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Independent College Dublin**

How Effective is Mediation in Handling Workplace Disputes in Ireland?

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to identify the effectiveness and potential of mediation in handling workplace disputes in Ireland. The primary aim of the research was to investigate the sources of disputes in Irish firms and the effectiveness of the processes to manage disputes and conflicts with a focus on the potential role of mediation and emotional intelligence therein. To accomplish its main goal of finding a speedy settlement to particular workplace concerns, mediation can be used at any time during a disagreement or conflict. The study will be focusing, amongst other things, on the institute, the organisation that serves as the professional organisation for mediators in Ireland called The Mediators' Institute of Ireland, or "The MII." It offers accreditation for mediators as well as training programmes. The MII's mission is to advance the effective application of superior conflict resolution by upholding the highest standards in the sector for professional practise, education, and training. Relevant literature further demonstrates the effectiveness of mediation to address relationship conflicts in the workplace including in relation to alternative dispute resolution; effective mediation; situations suitable for mediation and the principles of mediation. The data used in this study will be gathered through primary quantitative method, in which the researcher has conducted a survey: 41 people were sampled by the researcher in order to gather data. These 41 participants originate from a variety of workplaces in Ireland. The strategy allows the participants to reflect on the potential role of mediation on their ability to uphold their dignity and foster respect for one another within the boundaries of a secure environment and also develop the emotional intelligence necessary for harmonious and productive work practices; over time, it is hoped this may result in better and more meaningful connections among employees.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Mediation, a voluntary procedure facilitated by an unbiased third party, is one technique that may be used to effectively resolve problems. Every professional relationship might be subject to conflict. If it is allowed to fester and grow without being addressed, grievance and disciplinary processes, as well as employment tribunals, may become necessary. Mediation assists parties in avoiding more formal and expensive dispute resolution processes by assisting them in identifying solutions that are mutually acceptable.

Mediation is a procedure that may be used while attempting to settle workplace disputes or conflicts. Due to the fact that it is less formal than grievance and disciplinary processes as well as employment tribunals, it is often referred to as an alternate method of dispute resolution or an informal type of conflict resolution. In spite of this, a methodical and organized plan is required.

Mediation can be utilized at any point during an argument or dispute in order to achieve its primary objective, which is to find a quick resolution to specific issues that arise in the workplace. The procedure is flexible and entirely voluntary, and any agreement reached is binding more in the ethical sense than the legal one. In addition, it seeks to provide comprehensive responses that get to the root reasons of the problem and are more win-win than confrontational techniques. The goal of the approach is to provide a secure and private environment for the participants so that they may work together to discover solutions to the issue that are acceptable to both sides.

1.1 Background of the issue

In the course of professional relationships, it is almost certain that a dispute will emerge at some time. A certain amount of disagreement on technical topics, such as what tasks to do and how to execute them, may be advantageous since it promotes critical assessment, which can lead to improvements. However, friction between individuals may quickly damage relationships, leading to increasing disagreement and less-effective teams. In general, the vast majority of individuals have pleasant connections with their co-workers. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the majority of these reports are good, there are still those employees who encounter conflict or who are treated unfairly.

In our study on the management of conflict, the experiences of workers on interpersonal conflict in the workplace were emphasized. Conflict, including both one-time scuffles and persistently strained relationships, as well as bullying and harassment, may have a significant impact on an individual's health, well-being, and capacity to do their job. If a conflict is not handled and resolved as soon as it arises to avoid it from escalating, the difficulty of the situation will likely increase.

The mediation procedure may be divided into many distinct parts. In the early stages of the mediation process, the mediator will have private conversations with each party. The aim of these discussions is for the mediator to obtain a knowledge of each side's viewpoint on the problem, as well as its position, interests, and objectives for the next phase of the process. During the course of these discussions, the mediator will also attempt to convince both parties to agree to a joint meeting that will be mediated.

In order for the matter to be resolved, it is essential for individuals to be able to express to the other party the reasons why they think they have been treated unjustly and the way in which the perceived unfair treatment has impacted them. In the great majority of cases, they have not been completely heard in the past because avoidance or heated discussions hindered this. Nonetheless, one of the most crucial things for the mediator to accomplish at some point during a joint meeting is to change the focus from what has occurred in the past (grievances and experiences) to what the parties desire to occur in the present and the future.

1.2 Problem Statement

This particular research has discussed the process of mediation in Irish firms to manage conflicts. However, while researching or studying this variable, the main concern was to investigate the gap that occurs between the mediation process and managing conflicts in Irish firms. It has been shown by Baumann and Clayton (2017) that there is a trust deficit between upper management and HR managers when it comes to the creation and use of mediation for settling workplace issues. It was also found that a lack of self-assurance and competence on the side of the line and operational managers in their capacity to handle tough conditions was deemed to be the most important obstacle to early conflict resolution, even if the requisite training and coaching were supplied (Saundry and Wibberley, 2012).

Since it is impossible to know for sure whether or not providing mediation training to line managers and operational managers would increase the likelihood of businesses using

mediation, it is not possible to say with absolute certainty that such training would increase the likelihood of firms adopting workplace mediation (Saundry and Wibberley, 2012). It seems that the lack of trust on the part of management is a major factor in the emergence of this situation and that the uncertainty connected with this situation has a major impact on the results.

It was further said that the costs associated with integrating workplace mediation into a culture of conflict management may be a significant barrier, particularly for SMEs (Fernet et al., 2016). It would seem that bigger organisations in Ireland are the ones that are more prone to use mediation as a method for resolving conflicts. It is possible that this is due to the financial constraints that come along with workplace mediation. It would seem that these companies had the required financial, technical, and human capabilities to either provide an internal mediation service or engage outside mediators (Anagnostopoulou, 2018).

In addition to this, Deacon and Kieffer (2018) found that a lack of awareness and grasp of mediation on the side of employees and management is one of the key challenges. Hence, there is an immediate need for enhanced education efforts on the issue of mediation if organisations are to meet the expectation that workers would regard mediation as a credible option for addressing workplace difficulties (Malizia and Jameson, 2018). The fact that upper-level management tried to have a better grasp on mediation's broader influence on the organisation and the positive effects that mediation programmes have had on the company overall is indicative of the challenges in calculating the advantages of mediation.

1.3 Aim and Objectives

The primary aim of the research was to investigate the mediation process in Irish firms to manage disputes and conflicts. In order to assist this aim, the researcher has made three additional objectives:

1. To find the factors that affect the mediation process in the Irish firms
2. To determine the gaps in the Irish firms that cause disputes
3. To suggest ways to manage conflicts and handle disputes in the Irish firms

1.4 Research Questions

The primary research question of the study is:

How effective is mediation in handling workplace disputes in Ireland?

In order to assist this research question, the researcher has made three additional sub-questions:

1. What are the factors that affect the mediation process in Irish firms?
2. What are the gaps in the Irish firms that cause disputes?
3. What are potential ways to manage conflicts and handle disputes in Irish firms?

1.5 Research Significance

As the primary aim of the research was to study the mediation process in Irish firms, it holds significance for the managers and business owners of Irish firms. Educating Irish business owners, HR professionals, line managers, and employees on the merits of mediation might take the form of advertising campaigns as well as the delivery of information sessions on mediation to Irish businesses (Deacon and Kieffer, 2018). As a consequence of the instability that is associated with mediation outcomes, it is recommended that organisations give enough education and training to all employees who may be involved in a disagreement at work. Training and education programmes that involve mediation and other forms of dispute resolution are crucial for Irish firms, particularly at the management level.

However, in order to provide real facts and figures that will improve confidence and credibility in mediation as an effective tool for resolving issues in the workplace, proper evaluation and reporting on the outcomes and performance of pilot programmes are essential. It is of the highest significance that this evaluation and this feedback be presented in a manner that is consistent with one another. In addition, Malizia and Jameson (2018) discovered that training and education for managers on methods for mediating conflicts and resolving disagreements is another measure that might be implemented within Irish businesses. In addition, the development of mandatory information sessions concerning mediation inside enterprises, which would be presented by mediators who are capable and qualified in the subject matter.

It has been stated that mediation should be included in organisational norms and procedures, with the primary emphasis being placed on the need of providing more comprehensive information about mediation (Malizia and Jameson, 2018). Commonly, these kinds of endeavours are regarded as among the most important methods for overcoming management hostility to mediation inside businesses and for creating awareness regarding mediation and the benefits it delivers. Because of the consensus that this should be their group's top priority, the

decision was made to go on along these lines. These methods are also crucial for resolving the underlying problems that have prevented mediation in the workplace in Ireland from acquiring popularity and momentum abroad.

1.6 Research Structure

There will be a total of five chapters to this research, the first of which will serve as an introduction by outlining the issue and its historical context. In addition, the chapter discusses the study questions and objectives. It also provides a summary of the primary research and a simplified description of the mediation process. Furthermore, the next chapter provides a survey of the relevant literature, with a focus on the relevant theories and secondary literature on the issue under investigation. This means that the secondary literature would cover similar ground to that of the mediation process in Irish firms, including the variables that affect it and potential methods for managing conflicts. In addition, the researcher will offer the theoretical foundations for the subject at hand and explain how these foundations are relevant to the issue under study.

The third chapter will focus on the processes and techniques that will be used throughout the study to gather and analyse data. Then, in the next chapter, the researcher will look at the results of this study of the data gathered using the methods decided on in the previous chapter. However, recommendations, summarised results, and constraints will be presented in the last chapter to wrap up the investigation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 The Media Institute of Ireland

The Mediators' Institute of Ireland, sometimes referred to as "The MII," is the organisation that acts as the professional organisation for mediators in Ireland. In addition, it provides accreditation for both training programmes and mediators. The aim of the MII is to promote the successful use of high-quality conflict resolution by maintaining the industry's highest educational, training, and professional practise standards.

When disputing parties engage in mediation, a procedure for deliberately resolving and avoiding conflict, they offer themselves the chance to discuss and resolve their difficulties in a confidential and private setting. A neutral third party, referred to as the Mediator, assists conflicting parties in the workplace to achieve an agreement via a collaborative approach. The Mediator's function does not include rendering verdicts or issuing directions to the disputing parties. The Mediator is not a court nor an arbitrator; thus, he or she does not decide whether the parties' behaviour were proper or unsuitable, nor does him or her judge or arbitrate the dispute. The Mediator collaborates with the parties to help them in identifying their issues and requirements, and then examines various solutions that might satisfy those criteria.

2.2 Relationship conflict in the workplace

It is essential for professional interactions to have an element of emotion. The bulk of the time, people's demeanour in the job or arena of professional employment deviates significantly from the socially anticipated emotional standards. Relational conflict in the workplace may vary from small disagreements between employees to open animosity and organisational violence. It might be overt or subtle, intentional or unintentional, but it is always accompanied by negative emotions. For instance, researchers argue that a particular kind of "emotional labour" is essential to maintain strong co-worker relationships. These conversations are increasingly recognised as one of the most significant interpersonal connections that people will have at work.

Nevertheless, because the activity is visible to the entire public, it may be necessary to hide emotions such as anxiety, desire, and dissatisfaction. Due to the nature of the job, this is the case. According to Waldron (2000), the emotional experience at work is impacted by the

context-specific qualities of work interactions and is an intrinsic aspect of relational conflict. This impact, according to Waldron, is due to the fact that emotional experiences are a natural element of human contact. In addition, Waldron believes that the presence of emotion while work may be either advantageous or harmful to one's performance. In addition, the involvement of emotion and feelings of alienation in a protracted argument at work restricts communication since it evokes deep emotions such as remorse and fury in the parties.

Inadequate interpersonal interactions in the workplace are often cited as a cause of stress rather than a predictor of the likelihood of experiencing stress. This is due to the fact that it is simpler to identify a stress source than a stress predictor. There are a number of indicators that employees are suffering from job-related stress, including frequent absences and frequent time off. These behaviours are indicators that an employee may be under stress. High levels of discomfort and poor levels of enjoyment with one's job have been found as factors that might lead to stress reports when used together. Since conflict is an emotionally charged situation that may have both psychological and physical repercussions, psychological injury claims are likely to have physiological consequences as well. In addition, psychological injury allegations are likely to be supported by evidence. They think that beliefs and attitudes towards psychological injury, as well as organisational culture and help for injured personnel, have a detrimental impact on the results under investigation.

Even though there isn't enough documentation or recognition of the causes and conditions of sick leave, this could be a sign of something more serious, like bullying or harassment. Even though some workers think that getting sick and staying home from work or getting away from the place where they work might help temporarily, they often find that the problem is still there even after taking these steps. If a worker is going to be able to go back to work and do a good job, the company where they work needs to deal with any interpersonal problems that might be there. For example, research on bullying at work has shown that changes in the workplace that make it harder or stop bullying are important signs of going back to work.

The results of a study done by O'Donnell on women who had been bullied at work showed that the working environment and the help given by the organisation both affected how well the women were able to deal with the situation. On the other hand, the success of this method depended not only on how ready the workplace was for change, but also on how well it could adapt to change. For example, many small organisations may not be able to reorganise their workplaces because they are either too small or unable to do so, while others may simply not want to.

When it comes to workplace disputes, interpersonal conflict is often seen as an occupational health and safety (OH&S) issue rather than an industrial relations one. Models of occupational health and safety often define stress as an individual's response to their current circumstances. As a consequence, stress-related workplace techniques and interventions might possibly occur on three unique levels: the primary, the secondary, and the tertiary. The vast majority of interventions are conducted either at the secondary level (individual/organizational interface), with the goal of modifying how individuals respond to stressors at work and improving their coping mechanisms, or at the tertiary level (individually-focused), with the goal of minimising the effects of stress-related problems that have already occurred. Interventions at the tertiary level are most likely to be classified as those that aid in the resolution of workplace conflicts.

Since they occur within the framework of an organisation, psychological injury and conflict in the workplace are instances of experiences that may be both individual and societal in character. In addition, psychological injuries have a greater tendency to be reported later than other types of occupational injuries. This is due to the stigma involved with discussing mental health concerns. Often, the claim process itself might exacerbate the difficulty of the issue. On the other hand, it is not possible to accurately foresee why some individuals submit a claim for workers' compensation for psychological trauma while others do not. Only one research found evidence to imply that psychological injury claims might be anticipated, and that evidence was workers' opinions of workplace unfairness.

Schultz (2008) argues that returning to work may be considered both a process and a result. The expanding and transdisciplinary conceptual models of health, function, and impairment are not well reflected in psychological injury litigation. This leaves a gap in the field's coverage. Traditionally, the topic of psychological damage and the law has been poorly defined, and it has been impacted by the biological paradigm, which undermines the adversarial result model. The new focus is on the handicapped individual in connection to their environment and the passage of time, as well as the integration of medical and psychological viewpoints.

2.3 Alternative Dispute Resolution

It was recognised that the adversarial judicial system had flaws, which led to the development of a method for resolving disputes outside of court. This procedure is known as ADR, or alternative dispute resolution. Globally, procedures defined in the ADR are currently being applied in a variety of circumstances. Alternative dispute resolution alternatives include an

open-door policy, an Ombudsman, peer review, employment arbitration, negotiation, and mediation. Schneider argues that ADR differs fundamentally from the adversarial system in that it seeks a mutually satisfactory process and resolution of a dispute, and that because it is quicker, more flexible, and less expensive than litigation, ADR serves clients and their lawyers, the justice system (through a reduced case load), and provides dispute resolution opportunities to the greater community.

The rising use of alternative dispute resolution is one of the more recent advances in the area of judicial conflict resolution, which has been subject to a number of recent alterations. Therapeutic jurisprudence (TJ) is another approach that urges attorneys to evaluate the psychological effect that the case they are working on may have on them. This perspective acknowledges that the judicial system has an impact on people and communities that goes beyond the concept of rights and obligations and incorporates an individual's or community's feeling of overall well-being. It recognises that this influence extends beyond the idea of rights and duties. It accomplishes so by recognising that people are affected in some manner by the justice system. Wexler (2011), for instance, argues that the law has the capacity to be more than just a formalistic process; it may also be a reconciling and resolving agency. This line of argument assumes that the legal system is capable of becoming anything other than a merely formal process.

One of the difficulties associated with ADR is choosing which technique would be most advantageous in a given situation. It was believed that there are three fundamental strategies, namely negotiation, arbitration, and mediation that have the greatest therapeutic potential; nevertheless, the choosing of one of these procedures over another depends on the client's demands. In contrast to the more active role they play during the arbitration phase of the legal dispute, clients may stay relatively uninvolved in the process during this phase of the legal dispute due to the nearly exclusive attorney-to-attorney nature of the conversations. In contrast, they take a more active role during the arbitration process. The parties, on the other hand, have the option to talk directly with one another during the whole process of mediation, which is assisted by an unbiased third party.

2.4 Effective Mediation

As mentioned, the process known as mediation is often used to resolve disagreements. It is a cooperative method designed to improve communication, address unresolved issues, calm emotions, and highlight areas of agreement.

The parties involved in the mediation are given with a safe and confidential environment in which they may discuss their problems and difficulties and listen to the fears and concerns raised by the other side. Only the parties to the mediation and the mediator have access to the mediation's material, which cannot be divulged without the approval of all parties or unless compelled by law. At the outset of the process, the mediator will collaborate with the parties to establish the ground rules that will govern the whole mediation session. It is possible, but not certain, that the framework of the mediation process will change depending on who is mediating and what kind of dispute is being handled.

Before beginning the actual mediation process, the mediator will often meet separately with each of the key parties to discuss the issue. Depending on the form of mediation being employed, the parties may stay in the same room together for the joint session, with the Mediator serving as a liaison. Regardless of the kind of mediation procedure used, the resulting agreement must be mutually agreeable and legally enforceable, unless the parties stipulate differently in the agreement. In addition, in order for an agreement to be legitimate, it must be legally binding, unless the parties clearly state otherwise in the agreement.

Due to the inherent flexibility of the mediation process, it may be used to mediate a broad range of disputes, from simple disagreements between two parties to complicated disputes involving several parties and various concerns. It is possible to employ mediation either as a preventative measure to address issues or concerns that, if left unresolved, might lead to a more serious conflict, or as a corrective measure in cases where a dispute has already occurred or a formal process has been initiated. Both of these applications may be used to handle concerns that, if left unresolved, might lead to a more significant conflict.

2.5 Situations suitable for mediation

MII approved the mediators' education and training include a vast array of strategies and approaches to the mediation of conflicts. They offer a secure and private atmosphere, as well as the essential skills, in order to provide their clients the greatest chance of addressing their problems and achieving life pleasure. The 'Workplace Relations Commission' in Ireland,

guarantees that a broad range of service recipients have access to mediation programmes that is confidential, efficient, and effective. This is done so that all parties concerned may be aided in reaching a mutually acceptable agreement or settlement to a dispute or claim. This service may also, and often does, provide an alternative to formal adjudication or other procedures involving third parties.

The impartial manner and conduct of the mediators with regard to the content and outcome of the process, the respect shown by the mediator to all parties participating in the process, the observance of the confidential nature of the process, and the ability of all parties to effectively control the outcome and the solution resulting from the process are the driving nature and guiding principles of this service.

2.6 The Principles of Mediation

A neutral and impartial third party acts as a mediator during the mediation process, which tries to help conflicting parties achieve an agreement via the utilisation of joint efforts. As a consequence of participation in mediation, the parties are able to have a better knowledge of the circumstances that led to the dispute and form an agreement on how they should conduct and interact with one another in the future. Following is a summary of the most important concepts linked with mediation:

2.6.1 Voluntariness

For the mediation to be successful, the commitment of both parties is required; however, any party may withdraw from the process at any moment without suffering any penalties, at which point the mediation would conclude. Any party may thereafter, at their own option, pursue any of the further dispute resolution procedures that are open to them at that time.

2.6.2 Impartiality

The mediator never loses neutrality, never adopts a side, and never passes judgement; the parties to the dispute determine whether or not a settlement will be reached. It is not the aim of mediation for disputing parties to assign blame to one another or to establish who is right or wrong; rather, the purpose of mediation is to get an understanding of what transpired, and reach an agreement on how to move ahead.

2.6.3 *Confidentiality*

Unless both parties agree otherwise, any and all talks that occur throughout the mediation process, including any and all agreements reached, are retained in the utmost secrecy at all times.

2.7 The Process of Mediation

Mediation is most successful when it is used as soon as possible, particularly before opinions on both sides of the issue get entrenched. To facilitate understanding, the mediation procedure might be broken into two sections. The approach begins with a conference in which the mediator speaks individually with each participant to start the process of problem-solving. During this first meeting, the parties will get an explanation of mediation, affirmation of their willingness to voluntarily commit to the process, and an understanding of what each party expects to accomplish via participation in the process. The mediator will also utilise this session to determine the underlying causes of the disagreement, as well as the interests and requirements of both parties.

During the second phase of the procedure, which consists of a joint meeting involving both parties, the mediator will act as the meeting's presiding officer. During the joint meeting, the mediator will monitor the process, encourage dialogue between the parties, help them in recognising their issues and wants, and assist them in reaching a mutually acceptable agreement. The mediator is responsible for offering a technique that is secure for both parties and enables them to talk about their specific interests and requirements for resolving the dispute. Before deciding on a course of action, it is the responsibility of all involved parties to communicate, analyse the challenges, and generate a list of feasible options.

During these private sessions, all parties get clarification on the issue, have the chance to ask questions, and are guided through the process by a neutral third party. If the parties are successful in settling their differences via mediation, a document with the working title "Mediated Agreement" will be produced. This report will present a resolution to every issue that was considered during the parties' conversations and discussions. It is not the mediator's role to determine the parameters of the agreement; rather, it is up to the parties to reach a consensus on these conditions. Each party will be required to sign this contract, and its contents will remain secret until both parties express a desire for the document to be made public.

2.8 Mediation in cross-cultural context

In many regions of the world, mediation is used not only as an alternative to judicial proceedings, but also as a means of settling disputes between private parties. This is due to the fact that mediation is seen as a neutral third party that may serve as an unbiased arbiter. On the other hand, both the method through which it is performed and the outcomes may vary considerably across cultures. According to the results of a research conducted by Davidheiser (2006), issues of power imbalance and inequality that arise in mediation, as seen by a Western paradigm, may not always transfer well to other models. The findings of this study contradict the commonly held belief that women are subordinate to males by providing evidence to the opposite.

According to Davidheiser (2006), this is because Gambians put a great value on harmonious relationships, and mediation is a means of effecting change without severing such links. Moreover, Davidheiser (2006) emphasises that this is the case since mediation is a kind of conflict resolution. Since the majority of mediators thought that maintaining harmonious relationships was the single most essential component in effectively resolving disputes, he reasoned that this should take priority above serving as neutral mediators. Therefore, he concluded that the majority of mediators prioritise preserving harmonious relationships above working as unbiased facilitators. Residents of the neighbourhood thought that mediators offered a more personal and fair solution than the legal system, especially for those engaged in the conflict who had less privilege. In addition, local citizens considered that mediators offered a more cost-effective resolution.

This is further shown by the results of Syukur and Bagshaw (2013), who remark that the 2003 implementation of the Western model of court-annexed mediation in Indonesian courts was ineffective. According to them, this was largely due to the fact that court-trained mediators were educated in a combative style and did not fully grasp the pre-existing indigenous methods to conflict resolution that emphasise peace. This factor had a significant influence on the dilemma we found ourselves in. Each of the several distinct island communities and ethnic groups that comprise Indonesia has its own technique for resolving disputes, as well as its own set of justifications for doing so. The authors argue that a kind of mediation that is better appropriate for application in the Indonesian setting would be one that takes into account both Western and traditional Indonesian methodologies. In addition, they stress the significance of cultural sensitivity and the ability for self-reflection among mediators.

Very little research has been completed to assess ADR programmes in the workplace, and all of the studies conducted in this field have been conducted in North America. Despite this, there is one programme that stands out as very successful. This specific workplace-based conflict resolution method is not only the biggest and most successful example of its kind, but it also highlights the need for organisational commitment to workplace culture change.

2.9 The Benefits of Mediation

Mediation is an effective method for resolving problems, and it offers a number of advantages, including those described in the following paragraphs:

- The parties involved have the opportunity to accept responsibility for the dispute settlement process.
- Businesses are beginning to see mediation as a more efficient and cost-effective alternative to conventional dispute resolution techniques.
- Each party is accountable for the formulation and execution of their own agreement. This results in higher satisfaction for all parties with the outcome and more durable outcomes.
- The use of mediation reduces the likelihood that highly talented personnel may quit their jobs owing to the increased stress they will experience on the job as a direct result of the mediation.
- As a direct result of their participation in the process, the parties will develop new skills that will allow them to manage similar issues more successfully in the future.
- Lastly, the technique affords the parties the chance to maintain their dignity and develop mutual respect within the confines of a safe atmosphere; this, in turn, leads to improved relationships between the parties over time.

2.10 Theoretical Framework

Before discussing the various techniques that might be taken to promote mediation in the workplace in Ireland, it is necessary to do an analysis of the existing condition of workplace dispute resolution in the setting of Ireland. Teague et al. (2015) conducted a recent research project on alternative conflict settlement in Ireland. The researchers reached to the conclusion

that "Irish companies are not following this path of radical innovation" by implementing ADR processes in an integrated fashion. According to the findings of the research, there is a need for "major inventive changes to traditional conflict management. According to the results of the research conducted by Teague et al. (2015), mediation is an increasingly popular component of a systems approach to the creative management of workplace conflict and "is now recognised as a method for resolving a wide variety of problems. On the other hand, the enactment of the "Workplace Relations Act (2015)" and the formation of a separate provision for mediation under the "Workplace Relations Commission (WRC)" constitute a significant step forward in the formalisation of mediation promotion (Curran et al., 2016).

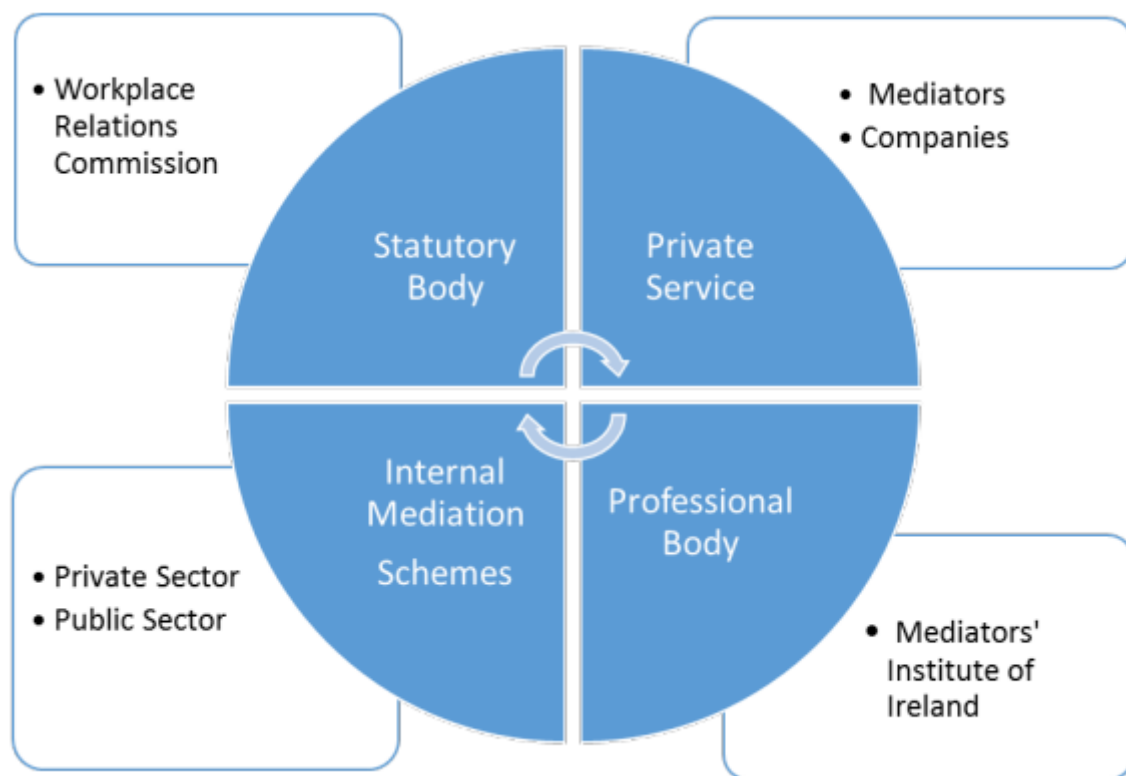


Figure 1: The context of workplace mediation in Ireland (KIWMRG, 2016, 7)

In terms of mediation, Kokaylo (2016) shows that its use in the workplace has grown from 42.7% in 2008 to 57.3% in 2011, with public sector employers being the most likely to use it at 82.8%. Even though this is the case, there are still only a small number of real mediations. In just 7% of commercial and public sector workplaces, only 5% of conflicts in the private sector in the UK are solved through mediation, and that number drops to 4% in SMEs (Kokaylo, 2016).

According to the findings of a recent study Sesen and Ertan (2021), mediation in the workplace has a variety of advantages. Organizational advantages such as higher morale, better performance, and a cheaper and quicker procedure that may assist to foster a ‘problem-solving culture’ are also possible, as are higher settlement rates and higher levels of participant satisfaction when it comes to resolving the underlying causes of the conflict at hand. In addition, they include: high settlement rates paired with high levels of participant satisfaction that address the substantive concerns of the disagreement; enhanced employee connections coupled with the healing of broken relationships; and a reduction in the number of disputes (Curran et al, 2016, 11).

Despite the evident advantages of mediation in the workplace and the fact that it is a successful tool for resolving workplace disputes, a number of hurdles may discourage organisations from using mediation in this capacity. These obstacles will be examined from a variety of perspectives, including those of management and organisation, as well as the difficulty of persuading parties to a disagreement to participate in the mediation of a resolution to the conflict.

2.10.1 Organisation Resistance

It has been shown that senior management, and HR managers in particular, lack confidence when it comes to designing and implementing informal processes and mediation for the purpose of settling workplace conflicts. According to a recent survey report released by the CIPD, HR managers are concerned about adopting informal processes for the settlement of conflicts inside their organisations; as a consequence, they continue to refer the cases to formal grievance procedures rather than mediation.

2.10.2 Managerial Resistance

It was revealed that a lack of confidence and skill of line and operational managers in managing challenging situations was perceived as the primary obstacle to early conflict settlement, even if the requisite training and coaching were provided (Saundry and Wibberley, 2012a). This was the case despite the fact that it was assessed to be the most significant hurdle to an early conflict resolution. Line and operational managers tend to be driven by the prospect of failing as a result of uncertainty to utilise the formal process rather than early conflict resolution options, mediation in particular, to settle conflicts (Saundry and Wibberley, 2012a).

Consequently, it is not certain that mediation training for line managers and operational managers would improve the possibility of organisations adopting workplace mediation. It

seems that the managers' lack of confidence plays a significant part in the evolution of this situation, and that this uncertainty has a significant impact. According to Vuori, Helander and Okkonen, (2019), if there is a rise in workloads and strong pressure to enhance customer service and promote efficiency, operational or line managers are unlikely to be enthusiastic about exerting maximum effort into the implementation of workplace mediation.

2.10.3 Lack of Awareness and Understanding

According to the findings of Deacon and Kieffer (2018), a lack of awareness and comprehension of the practise on the part of employees and management is one of the key challenges impeding a greater adoption of mediation. If employers are to satisfy the expectation that employees would see mediation as a legitimate means of resolving workplace conflicts, there is an immediate need for improved education efforts on the topic of mediation (Malizia and Jameson, 2018). In addition, Cheng and Wu (2017) revealed that a lack of knowledge about how the process works and the potential advantages of implementing it was an even greater barrier to its adoption than had been expected. Some employees perceived mediation as a punitive measure rather than a constructive method for resolving workplace issues due to a lack of knowledge about both the mediation process and the possible consequences of opting not to participate (Deacon and Kieffer, 2018).

2.10.4 Costs

It was noted that the expenses involved with incorporating workplace mediation into a culture of conflict management might be a substantial barrier, especially for SMEs (Fernet et al., 2016). Large companies in Ireland seem to be the most likely to use workplace mediation due to the budgetary restraints associated with doing so. These businesses seem to have the necessary financial, technological, and human resources to either offer an internal mediation service or hire external mediators (Anagnostopoulou, 2018).

2.10.5 Previous Negative Experience of Mediation

It was found an additional hurdle that limits a broader acceptance of mediation. Previous negative experience of mediation was found as a substantial influence on employers' attitudes on the use of mediation. Using the 'fragility' notion addressed by Kang and Kim, (2022), it examines the effect that the result of mediation has on people's perceptions of mediation's utility in general. According to the study's results, persons who have had unpleasant mediation experiences in the recent past have a tendency to affect potential mediator adopters, perhaps causing them to reject or disregard the use of mediation for future conflicts (Brandenburg,

2017). These people have a propensity to affect potential adopters of mediation because they tend to impact potential adopters of mediation. On the other side, it seems that a favourable attitude toward mediation is highly associated with a successful conclusion from the most recent round of mediation (de Coning, Muto and Saraiva, 2022).

2.10.6 Difficulty in quantity mediation benefits

It has been discovered that one of the key limits and challenges connected with the promotion of workplace mediation is the difficulty in quantifying the broader organizational benefits that may be realized via mediation. Difficulty in quantity mediation benefits was shown by the fact that top managers sought a greater understanding of mediation's wider influence on the organization, in addition to the positive effects that mediation schemes have had on the firm as a whole (Hațegan, 2020). In conclusion, there are a number of fundamental hurdles and issues that limit the broad acceptance and promotion of workplace mediation. These include 'commercial priorities' of organizations; managerial resistance, which appears to be based on the fear of reputation in front of employees and a perceived 'threat to managerial authority'; costs as a disincentive for embedding workplace mediation, particularly in SMEs; and a lack of understanding of the mediation process.

2.11 The Role of Professional Bodies and Individual Mediators

According to the findings of Kokaylo (2016), both individual mediators and professional organisations such as the MII and the "Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)" play a crucial role in the spread of workplace mediation in Ireland. With the aim of teaching Irish employers, HR managers, line managers, and workers about mediation, this may take the shape of advertising campaigns as well as the delivery of information sessions on mediation to Irish firms. The idea of 'fragility' that surrounds the results of mediation recommends that businesses must provide proper education and training to ensure that possible parties to workplace conflicts have a thorough grasp of the process. This is because the "fragility" around the results of mediation emphasizes the necessity for companies to implement adequate education and training initiatives. These efforts are vital to ensure that potential parties to workplace disputes have a good understanding of the method.

Previous negative mediation experiences seem to impact those who may choose mediation in the future (Latreille, 2010a). As a result, it is crucial to guarantee that mediators have a high level of training and that organizations are aware of it. This may assist establish an awareness

that a settlement may not always be achieved via mediation, but even when it is not, there may still be advantages for the parties, such as enhanced clarity and comprehension of the essential problems.

2.11.1 The role of the judiciary

Practitioners on the ground are of the opinion that judges sitting in the High Court might play a role in the promotion of workplace mediation by commenting on whether or not mediation has been used and, if it has not been used, advocating for its future use. In addition, the Labour Court may encourage the use of mediation by pressuring organizations to participate, and it can even include mediation into its own operations.

2.11.2 The role of organisations

Practitioners participating in the development of mediation in Ireland have also identified employer organizations and trade unions as potential mediator development stakeholders. According to mediators, Irish companies, especially at the management level, need training and education programs in mediation and other types of conflict resolution abilities. In addition, they require mandatory mediation education classes to be given by competent and accredited mediators. It has been argued that organizational norms and procedures should include mediation, with a focus on the importance of adding more thorough information on mediation. Generally, these types of activities are seen as some of the most important strategies for overcoming management opposition to mediation inside firms and for raising knowledge about mediation and its advantages.

In conclusion, the viewpoints of practitioners in Ireland are similar to the analysis of practices identified in the examined literature about methods of supporting workplace mediation in other countries (Kenny, 2018). In contrast, in addition to professional organizations (such as MII and CIPD) that mediate conflicts, the focus is given towards individual mediators. It has been determined that the major purpose of their organization will be to educate Irish organizations about the mediation process and its advantages in order to increase awareness and knowledge of the mediation method. These procedures are also essential for overcoming the underlying obstacles that prevent workplace mediation from gaining more acceptability in Ireland.

2.12 Steps to Mediation Process

Since they are responsible for facilitating the dialogue, mediators serve as both an intermediary and a facilitator in the discourse that occurs between the parties engaged in the situation. They assist them in reaching an agreement that is acceptable to both parties and prevent them from being side-tracked or entrenched in a dispute so that they may reach a mutually agreeable solution. It is crucial that they abstain from expressing their own judgement and instead guide people to discover their own solution, as opposed to offering advice or making their own conclusions. Instead of expressing their own opinion, they should urge others to discover their own solution. However, they must assure a fair resolution and protect themselves from the consequences of any power disparity that may exist between the parties.

2.12.1 *Ground Rules*

Beginning with one-on-one sessions with each participant, you must explain what they may expect from you and the process. Due to the futility of attempting to compel either of them to engage in the mediation process, the mediator should confirm that they are both prepared to do so willingly. Establish some parameters for the next phase of the process and get agreement on what those rules should be. Some examples include requesting that everyone come prepared with potential answers or suggestions, listening with an open mind, and minimising interruptions. It is crucial that the mediator earn the trust of both parties and foster an environment in which they feel secure enough to talk frankly and truthfully not just with the mediator but also with one another.

2.12.2 *Discussion with each individual*

The mediator should find a place that is away from the rest of the group, where you can concentrate in peace and quiet, and that is not in a very important place. When the mediator meets with the participants one on one, they will be able to tell him what happened from their point of view in an open and honest way. The mediator should use his ability to actively listen and ask open-ended questions to get to the bottom of the situation. The mediator should use his emotional intelligence to figure out the real reason for the fight, and then use this information to help the mediator to figure out how to solve the problem.

Get ready to feel a wide range of strong emotions, from fear and anxiety to anger and the desire to get even, and know that this experience will definitely change you. It is possible that this is the first time the people on the mediator's team have fully talked about how the dispute has affected them, and if they do so now, it will probably give the mediator important information

about where the problem is coming from. After that, the mediator need to ask each person what they want to get out of the mediation.

2.12.3 Explore the issues

The mediator should set up a meeting with both parties at the same time, but only after each has had time to consider the issue independently. The mediator must remind them of the ground rules, discuss the scenario, and then identify the main areas of agreement and disagreement between the parties and the mediator. Encourage participants to communicate their views and opinions on the issues as the mediator investigate each subject individually. Ensure that each person gets an equal amount of time to speak and that they are allowed to completely express themselves without being interrupted or cut off at any stage. If they become combative or defensive, the mediator must find methods to steer the discussion back to the topic at hand so that the mediator may continue. In order for them to have a better knowledge of one another's viewpoint, the mediator should encourage them to develop empathy for one another and to ask each other questions.

2.12.4 Negotiate and Compromise

Following the presentation of each party's perspective, the conversation should change to a subject that focuses more on the future than the past. If these difficulties can be overcome first, it will aid the process of gaining momentum and increase both parties' confidence that a practical solution can be reached. Consequently, it is necessary that they be resolved. The mediator should encourage the participants to provide potential proposals and urge them to negotiate in a way that benefits both parties so that you may reach an agreement that is acceptable to everyone. This will assist the mediator achieve a conclusion that will satisfy everyone. If the mediator find a piece of advice to be irrational, he/she should inquire as to what he views to be appropriate behaviour and if he believes the other person would agree with him.

2.12.5 Create a Written Agreement

Take notes throughout each session in which you serve as a mediator, and as soon as feasible after the parties have achieved an agreement, document it in the form of a formal contract. Ensure that the agreement is easily understood by all parties and that any actions taken are SMART.

Verify that the language you are using is objective, jargon-free, and easy for everyone to understand. You will lessen the risk of misunderstandings and new disagreements arising if

you take this action. Both parties should listen to the agreement being read out to ensure that they have a thorough knowledge of what is expected of them and so that any problems that either side does not understand or that are too broad or vague may be addressed. To ensure that both parties fully know what is required of them under the terms of the agreement, you must reread it to them.

You may even try addressing each individual independently and requesting that they sign the agreement. This may give the conclusion more weight and a feeling of finality, and it may also increase their sense of responsibility. If, on the other hand, you exert an excessive amount of pressure on the other party, you run the risk of undermining the mediation's intention to be at least somewhat relaxed.

2.12.6 Closure

It should be made abundantly clear to the participants, and copies of the agreement should be distributed to them, exactly what is expected of them after they have returned to their respective places of work. Invest some time in joint brainstorming and planning to figure out how to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of putting the agreement into action, and investigate the myriad of ways in which these difficulties might be overcome. Give an overview of what will happen in the subsequent phases, reassure both sides that you will continue to help them as a mediator, and show your appreciation to them for their aid and cooperation.

2.13 Recommendations for Workplace Mediation in Ireland

This section's major objective is to provide three suggestions to professional mediation bodies, the Irish government, and organizations about how they might aid in promoting workplace mediation, boosting awareness of it, and enhancing knowledge of it.

2.13.1 Institutional Drivers

The MII should become a primary platform for planning and delivering structured information sessions on mediation in order to increase senior management in Irish enterprises' understanding and grasp of mediation. In addition, the MII and CIPD may elect to work in order to identify the most important HR courses offered in Ireland, provide support for these courses, and include mediation-centred teaching sessions into each of these core HR courses.

2.13.2 Workplace Mediation Pilot Schemes

To encourage more individuals to use mediation in the workplace in Ireland, the Irish government may study the idea of creating Mediation Pilot Schemes as one option. These pilot programs may promote awareness of the benefits of workplace mediation and provide a chance to expand the practice to other parts of the nation. Moreover, as a consequence of these pilot initiatives, the number of companies using workplace mediation may rise. However, sufficient assessment and reporting on the results and performance of pilot programs are vital for giving actual facts and statistics to increase trust and credibility in mediation as an effective method for resolving workplace conflicts. These assessments and comments may be found in the pilot project's reports. It is essential that this evaluation and feedback be provided in a consistent manner.

2.13.3 Encouraging Informed Decisions

In the context of Irish organizations, mediation should be included into organizational rules and procedures, and significant attention should be given to compulsory mediation information sessions for disputing parties before they may pursue more confrontational formal dispute resolution alternatives. Training and education for managers on methods for mediating conflicts and resolving disagreements is another measure that might be implemented inside Irish businesses. In addition, the establishment of required information sessions about mediation inside businesses, which would be offered by competent and qualified mediators.

2.14 Summary

The primary objective of this study was to provide critical recommendations for expanding the promotion and usage of mediation in workplace settings in Ireland. In order to achieve this objective, the author researched about the perspectives of mediation practitioners working on the ground in Ireland. As a result of doing a thorough critical examination of the data, the author was in a position to provide suggestions for the distribution of workplace mediation in Ireland. Individual mediators and professional mediation groups, such as the MII, would play a crucial role in the spread of workplace mediation in Ireland.

It was also disclosed that the Irish government will play a significant role in the country's development of workplace mediation. This would be accomplished through developing mediation pilot projects as well as supporting and financing research studies. It was concluded that a lack of knowledge and understanding of the mediation process and its benefits was one

of the key impediments to a wider acceptance of workplace mediation in general and in the Irish context. It will be necessary for professional mediation groups to collaborate closely with the Irish government in order to remove the primary obstacles preventing the broad adoption of workplace mediation in Ireland.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The following research was carried out to investigate the mediation process to handle disputes in the workplaces of Ireland. This section of the research addresses the methods and processes to be used in this research. It further addresses the data collection process in a manner that was consistent with the aims and objectives of the study (Nguyen, 2020). After completing the introduction and reviewing the relevant work, the researcher next went on to develop the methods for the analysis. In this study, the researcher outlined the primary data gathering methods to be used. The last half of this chapter delves into the ethical issues that were taken into account and the difficulties that the researcher encountered. The collecting and examination of relevant data and information, which made it possible to come up with adequate answers for the research questions, represented the study's primary objective, and it successfully achieved this objective. Hence, observing the objective and subject of this study, it was decided by the researcher to use a primary quantitative method. Further information on the research approach, design, data collection process, sampling along with data analysis has been addressed below:

3.2 Research Approach

This research was conducted to investigate the mediation process to handle disputes in the workplaces of Ireland. According to Moroşan (2014), the research approach should ideally be conceived of as an overall strategy and a series of stages for carrying out the study. As a direct consequence of this, the approach used to conduct the inquiry may be divided into three separate categories, inductive, deductive and abductive.

The inductive technique starts with the observations, and hypotheses are presented at the very end of the research process. This approach do not employ hypotheses or theories at the beginning of the research process, and after the research process has begun, the researcher is free to make whatever modifications they feel are required to the direction the study will follow in terms of its ultimate aim (Mitchell and Education, 2018).

According to Pomeroy et al (2013), the purpose of the deductive approach is to develop a hypothesis based on current theory, and then design a research plan to test the hypothesis. In other words, to offer an explanation for the approach, the hypotheses, which are employed in

the deductive process, are generated from the premises of the theory (Cramer-Petersen, Christensen and Ahmed-Kristensen, 2019). In other words, the goal of the deductive approach is to reach conclusions by basing those conclusions on the premises or propositions that are offered.

Lastly, the abductive method is an attempt to solve the issues that are caused by the defects that are present in the deductive and inductive approaches (Cramer-Petersen, Christensen and Ahmed-Kristensen, 2019). In particular, deductive reasoning is criticised for being unclear in terms of how to choose a theory to test by establishing a hypothesis (Evans, 2013). On the other hand, inductive reasoning is challenged owing to the fact that there is no predetermined amount of empirical data that will immediately make it possible to construct a hypothesis (Feeney, Hayes and Heit, 2014). Hence, abductive reasoning, which takes a pragmatic stance, is able to sidestep these disadvantages, making it the third feasible alternative that may be considered.

In this concern, looking at the above explanations of the three approaches, the researcher has decided to include inductive research as there is no usage of hypothesis or any particular theory in this research. This study solely deals with the issue of explaining the mediation process to handle disputes. Feeney, Hayes and Heit (2014) have addressed the fact that mediation is a well-known process and hence, there is no need to construct any hypothesis. The researcher will solely rely on the data collected from the audience and then analyse it to answer the research questions.

Feeney, Hayes and Heit (2014) have also mentioned the fact that, the process of inductive reasoning begins with concrete observations of the surrounding world and then moves on to broader generalisations and ideas that are more conceptual in nature. When conducting research using an inductive methodology, which entails beginning with a subject, the researcher in this research has a greater tendency to arrive at empirical generalisations and discover preliminary links as he progresses further in his investigation.

3.3 Research Design

A research design is a blueprint that may be used to pick specific tactics for the collection of data as well as the analysis of that data. There are two categories that may be used to categorise research designs, and those are exploratory and explanatory designs respectively. According to Akhtar (2016), the objective of exploratory research is not to provide conclusive and comprehensive solutions to problems that already exist, usually, studies of this sort are carried

out with the intention of investigating a subject that has not yet been clearly characterised. The most prevalent kind of primary data collection utilised in exploratory research at the moment are semi-structured interviews (Akhtar, 2016). In addition, the main data for these kinds of studies may be gathered via the use of research methods such as survey questionnaires, focus groups, and observation, amongst others.

On the other hand, Fetters, Curry and Creswell (2013) have mentioned, research with an explanatory purpose is conducted with the intention of revealing the scope and complexity of the many cause-and-effect links that are present. The research of a situation or a specific problem is the major focus of causal investigations, with the overarching objective being an attempt to explain the patterns of correlations that exist between the many variables being studied (Fetters, Curry and Creswell, 2013). Experiments are by far the most common and important method of data collection used in research projects that make use of a causal study design.

However, by observing both of the research designs, the researcher has decided to use exploratory design. Although it was mentioned that an exploratory design is carried out with the intention of investigating a subject that has not yet been clearly characterised, and the process of mediation is a well-known fact, but its involvement in the workplaces of Ireland is not covered in the previous researches. Hence, it was optimal to use exploratory research to investigate the mediation process in the workplaces of Ireland. Also, the researcher has intended to use surveys and hereafter, making it easier to choose exploratory design.

Harrison III (2013) has mentioned, the objective of an exploratory research design is not to discover conclusive answers to the problems raised by the study; rather, it is to examine the topic of the study in more or less depth utilising a range of research approaches. Harrison III (2013) has further mentioned, it allows for more flexibility and adaptability to change, lowers the costs connected with carrying out the study, and is an effective method for laying the groundwork that will lead to other studies.

3.4 Research Philosophy

The nature of the study, the underlying assumptions, and the amount of one's competence all influence into research philosophy. It is conceivable to classify it as either pragmatism, positivism, or interpretivism. According to Goldkuhl (2012), positivism adheres to the premise that the only trustworthy kind of knowledge is 'factual' information, which is knowledge

received from observation (the senses), including measurements. When doing research in line with the positivist philosophy known as positivism, the role of the researcher is limited to the objective gathering of data and the interpretation of that data. Goldkuhl (2012) has postulated that the cosmos is made up of separate, observable components and events that interact with one another in a manner that is observable, predefined, and consistent.

On the other hand, interpretivism encourages researchers to contribute their own interpretations of components of a study and infuses human interest into research (Uduma and Sylva, 2015). Therefore, interpretative researchers make the assumption that the only way to get access to reality, whether it be a given or a socially built reality, is through social constructs such as consciousness, shared meanings, or language.

Lastly, Hammond (2013) has stated that the scientific philosophy of thought known as pragmatism maintains that ideas are deserving of study only inasmuch as they help to the accomplishment of useful goals. A pragmatist research recognises many different ways of interpreting the world and undertaking research and acknowledges that there may be several realities.

Hence, looking at all three philosophies, the researcher has intended to select positivism for this study. It has been mentioned-above that positivism philosophy includes factual data and is based on measurements. According to Panhwar, Ansari, and Shah (2017), the foundation of positivism is the accumulation of observable and quantifiable data, which is subsequently subjected to statistical examination. In domains of research that are relevant to business and management, it has been the primary technique of inquiry that is employed for many decades. It has been said that as a philosophy, positivism is in harmony with the empiricist premise that knowledge originates from human experience (Panhwar, Ansari, and Shah, 2017). And, this study has employed surveys to collect data and hence, the final data to be analysed will be factual. The surveys were carried out in relation to the workplaces of Ireland and hence, the data gathered contained factual information.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Gathering information from all of the relevant sources is necessary in order to evaluate the outcomes of the process of seeking solutions to the problem that was discovered via the study (Meshram and Pandey, 2018). When talking about the numerous ways that data may be

collected, there are two distinct categories that can be distinguished from one another. These are the secondary means of data gathering and the primary methods of data collection.

According to the study by Meshram and Pandey (2018), secondary data is a subcategory of data that consists of material that has already been presented to the general public in formats such as books, journal articles and periodicals. The collection of secondary data offers a variety of advantages, including the reduction of time, effort, and financial expenditures.

When compared to the research that made use of secondary data, the procedure of gathering and analysing primary data often requires a great deal more time and work to finish (Gupta and Gupta, 2022). This type of data collection method relies on the information collected in real time. When deciding on primary data collection methods, there are two types of procedures that may be chosen from: quantitative and qualitative.

Gupta and Gupta (2022) have addressed that techniques for gathering quantitative data are built on a foundation of mathematical measures, which may be presented in a number of formats. In particular, quantitative methods are put to use in order to analyse the replies that were obtained via the use of closed-ended questions. On the other hand, qualitative research methods do not call for any numerical or mathematical calculations at any stage of the research process (Syed, 2012). When doing qualitative research, it is essential to pay close attention to things like words, sentiments, and any other intangible facets that may be present.

Hence, in this research, the researcher has decided to use primary quantitative research and collect data by using close-ended surveys. The collection of numerical data, as well as displaying a view of the link between theory and research as deductive, a preference for an approach based in natural science, and an objectivist vision of social reality, are all hallmarks of this methodology. In addition, this methodology displays a view of the link between theory and research as inductive. To put it another way, quantitative research is primarily concerned with making use of statistical techniques in order to conduct an analysis of the relationships that exist between numerically measured variables.

In this research, the respondents will be provided with the questionnaire, and it will be required of them that they reply to the questionnaire. As a consequence of the respondents not feeling pressured to answer the questions, they are free to do so whenever they have the time, which leads to replies that are more accurate.

However, due to convenience and avoiding any physical contact due to the recent pandemic, the researcher has decided to use electronic surveys. They have the additional advantages of

being cost-effective, time-efficient, and not giving respondents the impression that they are being hurried (Syed, 2012). However, the most significant downside of the postal questions is that sometimes respondents do not bother replying to them, and they may simply ignore the questionnaire altogether.

3.6 Sampling Methods

For the purposes of an inquiry, the process of sampling may be described as the application of a certain set of criteria to the selection of people from a population. It has been pointed out, since many of the populations of interest are much too large to deal with directly, various methods of statistical sampling have been developed in order to acquire samples that are drawn from populations that are much larger (Taherdoost, 2016). This is done in order to ensure that the data obtained is representative of the population as a whole. The terms ‘probability’ and ‘non-probability’ are the names of two separate categories that may be used to categorise various sampling procedures (Taherdoost, 2016).

When doing research using probability sampling, each individual who is a part of the population is given a chance that is larger than zero of being chosen to take part in the study (Singh and Masuku, 2014). A random selection is used in some form or another across all of the many strategies for probability sampling. Therefore, putting this method into practise offers the greatest possibility to develop a sample that truly represents the characteristics of the whole population. On the other hand, Taherdoost (2016) has addressed that in non-probability sampling, not all of the people who are a part of the population are given the option to take part in the study. To put it another way, the selection criteria that are used in this method are not picked at random.

In this sort of sampling, participants are recruited from everywhere it is feasible to find them, and in the majority of situations, wherever it is most convenient to do so. Prior to the selection of respondents, the inclusion criteria are not determined when using convenience sampling since there are no such criteria (Singh and Masuku, 2014). Everyone, from any subject, is encouraged to take part in this discussion. This method is one that may be used in the area of business studies in order to gather initial primary data on certain difficulties. The perception of an image linked with a certain brand or the collection of the views of potential consumers in regard to a newly created product are both examples of these types of activities.

In this study, the researcher has used non-probability sampling due to the usage of primary quantitative method. Under non-probability method, the researcher has intended to use convenience sampling. This method of non-probability sampling focuses on gathering data from members of a population who are readily available to take part in a study (Khan, 2020). This makes it possible for such persons to be selected for the study. Hence, the researcher has selected participants on the basis of his convenience and persons who reside in the jurisdiction that is the subject of this dissertation, Ireland.

3.7 Sample Size

Research conducted by Etikan and Babtope (2019) indicated sample size refers to the number of individuals who are chosen to take part in the research method and supply the scientific data. Moreover, a big sample size is generally used in surveys to enhance the dependability of the data acquired. Hence, in this research, the researcher has used social media to collect data. The participants in the survey were selected on the basis of their jurisdiction of residence, namely Ireland.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This study by Tippins et al., (2021) has stated that ethical concerns are used to characterise the norms and restraints that a researcher must observe. Due to these rules and regulations, the research process may now be conducted openly and honestly. Those respondents selected for the study as part of the quantitative research are asked for their consent before submitting their replies at any step in the research process. Additionally, respondents may skip any questions they are uncomfortable answering for the study's sake. Furthermore, respondents' responses are confidential and may not be shared with anybody outside this group. In addition, any information regarding participants including their personal data will not be shared with any third party institution. All of the data will be kept secret and stored in a secured account. After the data has served its purpose, the researcher has decided to dispose of the data.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

There are sure to be obstacles and constraints while doing research; they are known as research limits (Martí, Serrano-Estrada and Nolasco-Cirugeda, 2019). When researchers run across such

roadblocks, it slows down their progress and prevents them from having their results fully verified. Some of the potential roadblocks that a researcher can encounter in the course of their investigation are discussed in the following paragraphs.

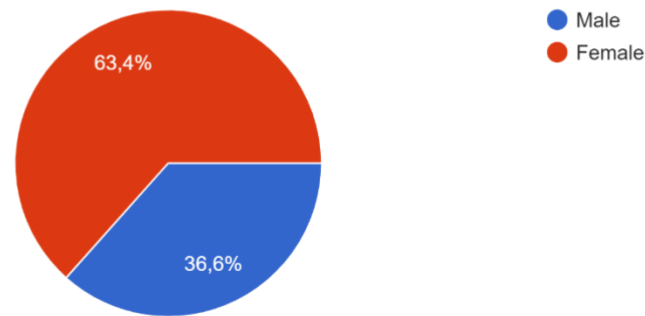
1. There are not many available research data.
2. The research used a predefined sample size to choose its participants.
3. There are very few internet sites that can give the information that is required for an inquiry of this kind.
4. The research method needed a little financial investment to be carried out.
5. Time limitations prevented more from being accomplished.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Demographics

Gender

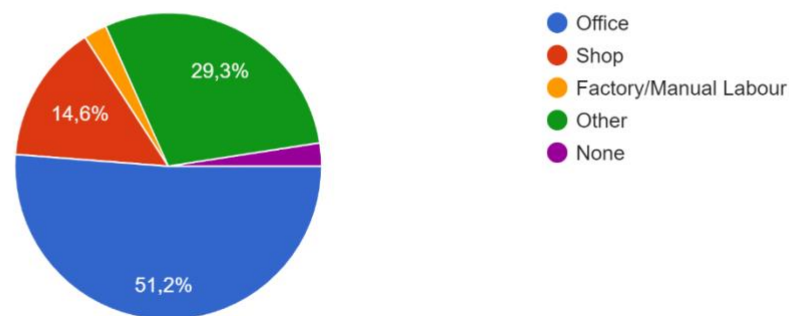
41 respostas



In this question, the researcher has inquired about the ages of the respondents since this demographic information was needed to conduct an insightful analysis for the research. Out of the 41 respondents, 63.4% were found to be male, while the female population was made up of 36.6%. This shows that the research has targeted a higher number of male employees than females.

What type of workplace are you employed in?

41 respostas

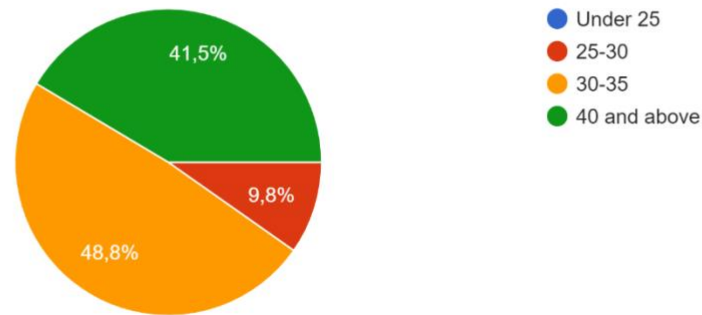


In the above question, the researcher has inquired about the type of workplace that the respondents are employed in as the information can be used to generate useful insights. Out of the 41 respondents, 51.2% people responded that they are employed in offices, 14.6% people said that they worked at shops, and 29.3% people said that they were employed at other places

and chose not to specify. Small percentages of people also responded with “factory/manual labour” and “other”, meaning that they were not employed at the time of the survey. This demographic question showed that more than half of the sample population works in offices.

Age

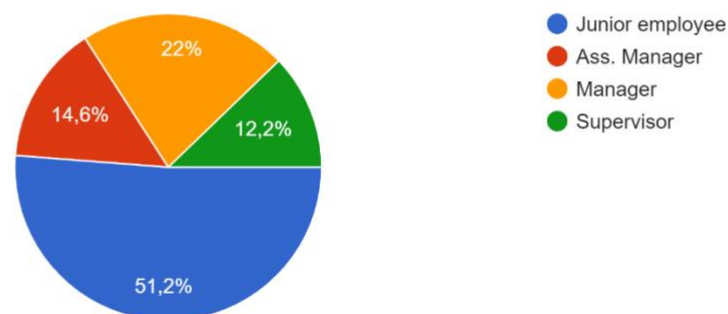
41 respostas



In the next demographic question, the researcher asked the ages of the respondents. The responses to the question show that, out of the 41 respondents, a high percentage i.e. 48.8% fall into the age group of 30-35 years. Following this, 41.5% of the respondents said that they were aged 40 years or above. On the other hand, the percentage of respondents belonging to the age group of 25-30 years was a mere 9.8%. These responses show that the sample population for this study consisted of mostly people over the age of 30.

Post

41 respostas

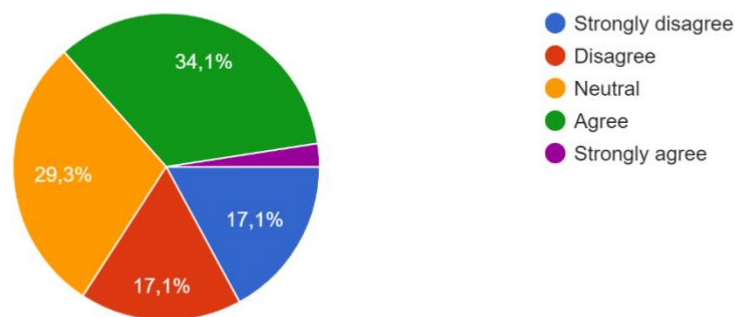


The next question inquired about the posts or designations that the respondents work at. The question is important to judge and analyse the levels at which the most disputes occur in Irish firms. In response to the question, there were 51.2% people that said they were junior employees at the firms, 22% people said that they worked at managerial positions, 14.6%

people responded that they were employed as junior managers, while there were 12.2% people working on the posts of supervisors.

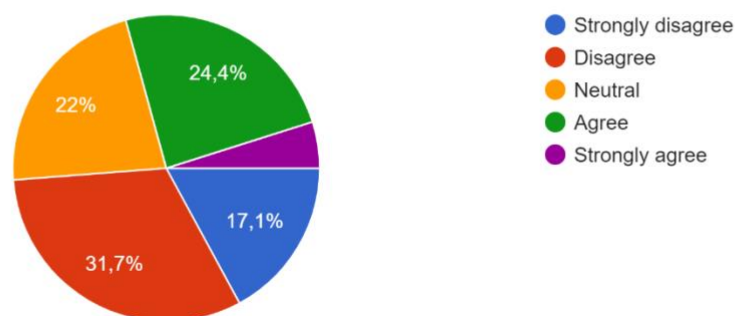
4.2 Gaps in Irish firms causing disputes

There is a lack of interaction between the employees in my department
41 respostas



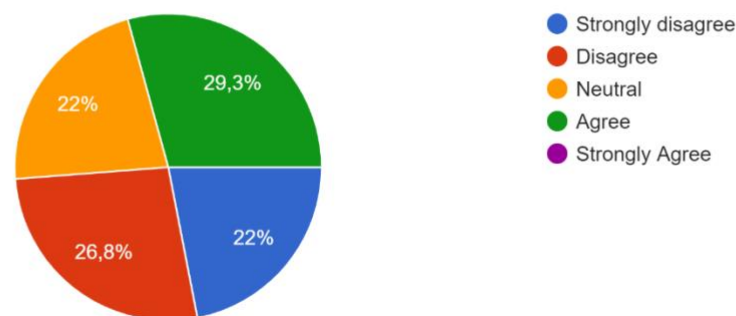
The above question asks the employees their stance on the statement “There is a lack of interaction between the employees in my department”. The answers given by the respondents were recorded on the Likert scale. 34.1% of the participants agreed with the statement, 29.3% people chose to have a neutral stance, 17.1% disagreed, while another 17.1% answered as strongly disagree. The responses show that there is a higher number of people that believe that there is indeed a lack of interaction between employees and departments at their workplaces. This response can be analysed as a major reason for the disputed at Irish firms.

Employees do not communicate much with each other
41 respostas



The above question asks the employees their stance on the statement “Employees do not communicate much with each other”. This question raises further inquiries about the levels of communication in the workplace. The answers given by the respondents were recorded on the Likert scale. 17.1% of the respondents, out of the total 41, strongly disagreed with the above statement and an even higher percentage of people i.e. 31.7% answered “disagree”. 22% people remained neutral, while 24.4% people agreed with the statement. The percentage of people who strongly agreed was nominal. The responses show that there is a higher number of people that believe that there is no lack of communication between the employees at their office and they are able to effectively communicate with each other. Therefore, it can be said that a lack of communication between employees is not a factor to be considered that contributes to disputes in Irish firms.

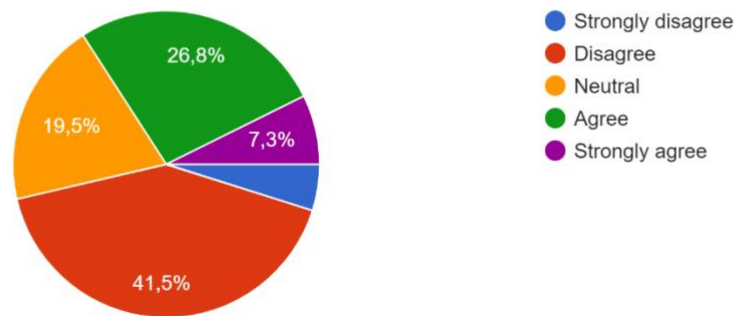
Employees in our firm belong to different backgrounds that often causes them to argue
41 respostas



The next questions ask the employees their stance on the statement “Employees in our firm belong to different backgrounds that often causes them to argue”. This question discusses another important variable as different backgrounds may be a cause for the rising disputes in Irish firms. The answers given by the respondents were recorded on the Likert scale. 22% of the respondents, out of the total 41, strongly disagreed with the above statement and an even higher percentage of people i.e. 29.3% answered “disagree”. On the other hand, 22% people remained neutral, while another 22% people agreed with the statement. No answers were recorded for “strongly agree”. The responses show that there is a higher number of people that believe that the employees at their firms either do not belong to different backgrounds or their backgrounds do not cause them to argue with each other. Therefore, it can be said that belonging to diverse backgrounds is not a factor to be considered that contributes to disputes between employees in Irish firms.

There is wide range of disparity in positions being given to employees in our department

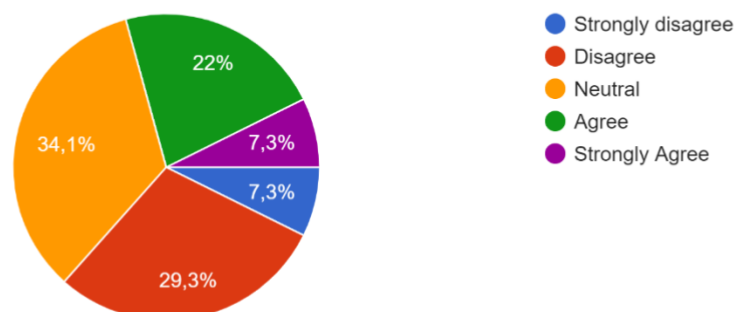
41 respostas



The next questions ask the employees their stance on the statement “There is a wide range of disparity in positions being given to employees in our department”. This question discusses another important variable as disparities in positions may create resentment between employees and become a cause for the rising disputes in Irish firms. The answers given by the respondents were recorded on the Likert scale. 41.5% of the respondents, out of the total 41, chose to disagree with the above statement. On the other hand, 26.8% of the respondents agreed with the statement, 19.5% chose to remain neutral, while 7.3% strongly agreed. Since the highest percentage of people responded with “disagree”, it can be said there are no such disparities in the positions being given to employees. Therefore, this may not be a contributing element for the rising disputes.

Employees in our department are not satisfied with the positions and responsibilities they have against those positions

41 respostas

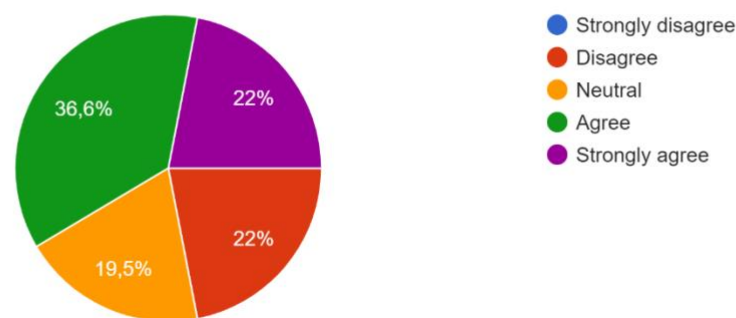


In this question, we inquired about the workers' perspectives on the following assertion: "staff in our department are not pleased with the positions and tasks they have versus their roles." For

the purpose of compiling the replies that were supplied by the respondents, the Likert scale was employed. 22% of the participants agreed with the statement, 34.1% of the people chose to adopt a neutral stance, 29.3% of the people disagreed with the statement, and 7.3% of the people stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement. According to the responses, the employees of Irish enterprises do not seem to have arrived at a resolution about whether or not they are satisfied. 34.1% of the audience did not provide any kind of commentary or response. We discovered that the great majority of workers had a negative impression of the scenario when we looked at the proportion of workers who agreed or disagreed with the scenario. As a consequence of this, one might get the conclusion that the vast majority of employees are, to a certain degree, satisfied with the occupations that they now hold.

Employees in our department are not satisfied with the remunerations and rewards

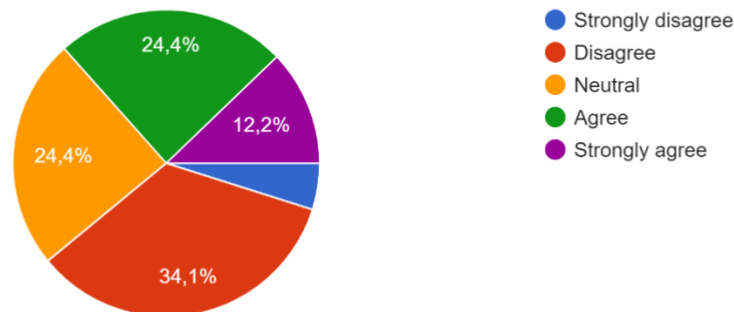
41 respostas



In the following survey, we are interested in hearing the employees' perspectives on the following statement: "Employees in our department are not content with the remunerations and rewards." According to the responses that were provided, 36.6% of the participants agreed with the statement, 19.5% of the people opted to take an approach that was neutral, 22% of the participants disagreed with the statement, and another 22% of the participants replied as strongly agreeing with the statement. The responses reveal that a bigger number of persons have the view that the employees in their department are unsatisfied with the remunerations and rewards that they obtain.

Employees in our department are not satisfied with their respective supervisors or management of this firm

41 respostas

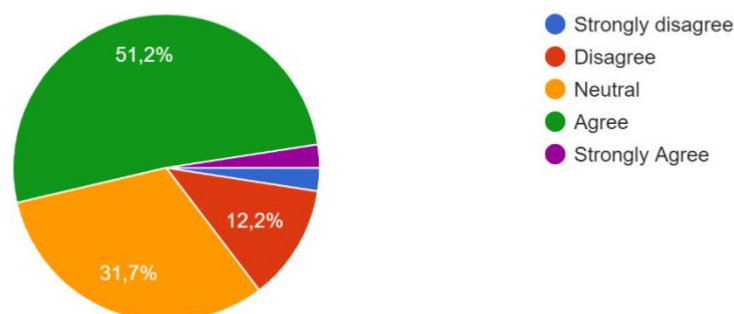


When we asked the employees the prior question, we inquired about their thoughts on the following statement: "Employees in our department are not pleased with their individual supervisors or management of our firm." There was a request made for the staff to offer their replies. According to the responses, 34.1% of the participants took the position that they did not agree with the statement, 24.4% of the participants opted to take a neutral perspective, and 24.4% of the participants stated that they strongly agreed with the statement. The responses reveal that there is a bigger number of persons who do not believe that the employees in their department are pleased with either their specific supervisors or the management of this organisation. Neither group is satisfied with the workers in their department.

4.3 Factors affecting the mediation process

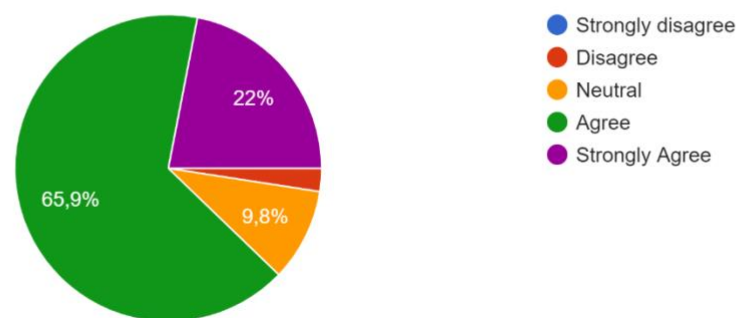
I believe the intensity of the conflict serves at the main factor in the process

41 respostas



In the preceding question, we asked the employees their thoughts on the following statement: "I believe the degree of the dispute functions as the major factor in the process of mediation." According to the responses that were supplied, 51.2% of the participants agreed with the statement, while 31.7% of the people selected to have a neutral position, and 12.2% of the people chose to disagree with the statement. According to the responses, a much larger number of persons are of the opinion that the degree of severity of the disagreement serves as the major component in the process of mediation.

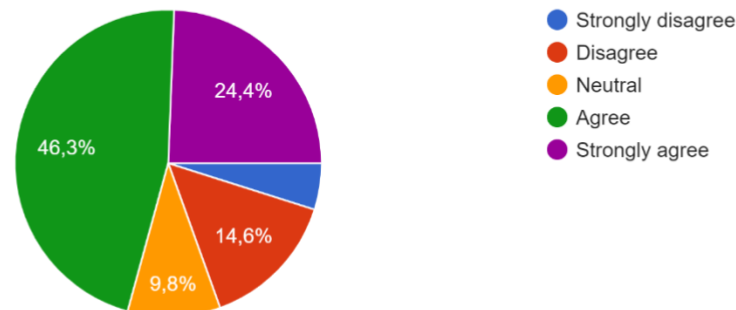
A mediator has to consider the type of issue taken place between the employees
41 respostas



When we asked the workers the above question, we inquired about their thoughts on the following statement: "A mediator is required to take into account the nature of the conflict that is taking place between the staff members." The responses from the participants indicated that 65.9% of them agreed with the statement, 9.8% of the respondents decided to take a neutral position, and another 22% stated that they strongly agree with the statement. According to the remarks, a sizeable percentage of people are under the impression that a mediator has a responsibility to take into consideration the nature of the disagreement that is going place between the employees.

When resolving a conflict, it is appropriate to be informed and acknowledge the social and political views of the parties in conflict

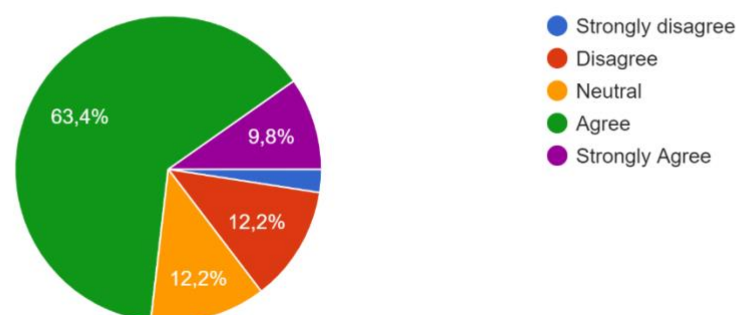
41 respostas



When we asked the employees the prior question, we inquired about their thoughts on the following proclamation: "When resolving a dispute, it is vital to be aware of and recognise the social and political views of the parties in conflict." What are your thoughts in regards to this assertion? According to the responses that were supplied, 46.3% of the participants agreed with the statement, 9.8% of the persons elected to have a neutral approach, 14.6% of the participants disagreed with the statement, and 24.4% of the individuals reacted as strongly agreeing with the statement. The responses show that a greater number of people believe that it is appropriate to be informed about and acknowledge the social and political views of the parties in conflict when attempting to resolve a conflict.

During resolution of conflict, both parties previous relationships has to be taken in consideration

41 respostas

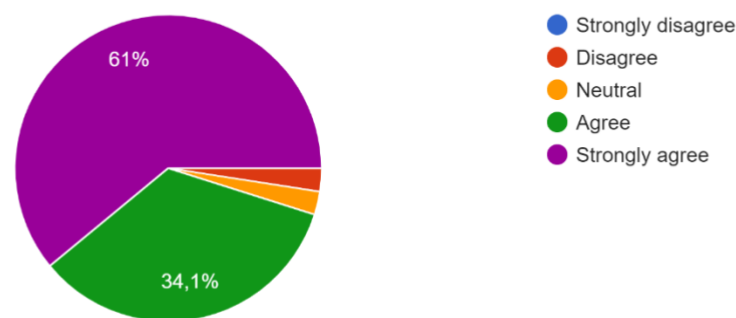


When we asked the employees the question that came before it, we wanted to know what they thought about the following statement: "During the resolution of the conflict, it is vital to take into consideration both sides' past ties." According to the responses that were provided by the

participants, 63.4% of the participants agreed with the statement, 12.2% of the participants selected to have a neutral stance, the same 12.2% of the participants disagreed with the statement, and 9.8% of the participants answered as strongly agreeing with the statement. The responses reveal that there is a bigger number of people who are of the opinion that the resolution of a dispute must take into consideration the previous relationships that both parties have had with each other.

In resolving a conflict, the mediator has to keep his/her emotions aside to avoid any form of biasness

41 respostas

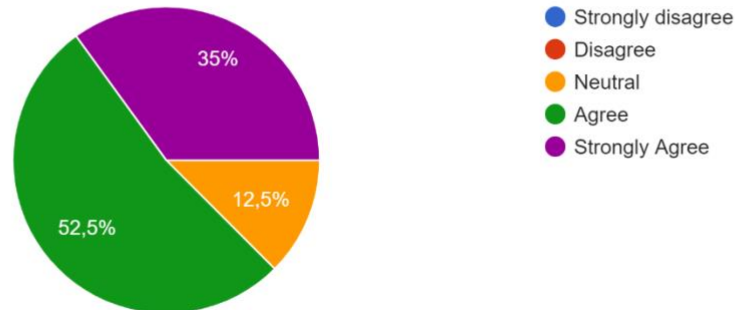


We questioned the employees' view on the following statement in the previous question: "In order to settle a dispute, the mediator has to put his or her emotions to the side in order to avoid any form of biasness." Only two of the answers that were provided by the participants were given significant weight, and those were "agree" and "strongly agree." The responses provided by the participants demonstrate this. Only 34.1 percent of individuals who participated in the study agreed with the statement, whilst 61% of respondents said that they did not agree with it. According to the comments, a sizeable number of persons are of the view that a mediator ought to be able to put his or her sentiments to one side in order to mediate a conflict in a manner that is devoid from any form of favouritism.

4.4 Manage conflicts and handle disputes

A dispute resolution training should be given in each department to their supervisors or heads

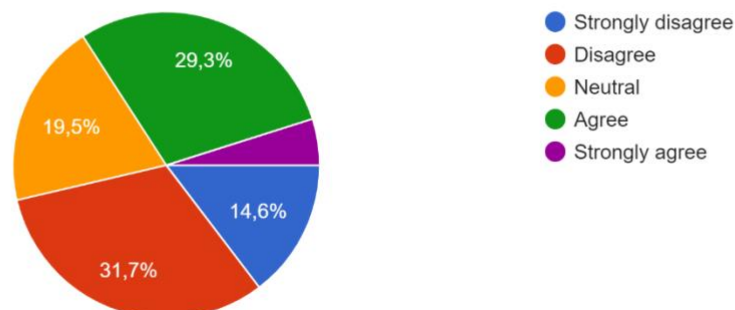
40 respostas



The question that came before it investigates the employees' comprehension of the phrase "A dispute resolution training should be offered in each department to their supervisors or heads," and it aims to determine the workers' points of view on the issue. According to the feedback that was provided, 35 percent of the participants provided strong agreement with the statement, 52.5% of the people decided that they agreed with the statement, and 12.5% of the people opted to keep their neutrality about the statement. Despite this, not a single one of the participants had any issues with the way the conditions were described. According to the responses, it appears that a considerable number of persons are of the view that a training course on how to settle disputes should be offered to the supervisors or leaders of each department in the organisation.

Supervisors and managers in our firm are aware of how to handle disputes and conflicts

41 respostas

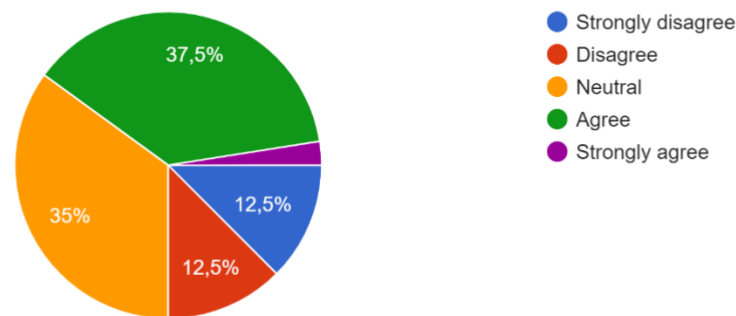


In the prior question, we sought the opinions of the staff members about the statement that "Supervisors and managers in our organisation are aware on how to settle disputes and

conflicts." According to the responses, 29.3 percent of the participants agreed with the statement, 19.5 percent of the people elected to have a neutral position, 31.7% of the people disagreed with the statement, and 14.6 percent claimed that they strongly disagreed with the statement. According to the responses, there are a greater number of individuals who did not agree with the concept that the company's supervisors and managers are knowledgeable of how to handle disagreements and conflicts. This is indicated by the fact that there is a greater number of individuals who did not agree with the concept. This may be deduced from the fact that there is a much larger group of individuals who took the stance that they disagreed with the remark.

We are satisfied with the cooperation an involvement of our management in the conflicts that occasionally happen in our department

40 respostas



In the previous inquiry, we asked the members of the staff about their opinions on the following statement: "We are delighted with the participation and involvement of our management in the disagreements that occasionally emerge in our department." The responses revealed that 37.5% of the participants agreed with the statement, while 35% of the persons chose to maintain a neutral viewpoint, 12.5% disagreed with the statement, and another 12.5% stated that they strongly disagreed with the statement. According to the responses, there has been a discernible rise in the number of persons who are pleased with the participation and involvement of management in the conflicts.

4.5 Discussion

Mediation has the most potential for success when it is used as soon as it is practically possible to do so, particularly before the opinions on both sides of the issue become more set in stone. It is feasible that the process of mediation might be broken up into two components so that it

is simpler to understand. In order to get the process of problem-solving off the ground, the first thing that this plan calls for is to organise a conference. Throughout this conference, the mediator will have one-on-one interactions with each participant in order to get things moving in the right direction.

During this first meeting, each of the parties will be given an explanation of mediation, an opportunity to express their willingness to voluntarily commit to the process, and an understanding of what each party intends to gain by participating in the process. The mediator will also employ this session to find the underlying reasons of the disagreement, as well as the interests and demands of both sides. The occurrence of this will continue all the way through the session.

During the whole of the second phase of the procedure, which will consist of a meeting that is attended by both parties, the mediator will preside over the gathering as the meeting's presiding officer. The mediator will monitor the process, encourage discussion between the parties, assist them in recognising their concerns and wishes, and assist them in coming to an agreement that is mutually acceptable to both parties.

The duty of the mediator is to support a process that is safe for all parties engaged in the disagreement and that allows them to talk honestly about the specific worries and requirements they have for the settlement of the conflict. This is the role that the mediator is expected to play. Before deciding on a course of action, it is the responsibility of all parties involved to communicate, evaluate the challenges, and brainstorm a list of viable solutions that are within their capabilities. This must be done before any action can be taken.

- During these private sessions, everyone who is engaged receives more information about the issue at hand, has the chance to ask questions, and is guided through the process by a third party who is objective. It is not the role of the mediator to set the terms and conditions of the agreement; rather, it is the responsibility of the parties to arrive at a resolution that is acceptable to all of them.
- Both parties are required to sign this agreement, and the contents of it will be kept secret unless and until both parties express a desire for the document to be made accessible to the general public. In that case, the document will be made public.
- The settlement of disputes via the use of mediation is an effective technique, and it has a number of advantages, some of which are highlighted in the following paragraphs: • The parties involved will have the opportunity to assume responsibility for the process of conflict resolution.

- Traditional methods of dispute resolution are becoming more and more out of date, and businesses are beginning to realise that mediation may be a more successful and cost-efficient alternative to these more conventional approaches.
- The formulation and execution of each individual agreement is solely the responsibility of the party with whom the agreement is made. All parties involved will feel more satisfied with the conclusion as a result of this, and the outcome will also be more long-lasting.
- The utilisation of mediation lowers the likelihood that highly talented personnel will quit their jobs as a direct result of the increased stress they will experience on the job as a direct result of the mediation. This is because highly talented personnel will experience this increased stress as a direct result of the mediation. This is because highly skilled employees will face more stress as a direct consequence of the mediation.
- As a direct result of their participation in the process, the parties will get new abilities that will enable them to effectively manage similar challenges in the future. This will allow them to successfully address similar conflicts. They will be able to handle the process more successfully as a result of these talents.

In conclusion, the approach gives the participants the chance to maintain their dignity and build mutual respect within the parameters of a safe atmosphere; this, in turn, leads to stronger relationships between the participants over the course of time.

Trade unions and employer organisations have been recognised as potential stakeholders in the development of mediators by practitioners who have been engaged in the process of developing mediation in Ireland. According to individuals who work in mediation, Irish firms, especially at the management level, have an urgent need for education and training programmes that incorporate not only mediation but also other types of conflict resolution skills. In addition to this, they insist that all required education programmes in mediation be presented by mediators who are not only competent but also accredited in the area.

It has been argued that organisational norms and processes should embrace mediation, with the major focus being put on the relevance of including more information that is more complete on mediation. These sorts of activities are usually considered to be some of the most critical approaches for overcoming management antagonism to mediation inside firms and for generating knowledge about mediation and the advantages it provides.

In conclusion, the viewpoints of practitioners in Ireland are similar to the assessments of practises revealed in the investigated literature about the ways taken by other nations to the provision of help for workplace mediation (Kenny, 2018). On the other hand, in contrast to professional organisations that mediate disagreements, individual mediators, as opposed to professional organisations, are the focus of attention. It has been decided that the primary objective of their organisation will be to educate Irish organisations about the mediation process and the benefits it offers in order to raise awareness and knowledge of the mediation method.

This decision was made after it was discussed and decided that this will be the primary objective of their organisation. Following the conclusion that this would be their organization's principal objective, it was decided to proceed with this course of action. These techniques are also essential for overcoming the fundamental challenges that prevent workplace mediation from gaining broader popularity in Ireland. These challenges prevent workplace mediation from becoming more widespread. These challenges come in a variety of forms, and some of them were just mentioned in the phrase before this one.

In order to encourage a larger number of people to use mediation in the workplace in Ireland, the Irish government may investigate the possibility of establishing Mediation Pilot Schemes as one of the available options. These pilot programmes may assist in increasing awareness of the benefits of workplace mediation and provide a chance to expand the practise to other areas of the nation. Additionally, as a direct consequence of these pilot programmes, there may be an increase in the number of organisations that use mediation in the workplace. However, sufficient assessment and reporting on the results and performance of pilot programmes are essential in order to give actual facts and statistics that will increase trust and credibility in mediation as an effective method for resolving conflicts in the workplace.

This is essential in order to give actual facts and statistics that will increase trust and credibility in mediation as an effective method for resolving conflicts in the workplace. This will assist in providing a more realistic picture of how the mediation process operates. You should be able to find these critiques and remarks in the reports that are associated with the pilot project. The provision of this evaluation and feedback in a manner that is consistent is of the highest significance.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study's findings confirm that mediation is underutilised as a means of dispute resolution in Irish businesses, a topic the researcher set out to investigate. Although this was the case, the major goal of the research or study done on this variable was to examine the disconnect between mediation and conflict resolution in Irish businesses. There is a lack of trust between upper management and HR managers when it comes to the creation and execution of mediation as a tool for resolving disputes in the workplace. Lack of confidence and competence on the part of the line and operational managers in their ability to handle severe situations was judged the most crucial hurdle to early conflict resolution, even if the appropriate training and coaching were given. Despite the fact that a lack of confidence and competence on the part of the line and operational managers was identified as the primary barrier, this was discovered to be the case.

It was also determined by the study's authors that a lack of mediation knowledge and awareness on the part of both employees and management is a major barrier. Thus, organisations urgently need expanded education on the issue of mediation if they are to satisfy the expectation that employees would see mediation as a viable choice for addressing challenges in the workplace. Organizations have this duty since it is expected of them that employees would consider mediation a valid dispute resolution strategy in the event of a disagreement. Companies should give enough education and training to all employees who may be involved in a disagreement at work because of the unpredictability that is associated with the outcomes of mediation. This is due to the fact that mediated resolutions are not always foreseeable. It cannot be emphasised how important training and education programmes that involve mediation and other types of dispute resolution are for Irish firms, particularly at the management level.

However, accurate assessment and reporting on the results and performance of pilot programmes are necessary to instil trust in mediation as a viable method for resolving workplace conflicts. This is because more people will have faith in mediation as a viable method for resolving workplace conflicts if the results and effectiveness of pilot programmes are properly evaluated and reported. It is crucial that this evaluation and this commentary be presented in a coherent manner, proper assessment and reporting on the results and

performance of pilot programmes is necessary, however, if organisations are to give genuine facts and statistics that will boost trust and credibility in mediation as an efficient tool for resolving disputes in the workplace. This is because more people will have faith in mediation as a viable method for resolving workplace conflicts if the results and effectiveness of pilot programmes are properly evaluated and reported. It is crucial that this evaluation and this commentary be presented in a coherent manner.

The research concluded that organisations should include mediation into their practices and procedures, with a primary emphasis on the need to provide more comprehensive information on mediation. Efforts like this are widely considered as crucial in educating the public and corporate leaders about the value of mediation and reducing resistance to its implementation. The advantages of mediation are not well known, thus efforts like these are often considered crucial. Since there was general agreement that this should be the group's top priority, they resolved to keep moving in this direction. These methods are also necessary for resolving the systemic problems that have prevented mediation at work in Ireland from catching on abroad. Because of these obstacles, mediation in Ireland has not yet achieved the same level of popularity and acceptance as it has elsewhere.

5.2 Recommendations

Considered as a whole, there are undoubtedly a number of approaches that, if used with caution, might successfully minimise workplace conflict. Emotional sensitivity may be the unifying feature among the several ways for minimising intergroup conflict, researchers concur that arguments almost always include emotions (Han and Harms, 2010). Emotional intelligence is the capacity to recognise and control one's own emotions as well as those of others, to discriminate between the positive and negative results of feeling various emotions, and to make sensible judgments depending on one's emotional state. To summarise what "emotional intelligence" refers to, we may say that it is the management of emotions and emotional content. In light of this, the remainder of this article will study a model of emotional intelligence that has the potential to reduce the chance of future disagreements.

Emotional intelligence has been found to be effective when used to the management of employees in commercial settings. Affect-driven behaviours, such as short-term efforts, organisational citizenship initiatives, and impulsive acts, are determined by emotions (Shao,

Zhou and Gao, 2019). Leadership, stress, and conflict management, as well as the achievement of a healthy work-life balance, may all be improved via the cultivation of emotional intelligence, which seems to have a direct bearing on the numerous characteristics of persons through self- and social-awareness.

Those who score lower on the emotional intelligence scale likely to experience more chaotic lives. Overall, those who score higher on tests of emotional intelligence may be more level-headed and steady in their daily lives (Scroggins, 2019). When used at its most basic level, emotional intelligence (EQ) may help resolve disputes by altering individual and group dynamics at work. EQ's emphasis on emotions and behaviour at the micro level may have far-reaching effects. People with high emotional intelligence were shown to be better at resolving disagreements and working together on projects, supporting the hypothesis that higher EQ correlates with greater success.

From this perspective, it is clear that emotional intelligence is intrinsically linked to the strategies for resolving problems via teamwork (Zhoc, Chung and King, 2018). Collaborative conflict resolution solutions might include, for example, mediation, leadership, and the utilisation of social networks inside the company. People with a high level of emotional intelligence are those who, under most circumstances, want to retain positive social ties and who use a range of techniques for amicably resolving conflicts.

In an attempt to lessen or do away with the potentially detrimental effects that conflict may have, more and more managers and professionals working in human resources are taking part in training programmes that emphasise conflict management (Pietromonaco and Overall, 2021). This kind of teaching lends itself well to a broad range of educational techniques, as well as a vast number of subject matter areas. It is possible for it to be presented in the form of seminars lasting a whole day, conversations in groups that are monitored, or even one-on-one sessions. Before deciding on a course of action, managers of human resources need to give careful consideration to the particulars of each instance of conflict in the workplace.

Training in conflict management may be beneficial for employees who engage in passive-aggressive conflict, as well as individuals who are constantly at odds with their supervisors, who are subject to disciplinary action on a regular basis, and who are the source of complaints from colleagues (Tommy and Oetzel, 2019). The majority of knowledgeable people are of the opinion that this kind of instruction might be advantageous. When employees are anxious, they are more likely to act badly in meetings and to send critical emails to one another. If they

continue to act in this way, it is probable that their management team has absence and turnover rates that are much higher than the norm.

On the other hand, if the actions of an employee create or threaten to cause harm to a third party, the employee may require further support beyond what can be provided by training alone (Aldawood and Skinner, 2019). When an employee exhibits signs of intense rage in the workplace, such as hurling chairs or smashing fists, managers should consult their workplace violence prevention plan for guidance on how to prevent potentially dangerous situations and how to act in them if they develop. For example, when an employee exhibits signs of intense rage in the workplace, managers should refer to their workplace violence prevention plan for guidance. In the event that there is threatening behaviour or violence in the workplace, there has to be a system in place that can recognise it, analyse it, handle it, and react in the proper manner.

5.3 Managerial Implication

According to the findings of our study, emotional intelligence may be able to act as a predictor of a variety of interpersonal traits in the workplace, including those that contribute to the process of organisational change (Urquijo, Extremera and Azanza, 2019). The findings of our research are presented in this chapter, and they make it abundantly clear that the various aspects of emotional intelligence are more closely aligned with collaborative conflict resolution techniques than avoidance or competition. This is because avoidance and competition are two approaches to resolving conflicts that focus on one party's interests over the interests of the other. The ability to recognise and react appropriately to the feelings of others, in addition to the ability to control one's own thoughts and emotions.

It is feasible to correlate the capacity to cooperate with a wide variety of other skills that are important for management as well as personnel during times of change (Carroll and Gillen, 2019). A few examples of such abilities are the capability to adapt, the ability to communicate properly, and the successful ability to manage challenges. The practitioner of human resource development is then presented with a profile of individuals who may be able to keep their emotions under control and adjust to new circumstances. Experts have also observed that a person's degree of emotional intelligence varies during their lifetime and that it is possible to raise one's level of emotional intelligence with the appropriate sort of training.

According to the results of this research, teams that have lower levels of emotional intelligence may be capable of being trained to a level of effectiveness at which their performance is comparable to that of teams that have greater levels of emotional intelligence (Mysirlaki and Paraskeva, 2020). According to the findings of our study, one method for mitigating the negative effects of the inevitable upheaval that accompanies any major transformation is to provide employees with the resources they need to regulate their own emotions during times of organisational change. This is one way to mitigate the negative effects of the inevitable upheaval that accompanies any major transformation.

One approach to mitigating the negative impacts of the inevitable upheaval that comes along with any significant transition is to use this method (Gomber et al., 2018). This turned out to be one of the most significant insights that we gained from our investigation. As a direct result of this, human resource development specialists may come to the conclusion that the most effective way to equip their team with the knowledge and abilities necessary to more effectively manage conflicts in the workplace is to provide them with access to training sessions that focus on developing their emotional intelligence.

Reflections

This dissertation has been a fantastic learning experience for me and I am really appreciative of the support and guidance provided by my supervisor Dr. Richard Brophy. He gave me excellent direction at the outset and made clear he was available if I needed him as the project progressed.

Structuring the dissertation and reading the relevant literature was most interesting. I also really enjoyed the process of seeking primary research respondents. Once the survey had been approved, I found the process of seeking out and receiving responses very gratifying. I am very appreciative of all the people who took the time to respond to the survey. I would have liked to receive more responses, but I am nonetheless satisfied with the level of feedback I received.

All told, I have found the challenging process of completing this dissertation hugely rewarding and I wish to place on record my thanks to Dr. Richard Brophy and all at Independent College for enabling such a stimulating undertaking.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Ethical Approval Research Form

Form A: Application for Ethical Approval

Undergraduate/Taught Postgraduate Research

This form should be submitted to the module leader for the relevant initial proposal and/or the relevant supervisor if the proposal has already been accepted.

Please save this file as *STUDENT NUMBER_AEA_FormA.docx*

Title of Project	How Effective is Mediation in Handling Workplace Disputes in Ireland?
Name of Learner	Renata Thamires dos Santos Costa
Student Number	51722305
Name of Supervisor/Tutor	Dr Richard Brophy

Check the relevant boxes. All questions must be answered before submitting to the relevant lecturer / supervisor. Note: only one box per row should be selected.

Item	Question	Yes	No	NA
1	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Will you obtain written consent for participation (through a signed or 'ticked' consent form)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6	Will you give participants the option of not answering any question they do not want to answer?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Will you ensure that participant data will be treated with full confidentiality and anonymity and, if published, will not be identifiable as any individual or group?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e., give them a brief explanation of the study)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9	If your study involves people between 16 and 18 years, will you ensure that passive consent is obtained from parents/guardians, with active consent obtained from both the child and their school/organisation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Item	Question	Yes	No	NA
10	If your study involves people less than 16 years, will you ensure that <u>active</u> consent is obtained from parents/guardians <u>and</u> that a parent/guardian or their nominee (such as a teacher) will be present throughout the data collection period?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	If your study requires evaluation by an ethics committee/board at an external agency, will you wait until you have approval from both the Independent College Dublin and the external ethics committee before starting data collection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	If you are in a position of authority over your participants (for example, if you are their instructor/tutor/manager/examiner etc.) will you inform participants in writing that their grades and/or evaluation will be in no way affected by their participation (or lack thereof) in your research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	If you are in a position of authority over your participants (for example, if you are their instructor/tutor/manager/examiner etc.), does your study involve asking participants about their academic or professional achievements, motivations, abilities or philosophies? (please note that this does not apply to QA1 or QA3 forms, or questionnaires limited to market research, that do not require ethical approval from the IREC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
15	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
16	Does your project involve work with animals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
17	Do you plan to give individual feedback to participants regarding their scores on any task or scale?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Does your study examine any sensitive topics (such as, but not limited to, religion, sexuality, alcohol, crime, drugs, mental health, physical health, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
19	Is your study designed to change the mental state of participants in any negative way (such as inducing aggression, frustration, etc?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
20	Does your study involve an external agency (e.g. for recruitment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
21	Do your participants fall into any of the following special groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	(except where one or more individuals with such characteristics may naturally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Item	Question		Yes	No	NA
	occur within a general population, such as a sample of students)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

If you have ticked any of the shaded boxes above, you should consult with your module leader / supervisor immediately. **You will need to fill in Form B Ethical Approval** and submit it to the Research & Ethics Committee **instead** of this form.

There is an obligation on the researcher to bring to the attention of the Research & Ethics Committee any issues with ethical implications not clearly covered by the above checklist.

I consider that this project has **no** significant ethical implications to be brought before the relevant Research & Ethics Committee. I have read and understood the specific guidelines for completion of Ethics Application Forms. I am familiar with the codes of professional ethics relevant to my discipline (and have discussed them with my supervisor).



Name of Learner Renata Thamires dos Santos Costa

Student Number 51722305

Date 3/11/22

I have discussed this project with the learner in question, and I agree that it has no significant ethical implications to be brought before the Research & Ethics Committee.



Name of Supervisor/Lecturer Dr Richard Brophy

Date 3/11/22

Appendix 2 – Information Sheet

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

HOW EFFECTIVE IS MEDIATION IN HANDLING WORKPLACE DISPUTES IN IRELAND

You are being asked to take part in a research study on workplace relations and disputes in Ireland. I am Renata Thamires Dos Santos Costa working under the supervision of Dr Richard Brophy of Independent College Dublin.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

In this study, you will be asked to answer several survey questions in relation to aspects of the workplace and potential disputes therein.

TIME COMMITMENT

The study typically takes a few minutes and can be completed in one session.

PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation required from you.

You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn / destroyed.

You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you.

You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study's outcome).

If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY

The data I collect does not contain any personal information about you and will be anonymous and confidential.

Appendix 3 - Primary Research

How Effective is Mediation in Handling Workplace Disputes in Ireland?

Hello! Thank you very much for clicking through to this survey. Please very kindly take a few minutes to complete and submit the questions. Everything is anonymous and no personal data will be retained. This research is being carried out by Renata Thamires dos Santos Costa as part of a Degree in Master of Arts in Dispute Resolution in Independent College Dublin. My ultimate aim is to foster better relationships among colleagues in Irish workplaces.

The study is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Richard Brophy and has been granted ethical approval by Independent College Dublin.

THIS SURVEY IS ANONYMOUS. THANK YOU.

Demographics

1.

Gender

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Male

Female

2.

What type of workplace are you employed in?

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Office

Shop

Factory/Manual Labour

Other

None

3.

Age

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Under 25

25-30

30-35

40 and above

4.

Post

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Junior employee

Ass. Manager

Manager

Supervisor

Gaps in Irish firms causing disputes

5.

There is a lack of interaction between the employees in my department

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Outro:

6.

Employees do not communicate much with each other

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

7.

Employees in our firm belong to different backgrounds that often causes them to argue

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

8.

There is wide range of disparity in positions being given to employees in our department

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

9.

Employees in our department are not satisfied with the positions and responsibilities they have against those positions

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

10.

Employees in our department are not satisfied with the remunerations and rewards

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

11.

Employees in our department are not satisfied with their respective supervisors or management of this firm

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Outro:

Factors affecting the mediation process

12.

I believe the intensity of the conflict serves at the main factor in the process

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

13.

A mediator has to consider the type of issue taken place between the employees

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

14.

When resolving a conflict, it is appropriate to be informed and acknowledge the social and political views of the parties in conflict

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Outro:

15.

During resolution of conflict, both parties previous relationships has to be taken in consideration

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

16.

In resolving a conflict, the mediator has to keep his/her emotions aside to avoid any form of biasness

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Manage conflicts and handle disputes

17.

A dispute resolution training should be given in each department to their supervisors or heads

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

18.

Supervisors and managers in our firm are aware of how to handle disputes and conflicts

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

19.

We are satisfied with the cooperation and involvement of our management in the conflicts that occasionally happen in our department

Marcar apenas uma oval.

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

SURVEY RESULTS

How Effective is Mediation in Handling Workplace Disputes in Ireland?

43 respostas

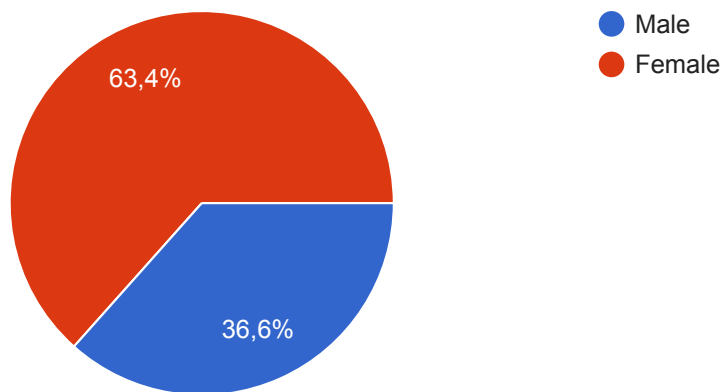
[Publicar análise](#)

Demographics

Gender

41 respostas

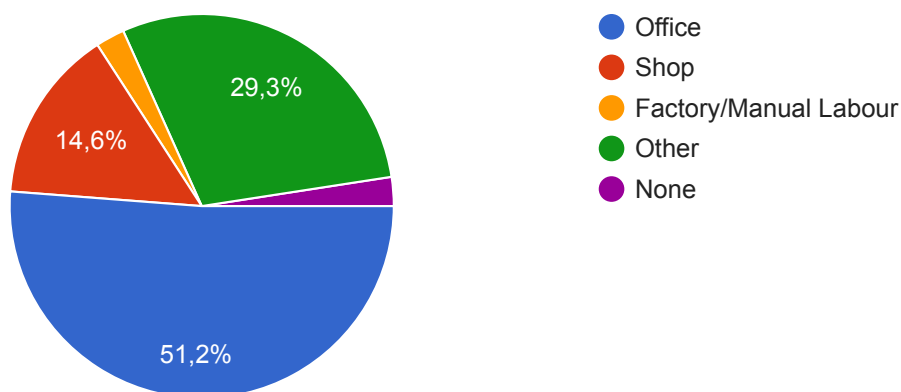
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What type of workplace are you employed in?

41 respostas

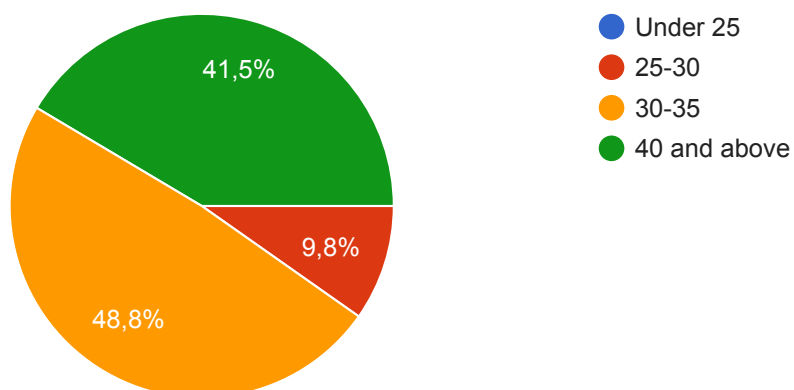
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Age

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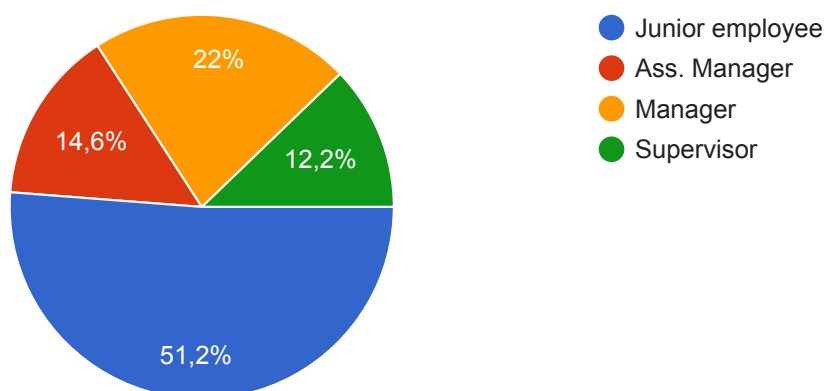
41 respostas



Post

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41 respostas

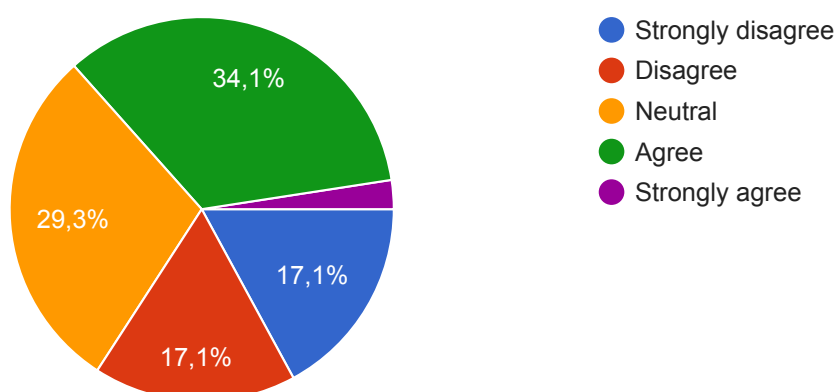


Gaps in Irish firms causing disputes

There is a lack of interaction between the employees in my department

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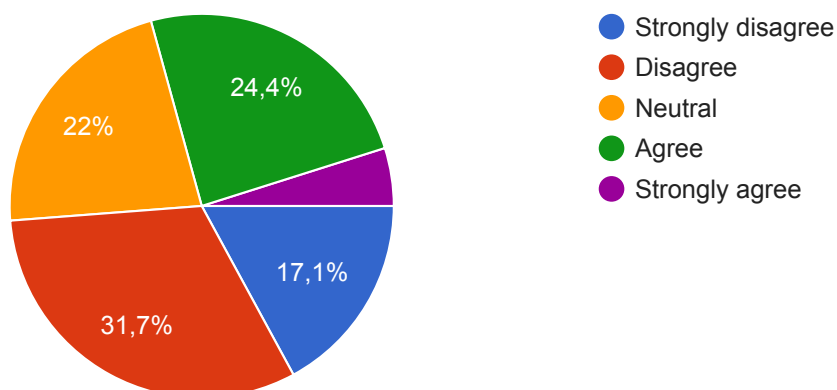
41 respostas



Employees do not communicate much with each other

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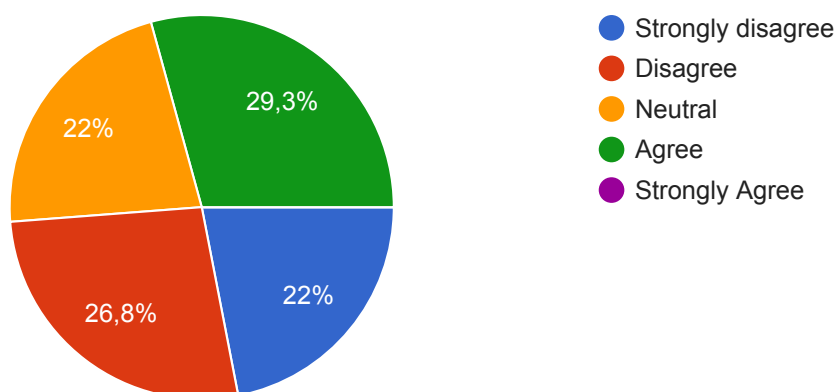
41 respostas



Employees in our firm belong to different backgrounds that often causes them to argue

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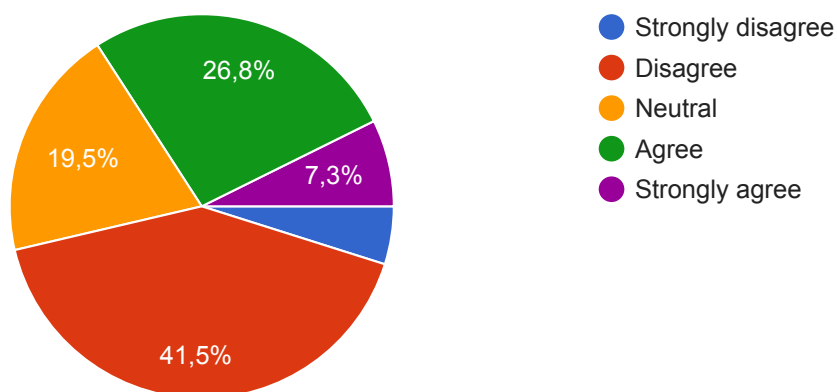
41 respostas



There is wide range of disparity in positions being given to employees in our department

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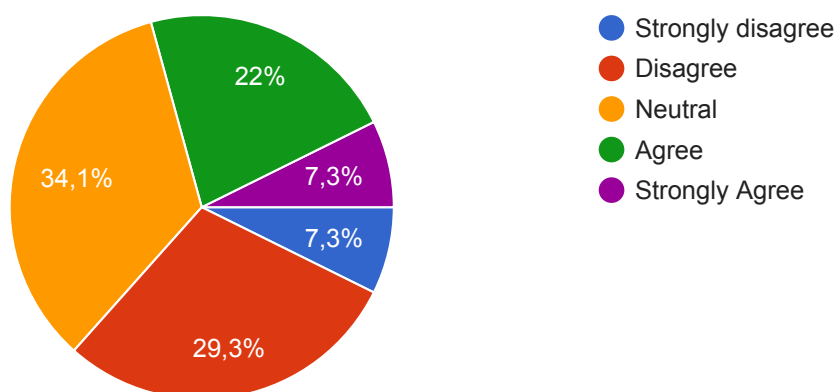
41 respostas



Employees in our department are not satisfied with the positions and responsibilities they have against those positions

 Copiar

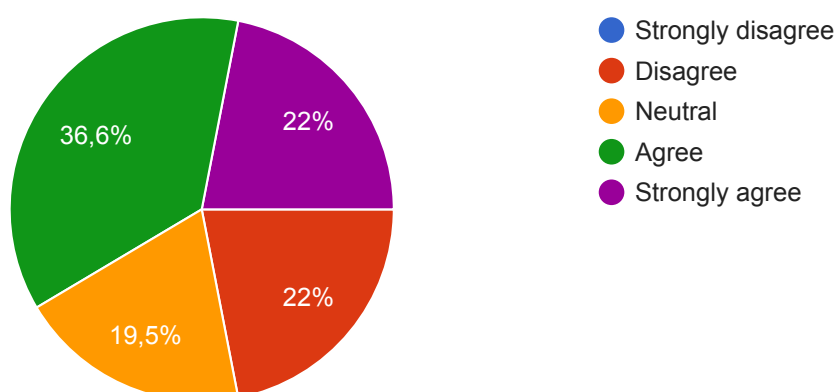
41 respostas



Employees in our department are not satisfied with the remunerations and rewards

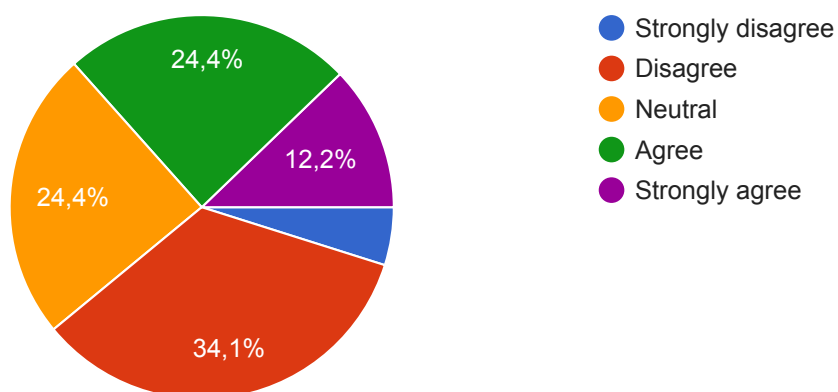
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41 respostas



Employees in our department are not satisfied with their respective supervisors or management of this firm

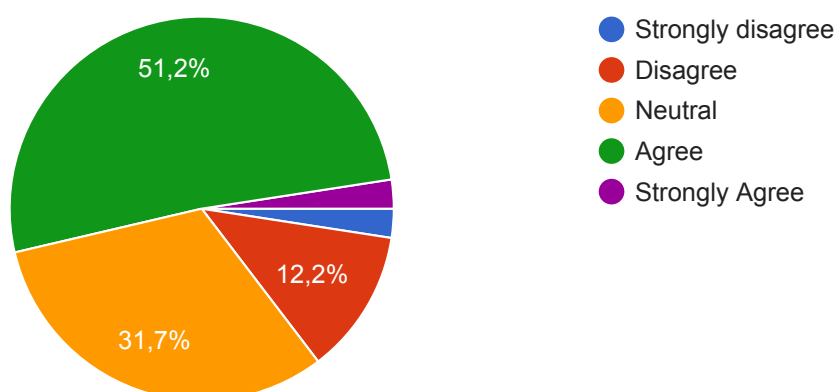
41 respostas



Factors affecting the mediation process

I believe the intensity of the conflict serves at the main factor in the process

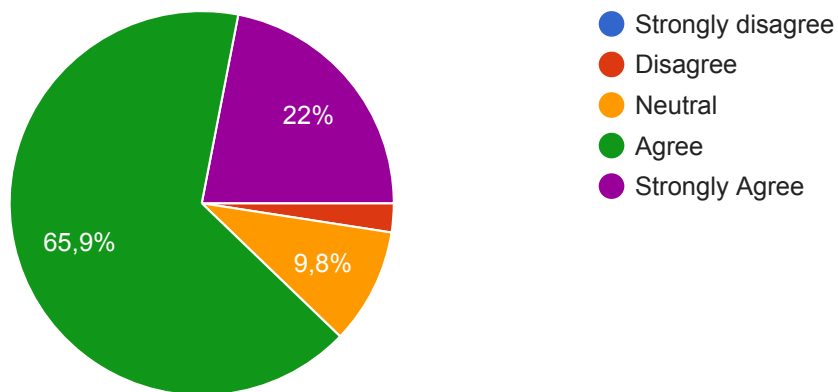
41 respostas



A mediator has to consider the type of issue taken place between the employees

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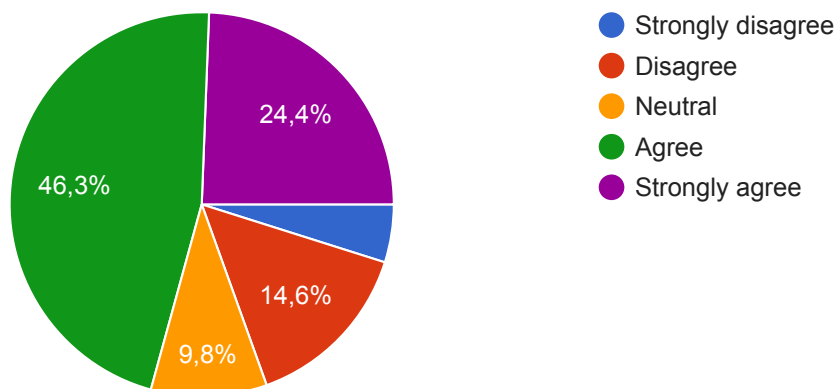
41 respostas



When resolving a conflict, it is appropriate to be informed and acknowledge the social and political views of the parties in conflict

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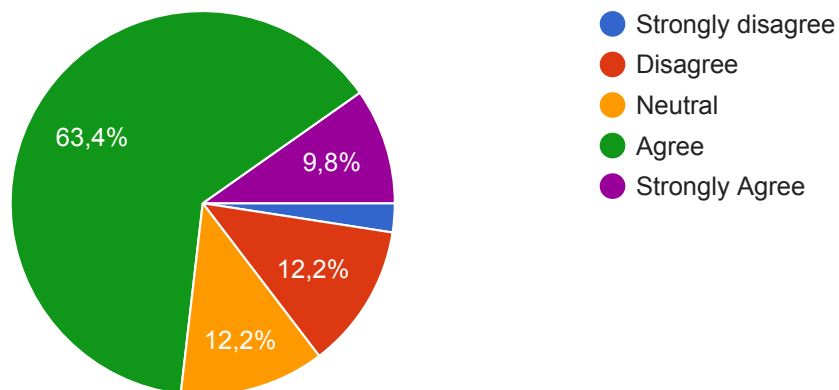
41 respostas



During resolution of conflict, both parties previous relationships has to be taken in consideration



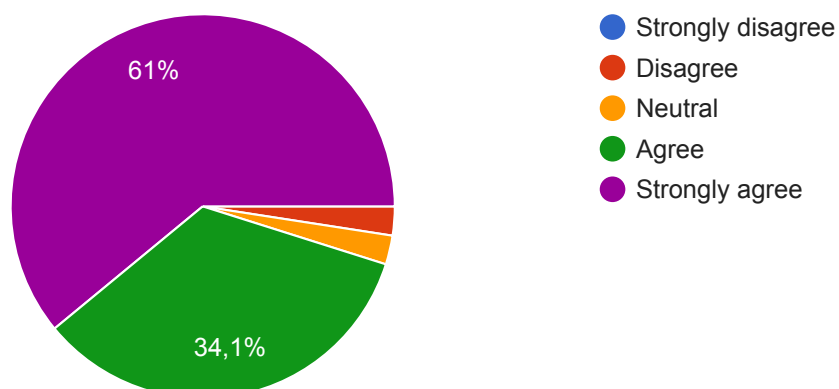
41 respostas



In resolving a conflict, the mediator has to keep his/her emotions aside to avoid any form of biasness



41 respostas

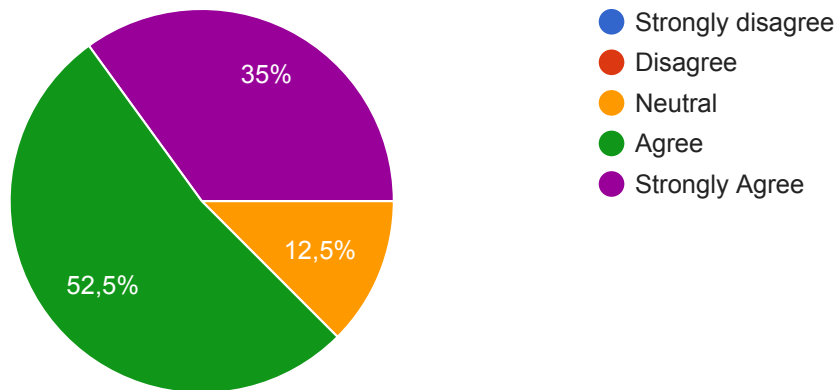


Manage conflicts and handle disputes

A dispute resolution training should be given in each department to their supervisors or heads



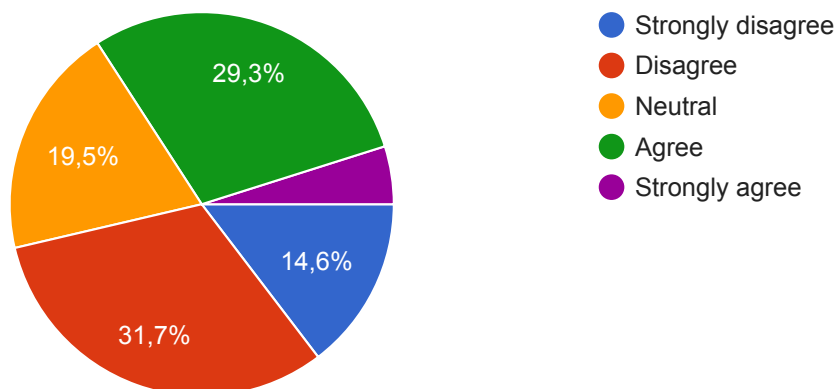
40 respostas



Supervisors and managers in our firm are aware of how to handle disputes and conflicts



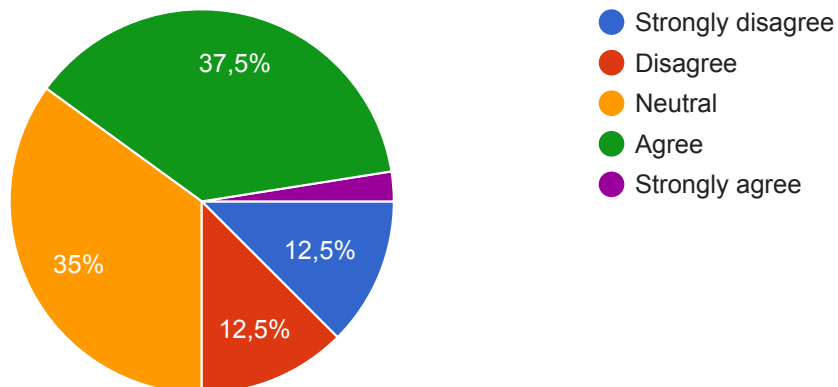
41 respostas



We are satisfied with the cooperation an involvement of our management in the conflicts that occasionally happen in our department

 Copiar

40 respostas



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