77% agree that conflicts are inherent in nature human and therefore unavoidable.

Perception of the origin of the type of conflict

Neither agree nor disagree	34% (gray) / 38% (blue)
Disagree	14% (gray) / 15% (blue)
Agree	52% (gray) / 48% (blue)

■ The conflict situations in which I have been involved in my workplace are of organizational origin (it has to do with the organizational dynamics).

■ The conflicting situations in which I was involved in my workplace are interpersonal origin (it is related to the cultural base of each individual).

Chart 9 – Perception of the origin of the type of conflict. Source: Author

In the second group, described in Chart 9, it is possible to assess the participants' perception about the origin of the conflict in the workplace environment, where 52% agree that the organizational internal dynamics are related to conflicts and 48% agree they are related to cultural differences.

Regarding the frequency of involvement in conflicts at work (Chart 10), 72% confirm having been involved in conflicts in the last year. Most of them disagree (47%) about being constantly involved in conflicts at work, although 38% neither disagree nor agree and only 15% of the sample stated that they had never been involved in a conflicting situation in the workplace.
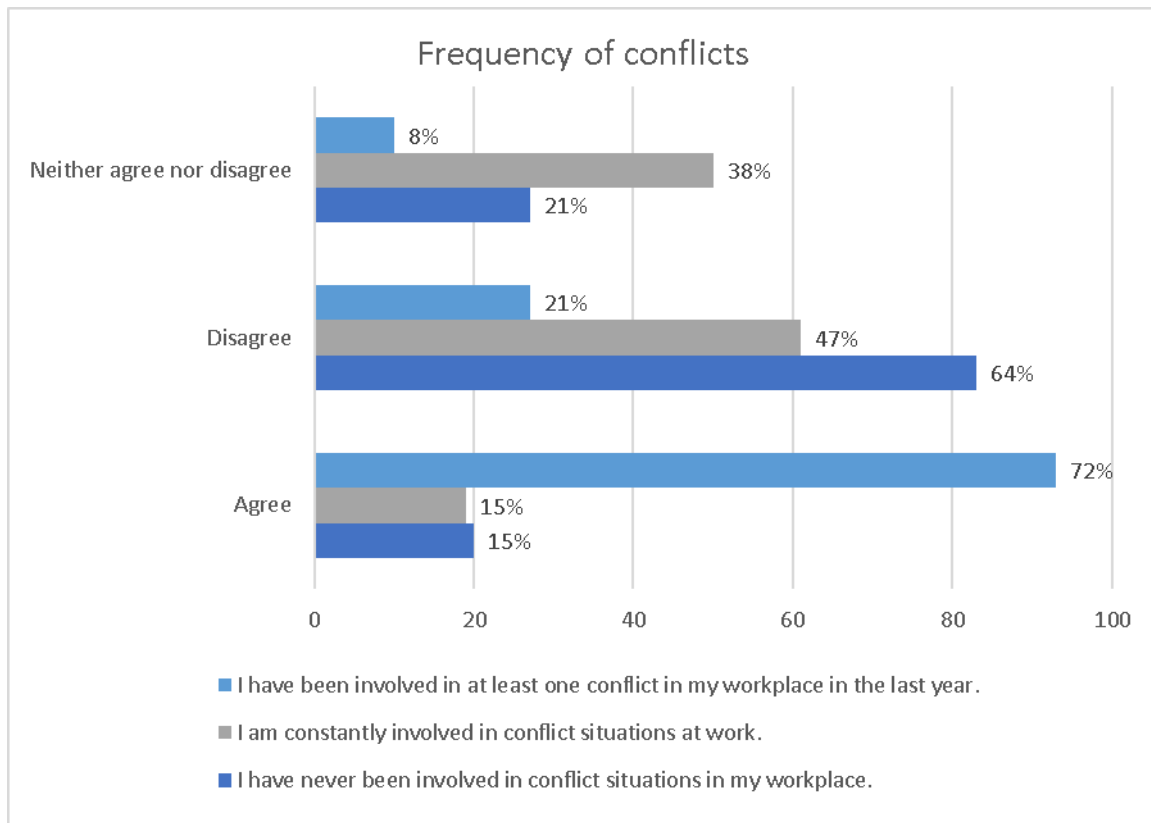
Chart 10 – Frequency of conflicts. Source: Author

When the participants were asked about their perception of the influence of cultural factors in conflicts at work, 62% agree that cultural differences in the workplace where they work are motivating conflicts and only 14% disagree. When questioned, they are involved in more conflicts working in Ireland than in their countries of birth, 38% agree and 37% disagree. In relation to the perception that their culture negatively influences the conflicts involved in work, 39% disagree and 32% believe in this premise, as we can see in Chart 11.
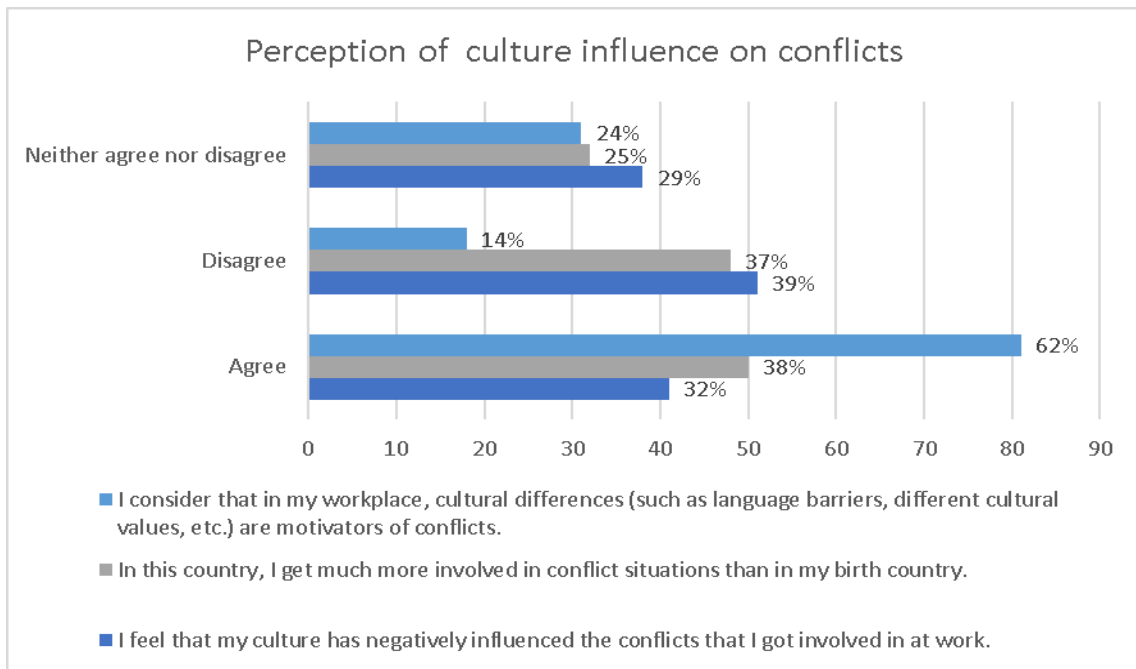
Chart 11 – Perception of culture influence on conflicts. Source: Author

It is possible to verify on the group in Chart 12, how the respondents identified and perceived the position of the corporation in which they work in respect to the issues related to conflicts in the work environment. A low level of agreement is observed as much as the adoption of an Alternative Methods of Conflict Resolution (25%) and the use of traditional methods (27%).
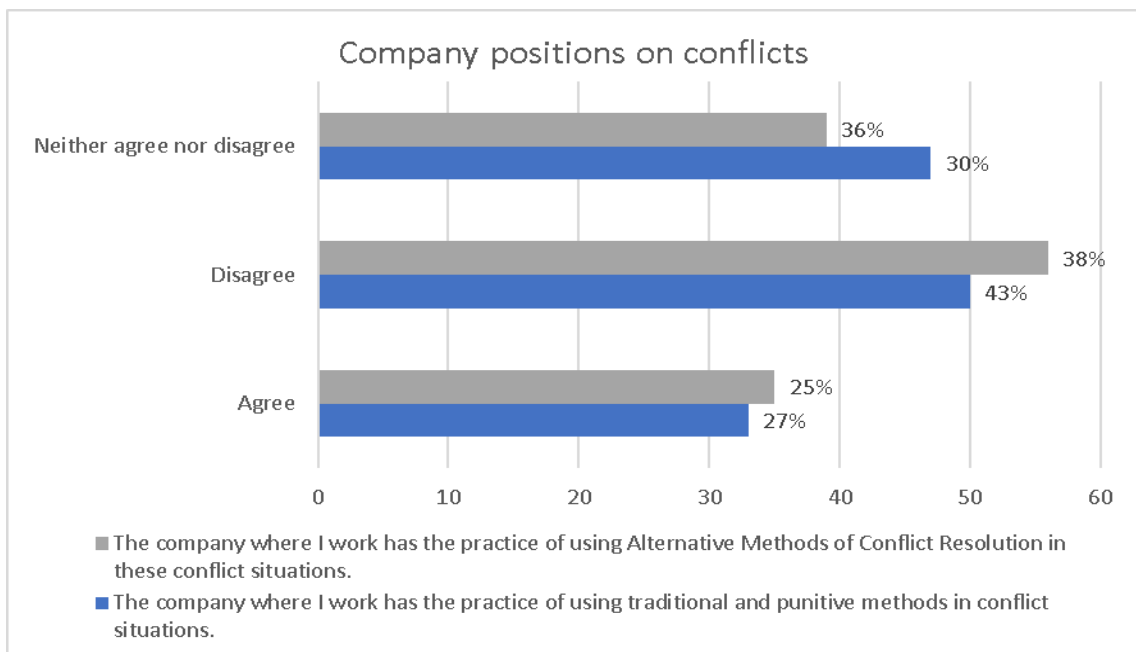
Chart 12 – Company positions on conflicts. Source: Author

The third and final part of the questionnaire addressed issues that are related to a direct involvement in conflicts. Chart 13 shows that 59% says that when they got involved in conflicts at work, they immediately communicated their direct leadership. In Chart 14, when asked about the company's concern to assist the employee in resolving the conflict, 44% responded negatively.

Chart 13 – When you were involved in a conflict, did you communicate your leadership immediately? Source: Author
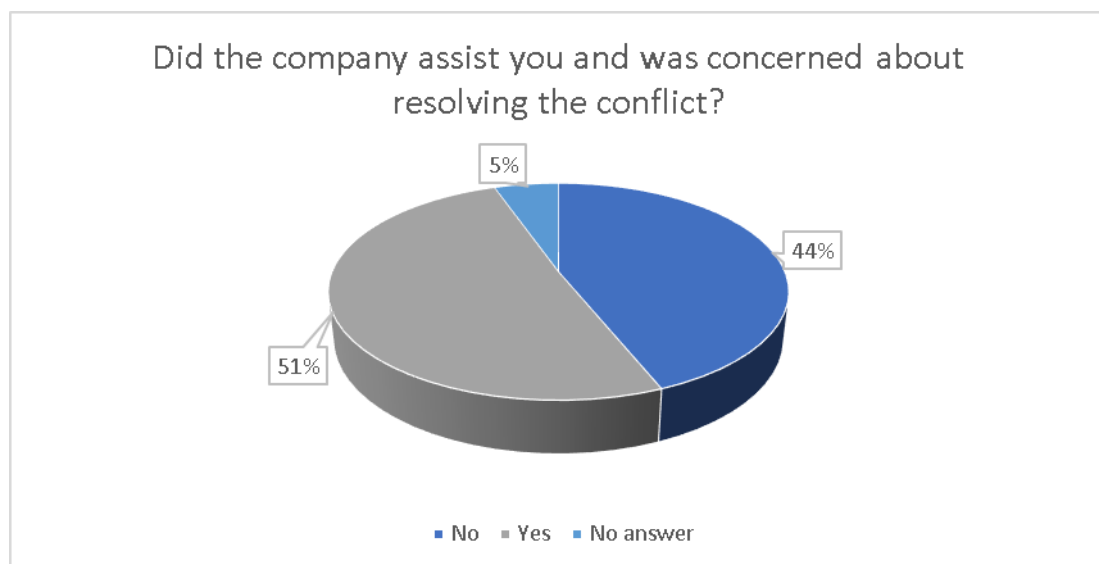
Chart 14 – Did the company assist you and was concerned about resolving the conflict Source: Author

When participants were asked about the involvement of a third party to help resolve the

conflict, 66% responded that there was none (Chart 15) and if there was the involvement of

a third party, if he was technically qualified to mediate the conflictual situation, the majority

answered no (47%) and only 21% said yes, they were qualified for it (Chart 16).
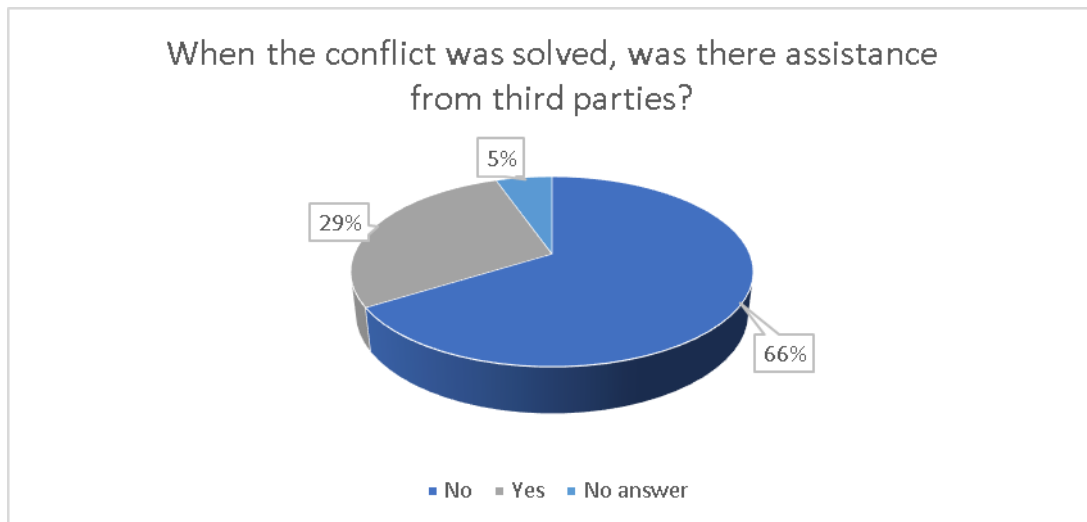
Chart 15 - When the conflict was solved, was there assistance from third parties?
Source: Author
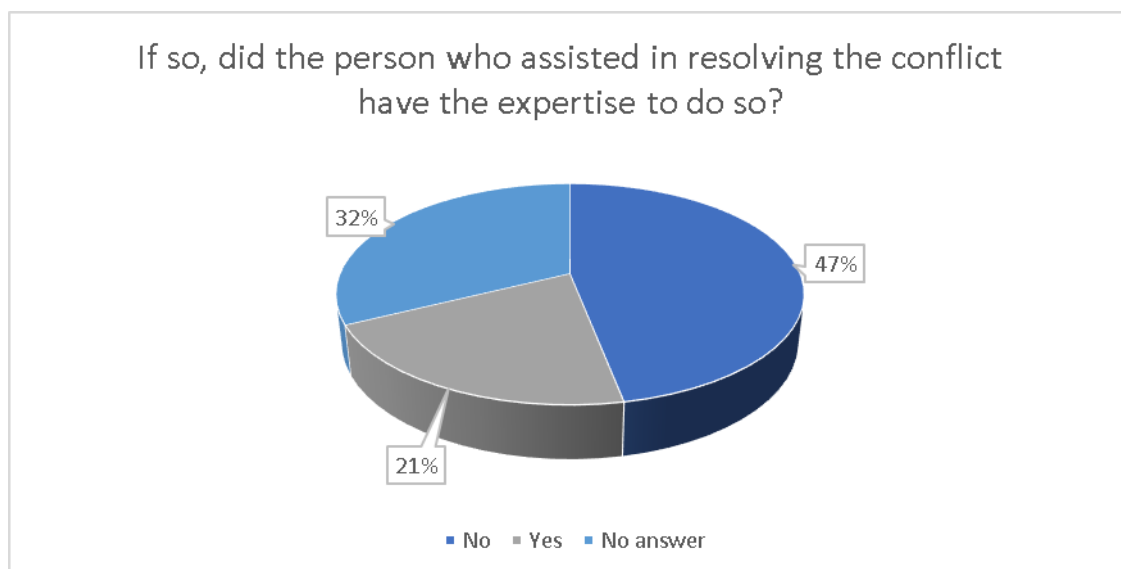
Chart 16 – If so, did the person who assisted in resolving the conflict have the expertise to
do so? Source: Author

The Chart 17 shows that in relation to employee satisfaction in regard to the resolution of

the conflict, 49% say they are not satisfied and 40% say that they were satisfied. In Chart

18, it is possible to see that most of respondents (75%) say that the company at the time of the conflict did not offer alternative measures for its resolution. On the other hand, 85% of the individuals said that they would feel comfortable with the presence of a third party, a mediator of the conflict (Chart 19), just as 85% said they would like to have used the Alternative Method of Conflict Resolution such as Mediation (Chart 20).
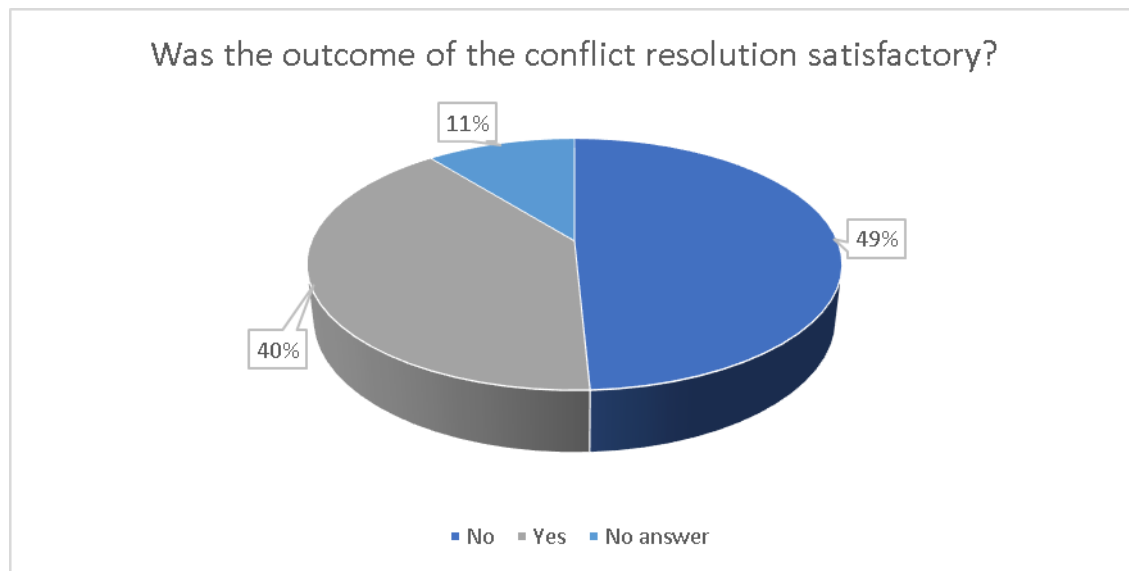
Chart 17 – Was the outcome of the conflict resolution satisfactory? Source: Author
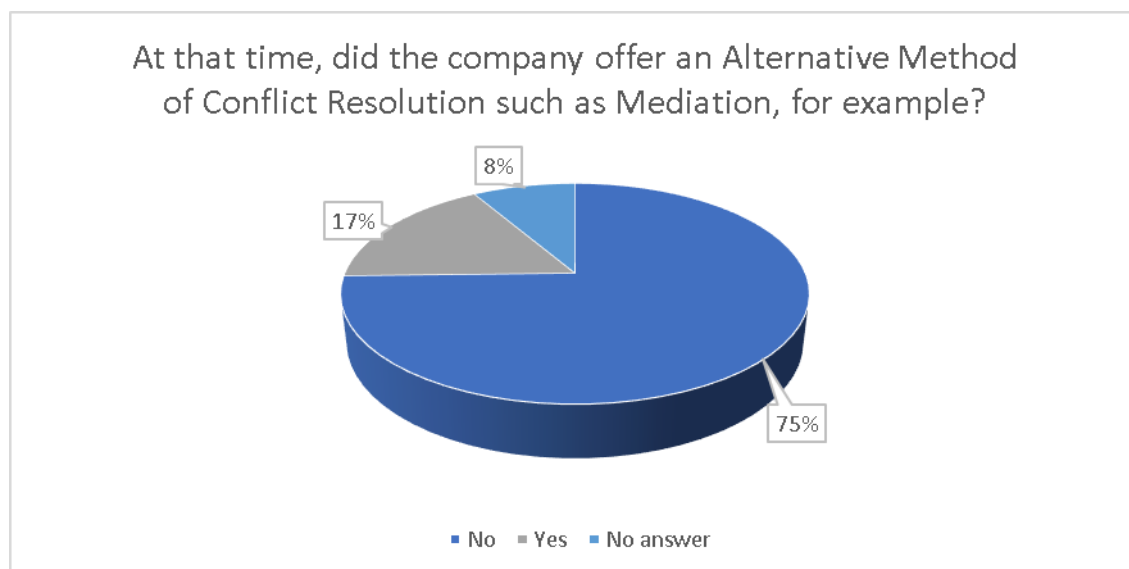
Chart 18 – At that time, did the company offer an Alternative Method of Conflict Resolution such as Mediation, for example. Source: Author
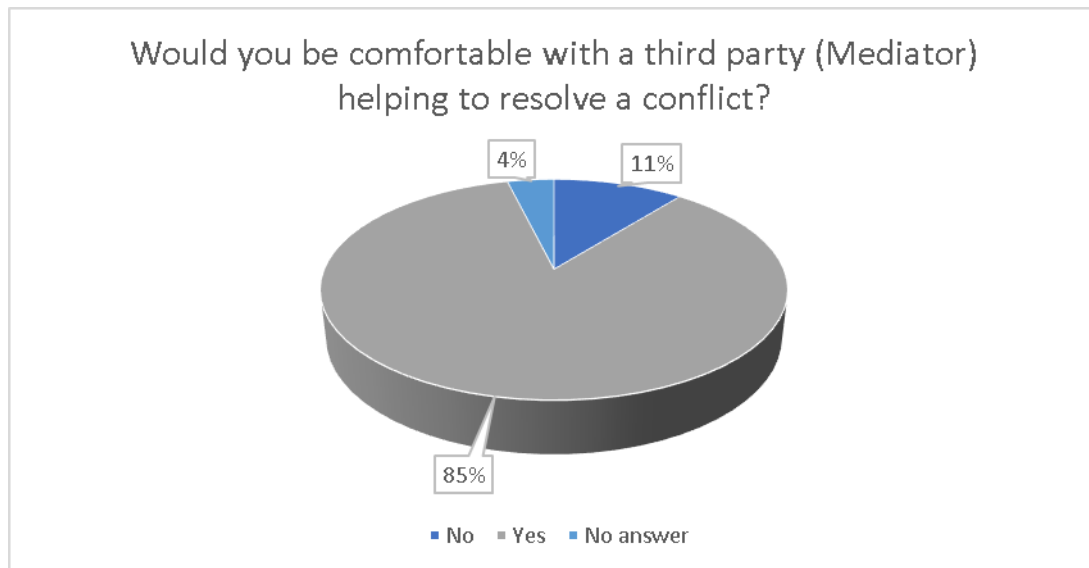
Chart 19 – Would you be comfortable with a third party (Mediator) helping to resolve a conflict? Source: Author
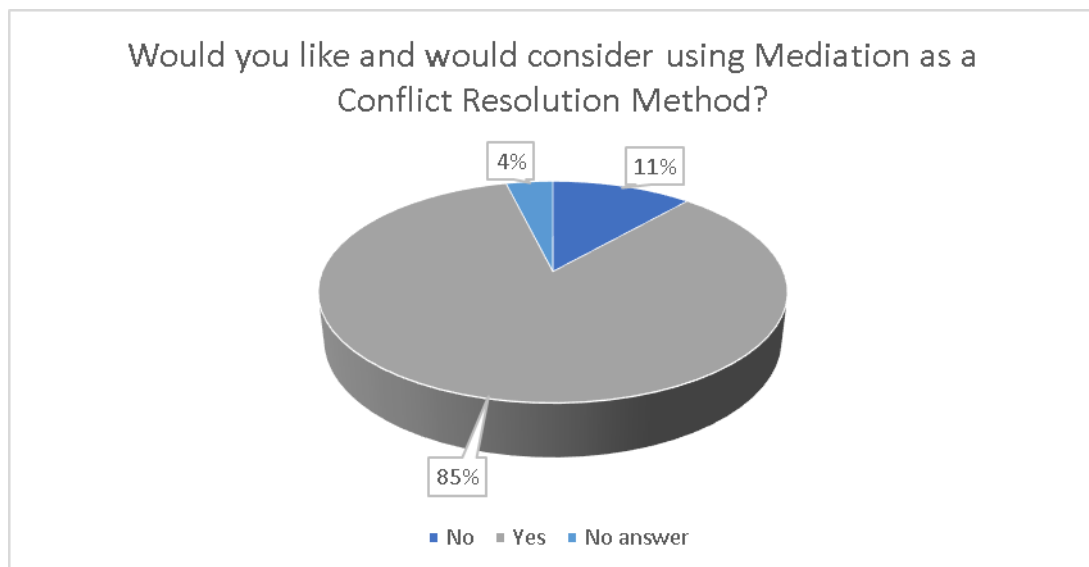
Chart 20 – Would you like and would consider using Mediation as a Conflict Resolution Method? Source: Author

In the last item of the questionnaire, an open question was carried out that aimed to know the experience of the participants in situations of conflict at work. Of the 130 participants, only 26 (20%) reported on their experience in the subject in question.

In table 4, it is possible to observe that the reasons reported are different, but the ones that appear most in terms of frequency are: Being foreign (15.4%); Language barriers (11.5%); Xenophobia (7.7%), remembering that for this consultation, the reports that explicitly

brought this term were characterized as xenophobia. It should also be noted that there was at least 1 report of physical violence and 1 report of sexual harassment.

Conflict Motivation	n	%
For being a foreigner	4	15.4%
Language barrier	3	11.5%
Xenophobia	2	7.7%
Aggressiveness	1	3.8%
Different points of view	1	3.8%
Moral harassment for being a foreigner	1	3.8%
Moral harassment for being a foreigner and sexual harassment	1	3.8%
Verbal harassment	1	3.8%
Absence of minimum conditions for carrying out the job I was contracted for	1	3.8%
Bullying	1	3.8%
Bullying and xenofobia	1	3.8%
Lack of comunication	1	3.8%
Divergence between contracted and required work	1	3.8%
Disagreement about working methods	1	3.8%
Divergences in the work methodology and collaboration process	1	3.8%
Gossip	1	3.8%
Insubordination	1	3.8%
Intimidation and gossip	1	3.8%
Personal reasons	1	3.8%
Physical violence	1	3.8%
Total	26	100%

Table 4 – Motivation of conflicts in descriptive reports Source: Author

It is possible to identify the outcome of the cases in table 5, where 23.1% of the sample does not report the resolution/outcome of the conflict, followed by 19.2% that informs that the conflict was resolved by the assistance of the leadership through a conciliatory approach, 7.7% decided to resign from the job, as well as 7.7% said that even with the communication with the immediate leader there was no movement from them for resolution or intervention by third parties. In only 2 cases was there any type of direct intervention and/or punishment for the agent causer of the conflict.

Conflict Resolution/Outcome	n	%
Does not mention	6	23.1%
Communication with the leadership that have assisted with conciliatory conversation	5	19.2%
Resign the job	2	7.7%
There was no resolution, even after communicating what happened to the immediate leader	2	7.7%
Communication with the leader, written warning, suspension and change of workplace to the offender	1	3.8%
Communication with the leader, verbal warning to the offender	1	3.8%
Communication with the leadership that resolved through a shift change	1	3.8%
Communicated to the leadership and there was no resolution, resigned the job	1	3.8%
Communicated the leadership that asked the employee to ignore the situation	1	3.8%
HR intervention and conflict resolution	1	3.8%
Not reported	1	3.8%
Risk of dismissal after communicating with the boss	1	3.8%
No action by the leadership or the organization. The attempted to legal action, which was also not resolved due to the fact of being a foreigner and its visa status	1	3.8%
No solution by the leadership	1	3.8%
Asked not to work with the colleague anymore	1	3.8%
Total	26	100%

Table 5 – Conflict Resolution/Outcome. Source: Author

The Chart 21 shows the description of the people who participated in the intervention as a third party assisting to resolve the conflict, where the majority was conducted by the leaders followed by the cases in which there was no report of anyone's intervention (31%). Only one case appealed to HR support and only one case searched for legal action.
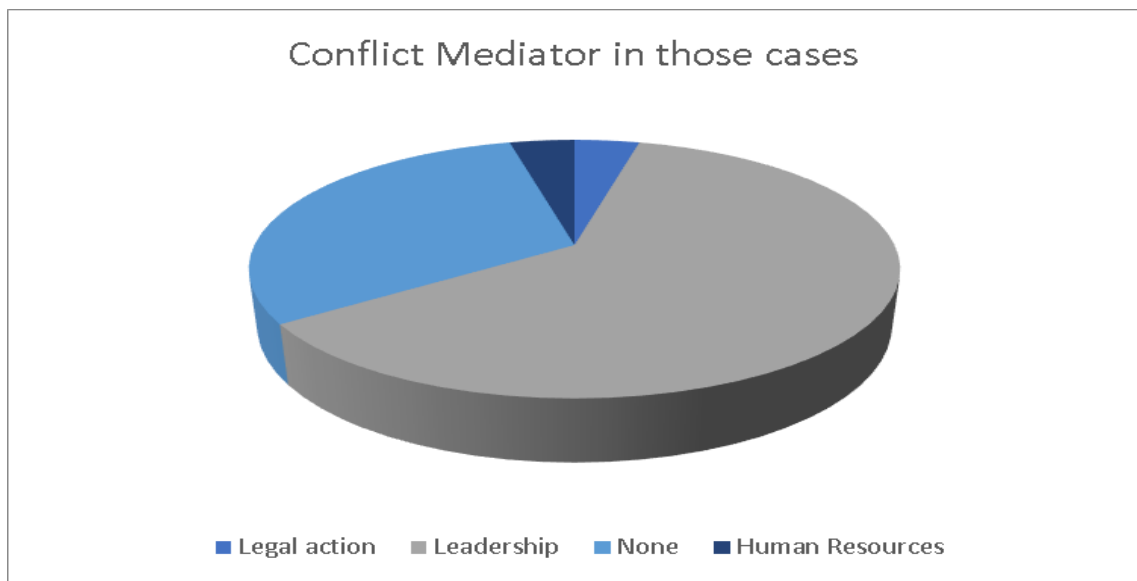
Chart 21 – Conflict mediator in those cases. Source: Author

CHAPTER 4 - DATA ANALYSIS/FINDINGS

The research findings regarding the profile of the sample, which had a higher-than-expected quantity for the method used, snowball, had 130 participants, mainly women, young adults, who are mostly non-European origin although they reside in Ireland to work in different sectors. Thus, it can be said that there was no significant predominance of any specific sector.

As verified, most of the participants have already lived in the country for more than a year, as well as having mostly high levels of education, with a significant portion of post-graduates.

When comparing the occupation/profession exercised in Ireland with their occupation/profession exercised in their country of birth, it is possible to observe that in their country of birth there were a plurality of activities. Many of the participants held positions compatible with their education and held leadership positions, a situation completely reversed the one found in their new working condition in Ireland, since few individuals remained in their area of expertise and qualification, as IT engineers, most of the participants performed more manual labour and household services, at higher levels of subordination and incompatible with their level of formal education.

It is clear that their perceptions about conflicts, although they mostly believe that it should be a situation to be avoided as well and widely understood as something inherent in human nature and, therefore, inevitable to occur.

Regarding the origin of conflicts, most agree that they originated from the institution's internal dynamics, but they also strongly believe that cultural differences are motivators of conflicts at work.

In relation to the frequency of involvement in conflicts, the majority has already been involved in some conflict in the last year, although they say they believe do not get involved in conflicts very often.

With respect to their perceptions about the influence of their culture on involvement in

workplace conflicts, they strongly believe their culture and the barriers that can be created around it can be motivators of conflict in the workplace environment. They report believing that they are not involved in more conflicts in their current work than in their previous work in their country of birth. Almost the same proportion that they believe they are involved in more conflicts in Ireland than in their country of birth, and in return most disagree that cultural barriers are negative influences in conflict contexts at work.

Analysing the employers' position on conflicts, it is visible that due to the level of disagreement, most of them do not use traditional methods of conflict resolution or alternative methods, in summary, there simply does not seem to be any internal policies or well-defined conducts for conflict situations.

When we enter the direct experiences of the participants with situations of conflict and its development, it is possible to identify that in most cases there was direct and immediate communication with the immediate leadership. However, almost half of the sample refers to perceiving the company's concern in resolving the conflict, which demonstrates a high percentage of perceived negative under an inertia of the companies in the process of conflict resolution, having few resources and effort to provide for these situations. Even when asked about the involvement of third parties to assist the resolution of most conflict concerns have not had this resource available, and in cases where there was a majority, it believed that it did not have the expertise for the qualitative management of the situation.

In this sense, it was evident that most respondents say they were not satisfied with the conflict resolution method adopted in their situation. A massive number of companies did not even offer alternative measures for their resolution and this is even more evident in the discursive responses given by the participants, where solutions were sometimes not even offered in an effective way.

It was possible to identify that most of the participants stated that they would feel comfortable and would like to have the involvement of a third party who mediated the conflict in the

workplace.

When we enter the experiences regarding the cause of conflict, it is possible to notice that many of the participants name the fact that they are foreigners, as well as xenophobia and language as the main causes. Physical violence and sexual harassment are also mentioned.

A considerable portion of the sample that had some type of intervention was through their immediate leader in a conciliatory approach, but the majority in fact had no intervention, and a part of the participants reported having had to resort to radical measures such as quite their jobs.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION

Our research revealed that the participants had a predominant profile of women, young adults, most of whom are non-European origin, although they live in Ireland to work in different sectors as well as who have lived in the country for more than a year. The fact that most of them are non-European people catch our attention to migration flows. In recent years, migration has reached levels never seen in the entire history of mankind. At the end of the 20th century, the number of immigrants jumped from around 75 million in the 60s to 150 million in the 90s. Notoriously, the countries with the highest degree of economic development, such as the USA and the European Union, have been the main focus of these migratory flows, both in terms of migration to work and study and to situations of refuge. Approximately one million immigrants a year follows these destinations (PAIVA and LEITE, 2014).

These large flows of migration were responsible for the global economic restructuring. Global markets created demand for labour in developed industrial societies, collaborating for social inequalities, considering that the growth of societies occurs in an unequal flow. In a such point ends up generating impulses for the desire to migrate to other developed countries and with possible better quality of life opportunities (PAIVA and LEITE, 2014). The data found endorse this premise to a certain extent, whereas when comparing the work activity performed in Ireland with that performed in the country of birth, it is evident that individuals end up leaving their country to fill in positions in another country incompatible with their level of knowledge, with a prevalence of manual work and domestic services, at higher levels of subordination and incompatible with their level of formal education, if we consider that the majority had postgraduate degrees.

Another point is that it is evident that this scenario ends up forcing organizations to deal with multicultural teams. A positive effect of cultural diversity in the workplace is that different

ways of thinking and performing tasks emerge. The plurality of experiences that cultural diversity at work provides the organization with a broader knowledge base (MARTIN, 2014).

In the research by Al-Jenaibi (2011) that addressed the impact and reach of cultural diversity in organizations in the United Arab Emirates, the authors elucidate that most workers believe that group work with culturally diverse people helps, through mutual sharing of experiences, to develop the team and the collaborative spirit. In addition to optimizing the overcoming of the culture shock that can be imposed when the organization expands its boundaries, because when an organization has culturally diverse employees, the organization tends to use each person's information and knowledge to overcome the obstacles imposed in this process, while companies that do not have this diversity in their corporation end up having to plan a part of the internal budget to inform their workers about the culture and work procedures in foreign countries where the organization is expanding (MARTIN, 2014).

Another point that is evident in the data found is that although the majority believes that conflicts should be avoided, it is also understood as something inherent to human nature and, therefore, inevitable to occur. The literature corroborates this perception, and it is precisely in this regard that it is necessary to know how to carry out the management after the beginning of the conflict (COLEMAN and FERGUSON, 2014).

As for the origin of the conflicts, most agree that they originate from the internal dynamics of the institution, but they also strongly believe that cultural differences are motivators of conflicts at work. It is worth remembering that conflict and power go hand in hand, to perceive yourself in a conflict is to see yourself in a position of power imbalance to a certain extent. Coleman and Ferguson (2014) makes it clear that just as changes of power and disparities in power often create conflicts, racial, gender, generational conflicts - almost all intergroup conflicts are essentially about power - and at the moment when a minority presents itself at a disadvantage groups may demand their rights, a strike for example, is also about power, promotions and rewards in bonuses or positions also tend to provoke envy and

resentment, which tend to manifest themselves at some point as a conflict.

Our research revealed that in relation to the frequency of involvement in conflicts, the majority has already been involved in some conflict in the last year, although they claim to believe that they do not get involved in conflicts very often. They strongly believe that their culture and the barriers that can be created around it can be reasons of conflict in the workplace. It is necessary to consider that these intragroup conflicts when considered in a context of cultural diversity in the workplace can lead to loss of productivity and a hostile environment. However, the effects of cultural diversity in the workplace depend on how they are handled by the organization and the leaders, because with a plan it is possible to increase the positive effects and reduce the negative effects of cultural diversity in the workplace (MARTIN, 2014).

As it was notoriously evident that employers in this research do not use either traditional or alternative methods of conflict resolution, that is, there simply does not seem to be any internal policies or well-defined conducts for conflict situations. It is known that ignoring work conflicts can be highly damaging to both parties and the organization. Usually, this attitude is taken with the hope that conflicts will simply end themselves. It is important to note that intragroup conflicts tend to evolve from the point that they arise as difficulties related to work, the task, and become individual and emotional conflicts (BAKHARE, 2010).

In the course of the research, it was identified that even with direct communication with the immediate leadership, the participants perceive negatively the lack of action by the company and interest in resolving conflicts, having few resources and effort to handle these situations.

It is necessary to understand the cultural context of conflict resolution in the investigated country, so Teague's research makes it evident that there is a process taking place in Ireland in recent years in relation to the modus operandi of resolving these situations in the labour field. An extensive survey conducted in Ireland in 2008 showed that organizations, both public and private were following the US standard and adopting workplaces inspired by Alternative

Methods of Dispute Resolution in conflict management practices (TEAGUE, ROCHE, HANN, 2012; TEAGUE et al, 2019).

Integrated systems of conflict management models such as the Alternative Methods of Dispute Resolution have not yet been systematically implemented in Ireland. In general, it is possible to observe that according to Teague et al (2019) the Irish conflict resolution system is not geared towards strong encouragement and radical changes in approach towards ADR. In 2016, 230 labour cases were heard in the Civil Court and 6.863 complaints were submitted to the state conflict resolution agency, the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC), representing a 30:1 ratio. About three quarters of WRC's labour complaints are concluded in less than six months. In Ireland, the estimated damages amounted to 2015, $ 18.320 in cases of unfair dismissal and $ 25.877 in cases of equality (COURTS SERVICE OF IRELAND 2017; WORKPLACE RELATIONS COMMISSION, 2017).

In comparison, job losses and damages in the United States range from $ 86,000 to $ 176,000, in Ireland, the financial sector and incentives are much lower than in the United States. In the sense that for employers there remains the incentive to develop internal conflict management systems, avoiding major damages and substantial costs in the long term. The United States is considered discrepant in terms of lawsuits filed by 100.000 people, as litigation levels vary, among other Anglo-American countries, but all lag behind the United States. A 2:1 litigation ratio separates the United States and Ireland. In 2017, the Mediation Act aimed to encourage the wider use of ADR in legal disputes in Ireland (TEAGUE et al, 2019).

Since this process is still in transition to better practices in conflict resolution, the individuals who were involved in conflicts were not satisfied with the conflict resolution method adopted in their situation. In this perspective, it is relevant to remember the profile studied, where most of the workers were foreigners, because in a competitive market and in situations of free transit between borders, employees would have gone to another job as conflicts emerged, however they are not able to do so, due to their own immigrant status. This context can lead to

the intensification of psychological situations and more deleterious effects for the company (BAKHARE, 2010).

The results corroborate the fact pointed out by Teague et al (2019), which shows that in Ireland organizations do not consider ADR-inspired conflict management practices as the ideal method of addressing problems in the workplace, or do not yet fully understand its values and benefits (LATREILLE and SAUNDRY, 2014).

A study carried out by private sector organizations in Wales showed that there is a higher prevalence of mediation to resolve individual and collective conflicts and conflict among employees, as about three out of ten employers use these methods, where the ADR practices of "conflict coaching" and "personal development planning" were used by 55% and 35%, respectively, of companies (HANN et al, 2016).

It was identified in this research that most individuals say that they would feel comfortable and would like to have the involvement of a third person who mediated the conflict in the work environment. However, comparisons with other realities make us believe that the Irish pattern of limited diffusion of ADR-inspired conflict management innovations is for the most part being replicated in other Anglo-American countries, in addition to the United States. It is necessary to consider that in Ireland there were no strong institutional incentives for the adoption of ADR-based conflict management systems (TEAGUE et al, 2019).

When we go into experiences about the cause of the conflict, it is possible to see that many of the participants point out that they are foreigners, as well as xenophobia and language as the main causes. Physical violence and sexual harassment are also mentioned.

The interventions in cases of conflict found in this research took place through its immediate leader in a conciliatory approach, but most of them did not actually intervene, and a part of the participants reported having had to make use of radical measures such as dismissal. According to the Institute for Corporate Productivity/American Management Associative (2012) the capacities that tomorrow's global leaders will need mostly, refer to agility and

multicultural collaboration skills. However, leaders are not properly prepared to take on the face of these skills. In a completely internationalized economy, it is necessary to change this mindset. The leader who thinks and acts across cultures is what is necessary, remembering that working in multicultural environments not only crosses the issue of language skills, but requires a strong sociocultural understanding of the communities and their history. This is an aspect of management in the new millennium and the ability to continually deal with paradoxes and manage contradictions (NEERA et al, 2010).

Cultural diversity opens the door to a spectrum of conflicts in the space in which it is delimited, and sometimes the outcomes are unfavourable. It is well known that the conflicts described here have a level of relationship with the cultural diversity in the context, being clear several types of intragroup conflict, relationship, process and task conflict. Vodosek (2007) points out that in his research, intragroup conflicts were associated with lower satisfaction with the group and lower perceived performance. Finally, the association between cultural diversity and attitudes, the results were mediated by conflict of relationship, process and task, which implied in the investigated context, it was realized that it is counterintuitive to bring together cultural homogeneous groups that are less likely to intragroup conflicts. Also, that it is better to face cultural diversity even though understanding that there will be a long cultural learning process to be covered.

Cross-cultural training programs that are capable of developing cognitive, affective and behavioural knowledge about differences are effective in mitigating the negative impact of cultural diversity and its adjacent conflicts (VODOSEK, 2007).

Another point that literature brings as the cause of the conflict relationship in the context of cultural diversity is the fact that some individuals will come from a collectivist society, while others will come from an individualist society. In this context, conflicts would emerge, since diversity would raise expectations regarding justice, equality and recognition. It is not uncommon for individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to being a part of conflicts

(YASMENN et al, 2020).

In the research by Yasmenn et al (2020) it is clear that in Pakistan, where the structure adopted massively by organizations is bureaucratic and hierarchical, with centralized decision-making, it appears in opposition to organizations in low-power countries such as Western Europe.

In collectivist societies, Jiang et al. (2016) proposes that team empowerment leads to knowledge sharing, as well as intragroup conflicts. The positive relationship between structural empowerment and interpersonal conflict becomes stronger where the organization is more culturally diverse in terms of the workforce. The power structure is critical for all organizations, as it explains lines of responsibility, authority and the overall control structure of an organization. Because of this, it is important that structures are planned and designed to reduce conflicts between individuals who obtain authority and benefits versus those who do not obtain such privileges or are reduced.

Bearing in mind that it is important to adopt a conflict resolution policy that embrace the context of cultural diversity, there is a need for a movement to use ADR measures in the conflict resolution process. Mediation proves to be the best way to create an organizational culture that is based on re-establishing relationships and minimizing damage. At this point, it is questioned how the introduction of mediation methods should be carried out in organizations. It is a process that will depend on an accurate analysis on the internal context of the company and what real objectives it wants to achieve with the implementation of these procedures.

For Doherty and Guyler (2008) the social and political change in the power base in the workplace that we have described has progressively represented the command, control and model of labour relations based on less effective authority in our times. However, awareness has grown that the success or extinction of important modern companies has become dependent on the new and urgent criteria for power sharing.

Several authors and experts in the human psyche have tried to explore the factors involved in what they call motivational theory in the workplace, using "self-updating" models and a "hierarchy of needs". The authors claim that companies and organizations are currently looking for a skilled workforce, based on a sense of team, oriented towards the customer experience and in a structure where power, resources, responsibility and involvement is shared in a multifunctional synergy across the company.

Mediation can be successful at almost any stage of the issue, the benefits of its applicability being the massive elimination of transaction costs. It also offers the possibility for the formation of teams and alliances between those who currently or potentially may disagree. Rebuild business relationships damaged by conflict and offer the experience of positive internal change as a result of what it was like to deal with this specific conflict and with that, it can transform your way of dealing with other potential conflicts as well (PHILIPS, 2001).

CONCLUSION

The findings from this research suggest that in Ireland employers are still not responding to the external context and the pressure for new habits and models of conflict resolution, in an increasingly multicultural society. The internal and external pressures for the diffusion of practices based on Alternative Dispute Resolution Methods should happen more quickly, but it does not occur in a significant way, so that it could be systematically evidenced in this research. It is worth mentioning that a significant part of the sample of this research worked as a service provider and not necessarily in large corporations.

The aim of this research is to identify the perception of individuals with work activity in Ireland about conflicts in the workplace and the influence of cultural differences in these conflicts. It is more than clear that there is a direct relationship between these variables that the individual perceives them in an implied way.

Another objective of this research was to identify the types of conflicts that have arisen by the participants that have resulted from cultural differences. Notoriously, the conflicts described are mostly intragroup, referring both to the process of emotional, interpersonal disagreements as well as to process and tasks.

This research also sought to clarify the impacts and deleterious effects of the presence of conflicts in the workplace due to cultural differences. The literature corroborates that the idea of conflict itself, can also be used in a constructive way, however, as organizations clearly do not yet handle conflicts well in Ireland, the deleterious effects are clear in relation to the risk of weakening company processes, less chance of global expansion, affective problems and impacts on employee performance, in addition to being able to contribute to turnover and decreased job satisfaction.

To analyse the advantages of using Mediation as an alternative method of conflict resolution in the workplace in those cases. All the points covered in the literature as well as in the

research findings, imply that the use of mediation as an Alternative Conflict Resolution method is placed in a very prestigious place for the management of these workplace conflicts.

It is clear that there is still a dullness to innovate with reactive and fragmented or evolutionary attitudes towards ADR innovation, these more strategic approaches are still observed very discreetly.

It is necessary to consider that the interest in promoting immigration is part of a broad project of development and globalization in several countries. There are a number of initiatives that seek to obtain this foreign labour in exchange for formal education processes, it is not uncommon for announcements such as "come and study in Europe", however the management of migratory flows in the country has to be done responsibly and conscious for those who aim to absorb these individuals. It is not enough to just encourage immigration if integration of foreigners into society is not promoted. Since the benefits of a multicultural environment are incontestable, but these can only be enjoyed if the countries that receive these foreigners do not invest in public policies for such purposes.

Therefore, there is a clear the necessity for more research to be carried out to consider the strategy of organizations and, also the other dimensions of an integrated conflict management system, such as the skills of human resource managers to deal with conflicts.

Mediation is a means to build a different future, where conflicts are resolved by building new perspectives. Human interaction within all its complexity needs to focus on living in the present, experiencing what happens as it happens, this perspective causes that we can see conflicts as small thing. It is this process of transformation that guides mediation.

According to the findings of this research, we suggest that, based on the possible implications for employers of foreign labour, regardless of the size of the company, be careful to provide the means for an optimized understanding among peers, as well as elucidating the expected roles and responsibilities of the contracted workforce, also being concerned with developing an adequate socialization process so that a favourable general environment can be established

both for the local inhabitants and for the individuals who come from different places and who bring their cultures and their language with them.

The results of this study represent a contribution to the literature on intragroup conflict and to the literature of the group, because they show that intragroup conflict is related to the occurrence of cultural diversity. The conflict literature has yet to develop a more complete understanding of the antecedents of the conflict, as well as such knowledge, and as represented by the results of this study, the increase of culturally diverse groups in organizations is important.

REFLECTION

Currently, with the level of globalization and the high migratory levels that has been intensifying over the years, societies in a way have become increasingly multicultural, however, this activity does not pass unnoticed, in the sense that social relations tend to suffer severe impacts from these processes.

The relationship that is established between different cultures can be tension characteristic, due to the shock that sometimes these different sets of habits and beliefs can generate. For this tension to be eased in situations where the deleterious effects of this shock may be established, it is important to develop alternatives that seek the maintenance of the parties, especially with regard to workplace relations, which are essential for human subsistence, there is not how-to live-in society without working relationships.

However, as noted in the results of this research, humanity still has a long way to go in order for cultural diversity to be fully lived socially.

Several actions still need to be carried out by governments and institutions to make it possible for us to have a harmonious coexistence in the same space, where differences can collaborate for a larger collective construction.

It was possible to verify that both in the literature and in the results of this research, it is necessary to establish an open dialogue path between the parties, so that conflicts can have a resolution without major damage.

It is visible how there is still an extraordinarily strong mark of colonialist inheritance and cultural supremacy, where cultures tend to be undervalued in favor of others, ignorance and intolerance are factors that contribute strongly to conflicts that are exacerbated in a workplace environment.

It is very evident from the research course that the management of interpersonal relationships urgently needs to evolve related to conflict management, regardless of the type.

The coexistence of cultures in a hostile workplace environment implies putting these relationships under a certain spectrum of violence, whereas sometimes there is no "non-interaction" option, which makes this process way more difficult for the individual involved.

Mediation emerges in this context as a form of assistance for the evolution of human being relationships, as it provides a setting for uniqueness and allows empowerment of individuals in their own conflicts, this evokes principles and skills that must be constantly developed in the work environment. In this sense, we can say that this alternative to the resolution is strongly based on dignity and its methodology rescues the need for an intercultural civilizational construction.

Another point that does not go unnoticed is the fact that the ability to manage cultural diversity, although it still needs to be extensively worked on by leaders around the world, is a skill that tends to provide an increase in the capacity, adaptability and flexibility of an organization to the environmental and sociocultural changes.

In the middle of the 21st century, it is time to understand the value of cultural differences and their role in driving productivity and growth in institutions. However, for this step to be taken in a safe manner, it is necessary to become aware of cultural differences and their impact on the work environment and modify the status quo of these relationships. Stimulating cultural diversity in an organization must be a process thought with responsibility, whereas a welcoming structure is necessary.

Another appropriate point of assimilation is how individuals face the process of being involved or having to deal with a conflict, we have seen in the literature and experienced in our work experiences that in many places, both employees and employers have a culture of silencing conflicts, waiting them to disappear, which in fact does not occur. However, this behavior generates a veiled culture about the communication of conflicts and about the transparency of the facts, but this only causes the problem and the consequences to intensify and have more deleterious effects. It is undeniable in that silencing a whole set of values

linked to the honesty and integrity of individuals is put in check, in a false civility, which does not aim at transforming relationships, but to hide the existing flaws in it, and due to the normative commitment that employees tend to have and because of their own need for subsistence, they submit to such a context.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

RESEARCH DISSERTATION: "THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN A WORKPLACE CONFLICT CAUSED BY CULTURAL DIVERSITY"

MASTER OF ARTS IN DISPUTE RESOLUTION

IMPORTANT NOTES

PURPOSE

The research has an academic purpose only.

There is no direct benefits from answering the questionnaire, but your participation will have extremely importance in the development of a bigger understanding of the topic.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The answer will be sent to a link at Google Forms and the data collected will stored online in an electronic format protected with password. Information such as name, email, address or IP address won't be collected by the platform. For those reasons, all the responses are completely anonymous and no identification is required.

AIM

The aim of this research is to identify the perception of individuals with work activity in Ireland about conflicts in the workplace and the influence of cultural differences in these conflicts.

DECLARATION

This research is being carried out in accordance to the WMA Declaration of Helsinki Ethical Principles (available at: https://www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/).

CONCERNS

In case you have doubts in relation to this research, the researcher is available to any further questions at the email julianneviegas@hotmail.com

In case you feel that this research wasn't able to maintain ethical principles, please contact Independent Colleges at the contacts below:

Independent College Dublin at Block B, The Steelworks, Foley Street, Dublin 1, or email: info@independentcolleges.ie

Proceeding with the questionnaire, you are automatically indicating that:

- You have READ and AGREED with the above information;

- You agree to participate this research VOLUNTARILY;

- You are 18 years or over;

- You are free to withdraw from this research at any time.

Thank you for your time and for assisting me in the completion of my Master's Degree.

Research lead by Julianne Lucena Viégas, Master Student at Independent College Dublin.

*Required

PROFILE

Gender. How do you identify? *

( ) Man

( ) Woman

( ) Non-binary

( ) Prefer not to answer

What is your age? *

( ) 18-24

( ) 25-31

( ) 32-38

( ) 38+

( ) Prefer not to answer

What region were you born in? *

( ) EU (European Union)

( ) Non-EU (Outside European Union)

How long have you been living in Ireland? *

( ) Less than 3 Months

( ) Between 3 to 6 Months

( ) Between 6 to 12 Months

( ) Over 12 Months

How do you rate your level of English? *

Speaking: ( ) beginner ( ) intermediate ( ) advanced ( ) fluent

Writing: ( ) beginner ( ) intermediate ( ) advanced ( ) fluent

Reading: ( ) beginner ( ) intermediate ( ) advanced ( ) fluent

Listening: ( ) beginner ( ) intermediate ( ) advanced ( ) fluent

What was your occupation in your Country of Birth? *

_____

What is your occupation here in Ireland? *

_____

Education Grade: *

( ) 12th Grade or less

( ) Graduated High School or equivalent

( ) Some College, no Degree

( ) Bachelor's Degree

( ) Post-graduate Degree

In which sector do you work in Ireland? *

( ) Commercial

( ) Industry

( ) Service supply/Service provision

( ) Other

Do you hold a leadership position? *

( ) Yes

( ) No

YOUR PERCEPTION ABOUT WORK CONFLICTS

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree
I believe that a conflictual situation is part of human nature and is inevitable*			
I believe that a conflictual situation is a bad situation and therefore should be avoided*			
The conflicting situations in which I was involved in my workplace are interpersonal origin (it is related to the cultural base of each individual)*			
The conflict situations in which I have been involved in my workplace are of organizational origin (it has to do with the organizational dynamics)*			
I have never been involved in conflict situations in my workplace*			
I am constantly involved in conflict situations at work*			
I have been involved in at least one conflict in my workplace in the last year*			
I feel that my culture has negatively influenced the conflicts that I got involved in at work*			
In this country, I get much more involved in conflict situations than in my birth country*			
I consider that in my workplace, cultural differences (such as language barriers, different cultural values, etc.) are motivators of conflicts*			
The company where I work has the practice of using traditional and punitive methods in conflict situations*			
The company where I work has the practice of using Alternative Methods of Conflict Resolution in these conflict situations*			

YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH WORK CONFLICTS

Answer this third part of the questionnaire only if you have been involved in a conflict in

the workplace based on your work experiences.

When you were involved in a conflict, did you communicate your leadership immediately?

( ) Yes

( ) No

Did the company assist you and was concerned about resolving the conflict?

( ) Yes

( ) No

When the conflict was solved, was there assistance from third parties?

( ) Yes

( ) No

If so, did the person who assisted in resolving the conflict have the expertise to do so?

( ) Yes

( ) No

Was the outcome of the conflict resolution satisfactory?

( ) Yes

( ) No

At that time, did the company offer an Alternative Method of Conflict Resolution such as Mediation, for example?

( ) Yes

( ) No

Would you be comfortable with a third party (Mediator) helping to resolve a conflict?

( ) Yes

( ) No

Would you like and would consider using Mediation as a Conflict Resolution Method?

( ) Yes

( ) No

Briefly write about your conflict situation at work and how it was resolved:

_____

_____

_____

_____