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An exploration of the social capital of immigrant
workers in Ireland.

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Abstract

This thesis examined the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland, focusing on the lived experiences of immigrant participants. This approach was taken as, currently; Ireland's research surrounding immigration is mainly focused on offering statistics and the accounts of those who have experienced racial discrimination, without offering an insight into how the individual had found living in Ireland more broadly.

In examining the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland, two studies were conducted in order to provide the results as mentioned previously. The first study involved semi-structured interviews. The questions incorporated into these interviews were based on a harmonised set of questions which were used to test for levels of social capital, as well as the inclusion of some that were introduced to particularly cater for the sample at hand. Using thematic narrative analysis allowed for the transcripts to be transformed into narratives that reflected the lived experience of each participant. Study two introduced the photovoice method, which allowed for the participants to essentially become researchers and determine the type of images that were presented in order to build the holistic image of both their social capital and lived experiences in Ireland.

Overall, the results that arose from the research provided a novel insight into the lives of immigrant workers by examining their social capital. The qualitative research showed the varying levels of social capital accumulated by each individual. In doing this, the research approach explored the intricacies and details of how their social capital was gathered, how obtaining further social capital was sometimes hindered.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and background

Discrimination and racism are a growing concern in Ireland with the country becoming more culturally diverse through exposure to differing cultural norms and values (Mitchell 2011). The existing research solely focuses on the historical nature of Ireland's racism, focusing on the perpetrators and victims of racially-motivated attacks as per ENAR's quarterly reports. The notion of "a land of a hundred thousand welcomes," as queried by Loyal (2011), slowly looks to be diminishing over time when looking at the wider sociological context of Ireland and its attitude towards immigrants.

This thesis will provide a more holistic image of the modern-day immigrant in Ireland by considering the individual lives of working immigrants in Ireland. Focusing on the social capital of immigrant workers to determine how their values, beliefs and morals have contributed towards their integration in Ireland will provide a more contextualised understanding of immigration today. As social capital is concerned with the connections that are established by an individual, it is important to consider elements such as values, beliefs and morals as this has a role to play in determining the aforementioned lived experienced of the participant.

Social capital is often contested in the world of sociology with the concept not having a clear, undisputed meaning due to ranging differences in ideological viewpoints and attitudes (Dolfsma and Dannreuther 2003). Social capital's multi-dimensional nature is often not considered and this then leads to the debate surrounding its definition (Grootaert and van Bastelaer 2003). This study focuses on the role of social networks, the feelings and experiences of immigrant workers and the availability of bridges in bonds in helping them establish themselves as active and contributing members of Irish society (Dekker and Uslaner 2001). Adopting a sociological stance eliminates the economical viewpoint and provides a practical insight into the lives of immigrant workers as opposed to focusing on financial measures.

1.2 Research Focus

Immigrant workers in Ireland are often stereotyped as being consigned to low-paid jobs that 'the Irish do not want,' or that they are consistently and aggressively

underemployed in the working environment (NESC 2005). Race for Opportunity (2011) show how workers of an ethnic minority background in the United Kingdom feel as though they are dismissed from an early stage in the job application process and are overlooked for possibilities for progression. In Ireland, there is a distinct lack of concrete material on this matter with the WRC (2009) highlighting how immigrants find themselves underemployed and unemployed based on obstacles that are associated with arriving in a foreign country without an existing knowledge of that particular society and its processes work. Figures offered by the CSO (2014) surrounding this state of employment follow a similar path and winds up at a destination that offers a lack of material with the statistical tables stating that the gaps in the majority of the years covered being related to either “discretion” or “uncertainty”.

The relevance of the state of employment and the attitude of the immigrant worker is paramount in this instance; particularly when focusing on the lived experiences of immigrant workers and the positions they find themselves in when looking to build upon their social capital. Better paid jobs can allow an individual to climb higher in the socioeconomic rankings providing an opportunity for the worker and their dependents to access more advantageous positions to thrive in society (Coleman et al 1966). Given that the participants hail from varying cultural backgrounds, the role of the values, beliefs and morals that were mentioned previously come to the forefront as these intrinsically determine the attitude a person will have towards thriving in the education system, establishing themselves in the working world and engaging themselves within society; whether that be through networks of close personal friends or partaking in events with a club or organisation (Knoke 1999). Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993, p. 1323) state that this type of “goal seeking behaviour,” contributes towards economic gain and drives the individual towards collectivity in the wider societal picture. From this viewpoint, this thesis will consider explanations of the lived experiences of immigrant workers, focusing on the attitudes held by working immigrants in terms of how they understand their past before coming to Ireland and present lives in this country.

Clearly, more holistic research is needed on the topic of immigrants in Ireland, which does not focus solely on those who have successfully navigated their way into the labour market in order to begin cementing themselves as engaged and active members

of Irish society, in order to provide an insight that focuses on those who have newly arrived in a foreign country, demonstrating resilience, strength and bravery to be admired. This particular form of research is virtually absent in Ireland with the majority of studies appearing in abundance in countries such as New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the United States of America. CSO (2016) show 94,978 immigrants have obtained social security numbers and taken their first steps in becoming members of Irish society. Somewhat superficial research studies indicate that we should delve deeper into the topic at hand and examine how immigrant workers have found the Irish experience thus far, rather than simply taking the approach of looking at historical influences and its role in current-day portrayals of immigrants (McVeigh 1992; Fanning 2002). Research studies, particularly those carried out by ENAR, focus on the slanderous phrases that are aimed at immigrants in order to depict a hostile environment that is suggested as being inhabitable for newcomers. These studies portray a narrow view of racist Ireland without highlighting the narratives and experiences that can offer a more positive representation of both the country and the lives of immigrants who have chosen to settle here.

1.3 Research Aims

The overall aim of this research study is to enhance understanding of the lived experiences of immigrant workers in Ireland by examining the levels of social capital immigrant workers have already established and how they perceive the possibility of accumulating further levels of social capital. In adopting this approach, this research will progress past the general method of examining historical influences and attributing these influences towards the presence of racial attacks and discriminatory behaviour that admittedly exists in Ireland. Developing an understanding of the lives of immigrant workers will challenge the daunting statistics composed by ENAR in their quarterly reports. ENAR's quarterly reports do not entirely represent the feelings of immigrants who are currently residing in Ireland. Immigrants who have participated in this study will show elements of an active social life, as well as providing details of their availability to social support in a variety of ways, thus providing a contrast to the ENAR reports.

In order to do this effectively, semi-structured interviews will consider the crucial elements of social capital such as the aforementioned social networks, bridges, bonds and the crucial element of values and beliefs in the accumulation of a strong and secure base. As a critical aim of this thesis is to provide a more comprehensive picture of the lives of immigrant workers, the underappreciated approach of the photovoice method will be used in order to gain a real, in-depth insight into how working immigrants live their lives in Ireland. Gathering real-time photographs that have been captured by participants provides a relevant and relatable source of data that can complement the narratives that were provided prior to the photovoice study. Harper (1988) states that a collection of images should then provide a visual narrative that exists amongst communities throughout the region that is studied, where similarities and differences arise in order to provide a unique description of life within these communities and the processes of their social lives.

In order to develop this understanding, the findings from these two collection methods will be considered in the context of existing literature from outside of Ireland (due to a lack of Irish findings and research). The present study aims to produce new findings, based on participants' narratives of their attributes which have contributed to the building of social capital, within the new national setting that they have surrounded themselves in. Essentially, this study will examine whether the ability of immigrant workers to establish and build social capital is influenced by factors external to the individual immigrant, such as racism, or by internal factors, particularly in this case of personal mentality and attitude. Through adopting these methods, a clearer image of the working immigrant in Ireland will be provided in order to comment on statistics, which provide a limited description of immigrants' experiences in Ireland.

1.4 The Present Study

As this dissertation aims to enhance the understanding of the lives of immigrants by exploring the experiences of individuals who have begun a new life in a new country it will employ a research strategy predominately structured around qualitative methods. This will ensure that the participants are at the forefront of the research topic and allows for the researcher to fully engage with the data throughout the data collection process.

In order to explore employed immigrants' experiences of social capital the following objectives will be examined and analysed across two studies:

- What does the person perceive to be their source(s) of social capital?
- How do respondents differentiate between employment and social capital and other possible sources of social capital (e.g. community, family, bridges and bonds etc.)?
- How do the interviewees perceive the level of importance of employment for social capital they currently have and are in they in a position to build upon this?
- What connection do the participants, if any, see between social capital and personal work ethic?

In order to examine these objectives and aims, study one will use semi-structured interviews to measure social capital. The purpose of this research project is to consider how the values, beliefs and traditions of immigrant families arriving in Ireland are related to the participants' understanding of their social capital and employment opportunities. Grooetaert and van Bastelaer's (2002) social capital analytical tool will be used to inform a semi-structured interview. Through carrying out semi-structured interviews with the participants, the aim is to uncover the possible barriers that exist within the workplace, which will in turn, shed light on the level of progression for immigrant workers. This study will consider how a lack of social capital might affect employment opportunities and consider how the presence of a 'bridge' towards social capital (e.g. an Irish partner/community liaison) might have an effect on the experience of immigrant workers in Ireland. The interview questions will examine the level of civic engagement for currently employed immigrants in the Irish workplace, based on factors such as trust and the level of networking undertaken by the individual. Elements such as these will look to provide an insight into whether immigrant workers in Ireland are settled in their new surroundings through questions about the 'trustworthiness' of their community and whether they engage with any social activities outside of the workplace, as well as in it, with colleagues and friends.

While a set of questions will be used in the interview, the semi-structured interview format allows for the interview to develop organically, and for new ideas and topics to

arise. These topics include elements such as social networks, trust, feelings towards employment, the experience within the education system, etc. Therefore, the interview approach incorporates both a basic set of core queries about social capital, with a semi-structured interview with free-form questioning.

Thematic narrative analysis will be used to analyse the qualitative interview data. When using thematic narrative analysis as a tool, it allows for the researcher to dive deeper into the human experience that has been given throughout the interviews (Bamberg 2012). Using thematic narrative analysis for the data collected throughout the interview and then pairing these with the images provided by each participant further enhances the chances of the sought after holistic image to be created for the researcher.

Study two will employ visual sociology. Harper (1988) sees visual sociology as the use of photographs, film and video to study society and the study of visual artefacts that exist within society. Participants will be asked to take photos of their physical environments. As well as providing some real insight into the lives of immigrant workers, the photographs will show how strong or weak their communities are and whether or not it leaves them in a more disadvantageous position to accumulate social capital. Photos that have been provided will reflect the narratives and thus provide an insight into the participant's community ties, which would reflect on factors such as social support, level of social trust and an overall mentality to dive deep into Irish society. The pictures offer a unique insight into the lived experience of immigrant workers and can reveal evidence of their position to accumulate social capital based on their surrounding communities.

As an example, a picture may reveal that there is a healthy and vibrant community atmosphere in an immigrant workers place of residence, thus suggesting that they are in a strong position to accumulate social capital through a strong network of community support. The participants will be asked to provide photographs from the sources of social capital, which will essentially require providing content from where they feel appropriate based on their social lives and experience of Ireland. This may involve pictures of their workplace, community centre, local sports clubs, etc. It is not necessarily essential that the photographs contain just the relevant institutions in their lives, but even the individuals that contribute towards their accumulation of social

capital. This can involve people such as close friends, employers, colleagues, teammates, etc. As well as this, they can include an insight into their commute to work and anything they feel is of importance in terms of simply living in Ireland on a daily basis. The images were examined and grouped together in the reoccurring themes that were provided throughout the narratives and then used in conjunction to further highlight the reality of the narrative given.

The second part of this study aims to provide a unique insight into the physical communities resided in by immigrants via visual depictions of the environment and surrounding community (e.g., buildings of a particular importance or the current living situation of each individual). This will be totally dependent on what the participant deems as essential to the study in order to provide a snapshot of their experience in Ireland. As well as this, it is proposed that photographs are taken, by the researcher, in varying 'immigrant communities' in Ireland in order to draw up possible differences and similarities to consider consistencies and variabilities between the lens of the researcher and participants.

In order to determine the experience of immigrants in Ireland based on this concept of social capital, it is essential that participants were employed, across a wide variety of employment roles (e.g., self-employed entrepreneurs, factory workers, restaurateurs, qualified individuals who are currently underemployed, etc.). This is based on the reality that as employees in Ireland, they would have dealt with the relevant social institutions that encompass the labour market, as well as the very likely possibility of immigrant workers living in rental accommodation or permanent housing. As part of this project, immigrant workers will be asked to partake in an interview so as to gain an understanding of their social capital. The participants were required to have an ability to converse in English.

Overall, this research will contribute to the development of the understanding of immigrant's lives in Ireland, particularly in the case of foreign nationals who are actively engaged in the labour market. The methods applied will look to build a strong and in-depth narrative of the working immigrant's experience and provide a distinctive insight that is lacking in the current literature. The next chapter containing the literature

review will examine the existing literature and highlight the shortage of this type of research that is present in Ireland at this point.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The present thesis aims to qualitatively examine the lived experiences of immigrant workers in their quest to establish social capital in a new country. The research conducted will produce findings that reflect on the individual's level of social capital, as well as examining factors such as the participant's personal mentality and attitude in the context of a new society. Given the research question, it is important to contextualise the findings within the context of the existing literature surrounding the relevant topics. In order to do this effectively, an overview of the concept of social capital will be discussed, along with how it influences the lives of workers inside and outside of the workplace and how 'bridges' and 'bonds' to social capital can assist in the alleviating of difficulty of accumulating social capital in a foreign country.

Discussing social capital's meaning, as well as its historical factors and how this resonates with the values and beliefs of the individual is concentrated into literature surrounding political social capital as this focuses on the participation of immigrants within a new society in their venture for gathering social capital. This leads to a discussion on nationalism and whether a strong sense of nationalism can create barriers through discrimination and racialisation. This section brings to light of examples concerning Ireland, as well as a general view into whether a nationalist-type attitude can prohibit an immigrant's interaction within society and the workplace, thus, hindering their accumulation of social capital. The workplace is seen as a base for the accumulation of social capital. Given that, the previously discussed harmful attitudes will be looked at to highlight how immigrants find alternative routes to accumulating social capital, as well as focusing in on how foreign nationals are viewed in the labour market. As an element on bias and prejudice is brought up in this section, the concept of a work ethic will then be discussed as a personal barrier or even a stepping-stone for a foreign national in a new labour market based on cultural variations. Having taken these ideas and concepts into consideration, we look to zone in on how this is presented in Ireland in terms of the conditions for immigrant workers, as well as looking at areas that are been left unattended in a research capacity. Given the conditions for immigrants, bridging and bonding will be looked at to show how immigrants can utilise

their new surroundings and connections in order to establish themselves as active and functioning members of their new society.

2.1 Social Capital

Putnam (1995, p.167) describes social capital as; ‘the features of social organization that encompass networks, the norms of that society and the trust that allows for the coordination and cooperation of others in order to experience some form of mutual benefit’. Social capital can therefore appear quite a broad concept, yet it is a critically important one in the successful integration of those who are considered outsiders in a given society. Putnam (1995) views social capital as a crucial factor in generating any economic gain; something that would be unlikely without some form of social networking or civic engagement. This form of engagement may come on a macro scale, such partaking in national political issues or being involved in nationwide groups in the form of a charitable organisation, but studies in East Asia have shown that even in small communities, strong social connectivity between locals have led to successful results in terms of economic gain (Putnam 1995). In short, strong social capital is a pre-condition for a successful, well-run society (Putnam 1995).

Coleman et al (1966) looked at how different immigrant families from different socioeconomic backgrounds could produce different attitudes that provide an advantageous position for children to thrive (i.e. the more deprived in your homeland you are, the more emphasis is placed on succeeding in your new host country). This is accompanied by establishing “networks” that promote ‘norms’ that encourage this form of drive (e.g. African families encourage educational attainment and a good career, European based families, given an assumed Christian background families encourage self-sufficiency). Weber’s (1992) work shows how these norms are based on bias that have existed throughout time, in which Lutheran teachings that have influenced the conception of Christians as self-sufficient individuals, as well as viewing Catholics as being part of a strong community base that assists with growth in the context of wider society. Studies have shown that immigrant children who achieve in the American educational system tend to come from close, intense and emotional family backgrounds that are bound together by strong networks of similar people (Coleman 1966). Given this point, social capital cannot just be a structure of relations,

but it must also include the values, beliefs and expectations that are maintained and acted upon within certain social structures. Vietnamese-American students grow up with values that encourages cooperation and respect for the elderly and authoritative figures (Coleman 1966). These values are practiced and regularly encouraged within the tight-knit social structures and relationships they belong to. These values are placed on Vietnamese-American children by the generations above them as they look to recreate a form of an idyllic homeland in a small community in the US, due to the fact they have “lost” their host country (Coleman 1966). The attitudes that have come about from an emphasis on the values given to Vietnamese-American children leads to a positive knock-on effect whereby teachers, employers, etc. treat them somewhat differently, as the character they have grown to develop is one that is almost endearing to the surrounding communities (Coleman 1966). Paradoxically, the author believes immigrants form their social capital by forming closed pockets from the influences and cultural norms of their host country and therefore eradicates any notion of an equal society with an equality of outcomes for all.

The Vietnamese-American’s discussed above hold a similarity to Turks residing in Amsterdam. The close-knit community bond tends to bring about more positive results in terms of political participation and therefore, increased levels of social capital (Tillie 2007). Political clout with regards to social capital is of high importance. It can go a long way in determining your stance within a new country based on its ability to promote your best interests, as well as gaging how well an individual can adapt to new social institutions, which can determine how comfortable they can be in their day-to-day lives. Tillie (2007) looks at the importance of political integration is for the immigrants that reside in Amsterdam. Amsterdam is widely known as a culturally open city within, what is perceived, as an accepting country based on a variety of immigrant groups in a culturally vibrant nation. (Tillie 2007). The collapse of the Twin Towers and waves of terrorist attacks in recent years has led to political chatter in the Netherlands that would go some way in terms of tarnishing their open and accepting reputation (Tillie 2007). This political conversation was concerned with wondering if Muslim immigrants could effectively participate in a democratic society having come from a nation of polarised opposites in terms of its societal outlay (Tillie 2007). Questions have been raised in Dutch parliament that indicate a suspicious outlook on immigrants, particularly those from an Islamic background. It is often wondered

whether Muslim immigrants can adapt and integrate into a political system that encourages free-speech and democracy, especially in a Europe that is seeing the growing influence of Muslim traditions as an attack against its Western norms and values (Tillie 2007).

Simply put, those who operate within the political system are politically integrated and those who do not, are not. In Amsterdam, immigrants who have lived in the country for five years are eligible to exercise all democratic political rights. In this instance, an immigrant can contact a municipal councillor, demonstrate for or against a certain issue, vote in local or national elections, visit a local neighbourhood meeting where local issues are addressed or become an active member of a political party or a protest organisation (Tillie 2007).

Fennema and Tillie (1999) gathered information on the political participation on the most 'common' immigrant backgrounds in Amsterdam in order to gain insight into whether they were politically integrated or not. Using a scale, Turks, Surinamese, Antilleans and Moroccans were given five political activities they were legally allowed to engage in, in order to determine their participation. If they partook in five, they scored five. If they involved themselves in two, they scored two. Turks and Moroccans participated the most with an average score of 2.7 and 2.5, respectively. Surinamese and Antilleans came behind them with average scores of 2.2 and 1.9 for the latter (Fennema and Tillie 1999).

Tillie (2007) looks to test the theory that membership of social groups increases social capital, thus increasing the levels of social trust which then spills over into political trust, which would suggest a strong link between an individual and their community. From looking at membership figures, Tillie (2007) found that Turks had the lowest membership rates, whereas Surinamese and Antilleans had high levels of participation in social groups. Tillie (2007) explains that because the Turks have a strong, interconnected network, they are more likely to participate in the political sphere. In the case for Antilleans and Surinamese, it is suggested that because their levels of civic engagement are low, they are more likely to be involved in political participation. This suggests that Turks are more concerned in aiding and contributing to their own community rather than the greater society, whereas Antilleans and Surinamese focus on a broader approach in the political realm given its low levels of strong, network

connections.

In essence, examining social capital in this sense provides an insight into the conditions of a society and whether it allows for an immigrant to integrate successfully based on their existing values, morals and beliefs. A wider and more culturally open country can provide the perfect conditions for an immigrant to settle in and allow for them to establish themselves as an active member of society, even in the case where their electoral rights cannot be exercised. Due to the intricacies surrounding this topic, participants will be questioned about their political involvement and interests; in the case where they cannot exercise the right vote in national issues, their involvement in local issues will be taken into consideration as the literature suggests that it is an influential factor in the determining of the levels of social capital.

2.2 Imagined Communities: Us vs Them

Given the importance given to the existing conditions of a society that allow for an immigrant to integrate seamlessly into the backdrop of a new country, particularly in terms of the previously mentioned political involvement and social engagement, it is important to discuss the concept of 'imagined communities' in which the divide of 'us versus them' is created. In this section, there will be a continuation of how a society can assist with the integration by being culturally open, but with a distinct focus on the establishment of a nation. This will concern the importance of adapting to the language spoken in a new country and its ability to distance yourself from being 'othered'. Amongst this discussion, the racialisation of immigrants will be considered as a hindrance in the accumulation of social capital as it further creates an element in which immigrants can be 'othered' and kept at a distance in the participation of an active society.

Anderson (1983) examined the political structures that exist, in which ideas of nationalism are established and become a barrier for possible newcomers. Could this notion of imagined communities hinder the social capital accumulated by an immigrant worker who may be viewed as an 'other' in an established community, or do other influences such as the ability to replicate the language of that community eradicate any negative outcomes? In posing these questions, it can be examined as to whether a

foreign national will be excluded from society based on how they have experienced Ireland up till this point, as well as considering more detailed elements such as the ability to adapt to the English language as it creates a platform for an immigrant to actively participate in society and decreases the chances of becoming closed off or stuck in immigrant community groups, which will effectively reduce their chances of increasing their social capital.

Anderson (1983) states that modern institutions are not defined by power given from the divine, rather it is politically based and has been transformed into state sovereignty in which each square centimetre of the country is organised is such based on political territory or 'the dynastic realm'. This break-away was further enhanced by print-capitalism, which signalled the end for Latin, a language nobody was born speaking. Low funds meant printers began to print books in the native language of the country in order to generate profit by appealing to the common language, rather than that of the hierarchies.

Over the next century, a battle for men's minds took place with Protestants taking the offensive by exploiting the market and the vernacular through print-capitalism. This trend saw a ban on printing books by Francois 1 (of France) as he feared the rising of Protestantism and a move towards a state-sanctioned nation as print-capitalism had saw the rise of smuggled print and merchants selling cheap, multiple edition books in the vernacular rather than in Latin (Anderson 1983). This radical change dismantled previous imagined communities over time and saw the rise of nation states between the 1700s-1800s.

Due to these developments, Anderson (1983) states that the Dutch, Spanish and Portugese began adapting to foreign languages by taking simple, foreign terms and words that may be of use to them and developing them into words that suited their vocabularies. Perhaps an early sign of foreign workers adapting in a more capitalist driven world.

Not all nations were formed on the basis of capitalism and the decline of imperialist power (Hobsbawm 1990). Many nations have been formed as a response to a fear and hatred of others. The Thai government banned missionaries from helping their "hill

people” as they do not know what they will teach them and nor do they care what dialect these people speak or how they live (Hobsbawm 1990). This is slightly comparable to the treatment of those in Ireland considered to be ‘outsiders’, more specifically in the case of Travellers. Aside from this, this establishment of a nation based on xenophobic notions offers a very interesting platform for misplaced hate and aggression, even in modern and developed states such as Ireland.

The weight and power of words that Anderson (1983) refers to in the forming of a nation is as evident and as applicable to 21st century life. Take for example national anthems and the songs of the country’s past that are sang on national holidays, in unison, that create strong levels of nationalism. These songs may appear harmless upon first contact, but it is difficult to deny that they generate a certain dislike towards past oppressors, i.e. the English. This suggests that an unconscious level of hatred towards immigrants can be awoken by nationalist traditions. This further supports Hobsbawm (1990) statement, whereby it is suggested that nations are established and built on a bed of hatred towards others, or in this case, past oppressors.

In this sense, “nationality is not natural” – it is something that is constantly geared up and validated through social, linguistic and material practices (Mitchell 2011). A nation is more based on what it is not, rather than what it is. This viewpoint is similar to the point made about nations being formed based on hatred and fear of others. This notion of a nation then, opens up possible conflict between insiders and outsiders who have arrived in a foreign nation. More recently, the Roma community has provided the people of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland a direct target for ethnicity-based hatred. This hatred ascends upwards into the authoritative figures of both states and creates a situation that is strikingly similar to that of the Thai government’s previous position on the country’s “hill people”. The powers that be, so to speak, have little to no concern for the Roma community. BBC News (2009) states that although legislation is being introduced and implemented to guard against rising racial attacks in Ireland and Northern Ireland, little is being done to facilitate and protect those from the Roma community.

In predominately white nations, ‘whiteness’ is detrimental as to how all others are ‘othered’.

Mitchell (2011) states that Northern Ireland's Jewish community is widely regarded as the North's 'others'. The Jewish community have traditionally only been the victims of discrimination during cultural festivals that celebrate their heritage and traditions. These festivals lead to a scenario where those from different cultures and nations are viewed through a lens of 'otherness'; this is almost the ultimate way of portraying 'outsiders' that are living within.

Anderson (1983) suggests that a nation's language, demography, etc. is unchosen and so the process of interaction leads to an ideal of that nation's race and therefore a national identity. Ballibar and Wallerstein (1991) suggest that a notion of a national personality going back, as well as forward through time creates a conception of a nation that draws differences between insiders and outsiders, which inevitably leads to minorities being pushed away by racism and discriminations. This suggests that your borders have been exposed and infiltrated by outsiders; leading to an awakening of sub-conscious hatred.

The Jewish experience in the Republic reflects this. It has been suggested that the nineteenth century Irish nation-building project - "an authoritarian, reactionary and monocultural state apparatus [that] seeks to control entry to Ireland and movement within it according to the state's construction of external threat" (Garner, 2004, p. 25) – In a time where the Irish government looked to construct a national identity, Jews were labelled as dishonourable and a 'race' that could not be trusted. This led to a situation whereby all outsiders were seen as a threat to the culture and the number of wartime refugees was limited (Keogh 1998).

In modern day, asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants have faced the same racialisation and have been grouped into the same category as they are viewed as cheats and spongers in a nation that "built America" (Mitchell 2011). Given the new waves of immigrants, it is interesting to note that there has considerably been less hostility towards white immigrants in Ireland as they tend to go under the radar in terms of nearly checking for whiteness and associating them as 'one of your own' as they have arrived in a country that is so traditionally 'white' that their skin colour has saved them from potential persecution in respect to the job market and everyday society (Mitchell 2011). Accumulating social capital as an immigrant worker can be hindered by external

factors such as discriminatory behaviour. When discussing the historical influences on Ireland's racism, it certainly can be viewed as a pre-conditioned barrier that must be overcome. Given that, it must be discussed how discriminatory actions influence the accumulation of social capital for immigrants in a general workplace setting before examining more specific literature that focuses on their personal attributes and the Irish workplace.

2.3 Social capital for immigrants in the workplace

Harmful attitudes that arise from nation states can influence the economic earning power of immigrants, as well as an ability to adapt to the language spoken. If an immigrant is incapable of escaping the prejudices that have been placed upon them, or even being able to speak a level of English that would allow them to participate in society effectively, their ability to fully perform to their financial potential will be hindered thus harming their ability to catapult into the higher socioeconomic classes, avail of a better standard of living and therefore a stronger level of social capital.

Campbell and Li (2007) found that many immigrants who had expected to receive a position similar to the one held in their home country had been reduced to low-skilled labour and in many cases the underemployment of their skill set. Immigrants did recognize that barriers such as their inability to speak English well, or their lack of understanding around societal norms may have cost them the position, but many others felt it was a result of existing prejudices. This lack of understanding may be a result of these pocketed communities that arise as a result of a hostile atmosphere that leads to the creation of a 'mini homeland'. Campbell and Li (2007) state that East Asians in Canada conducted business in their own language and hired co-ethnic workers to take up employment, but this was mainly based on their values behind family and helping those similar to you, i.e. co-ethnic workers. In this instance, the hiring of Canadian workers was seen to drive down the efficiency of the business, as well as the overall communication between staff.

Due to limited employment opportunities, an immigrant can find him/herself in a position where they are unable to accumulate a level of income that can lead to an accumulation of social capital (Sanders and Nee 1996). In this case, self-employment can operate as a gateway into the labour market for immigrants, as they look to put

their already acquired human capital to work in a host country (Sanders and Nee 1996). This American based study looks at the role of immigrant families in the upper-classes and how it can act as a stepping stone to run a more successful business. Zhou (1992) states that the level of financial capital available to pre-existing family ties has a role to play in the availability of loans that are provided by unique loan-based institutions that are aimed specifically at immigrants.

Given the development in the US after the post-civil rights era, documented immigrants are entitled to the same rights as indigenous workers and entrepreneurs. This, however, can weaken the solidarity that has been established by previous waves of immigrants as it has a detrimental role in determining the importance of the unique financial institutions that were mentioned previously (Sander and Nee 1996). The notion that more advanced and developed institutions cannot aid enterprise for an immigrant seems ridiculous, but Loewen's (1971) study showed that Chinese families' businesses further improved upon the arrival of family members and those from similar backgrounds into their Mississippi based community. The common driving force behind entrepreneurial immigrants is steeped in the acquired human capital of an individual, coupled with the social capital of the family, i.e. trust, solidarity, creation of a wider pool of people to establish connections and networks, etc.

New Zealand has experienced high rates of immigration in recent years with the main focus of their immigration policy being the attraction of human capital so as to bring workers with a specific skill set or low-skilled workers to sustain cost-sensitive businesses (Clydesdale 2011). Economic benefits that arise from immigration are constantly debated in New Zealand with many of the advantages said to come with it are based on economic assumptions. Immigrants arriving in New Zealand have to accumulate points, which would evidently categorise them into high-skilled labour, low-skilled labour and so on. This ensured that the country was receiving a minimum of human capital in order to facilitate labour shortages. This concept runs into some difficulties, though. Especially when the levels of income of immigrant workers is taken into consideration, relative to that of indigenous workers. Clydesdale (2011) shows that males aged 25-29 who have been in the country five to ten years 38.8 percent are earning less than \$20,001 per year while another 5.9 percent are earning nothing at all. Clydesdale (2011) raises the question as to whether there are serious problems with

progression, as well as barriers to better employment for immigrant workers. New Zealand seem to operate on a more decisive, points based system, yet there appears to be a clear disadvantage for immigrants.

Ethnic barriers to progress in the workplace tend to be quite common in the United Kingdom. Race for Opportunity (2011) provide an extensive study of 'BAME' workers, this group encompasses Black, Asian and other 'minority ethnic' individuals within the workforce. This study shows that African workers top all the indicators in terms of ambition and their positivity with regard promotion and upward mobility, but, Africans are more likely to be overlooked in terms of promotion with 50% of Africans having fewer promotions than White British workers. 40% of these African workers feel they have been overlooked in the selection process and have been undermined by their employees based on their skin colour (Race for Opportunity 2011). In 2005 the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor found that people from a BAME background were twice as likely to be entrepreneurs than white British workers, but they were widely unrepresented across the entrepreneurial spectrum – "People of non-British origin are disproportionately concentrated in a number of inter-linked industrial sectors relating to food, appearance, health and certain professional services," it said. On the other hand, BAME entrepreneurs were under-represented in many high value-added sectors such as civil engineering, aerospace, marine engineering and radio and television and print media."

Race For Opportunity (2012) conducted a study based on the BAME workers who sought employment via the medium of recruitment agencies, which provided a solid 'snapshot' of the level of discrimination and the difficulties of the barriers that meet those of an ethnic minority background along their career paths.

Key findings:

- Only 29% of BAME workers offered job when applying through recruitment agency compared to 44% white workers
- "BAME respondents were **more likely to be qualified to degree level** than white respondents, and were younger on average. Despite this, BAME applicants were **less likely to be offered a job through a recruitment agency.**"

- 57% of BAME applications were invited to interview through a recruitment agency compared to 73% of white candidates
- Outcomes were more equal when applying **directly** to an employer – 29% each securing jobs

The effects of a lack of social capital are evident from studies such as these, and pose some difficult problems for immigrants. A lack of material based on the social capital of immigrants in Ireland provides further rationale for this research, given its potential importance to understanding the social lives of immigrants who are currently employed in this country. Most research in Ireland only seem to focus on the fact immigrants find it difficult to secure steady employment, rather than looking at its implications and the reasons behind why they cannot gain employment; a potential boost towards the social capital of an immigrant in Ireland. WRC (2009) state that difficulties navigating the Irish labour market and complicated policies lead to incidents of either high unemployment and underemployment due to difficulties with validation of international qualifications and delays in vetting. WRC (2009) highlights the uncertainty and confusion that immigrants face in the job market, as well as the feeling that they have been “screened” and discarded before the actual job process can take place. This goes hand-in-hand with the sense that Irish employers seek out Irish employees due to work experience and qualifications gained outside of the country being seen as irrelevant. WRC (2009) show that immigrant workers feel employers do not facilitate their needs regards language difficulties in interviews, as well as a feeling that they are not adhering to cultural norms when in the application process; a key indicator of a lack of social capital.

Another incidental element that may appear could be the concept of work ethic. The ability to navigate the labour market having adopted important elements such as language when necessary provides a pre-condition for exercising your capabilities in a new society. The development of a strong work ethic and a mind-set to accompany it can determine the lived experience of an immigrant as they look to actively accumulate social capital in the job market. Having looked at the concept of work ethic in order to determine whether different cultures produce different backgrounds and therefore different outcomes for specific cohorts of immigrant workers in Ireland, it became clear that there was no clear way of measuring this. Most literature surrounding this concept

was either an economical evaluation of Weber's work ethic hypothesis or a sociological/psychological evaluation that failed in some respects in its goal of disproving the theory in its purest sense as no clear conclusive result was drawn amongst figures that appear confusing for those who are not familiar (Becker and Wosserman 2007; Arranuda 2010). Different readings around whether work ethic changed throughout generations and the examining of whether work ethic had any real tie to a religion or culture led to a discussion around social capital. Whether or not a particular background maintains a certain work ethic may mean nothing at all in the wider context if they are not in a position to accumulate enough social capital in order to exercise their work ethic within a new society. Having extensively searched for similar sources in Ireland to no avail, it appears as if there is a gap for such a research project in a country that is becoming more and more familiar with immigrant workers, especially when similar studies have been done in countries such as the United States of America and New Zealand. These studies were previously and looked at how close-knit immigrant communities apply their work ethic in an open and culturally vibrant country in contrast to New Zealand's strict barriers that inhibit immigrant workers from realising their economic potential (Sanders and Nee 1996; Clydesdale 2011).

2.4 Work Ethic & Nationalism: The foundations of social capital and discrimination

Through discussing the measurement of a work ethic, it can be determined how relevant cultural backgrounds are in terms of determining an individual's attitude towards work. Given that work ethic is contested in terms of its meaning and measurement, alternatives will be recommended as it is advised that participants are asked about their experiences individually. Based on Luther's view of expansion and wanting people to develop in an educational sense, it is suggested that people's own mentality and attitude is taken into consideration throughout this research in order to determine whether their accumulation of social capital is hindered or encouraged depending on their own character.

This section will examine the role culture plays in contributing to the mind-set and overall attitude towards work, as well as discussing the complications of thoroughly measuring a distinct work ethic. Van Hoorn and Maseland (2013) that a cultural background can promote an attitude to work based on the importance attached to

employment, particularly when measuring the well-being of the individual. This indicates that a cultural make-up can influence a work ethic given the importance that is attached to it when exploring the values and beliefs attached to it. Van Hoorn and Maseland (2013) indicate that religion as the primary source of culture encourages an individual to exercise a strong or weak work ethic given its importance to the happiness and security employment can generate. In this sense, the most commonly referred to form of culture is religion as it looks to provide a platform for an individual to launch themselves from based on social teachings, as well as providing a proposed socioeconomic standing; historically (Weber 1992).

In order to examine religion as a cultural building block for a strong or even a weak work ethic, the theories and ideologies of Weber and Martin Luther will be examined. These views will be examined briefly in order to determine its relevance in relation to having a particular work ethic as the current lack of research in Ireland does not seem to apply this concept in terms of determining the employment of immigrants. The better-known example of attaching a work ethic to a culture would be that of Weber's theory surrounding the Protestant work ethic in which religious motivations could be seen as a moulder of your attitude to work based scenarios (van Hoorn and Maseland 2013). As a brief example, the Germans Protestant background can be linked to their positions in high skilled and educated type labour which is seen to be a causation of the relationship between religion and the formation of capitalism which has led to a cultural demand in the upper echelons of the working world. This can also be encouraged by inherited wealth and the previous ownership of land and capital which tends to cause a cyclical effect within the culture.

Religion can form a political minority of sorts, depending on your religion, your social, economic and political power may be diminished long before you had a chance to improve it, (e.g. Poles in Eastern Prussia or "the Jews for two thousand years" (Weber 1992)). Does the religion or cultural background you have grown up with have a major influence on your attitudes and thus the career path you embark on? Catholics prefer security, even if it means lower income. The Protestant prefers to eat well, the Catholic prefers to sleep undisturbed (Weber 1992). Interestingly, the German word for career is "Beruf", which comes from Lutheran translations of the Bible (a product of Reformation) and then translates to "calling". No such word in the history of civilised

languages exists for those of the Catholic faith. Answering your “calling” is said to be seen as a way of adhering to God’s plan for yourself. This can be viewed then as the Divine Will from God, imposing itself upon the choices and decisions made by an individual of the relevant faith. Weber (1992) states that within this form of Christianity, there is a much less ‘mystical’ presence, which tends to suggest that as a good Christian, you make your own ‘luck’.

An alternative theory suggests that Protestant prosperity in terms of economics is rooted in literacy levels and education, rather than a work ethic that was said to be associated with the denomination (Weber 1992). Luther’s demand that all Christians should read the bible in order to bring themselves closer to God may have had a positive knock-on effect in terms of economic development. This is more evident in the relevant data from both past and present, i.e. modern day and 19th century Prussia, shows that economic prosperity in Christian regions is complimented by excellent levels of literacy (Weber 1992). Luther’s development of the ‘calling’ during the reformation was seen to create a specific work ethic for Protestant’s in Weber’s eyes. This is compared to the Catholic alternative of achieving other-worldly morality in a bid to impress God forms different expectations, as well as different life goals for those from differing faiths (Weber 1992).

Considering its place within the social sciences, it is not too surprising that there is a slight confusion surrounding Weber’s actual message based on its several evaluations and critiques (Becker and Wossmann 2007). Numerous critics disagree with the fact a religion can determine your work ethic, but, considering Weber’s original work is still being discussed it shows it still holds a place in dialogues based on work ethic

Luther was never concerned with economics. Luther viewed and wanted an expansion on education so that people could read and understand the ‘Word’. There was no ulterior motive behind it. It was simply so Christians could bring themselves closer to God. In contrast, Catholic doctrine dictates that Catholics should look towards clergymen in order to teach them the word of God. From the Protestants’ perspective, this educational expansion led to increased chances of economic success. It is then a case of coincidence that a Christian recommended the improvements, especially when you factor in that the expansion was not to be used as somewhat of an economic tool

(Becker and Wossmann 2007).

The Catholic tendency to flock to their clergymen for moral guidance in terms of adhering to the social teachings of their faith looks somewhat brutish when you consider that Luther delivered sermons demanding the Protestant rulers build and maintain schools, as well as individuals, particularly parents, place huge emphasis on education. This, coincidentally, links in with the theory of human capital, in which education is seen as an investment in an individual so as to develop a worker who yields higher wages than those with lesser qualifications.

Work ethic, then, in this sense remains contested. There is no absolute clear and concise manner in which it can be measured despite associations between work ethic and cultural background. In these circumstances, it would be more beneficial to discuss an individual's attitude towards work, and to determine whether elements such as parental influences were more effective than that of purely cultural practices. With this, the question beckons: does an associated work ethic have any real effect on how you are treated in the job market? Whether you are a Polish painter with an outstanding reputation or a fully qualified medical doctor with an African background, do the results differ in terms of employment, unemployment or underemployment, particularly when examining as to whether a participant has been given the right and fair position to build upon their social capital.

2.5 Social capital for immigrants in the Irish workplace

Having previously examined the importance of social capital, we must consider its implications for immigrants within the Irish workplace. In Ireland, figures surrounding labour market activity are hazy at best and leave a lot to the imagination with very little conclusive results or statistics to paint a steady and clear picture of what the reality is in a modern European country (CSO 2014). The CSO (2014) provides baseline data for this study by presenting figures for foreign national's employment activity between the years 2009 and 2014. In this period between 60,000 and 90,000 foreign nationals per annum were given a government issued social security number, yet the employment activity never rises above 30,000 people. Well under half the immigrant population are lacking some form of activity in the labour market. Further, this table of figures is

presented without explanation; and is presented only in the form of figures, which leaves open some questions around the current situation for immigrant workers in Ireland. The CSO (2015) provided no indication of which sectors foreign nationals are employed in, and whether or not those immigrant workers are underemployed, i.e. in employment that is below their qualifications and training. Their figures are simply activity-based, with no indication of the quality of employment or any clear sign of the level of unemployment amongst immigrants.

This study will examine the lived and working experiences of immigrant workers in a qualitative sense which in turn illustrates their capacity to garner social capital; allowing them to become more active members of Irish society. Higher social capital permits the immigrant to compete at the top levels of employment, education and so on. It can be suggested that parents of immigrant children take on low-skilled jobs in order to provide a stable basis for their children to go on and achieve in their new home. Wall and Jose (2004) show that an absence from a close network of people, coupled with long working hours and a huge emphasis on getting work leads to poor integration. This is accompanied by a lack of knowledge surrounding crucial institutions and often leads to first generation migrant families availing of low-cost solutions for both their children's education and care (Wall and Jose 2004). This somewhat sacrificial form of labour market activity should, in theory, support a more productive result for the next generation in the above and beyond classes of society, but studies around intergenerational work ethic are inconclusive and tend to be situational and occupational based rather than a zoned in focus on families.

Having discussed studies surrounding intergenerational work ethic and its inconclusiveness, other elements will be examined in order to determine what, if any, barriers have been established that can prohibit immigrant workers from striving in the workplace that actively harm the process of creating and building upon their levels of social capital. This will be done by looking at historical influences that have led to discriminatory attitudes in present-day Ireland, with their effects on the lived experiences on immigrant workers being discussed in a modern-day context.

With that, it must be considered that elements of racism and discrimination exist within Ireland, but how is it contextualised and how does it look in practice? McVeigh (1992) argues that there is a unique form of racism that is exclusive to Ireland and can appear on different levels given its specificity. These specificities are based on the ‘diffusion’ of racism from Britain, the involvement of Irish people in the development of Western imperialism, the Irish diaspora, the ‘grafting on’ of racism to internal forces, such as sectarianism and the existence of anti-Traveller racism (McVeigh 1992). Given the nature of the research question, this will be the last mention of Travelling people, but the rest provide a basis that explains the racism shown towards immigrants in Ireland both in the past and present.

Ejorh (2007) discusses the legacy that Irish missions left within certain parts of Africa where the Irish were seen as an elite presence that implemented traditional and sensible values in the communities they established. This notion of elitism and need to reinforce such civilised values implies that the Irish viewed themselves as being superior to the Africans. Fanning (2002) states that this colonial attitude towards racial superiority began to provoke an image of destitution and a lack of civilisation in the minds of the Irish public. This was done through missionary magazines where priests would be stood next to or engaging a small group of black children. Africa was seen as a continent that was starved of Irish religious civilisation, as well as nourishment. This led to the phrase, ‘a penny for the black babies’. The equivalent to the contemporary charity box was viewed as a means of saving the deprived children of Africa and bringing them a step closer to the civilised nature of their Irish ‘heroes’ (Fanning 2002).

Horgan (1987) looks at the role of the media in promoting this image, not only in Ireland, but to world, during the African Famine of 1984. Images that transcribed during that period were promoted based on their ‘newsworthiness’, suggesting that the wave of coverage around a particular incident was based on editorial decisions, not on the actual order of events that transcribed throughout the Famine. This is seen as a way to grab the attention of the ‘elites’, but it is not one that is always effective. In contrast to this image, Guerin (2002) states that the media can become a platform for racism to display itself on a level where a particular ethnic group, in this case black Africans, as villains in an extremely embellished manner, more so in the case of Nigerians. Small

minorities of Nigerian nationals were branded as one by means of sensationalist headlines, where they were seen as rapists, fraudsters and members of the not-so-elegantly phrases, 'Black Mafia' (Guerin 2002). There were little attempts to analyse the large crime operations in Ireland with reference to the small amounts of Nigerians that operated within them. Joy White (2002) insists that this negative attention towards Nigerians in the media, has led to a situation where most Africans in Ireland are referred to as Nigerians. This negatively focused attention means that 'the blacker you are, the worse it gets'.

Mahadeo and MacKinney (2007) state that the media has the power to implement these representations, thus creating a stereotype around African communities in Ireland that insists they are dangerous and violent or uncivilised and poverty stricken. Media portrayals of Africa in the Western World focus on their major social problems, rather than the growth in the economy or an improvement in social conditions. In Ireland, Africa is seen as a continent that experiences political corruption in the form of corrupt leaders and countries that have no democracy, as well as this, Africa now equals poverty (Mahadeo and MacKinney 2007). The image given to Ireland is one where Africans are bystanders amidst their own controversies, waiting for the 'civilised world' to intervene.

ENAR Quarterly Reports suggest that racist incidents increase each quarter. In order to gain some form of scope on these incidents, the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th quarters between the January and December of 2014 were looked at. ENAR Ireland (2014) reports between the months of January, February and March, black Africans were the most recorded victims of racial discrimination, with nearly twice as many black Africans being exposed to discriminative behaviour in comparison to the second in line which were Muslims. The most common methods of this racist behaviour involved violent threats, abusive language, being treated unfairly in public and incidents of physical harassment. The most common perpetrator of this racist behaviour tends to be white Irish people, with around 80% of the reported incidents indicating that a white, Irish person carried it out. ENAR Ireland (2014) states that between the months of April, May and June, the racist incidents reported showed that black Africans, once again, remained in the top two of ethnic minority backgrounds that have been affected by racist abuse. Once again, the same trends keep reappearing with the majority of abuse

coming in the form of physical harassment, unfair treatment in public and the use of violent threats and abusive language. Similarly, to the 3rd quarter, the main actors in the carrying out of this abuse is white, Irish people. ENAR Ireland (2014) combines the 5th and 6th quarters which show horrendous results with regard to black Africans in Ireland, but what impact does this have on victims? ENAR Ireland (2014) states that victims do not feel a need to retaliate, rather they feel ashamed, depressed and unsafe within the region of the country they live. Feelings of anger and infuriation are also overwhelming as black Africans and other ethnic minorities feel somewhat cheated and traumatised by the incidents they have experienced whilst living in Ireland.

Immigrant Council of Ireland (2011) looks at the accounts of bus drivers Adam and Caleb in which each man experienced racial abuse for doing their job and simply instructing the public who availed of the bus service. Adam recalls asking three young men to not drink cans of beer on his bus as they walked on; they refused to pay and went to the top of the double-decker bus. Adam asked the three men to come back to pay, when he was greeted with extremely offensive remarks. When they revealed they had no money, he asked them to get off before they turned and spat in his face. Caleb reveals that he experienced racial abuse in the form of strong language for requesting that passengers pay their fares or that they respect the rules of the bus company. Incidents like this arose when Caleb asked for passengers to do things such as folding down buggies whilst on a non-wheelchair accessible bus. On a number of occasions, he was forced to call the authorities in order to reprimand the perpetrators.

Loyal (2011) states that the welcoming, vibrant, ‘tourist-friendly’ image is not as well represented as the country may think. Loyal (2011) refers to the alarming amounts of black Africans who experienced racial abuse whilst living in Ireland as a prime indicator of the contradiction that lies within this self-assigned image with over 80% of black Africans stating they have been victims of racial abuse. Similar to the accounts given in the Taking Racism Seriously report, many black Africans experience abuse whilst doing normal things, such as shopping.

This remains a common problem in Ireland with the ENAR 7th and 8th quarterly (2015) showing that Black Africans (25), and White Europeans (23), account for the majority

of racist incidents and almost twice as many compared to other ethnic backgrounds. South Asians and East Asians accounted for a combined total of 24 reported racist incidents, which seems to indicate that the formerly mentioned groups are at a much more alarming risk of discrimination. Most of these incidents tend to take place near the victims' home or on the street with only 8 incidents reported at work (ENAR 2015). This leaves open the question as to whether every incident was reported, which, in reality, is not likely. Those from black backgrounds are less likely to report the incident in comparison to those from White (other or European) and Asian (South and East), which draws even more attention to rates of report mentioned previously.

Although only slightly, the ENAR 9th and 10th quarterly (2015, p. 10) showed an increase in the number of incidents at work from 8 to 11, but this is not entirely clear, given this extract from the literature:

“Discrimination in service and employment accounted for 36 reports (22%). The reported cases of discrimination result from both direct and institutional racism, enacted by public and private bodies and individuals. Discrimination in this category describes incidents which appear to contravene the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 or the Equal Status Acts 2000–2015 (which outlaw discrimination in employment, vocational training, advertising, collective agreements, and the provision of goods and services), or which demonstrate discriminatory treatment by a public body on the grounds of race or ethnicity.”

There appears to be no real, coherent link between the figures and along with this, the report is not entirely clear as to whether this is based on discriminations, assault, verbal abuse, etc. The three main groups remain a constant throughout each quarterly report with White background (European/other) accounting for 27 incidents reported, Black (African or other) accounting for 47 and those from an Asian background (South & East) accumulating 30 reported incidents. As well as this three groups becoming a common presence in terms of the number of incidents reported across the 7th-8th and 9th-10th quarterly reports, the common perpetrators of this abuse and discriminatory behaviour are White Irish.

Immigrant Council of Ireland (2012) include a section on “Multi-Ethnic Luas workers”, but they tend to be those still from a black background, with little to no attention paid to those from a European background included with the detail and focus as it is with those with African heritage. The only section for Europeans appears short

and maintained inside one paragraph, which reads, “Eastern European members of the focus group did not experience the kinds of racist name calling experienced by black colleagues. However, they expressed concern at the high levels of anti-social behaviour, which included verbal abuse.” There is no elaboration on this accusation of anti-social behaviour shown towards them, nor are any of the focus group members represented in any of the personal accounts provided. Aside from this lack of attention paid to other backgrounds, the below statements have been extracted from the report to shed light on the experiences of George, a Luas driver in Dublin.

George: George experiences racism “every day” during what appear to be basic interactions with service users. When asking passengers for a ticket, he is met with “Fuck off nigger,” “Go back to your country,” etc. A man in his late 20s brought his 3-year old son aboard the Luas and then asked his child, “Do you wanna see the black monkey?” and “Can you make the sound of a monkey?” (Immigrant Council of Ireland 2012).

Given these barriers, what hope is there for immigrants gathering enough social capital to be either successful in the workplace and therefore, Irish society? Terrazas (2011) states that in America, there is very little room for upward mobility based on the barriers that exist for immigrant workers. AS-COA (2014) state that the only real hope for immigrant workers in an American context is if the upward mobilisation of American workers somehow creates a gap in the labour market, so as to gain some form of a foothold. Could this be the case for immigrants in Ireland, or are they given enough social capital to compete and thrive within their new surroundings and become successful in their own eyes, rather than the countries.

Brondolo et al (2012) states that cultural racism fosters an attitude that encourages race-related social distancing. This is aided by institutional racism and its ability to inhibit an individual’s ability to develop the necessary skills to integrate successfully within new surroundings. As well as this, the lack of solid integration can encourage interpersonal racism, thus damaging basic exchanges with other citizens and leading to a rise in the anxiety levels of the individual who experiences this form of racism from cross-race peers. If a society encourages different forms of racism, it can lead to a scenario in which internalised racism challenge the possible benefits of cross-race

relations in day-to-day life. From the above notes, we can see that racism has the ability to discourage peer relationships, which leads to racial disparities in economic, social, and health-related outcomes in society, as well as posing a threat to social cohesion within Irish society. As employment is a crucial source of social capital, both racism and institutional racism can be seen to have a grave impact on the lived experiences of immigrants, as well as their experiences in the Irish workplace.

Very little is documented in Ireland in terms of considering the lived experiences of immigrants, especially in a workplace setting, so it is difficult to gauge just how important a working life is in terms of gathering social capital and its effect on the mental health and overall well-being of an immigrant. Kouvenen et al (2008) reported that amongst Finnish public-sector workers, depression levels were reported as being higher for those who indicated they had low levels of social capital and vice versa.

Participants were measured using a “workplace social capital” self-assessment scale that posed statements such as: we have a ‘we are together’ attitude, people feel understood and accepted by each other, and we can trust our supervisor. The responses were measured using a standard likert scale where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. Kouvenen et al (2008) shows that for the 34,000 baseline of “non-depressed” participants, the chances of those who reported low levels of workplace social capital were 20-50% higher of reporting that they had physician-diagnosed depression. These cases involved participants starting courses of anti-depressants and seeking out to physicians after the baseline figures were taken into consideration (Kouvenen et al 2008).

It is felt that low workplace social capital and feelings of depression can be compared to social capital in a neighbourhood context. For instance, low social capital can reflect a situation whereby an individual has less access to suitable services that can aid with fighting feelings of depression (Kouvenen et al 2008). As well as this, low integration with social groups and networks can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness (Kouvenen et al 2008). Communities and neighbourhoods that are bombarded with the above symptoms can be seen as strugglers in terms of finding remedies to fight against these disadvantages that have been placed upon them by poor levels of social capital. From this, we can catch a snapshot of the importance of work and its ability, not only

to accumulate social capital, but to fend off feelings of isolation, depression and loneliness. If this is the case for indigenous workers in the Finnish public sector, what is the likelihood of these feelings being much more frequent amongst immigrant workers in Ireland, who may have entered the country with a blank slate in terms of their personhood.

As Brondolo et al (2012) mentions, the level of discrimination can further increase the risk of isolation, but in Ireland, there tends to be more of a focus on uncovering the racist incidents reported by those from a black background rather than developing a more complete picture of the wide variety of nationalities that dwell in Ireland. This degree of discriminative behaviour combined with the effects outlined by Brondolo et al (2012), point towards a situation in which immigrants will consistently and constantly struggle to build social capital in a hostile environment. A lack of attention paid to Eastern European workers in comparison to those from a black background from one of few published pieces of work highlights a need for research in this area.

2.6 Bridging, Bonding & Social Capital

Having examined immigrants in the workplace in general, as well as focusing in on the dearth of research available that examines the social capital of immigrants in the workplace, the question arises as to whether there is measures available to assist an immigrant worker or indeed, any immigrant, who looks to accumulate social capital. Two measures that present themselves quite frequently in the literature are that of ‘bridging’ and ‘bonding’. These two measures look at the types of networks that can be established in order to aid the holistic and proper integration of any immigrant who envelop themselves within new surroundings. By examining the relationships between an individual and a bridge or bond, the advantages and disadvantages of having these types of relationships can be determined. Through doing this, we can see what type of influence bridges and bonds have on the individual and how they affect the accumulation of social capital, as well as the overall lived experience.

Bridging and bonding are two helpful concepts that can help an immigrant settle into new surroundings. A ‘bridge’, or a relationship with cross-ethnic connections sounds

like a useful tool for an immigrant looking to gain a head start, so to speak, in a new labour market. The same goes for ‘bonding’, which essentially involves the deep-rooted connections an immigrant may have with someone from a similar background that enables them to form a relationship that can assist with the integration process into new surroundings (Lancee 2010). Bonding, in contrast to bridging, involves more trust due to the fact it is more common within networks of people. Given its connection within networks of people, it can be seen to be a hindrance in the labour market due to an individual coming away from a close, solidarity-based relationship and going into newer surroundings that are a far-cry away from a particular ethnic community (Sanders and Nee 1996).

Bridging, however, looks to extend upon an immigrant’s social networks and develop relationships outside of their ethnic community. Like bonding, bridging is associated with a structural and cognitive feature. Lancee (2010) states that with bonding, its structural element lies within the family and the extremely tight networks of immigrants from a similar background with its cognitive feature focusing on the levels of trust that develop from these ties. Bridging differs slightly however, with its structural element being more concerned with the connections made outside of their own community and its cognitive component looking at how the attitudes of indigenous people are adopted (Lancee 2010).

These different forms of bridging and bonding were then examined in relation to their effect on labour market outcomes. Interestingly, only structural bridging had any real positive effect in terms of labour market outcomes and participation. Lancee (2010) states that close, structural bonding within the immigrant community can lead to a form of isolation, in which, no real useful information is supplied to an individual that will eventually lead to better paid jobs. Lancee (2010) states that those with bridging connections are two times more likely to find better paid jobs and participate more effectively in the labour market compared to those who have not developed these connections.

The economic outcomes that come from bonding and bridging are there to see, but what does it look like for an immigrant without the presence of bridging, or even bonding in new surroundings? McMichael and Manderson (2004) examine the effects of resettlement for Somali women, one of Australia’s largest migrant groups in recent

years. The narratives supplied by these women focus on a disillusionment with regards to community life in Melbourne, even in comparison to their war-torn community-based lives in Somalia. Horrendous homeland conditions have combined with the difficulties of resettlement to damage the chance of community cohesion (McMichael and Manderson 2004).

Giving the circumstances that envelop Somalia, the assumption would be that a move away from the upheaval of an entire nation would instantly result in a more positive outlook on the new life that awaits, but this simply is not the case in this instance. Gupta and Ferguson (1997) have argued, immigrants “use memory of place to construct imaginatively their new lived world.” This is certainly evident in these women’s narratives as social norms and values allowed for strong levels of trust to be built, allowing for the development of strong relationships in a solid community setting.

McMichael and Manderson (2004) recall the the account of Maryam, an elderly widow recalls how people in Somalia would gather outside in the afternoon to chat with one another and, for want of a better term, gossip. This simple activity, though, allowed for high levels of trust and togetherness within the community. Trust and togetherness are two essential features of social capital, so what does it look like when that level of social capital that is embedded in an exceptional community is lost?

McMichael and Manderson (2004) state that migration does not only mean movement away from a country, but the movement away from the relationships that have been built. Samira, who lives with her husband and children in Melbourne, states that she has no family and friends aside from the ones listed above within her vicinity. Samira believes that support in Australia only comes in instances such as pregnancy or if there has been a death; both herself and her family were given some support in their first week in Melbourne, but after that, nothing. Samira believes this is a product of the lifestyle in Australia, in which, each individual has their own problem; leading to this lack of community engagement. McMichael and Manderson (2004) show that this complete culture shock has led to cases of loneliness and depression in resettled Somali women.

This is not only the product of Australians showing a lack of solidarity with a cohort of people they would struggle to empathise or engage with considering the differences

in circumstances surrounding their upbringing, in some cases, it comes from those within the Somali community. Rouse (1991) explains how migration can leave the social nature of a particular group open to the manipulation of change in their current situation. Amina gives an account of how fellow Somali's alerted her to a problematic neighbour who was said to have been abusive to her children, as well as disrespectful to her property. Instead of offering real support, the Somali's within the neighbourhood only simply stirred trouble between Amina and her neighbour before hiding away from the situation entirely. McMichael and Manderson (2004) state that civil war, as well as resettlement for Somali's in a new country has broken the level of community trust, on top of the tarnishing of pre-existing social arrangements that encouraged trust amongst one another. Given the nature of Somali's resettlement, past social arrangements that were once a sign of togetherness and community bonding have become a tool to fuel a unique form of distain for one another. Fahia believes that because Somali women are lonely in Australia, with little to do outside the home, they engage in gossiping about one another; which is unfortunately extremely convenient given that "here, all Somalis know each other." A history of violence has led to distrust and a lack of togetherness for those who have chosen to resettle in Australia (McMichael and Manderson 2004). With a distinct gap between Somali women and Australian society forming, it is fair to assume that these conditions will only worsen with no sign of bonding or bridging in sight.

Given that this study will look to examine the lived experiences of immigrants, focusing on bridges and bonds as an assistant to integrating at a faster and much more efficient rate is necessary. Through the previous discussion, we can see how the existing literature sees bridging as a more idyllic way of establishing yourself within a new society as it encourages an immigrant to venture into different networks, groups or even a partner. In contrast to this, bonding is seen as a hindrance, although its importance cannot be doubted as a comforting factor upon arrival in a new country; although its disadvantages have been highlighted as it can lead to a situation in which an individual can become stuck within a cohort of people from a similar background that prohibits them from experiencing a new country in its entirety. By discussing these with participants, we can determine if their lived experiences have been influenced by the presence of bridges and bonds.

2.7 Conclusion

Having discussed the various elements of this study and explored the existing literature, certain areas have been highlighted that call for research into this topic given the current lack of this particular knowledge in Ireland at present. Examining the depth and intricacies of social capital provided the pathways that are taken to earn and accumulate it upon arrival in a new country. The existing literature focused more on how this can be measured from a political point of view and how it reflects on the social stance of a particular group. This study will look to adopt the previous approaches, but also take into consideration the everyday effects of this in other areas of an immigrant workers social life. Through doing this, focusing in on the creation of nation states that draws on the racialisation of immigrants, as well as their ability to adapt to the spoken language of a country in order to blend in to the countries background and avoid discriminatory barriers that have been established by the country on a sub-conscious level. This study will call on participants to demonstrate the importance of the English language and to provide details throughout their narratives if they have ever felt discriminated against on any level since arriving in Ireland.

Continuing on a discussion that relates to barriers to social capital, this study will look to examine whether participants have become members of closed off, immigrant groups that would hinder their ability to accumulate more social capital. As well as this, governmental barriers will be considered and addressed as participants outline if they have been able to mobilise themselves freely within the labour market since coming to Ireland. Their ability to do so will reflect on past studies and the feelings of ethnic minority workers who feel underappreciated and held back in the workplace.

Having taken into consideration societal barriers, the work ethic and mentality of immigrant workers will be discussed. This comes from the point of view that an inability to establish social capital may not be dependent on a countries conditions, rather that it is reliant on the mind-set of the individual regardless of cultural background or race. Given that work ethic and its measurement are contested, this study will look to ask participants to provide a narrative that reflects their own mind-set that reflects on the standard of their lived experience, as well as their level of social capital. This leads to the lack of research surrounding the social capital and lived experiences of immigrant workers in Ireland. The deficiencies surrounding it have been highlighted

and criticised by looking at research conducted in other nations that take into consideration the lived experiences of its workers.

In terms of examining social capital and immigrants in Ireland, virtually no research has been conducted to date. There are several racism and discrimination based reports available such as the ones noted above; but there is nothing specifically focused on our chosen topic. Examining the social capital of immigrants is quite common elsewhere in the Western World. Studies conducted in other countries show that the social lives of immigrants are hugely affected by their levels of social capital. Reports based on discriminatory behaviour shown towards immigrant workers highlight a difficulty with engaging with Irish institutions; though nobody -to date- has considered this within the context of immigrant's social capital.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The present qualitative study involves exploring the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland through semi-structured interviews focusing on interviewees' experiences of social capital. Having completed this interview, participants were asked to also take a minimum of ten photographs which reflected their sources of social capital based on the photovoice method. This has allowed for a more holistic overview of the level of social capital each immigrant worker has and in turn, given a more in-depth view into their lives.

3.1.2 Epistemology

Given that this research topic looks to use exploratory qualitative research, it is important to briefly look at the role of epistemology as it determines the approach to analysing the data. Tennis (2008, p.103) states that epistemology is "how we know". In essence, as a researcher you gather knowledge, but your epistemic position determines what type of knowledge that is. Tennis (2008) states that epistemology practically determines what is deemed valid in terms of research and plays an important role in determining the suitability and acceptability of the presenting of knowledge, as well as the means of discovering this knowledge.

As the methods used in this study aim to highlight the lived experience and understanding of social capital of immigrant workers, it is essential to look at the relationship between methodology and methods. Willig (2001) states that methodology and methods are often, at times, interchangeable, but both have specific roles with regards research. Methodology in this case is seeing as the general approach, whereas methods is concerned with the techniques that were used. The position taken for each is an indicator of the quality of findings that would be provided in the end product (i.e. how does the epistemological position determine what approach is taken? [Willig, 2001]). In this instance, exploratory qualitative research was used. By using qualitative research methods, it was far more practical to consider the meaning and significance

of the words that the participants were discussing throughout the research process. Willig (2001) states that in this case, the researcher can understand what it is like to experience things such as living with a chronic illness or being unemployed. For this research topic, I was able to gain an understanding of what it is like to live as a working immigrant in Ireland. Social capital is a term with contested meaning and a variety of definitions, but in essence, it is concerned with how well connected an individual is socially so that they can access different parts of society and live as an integrated part of that community (Sander 2002). Using an exploratory approach enabled me to gain an insight into what meaning the interviewees used to construct their sense of social connectedness and what feelings they expressed about their lived experiences in Ireland having gained access into different avenues of social capital having been made employed whilst in Ireland. This is primarily concerned with basics such as a network of friends that they can rely on for interaction and support, as well as more structured networks in the form of clubs and organisations.

Willig (2001) states that having an exploratory stance enables the researcher to determine what feelings and meanings the research participant has towards the proposed theories and concepts, particularly in areas of uncertainty or where there appears a lack of knowledge. As there is a dearth in this particular type of research in Ireland, exploratory methods were employed in order to address the apparent ignorance surrounding the topic and to allow for participants to expand on their experiences. The exploratory nature allows for flexibility and is recommended as the most fitting research design in an area where a deal of uncertainty resides (van Wyk 2012).

As language forms an important part of the research findings in terms of it being a requirement to take part in the interview, as well as its ability to provide a stepping stone for participants to interact with societal institutions, it is important to note critical language awareness as a part of reflexivity, which determines the role of the researchers own experiences, values and beliefs in determining the research (Nightingale and Cromby 1999). Critical language awareness, or simply, assessing how and why certain language is used in order to determine if they are pre-conceived notions attached to the words used by an individual (Wallace 1998), in this instance is simply used as a tool to for participants to attach meaning to their experiences, whilst being asked open-ended questions by the researcher in a formal, as well as conversational-styled interview.

Adopting this stance resonates with social constructionism. Social construction builds our understanding through social interaction, and indeed, language. Through interacting with other actors in society, a knowledge is created by gathering together a ‘system of statements’ that form together the complete ‘object’ (Parker 1992, pg 5). Discussing and analysing how exactly language is used by the participants shows elements of social constructionism as it is primarily concerned with how we build our knowledge based on interactions with others (Burr 1995). Willig (2001) notes that if a researcher asks a participant ‘how they felt’ as a part of the question, it will instantly be coded as emotion and answered as such. Instances such as these determine the eventual findings and have been considered whilst analysing the gathered data. This is particularly the case when posing questions directly relating to the issue of trust, as well as social and emotional support from surrounding networks.

3.2 Study 1: Interviews with currently employed immigrants residing in Waterford

Study 1 involved completing structured interviews with 11 participants.

The interviews were based on a set of harmonised questions that were used to determine the level of social capital of individuals in the United Kingdom, which will be discussed in further details in section 3.2.2. The majority of questions were taken directly from this study but were adjusted to facilitate the specifics of life in Ireland that would not be present in the United Kingdom, such as political terminology and societal institutions. The final set of questions removed elements in Green and Fletcher’s (2003) pilot study were showcards were used to gather information in order to provide a more free-flowing interview so as to effectively gather the narratives portrayed by each participant. Each interview involved gathering the lived experience of a participant since arriving in Ireland in order to determine their levels of social capital.

3.2.1 Participants

The participants were employed immigrants, currently residing in Ireland. The participants ages ranged between 24 – 54 years old. Given the range, it was interesting to look into the differing experiences for those who have been a part of the workforce

for decades in comparison to those who have just entered it. The occupations involved: a qualified machine operator, a security guard who is currently in college in order to pursue a career in I.T., a former fast food restaurant manager who is now currently a sales assistant in a local supermarket, a factory supervisor, a customer service agent who has since taken up employment in his preferred career choice of accountancy from the time of the interview, a lab technician, a restaurateur, a cleaning technician, a member of the Order of the Christian Brothers who works as a Director of a Integration Support Unit and has different roles in the local community to aid the development of immigrants, a local business owner, and a former crèche worker who now works from home. The nationalities included, Cameroonian, Lithuanian, Czech Republicans, Scottish, Polish, Italian and a Pakistani-Canadian. Amongst these nationalities were eight men and four women. Participants were chosen based on availability, standard of English and nature of occupation.

People were approached for this study based on a prior knowledge of specific experiences they had that were of use to this study, as well as knowing their ability to speak English. Participants were identified through discussions with colleagues, both past and present, as well as my own personal networks. In order to gather the results required, I have used purposive sampling. By choosing the method of purposive sampling, the researcher may not know the participant personally, but is aware of their usefulness with the research question through past experience or through other contacts they possess (Freedman et al 2007). This method of non-probability sampling involved gathering individuals that were best suited to the proposed hypothesis rather than interviewing random samples of the population. This can create an element of bias and reduce the results to incoherency (Miles and Huberman 1994). Within this proposed research design, the possibility of snowball sampling arose. Some opportunities were made available to interview another participant that has been recommended by the previous interviewee in order to gather a greater insight into the research question.

Purposive sampling will be used to select to select participants, which serve a particular purpose for the proposed research. This method of non-probability sampling involves gathering individuals that are best suited to the proposed hypothesis rather than interviewing random samples of the population. Similar to composing a sample of human participants, the communities assembled for the visual sociology element of this

study will be based on prior research of the relevant areas so as to determine their applicability within the research aims. As well as purposive sampling within this proposed research design, the possibility of snowball sampling arises. An opportunity may be made available to interview another participant that has been recommended by the previous interviewee in order to gather a greater insight into the research question. Data was collected from eleven participants.

| Age | Gender | Occupation | Country of birth |
|-----|--------|---|------------------|
| 24 | Male | Customer Care Agent (Accountant in training) | Cameroon |
| 33 | Male | Machine Operator | Czech Republic |
| 34 | Male | Security Guard | Czech Republic |
| 42 | Male | Restaurateur | Italy |
| 39 | Female | Childcare/Housewife | Poland |
| 39 | Female | Self-employed | Poland |
| 37 | Female | Lab Technician | Poland |
| 43 | Male | Factory Supervisor | Czech Republic |
| 54 | Male | Cleaning Technician | Scotland |
| 53 | Male | Integration Support Director | Pakistan |
| 32 | Male | Manager | Lithuania |

3.2.2. Semi-structured interviews

There are many different forms of interviews that exist within qualitative research methods, but for this research topic, semi-structured interviews were carried out. Oppenheim (1992) states that the main focus of a semi-structured interview is further develop the proposed research question rather than producing findings that involve an empirical. An element that is attached to this type of interview is that of spontaneity. This was relevant to the proposed research question as different individuals may have

different understandings and diverse experiences with immigrant students. Adopting this approach allowed the researcher to maintain an element of naturalness throughout the interview and ask questions that may arise in the conversation that occurs between researcher and participant during the interview. Oppenheim (1992) states that the researcher, in this instance, should reduce his or her role to a minimum as it is more important to gather the ideas and information provided by the participant. It was important, in these scenarios, to pick up on what was being provided and to find gaps so as to discover what the reasoning is behind these gaps. As it would have been difficult to gather the information first hand and then transcribe it, the researcher recorded the participants during the interview.

The use of semi-structured interview questions allowed for the formation of a narrative that Ewick and Silbey (2003) believes gives power to the individual in circumstances that may normally be personal or even discrete in some cases. Given the nature of the study, it was essential that the participant felt free to discuss their views on a matter that lacks a certain degree of attention in the current research. Given the ability of the story to change as it progresses, it was important for the interviewer to keep their role to a minimum, but also engage in active listening so that the participant felt as though they were being engaged and so they felt their story is in fact, reaching an audience (Ewick and Silbey 2003).

Although spontaneity is encouraged in this form of interview, certain criteria needed to be met when measuring social capital in terms of its values, for this, Grooetaert and van Bastelaer (2002) recommend using the SOCAT or Social Capital Analysing Tool. This creates a more valid set of results when discussing the personal experiences of foreign workers within their new institution.

Grooetaert and van Bastelaer (2002) view the main advantages of using this tool as the following:

- The SOCAT takes into consideration different cultural variations, but still maintain a unifying conceptual framework
- Takes into consideration the cultural norms/appropriate social activity

Furthermore, it is seen to be flexible and encourages the collection baseline data before examining the chosen communities, so as to monitor any possible progress throughout. Grootaert and van Bastelaer (2002) state that it monitors community and household factors in comparison with economic and social factors, such as: crime, education, employment, etc. The elements associated with the SOCAT have been incorporated within the semi-structured interview along with questions surrounding employment and education.

Whilst devising a set of questions to explore the experiences of immigrant workers, a harmonised set of questions was combined with those of relevance to this study, thus allowing for both broad, open-ended questions, as well as taking into consideration the possible sensitivity of some of the subjects at hand. These harmonised questions, piloted and tested by Green and Fletcher (2003) provided an extensive array of questions that look to test the varying elements attached to measuring social capital. As these have been only piloted and tested in the United Kingdom, some questions are irrelevant when interviewing immigrants in Ireland, so it was proposed to add questions in their place to provide a more relevant set of findings. Bankston (2004) states that social capital cannot just be a structure of relations, but it must also include the values, beliefs and expectations that are maintained and acted upon within certain social structures. Giving this, it was not only crucial that the pilot questions were considered; but mixed with the essential values and beliefs that are associated with social capital.

Having gathered the interviews that were recorded through an audio device that was thoroughly password protected, each one was transcribed verbatim for the entirety of the process. Participants were made fully aware of the conditions for this study and were given detailed information on the project, along with informed consent sheets that were signed and dated, as this was a detrimental part of the recording of the given data. These ethical processes were taken into consideration at the beginning of this thesis but were also re-structured in light recommendations made by the Waterford Institute of Technology's ethics committee.

3.2.3 Analysis: Thematic narrative analysis

The interviews themselves as stated previously, were semi-structured in order to allow the participant to fully build their narrative and to engage fully in the process of data collection. Yeager (2012) states that allowing for a semi-structured interview assists the interview, not only in terms of its flow, but in its ability to allow for any possible follow-ups the researcher may have. This encourages the need for expressive, flexible and in-depth explorations of the lived experiences of working immigrants in Ireland. Open ended questions will further aid this requirement as Riesmann (1993) states that open ended, broad questions encourage the interviewer to piece together the beginning, middle and future outlook that has been provided by the participant. This highlights the points made earlier with regards to allowing the participants to express themselves in order to bring about new pieces of data to deconstruct (Misler 1991). The narrative then, becomes just as important as the way it is told and acted out by the individual. Silberstein (1988) states that this unlocks an array of concepts in the ‘audience’ that is subject to the narrative being told by the participant. It creates a process in the minds of the audience whereby they attach their own learned theories, schemas and formulations towards the story that is unfolded before them. Birch (2011, p.38) states that using thematic narrative analysis focuses on what was communicated whilst maintaining the “whole story”. By doing this, the narratives maintain their structure whilst being interpreted. In this sense, a semi-structured interview opens up the opportunity to analyse not only ‘what’ was said, but also ‘how’ it was said (Presser 2003). Using thematic narrative analysis in conjunction with the interviews allowed for the accounts to maintain their integrity in the development of new concepts and ideas Birch (2011).

Given that the questions were structured based on Grootaert and van Bastelaer ‘s (2002) analytical tools with regards to social capital and Green and Fletcher’s (2003) combination of extensive questions to measure social capital, the narratives provided from the interviews were gathered and aligned with common themes or any general pattern that formed throughout with a strong focus on attaching these to social capital. The thematic narrative analysis was used for this study and it was flexible and allowed for a ‘story’ to be formed for the lived experiences of working immigrants in Ireland above everything else. Using thematic narrative analysis with a semi-structured

interview allowed for elements of social capital, such as trust and social networks to be combined and arranged into a coherent and informative account of the general level of social capital that exists for working immigrants. Birch (2011) states that thematic narrative analysis can be very useful for identifying commonality across participants, through the idea of shared themes. This meant that the accounts could be compared under a theme in order to create a complete image of the lived experiences of immigrant workers.

To do this effectively, Reismann's approach was applied; Reismann (1993) states that the interviews should be approached in the same way any regular, day-to-day conversation should be approached. This emphasises the point previously made with regards Ewick and Silbey (2003); Mislner (1991) viewpoint whereby participants are given some form of control, as well as freedom to dictate how this research is gathered and portrayed as they assume the role of an actor that looks to perform a story through expression, based on the events that have had a part to play in their lived experiences as a worker in Ireland. More specifically in line with this study, Glover (2004) outlines specifically how thematic narrative analysis works in conjunction with a semi-structured interview that calls upon the participant to offer up a personal account of their lived experiences. Glover (2004) indicates that questions can be posed simplistically and can be as open as 'tell me the story of your community garden'. This can translate easily into this particular piece of research with regards to asking how the individual arrived in Ireland or rather 'tell me a bit about your educational background?'. These open questions lead to a narrative that takes into consideration the elements and segments provided by each of the participants in relation to its effect on how an individual's actions constructed the actions and goals of others involved in the community (Glover 2004). Riessman (2008) states that theorising across common themes is a long-standing tradition within narrative inquiries. This technique was used consistently throughout the research process and it has allowed for stronger narratives to be articulated by participants. Sections of the narratives have been provided throughout the analysis of the data, particularly in reference to their thematic backgrounds.

3.2.4 Procedural steps for thematic narrative analysis:

- Interviews were recorded and transcribed with the participants consent then stored for analysing.
- The interview transcript was considered as the narrative for the purposes of analysis. Interview transcripts were analysed and read through in order to identify common patterns across the interviews with the 11 participants.
- Narratives were developed based on these common patterns, e.g. using the base of the narrative to be built on the answers from the last question, ‘Question 10: Can you summarise your life in Ireland up to this point?’ Each participant responded positively to this question. (See Appendix E)
- These narratives were then collapsed into a smaller number of common themes, e.g. from taking the answers to this question and exploring the account of each participant, it was possible to attach a reason to this answer. This showed that the lived experience may not be as positive, which led to an exploration of immigrant workers social capital throughout the analysis.
- The themes were then analysed, taking into consideration the shared and contrasted experiences in order to determine the lived experiences and levels of social capital for immigrant workers.

3.3 Study two: Photovoice

In study two, the same 11 participants completed the second part of the study. The interviewees were asked provide images in order to provide a more holistic insight into the level of social capital each immigrant worker accesses in Ireland. Photovoice can be understood as a method under the umbrella of visual sociology. Harper (1988) describes visual sociology as images that can be used to describe sociological concepts and phenomena. For a method that goes under the radar in many cases, it maintains the purpose of adding a unique element to any sociological based study (Harper 1988). Visual sociology is perhaps most effective when using the ‘photovoice method’, in which photographs that have been taken by participants are used to examine and reflect upon the emotions and experiences that have led to those particular images been chosen (Wang and Burris 1997).

3.3.1 Procedure and analysis:

After the semi-structured interviews, participants were provided with instructions and guidelines for the photovoice study (Appendix F). Each participant was asked if they had the sufficient technology to forward on images via their smartphones, providing a swift and efficient method of collecting data.

Wang and Burris (1997) state that by using photovoice, people can cooperate with the researcher to provide evidence that promotes a unique level of expertise and new knowledge. This particular method can be seen to be quite advantageous when dealing with communities, in particular, as it allows for an insight into this chosen communities' social world. It opens up an opportunity to build a narrative. To assist with building the narrative and analysing the images with this notion of participant cooperation, each person was asked to attach a small caption depicting what the picture represented or simply stating what it was displaying. Gonzales and Rincones (2013) that photovoice, in this sense, allows for participants to become creators of new knowledge as they are involved, almost first-hand in the presentation of new information regarding their community or society. Having gathered the photos and attached captions, each image was coded relative to the answers provided for the themed questions to highlight and further enhance the narrative that was given by each working immigrant. In this case, a participant provided images of their community group participating in both cultural rituals, as well as partaking in Irish national holidays which highlighted important elements of social capital such as social support, trust in the wider community and involvement in a structured organisation.

Beh (2011) supports these narrative accounts by grouping together the most common and representative photographs in order to reflect the experience of the participants. These narratives paired with the photos provided offer a holistic view into the lives of the participants, an element that is crucial with this research. Nykiforuk et al (2011) states that offering short summaries with the images based on the narratives provided with the relevant images gives the findings more depth and meaning. It is important to note that as only 5 -7 photos were chosen to reflect the answers given in the interviews that some may be left out as they did not concern the research objectives or any of the issues that were explored during the research process. This then substantially reflects

the flexibility and the adaptability that will need to be present throughout this study, not only from the researcher, but from each of the participants as each image will need to purposely reflect the narrative that was given.

Procedural steps for photovoice method:

- Participants were provided with guidelines and instructions for the photovoice method (Appendix F)
- Based on recommendations for the literature, participants were asked if they needed assistance with the provision of a camera in order to capture the images.
- Each participant possessed a camera phone. Given this, a method for forwarding on the images was agreed upon.
- Having received the data, the images were analysed in order to determine where they needed to be placed in reference to the themes that had been constructed through narrative analysis.
- Given that using the photovoice method left an opportunity for identifiable elements to be seen, blurred effects were applied to any recognisable features of the image. These varied from people's faces to street signs.

3.4 Ethical Issues and Limitations

Due to the specific requirement of each participant being an immigrant currently in employment in Ireland, there may have been a language or communications barrier that could cause problems during the interviews and the explaining of the detail required in the photovoice study. Therefore, participants were required to be able to converse in English that will allow them to participate in this study with no complications. In this regard, gatekeepers can act as a 'filter'. Nykiforuk et al (2011) states that good coordination of the project will be needed given that it will be a particular sample of people taking part.

Gatekeepers were asked only to refer participants who already have a conversational or high standard of English to partake in this study. However, this limitation caused a situation whereby good and useful material cannot be gathered, as a possible participant

is unable to communicate well enough to take part in the study. Due to the fact neither supervisor nor researcher has the foreign language skills or any funding to pay for translation services, it was a practical and necessary limitation. Effective and efficient organisation ensured that any possible limitations posed by sampling methods will be reduced to a minimum (Nykiforuk et al 2011).

As these participants are immigrant workers, there might be a possibility that certain individuals who have agreed to participate in the study may not have legal status to work in Ireland. Although it does raise an ethical concern, it was made abundantly clear that legality, or otherwise, of each participant will not be assessed or form the basis of any questions posed during this project. This will ensure that this sociological based researched maintains its integrity as participants will not be undermined, nor will their confidence in sociological matters be negatively impacted by the research that is being undertaken (SAI 2004). This study examined the lived experience of immigrant workers in Ireland and the extent of the social ties that connect them to Irish society and to their own communities, rather than the legal status that has been/has not been obtained by some individuals. Each immigrant worker who complies and meets the selection criteria is seen to be of value to the study as they hold a certain life experience that is detrimental in determining the final steps of this study with regards analysis and discussions. In order to combat this, participants were not asked questions surrounding their legality and were de-identified in order to protect their privacy. The questions asked of these workers focused on their values and attitudes towards their new surroundings, as well as gaging as to how these square up with regards their own values and attitudes. SAI (2004) state that respecting the rights of all people is paramount in the conduction of research. This approach with participants will guarantee that no bias exists within the study, nor will any form of discrimination be present throughout, whether it based on race, denomination or otherwise (SAI 2004).

In terms of the photovoice study, street names and other identifiable elements were de-identified with blurred out effects being applied to the pictures in the case that certain street names or nearby stores are exposed. Street names can also be reverted to generic terms such as: 'local council estate' or 'city centre', etc. People will not be the focus of the images provided. However, if a situation arises where faces are visible, the faces present will be blurred. Given et al (2011) states that privacy is a major ethical

consideration when using the photovoice method. Due to the importance of privacy, Given et al (2011) recommends that each participant is briefed on the ethics associated with research. Respecting the privacy of each participant is of huge importance in this study. Through respecting the privacy of each individual, good relations can be built, so that those taking part can entirely trust the competence of the researcher to carry out an effective research project (SAI 2004). In the event where a research participant feels they are at some risk, they will be made completely aware of their option to withdraw from the study (SAI 2004).

Rigorous ethical considerations were taken with regards to the interview process as nature of the interviews themselves open up the opportunity for participants to reveal detailed and intimate information about themselves. Alsheenqeti (2014) states that researchers should guarantee that researchers have given informed consent to avoid any ethical complications. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and required to sign an informed consent sheet that will be give them a brief overview of the project, as well as outlining what will result after their voluntary participation in terms of publication of data, the storage of data, etc. This information was verbally communicated and in writing on the informed consent document. Permission to record the interviews was sought with this document. Cohen et al (2007) states that this is paramount in ensuring the protection and proper data collection procedure for the information that has been given.

The security and data protection for each individual was paramount throughout this research. In order to protect each individual, all quantitative and qualitative data, i.e. interview recordings, transcripts and analysis of photos, is only available to the researcher, principal supervisor, and co-supervisor. All recorded information was be secured and protected on a WIT based storage device in compliance with section 2.1.d. of the Data Protection Act 1988. No participant will be given any unrealistic expectations with regards the data storage. To combat this, each participant was made aware of why elements of the study are being noted and recorded (SAI 2004). Acting in compliance with these guidelines will ensure that WIT's policy of each research student taking on the responsibility of acting within the regulations of the Data Protection Act 1988 is adhered to (WIT 2017).

Chapter 4: Analysis

This chapter will present the findings of studies one and two in a synthesised thematic analysis of the interviews and photovoice studies. The aim of this research topic was to provide a more comprehensive understanding of immigrants in Ireland given the existing literature's primary focus on statistics. Through selecting working immigrants, it was possible to focus on participants who have been not only been able to adapt, but to integrate to some extent and find a home away from home. This indicates that an individual has been able to live a life that is no different to the one they created in their own country as they look to become active participants in a new society. A sense of feeling as though you are 'home', creates a platform for an individual to create and expand upon their social capital. Given that social capital has provided the theoretical framework for this study, looking into the lived experiences of employed immigrants meant that they had already gained an access point into gathering social capital (i.e. the work place). The working world allows for employees and employers alike to gather together networks of people where they can access their interests and become a more social connected individual; it also provides an environment that can highlight an individual's isolation. In this sense, this chapter will look to analyse as to whether the working immigrant participants, as active members of the working world, are in a position in which they can become socially connected individuals, or whether outside factors such as established connections, feelings of trust and personal viewpoints enhance or hinder their chances of doing so.

Paramount to this study's contribution to the academic literature is the combination of both the semi-structured interviews and the photovoice method in the exploration of the social capital of immigrant workers. This chapter will present the findings of the thematic analysis according to four themes identified in the analysis of interviews and images:

1. Ireland as home ("Your home is where your heart is and my heart is here")
2. Bridging and bonding ("I find it easier if I was with friends in another country")
3. Resilience ("I have to survive")
4. Trust ("We didn't feel safe")

4.1 Theme 1: Ireland as home

“Your home is where your heart is and my heart is here”

The initial assumption for this study was that each participant had generally adapted to Ireland after an initial break-in period. What is meant by this is that each immigrant was able to successfully navigate their way into the Irish labour market, in some form, and begin to establish their social capital. Ireland has provided a place in which immigrants could come and exercise their social potential through education, the workplace and even through involvement in clubs and organisation, some of whom had set up their own and had actively sought about acting out social responsibilities as an appendage to being a part of a club. Each participant towards the end of each interview had been asked to summarise their life in Ireland up to this point. At times it offered out an echoing representation of their interviews with others delivering a more positive summary than what some of the more intricate details of their narrative may have suggested.

Extract 1: Neo, male, 32 years old, Lithuania.

For instance, Neo presented a depiction of himself in his views on his time in Ireland:

R: ...What I'll ask you to do is to just give a summary of your life in Ireland up to this point, so even taking into consideration the interview, could you sum it up briefly in a few sentences?

P: A sentence, I don't know. I really, really, really enjoy living here. You know, never say never and you never know what can happen in the future, but if all goes according to the plan, I'll retire to Spain where the weather is better and I don't have to deal with the rain so much! [laughs]. But, no, no. I love the people. I love how warm they are. They're personal without being personal. You could know someone two weeks and they'll come to you going, “oh, me and Sharon did this this this blah blah blah [gives confused look],” why are you using a first name basis describing your family members, I don't know these people!

Throughout the interview, Neo gave details of his love for travelling and experiencing different cultures and different cities. Neo had stated that “I lived in London for 4 years... Yeah but what I really, really, really liked about it was it was so much more intimate and personal. London is great for the hustle and bustle, always great masses of people. Like, I worked here for 2-3 weeks and I was already recognizing faces and I’m thinking “shit man, what’s happening?” In London, I lived in the same area for 3 years, took the same tube station back and forth each day and not once do you come across the same person. Never single day would you see the one person. I got really used to it then here, especially the friendliness of the people as well, as opposed to [long pause] – yeah, no, it’s the big difference between London and Waterford.” Ireland, particularly Waterford’s intimate set up allowed for the participant to feel more at home and to experience a different country in a different light, further increasing any opportunity of accumulating a level of social capital that would see him successfully integrate within the wider community.



Figure 4.1 This is a picture Neo entitled “Blaamegddon”, showing how his love for engrossing himself within a new culture has helped him flourish in local festivals.

Neo is very much a socialite in many ways. Neo approached this study with an attitude that outwardly resembled his want and need to indulge himself in all outgoing elements of society. Prior to recording the interview, Neo was keen to stress the fact that immigrants were capable of becoming active members in Irish society with the only real barriers being ones that have been set up by the person themselves. This opinion was reflected throughout the narrative and was a testament to Neo's personality, which has allowed him to flourish as an individual within Ireland.

The intimate and welcoming nature of Ireland, that has become somewhat of a stereotype of the country, appeared to have a long-lasting effect on the participants' outlook throughout this study. JJ, who had experienced a great deal of support from his Irish partner and his partners family, felt he was no longer "an immigrant," but instead had found a new "stable and secure" life where he can actively access the wide variety of social institutions that play an important part in the overall lived experience of a foreign national, such as the workplace. What is important to note, is that since recording the interview, JJ has found employment that is directly related to his qualifications. This is highly important as it highlights how an individual's attitude, as well as the availability of social and emotional support that was present throughout JJ's interview, has allowed him to move onwards from his job in a call centre and exercise his degree, thus improving his chances of creating more social capital given an increase in his standard of living.

Extract 2: JJ, Male, 24, Cameroon.

JJ emphasises how stable and secure he has felt since his arrival in Ireland -

R: ... briefly, in a few sentences, could you give a summary of your life in Ireland up to this point? A bit of an overview about what we just talked about, I suppose!

P: My life in Ireland is really stable and secure you know? I feel like I have a place in Ireland and that I'm not just an immigrant. Sometimes I feel like I'm not even an immigrant, I feel like I'm Irish because of the stability I have around and the opportunity to get employment and I have a family and friends here that look after you and care about you and hopefully it just gets better with time.



Figure 4.2 This is a picture JJ has captioned, “watching hurling with my partner’s family.”

JJ felt that moving to Ireland has allowed him to create a secure environment that is centred around family. Assistance from his Irish partner has helped in allowing him to engage socially, as well as physically, with JJ owing a great deal of his improved health to her. Ireland has provided a home away from Cameroon, but this is greatly assisted by presence of a strong Cameroonian community group in his county, which has provided him with a base to familiarise himself with Irish culture, as well as keeping in touch with his own.

Stability and security appeared to be important factors, in contributing to a sense of Ireland as home for these participants. Another interviewee states, “I wouldn’t go back,” having been able to build a more socially connected and active life in comparison to the one he had left behind in his own country. Dave stated, “As I say I wouldn’t go back, when I first came here, I wanted to see as much of the country as I could. When I first came here I was staying in [local place] actually, and I used to have a roundy table outside the door. Map on the table. Coin. [flips & slams]. And that’s where I would go for the weekend. It was absolutely fucking beautiful. It really is and as I say, I’d never go back. I am at home as far as I’m concerned. I’d never even consider going back to Glasgow or England, unless the kids needed me.”

Much of the attraction to Ireland came from living in a rough area back home that had caused the participant to have several trust issues with people later on in life which had affected Dave socially. These issues were commonplace amongst the narratives and will be discussed further under the theme of ‘Ireland as home’.



Figure 4.3 This picture was sent with no caption, but it depicts the beauty of Ireland that captured Dave’s heart.

An element that appears to have had an effect on the sense of Ireland as home is the helpful nature of those around them, more specifically in the form of neighbours. JB, a Polish lab technician, found that Ireland was now her home and found herself more of an Irish person with regards her mentality and outlook on life than she would have with Polish people. “I think you know, your home is where your heart is and my heart is here basically. Yes I am happy here honestly, I found people here, I am closer mentally in the sense of sense of humour at how I look at the world to an Irish person to someone from my own country and I think your place is where you’re happy and I’m happy here!” JB is quite well connected with her neighbourhood and feels they have offered her a lot of support, as well as creating an environment that is relaxed, as well as assured: “we were out on holidays for 4 weeks and our friend was taking out the rubbish bins for us out and he was wearing a baseball cap and my elderly neighbour came out

to ask what he was doing there, she is really vigilant, she looks after our house when we're not there, even though she's in our late 70s!"

The provision of comfort from networks feeds into this, "your home is where your heart is" notion" and it appeared throughout the narrative provided by Nell. When asked to provide a summary of her life in Ireland up to this point, she replied: "Ok, so 16 years I've gone through loads of stages, it was obviously during 2001, I found everyone very happy and very friendly. Ireland is a place where the people at the beginning, when I had no English and no idea what to do, people were taking days off from work to be able to help me." The homely nature of these gestures really helped Nell in times where she felt "stuck" and in turn, it led to a situation in which the previously mentioned social institutions became accessible and a stable point of reference when she set out to set up her own business in Ireland: "I feel if you go to any officials or any public service office, they really treat you with respect and they try to help you as much as they can, so I'm very impressed with Irish public sectors. You know, most people are quite helpful if you're stuck."

These two narratives are similar to that provided by Emiliano, who had found that Ireland "gave him a home", he has reached a point in his life where he feels 50% Irish: "for me, Ireland gave me a home. The people were so welcoming and I can only say positive things- besides the rain, everything else worked for me and you know, until today, I will never regret coming to Waterford. I see Waterford, what suits me the most at the moment and I believe in general that Waterford is a place- it's a welcoming for anyone but you know its like all the things, you have to behave with respect, because it's a big place but also small in certain ways so you have to educate yourself to the lifestyle of the place." What is most prominent here is the mentality that you must adapt to the countries culture, which is directly comparable with JB's view that she is now more Irish than Polish, and Neo's culture-hungry approach in which you immerse yourself within it, in order to avail of a better lived experience and gain a more advantageous access point to gaining social capital. What also appeared to have a role in the settling in process was the intimate nature of Waterford, much like Neo and JJ's reasoning behind their successful integration:

Extract 3: Emiliano, Male, 42, Italy.

R: Lastly then, if you could sum up your life in Ireland in a sentence or two maybe?

P: Ok, so there is two things I could say to you. When somebody has no regrets on what you have done on what you have done or where you have been, it explains a lot. I would never change my choice. I could never get a better place to be honest with you. Maybe if I been to Dublin, I would be different again and I would have different approach because I'm not a big fan of big cities, so Waterford has been very like home. All my experiences here have been very positive.

Although each experience in Ireland was a positive one, some were narrated with some details that would suggest the opposite. Even though each individual had experienced a good life in Ireland, the following participants seemed somewhat frustrated in terms of opportunities in the workplace and the bureaucratic issues that led to a force change in career paths, as well as the overriding sense that the individual was unhappy and was merely staying put because her family were content in Ireland. These particular issues led to a situation whereby Ireland was home, but only temporary for some, with the long-term goal being to move back home when the right time comes.

This is emphasised by Ola, whose difficulties with losing a comfortable job she was qualified to do, and increased feelings of isolation as she now works from the home have led to a hurried feeling of wanting to return home where the entirety of her friends and family are:

Extract 4: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

R: Yeah brilliant, so just to finish up then, what I'm asking everyone to do is just to summarise your life in Ireland up to this point?

P: Emm, I was thinking, why I'm still moaning when I'm happy in here? Especially in Waterford, um, there is few things I love in here; nature – especially in Dublin where it's noisy, but my husband has a good job here and he's happy and not complaining, my children who are happy with the

friends around, so when they are happy I am happy, but there are few things that would make me more happy, so to be driving and to have a better job and good money, I would be more happy, so I could save, and go back to Poland [laughs]

R: [laughs]

P: But I am so long in here, I might retire and go back to Poland. I am 12-14 years here, so if it was really bad or if I had a big problem, I would go back to Poland, I still have in my head, if something bad happened, I would go back to Poland, but it means I am ok in here!

This response echoes Ola's sentiments that found she was having "a bit of a middle-aged crisis" and found herself at a crossroad in her life having lost her role in a crèche after 10 years after she was told her Masters in Philosophy from a Polish institute would no longer suffice as a qualification. Along with this set back, Ola has ongoing feelings of isolation, and is limited to accessing social networks through her husbands and her children's crèche:

Extract 5: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

R: I know you said you work from the home, but do you feel that it creates this feeling that you're maybe cut off from society? Maybe society is a little broad-

P: As in, like a feeling to belong? Yeah. I feel I need to go out to work to feel like I belong to some community because it's hard when you work from home to make new friends and new connections, but I think my husband's work, especially my son's school and daughter's crèche, through this-activities I will go

These statements highlight the role of social networks in the accumulation of social capital and further emphasises the need for an access point either through some form of bridge to social capital itself to significantly influence the adaption of an individual

into new surroundings. Due to these elements missing, Ola's scenario is one in which the only real comfort is that home is only a plane journey away. Ola feels she is like an "octopus", as all of her connections and comforts are in Poland: "I am living here for all my, um I'm like an octopus, so all my legs are in Poland. I have polish phone, polish television whatever, so every day I am calling, but every day I am living and hoping that I go back. My heart is there, not because it is bad here, but because all my family, friends and everything." The lack of a strong social network has somewhat forced the participant to look a little less through rose-tinted spectacles at the supposed 'warm and welcoming' nature that was proclaimed by others and see it through a more critical lens:

Extract 6: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

P: Well, my need is much bigger than what they give to me. I would like to—because I was born really connected to my neighbours, I was so close to them, but it doesn't happen here, you know, no dinner with neighbours. That's what my need is but I cannot fill it.

R: So you found in Poland there was more of a community set up?

P: Neighbours were like family. Here a neighbour is like a neighbour

R: A bit more private then in that sense?

P: Yeah, yeah

The feeling of essentially being dissatisfied, much like Ola, in Ireland was evident in Peter's narrative. This feeling of dissatisfaction seemed to be more coupled with a lack of opportunities with his chosen career path though, as Peter showed throughout the interview that he was socially connected and had exercised level access points into gaining social capital, more particularly when he found himself in a difficult position with illness, and was struggling to settle in Ireland:

Extract 7: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

R: Did you find it difficult then to get a job when you came here then because of the language barrier?

P: Yeah I would have, but I already knew I would get a job when I came here, my friend worked in a chip shop so he said he would get me a job when I came here.

R: So after that you went into the security side of things?

P: Yeah so I was in the chipper for 3 months and then I got sick because I had rheumatic arthritis, so I couldn't even walk or crawl and I went to hospital and they kinda fixed me, but very next day I was back in the same way. I couldn't walk again. So I had to fly back to Czech Republic for 6 months to get it fixed so I could come back and from that I found the security job from then.

R: Did you get that job through friends or did you manage to source it yourself?

P: Because I had rheumatic arthritis, there was a woman called Joe Cragan, who is kinda involved with people with disabilities and she knew my boss so she got me an interview

R: She's part of an organization so is she that helps with the kind of thing?

P: Yeah she's part of a thing called "VESTA" or W something? I really don't remember it was 11 years ago

R: But when you came back then from Czech Republic, she was able to help you with that?

P: Yeah, now it took awhile, first she found me a job as a night porter in Woodland's hotel bar, I worked there for 2 weeks and they never paid me. Even now, I'll still go and manager just says "next time next time" and still nothing.

R: The job now is a little more settled, but since you've come here, you've gone through a college and a few jobs, but now you're a bit more settled. How long did it take you to get to the security job?

P: It was about a year, so 6-12 months. [6 – 12 months after he came back from Czech Republic]

R: Was it a bit of a rollercoaster?

P: Yeah, I was really down and just really wanted to fly back home to Czech Republic but then I found the job- it's not best job ever, but it's settled me.

This involvement with “VESTA” was essential into gaining access to the workplace, but Peter's ideal career choice is related to IT, rather than security roles and jobs in fast food restaurants and has struggled in education in Ireland since arriving. This has led to a situation similar to that of Ola's where a crossroads has presented itself and has left a scenario in which the next choice in life is somewhat unclear:

Extract 8: Peter, Male, 39, Czech Republic:

P: "...I think some jobs in Czech Republic went up, so now it's kinda 50/50 [using hand gestures to show balancing]. But over those 10 years, I have more friends here now than in Czech Republic, so I don't know. I was even thinking about moving to Canada or uhhh London, but then Brexit kicked in and I wouldn't touch it now."

R: So life in Ireland has gone ok up to this point, but you'd see yourself moving elsewhere to chase a career down maybe?

P: It really helps if I finish that degree and if anything comes up, like in Canada, I would go, but for now I'm quite happy to stay here.

Peter has often felt the urge to leave his job and claim social welfare due to his work schedule interfering with his chosen career path. Peter felt his major problem was that he worked late night shifts for 12 hours at a time, often finishing work at 6:00am, attending college at 9:00am, finishing at 5:00pm and going to work for his shift at

6:00pm. This led to a situation in which his immune system had shut down and was advised by doctors to cut back: “My first year, I got really sick, my immune system just shot down, so that’s why I’m kinda like, I had to stop, even doctors say I had to stop or I’m gone!”



Figure 4.4 Unwanted jobs have led to a situation in which Peter feels he is becoming obstructed from pursuing his career of choice.

Another immigrant worker had a similar situation to that of Peter, but given the nature of his job, was much more capable of balancing education and a full-time job. The basis of gaining this education was due to the fact that some day Marek saw himself returning home to Czech Republic and wanted something to support himself. This urge to go back home again is evident even with those who have seemingly had a positive experience living in Ireland:

Extract 9: Marek, Male, 43, Czech Republic.

R: Yeah, that's perfect, I suppose we've had a nice chat about it all, but do you think you can summarise your life in Ireland up to this point?

P: Well, hmm, I can say it was a really good life [pause]. Yeah, a really good life and I've enjoyed my time here because at the start we thought we stay 2-3 years to have better English and all this kinda stuff, but then we stayed for 5 years then 10 years and then maybe more!





Figure 4.5 and 4.6 Although Marek plans to return home at some point, he spoke about how the Irish landscape contributed to his positive experience.

Much like Ola, Marek plans to return home at some point over the next few years and has used education as a tool in the same way Peter has in order to support his next move in life. The differing nature of Peter's employment where hours were demanding and concrete contrast against Marek's opportunity to study whilst on the job given its laidback nature and apparent freedom to do as you please when the workload was less hectic shows how the lived experiences can affect the accumulation of social capital and heavily set back an individual in moving onwards to the next step in their lives:

Extract 10: Marek, Male, 43, Czech Republic.

P: So, I finished the bachelors and that was the Bachelors of Business Administration, so that was basically that was all about management, all about managing people, plans and healthy living as well, everything covered in there.

R: And did you do the bachelors here?

P: Actually, I did, but eh the school was back in Czech Republic, so I had to go back every few months for exams and final exams as well, so...

R: Was it a bit testy for yourself then going over and back? Did it put any pressure on you?

P: No because I used to work in stores [supply stores] so I used to have a lot of free time, so it was great to have something for the free time, but on the other side, it was hard for me to study! [laughs]

R: Anyone can find study hard I suppose! Would you feel it was important, that bachelors degree, in determining how far you got then in this company itself?

P: Not sure, to be honest. [pause]. I think it was more my approach to work and how I did my work, it wasn't just because I had a degree. It was how I managed and worked myself in the company. I was thinking, you probably will need something in the future, some day, there will be a day when we go back and home and I'll need something to back myself up.

Education and its attainment, or lack of, in some cases was not always the case for the overall view on the lived experience of Ireland, but it did appear to influence a participant who felt Ireland could make drastic changes at educational level in order to improve social capital for the entire country rather than its select few who tend to thrive within its system. This was offered by Stan, who went through the educational system in Czech Republic, much like Marek, and felt Ireland needed to adapt to help people think more for themselves so that they are not overly reliant on 'going through the motions' as it were. The opinion offered throughout this narrative could have some repercussions on how Ireland could operate in terms of integrating immigrants, especially immigrants who have gained access to the workforce, much more successfully and efficiently:

Extract 11: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

R: Yeah, we've had a good chat about pretty much everything, but just to

finish up then, what I've been doing is asking people to summarise your life in Ireland up to now? So how have you found Ireland up to this point?

P: My friend told me- [language barrier issue]

R: Oh, no sorry! As in how have you found the experience?

P: Oh, ok! I love Ireland, I love Waterford, I love how it looks, I love the people. The only thing I don't really like, is the schools. I think he should be pushed up to be on higher level and kids should be more independent with their thinking but if you give something now to some kid and you ask them to say, take something out, and you give them a box, if you ask them now, many kids don't even know how to think to do it! You have to learn the kids. Start from them young. I don't want to go school for 9 years, too bad or your family is in trouble, and they can be jailed, and you will be- in Czech, we have a school for kids who make trouble. So, if you not go to school, guards go to your parents and if they not bothered, they take your baby. When you change then, we give you baby back, and the baby go to school every day because government look after the baby. You know, you need at least 13 years school.

R: So, you think the country should be set up in a way so people are more independent and that they're made to think a bit more in terms of how they go about life and how they will work?

P: Yeah, it also teach them, oh how it's called? [slight pause] More clever. People are clever, but they are too lazy to think. You can help yourself, but you have to know how to help yourself. When you go to school, you have Mathematic, English, whatever, but you only have like six/seven things. Look at somewhere like America, they know nothing about Europe because it's not how their history is taught to them, so now you have people going around thinking Hitler was a great fucking guy [laughs].

R: So, a lot more aimed towards education to help Irish people think a bit more for themselves?

P: Yeah! Push it to the higher level! Now people have arguments about something and they don't think. Say argument about refugees. You need to know why you don't want refugees, you don't want the ones that aren't registered, but you have to know why they are not. It's not everyone to be in same place. You have good people. Bad people.



Figure 4.6 Stan was a lover of Ireland's scenery and tried to get out as much as possible to see it, but he still felt the country had its flaws and needed to adapt in terms of its approach to education.

This indicates the participants' mentality, where acting for yourself, taking responsibility for yourself and being an independent individual were of the highest importance when it came to living your life. This importance of this independent mentality was evident for many participants; for instance, Kevin, a Pakistani-Canadian who works in the local community with a key focus on the successful integration and support for immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees alike, strongly emphasises the importance of his role in light of the challenges this particular cohort of people face when embarking on a new life in new surroundings:

Extract 12: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

R: "...What I'll do before I finish is, I'll ask you to summarise your life in Ireland up to this point?

P: I've got on very well. Most of the time I've helped people integrate, I told you I came from different cultures and how I've changed cultures and these kinds of things. It's a difficult area to change a culture and it's only when you go abroad you realise what it is to change a culture and how people take to you because you're from a different culture because they don't understand you, not because of an accent, but other things as well, like how you live and act and as you know in Ireland there's different types of accents when you talk to polish and Asian and Lithuanians. So, it's hard for people to understand them sometimes, so because they're not able to express themselves, and that's the big challenge sometimes.

Kevin's ability to change and adapt to different cultures has been an obvious positive factor in his lived experience and, in turn, his career in assisting others like him to settle in Ireland. The notion that Irish people must learn how immigrants "live and act" essentially mirrors Emiliano's statement that you must learn to adapt to Ireland's morals and respect them, as you acclimatise yourself to live and behave within your new, adopted home. This creates somewhat of an inconvenient crossover in terms of who needs to adapt. In terms of the language barrier, each participant spoke in depth in relation to it, but this will be focused on when examining the resilience of immigrant workers in a later section, but from a broad point of view it appears that both Ireland and its immigrants need to work together on this issue.

Extract 13: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan:

P: "...with Muslim countries like Somalia where the women are not allowed to work, we are working on that to give them independence to work

R: Is that quite a tough thing, especially culturally in terms of trying to adapt them into the country that the husband would find a problem with it?

P: The man in the family is the one where other people are below that, so we are trying to change that. Women come here with their heads down when they come to learn English but when they learn the language some of them speak back to the husbands

[laughter]

P: Husbands say, “what have you done to our wives?” We say no, we are just giving them independence they didn’t have before, some of them have jobs now that they would never have before, so this is the freedom employment gives after not having the freedom in their own country, so all their culture has to change once they come to Ireland, they have freedom, language and they’re able to speak

From this account it appears that an understanding needs to be built up. Key indicators of working together to avoid a possible misunderstanding between immigrant workers and Ireland in general should focus on avoiding ghettoization by integrating foreign nationals into more universal communities rather than being grouped together with their fellow countrymen and creating a safety net in which people become entangled. Kevin felt the English language was a way out, but as a provider of language courses, he felt the interaction between Irish people and foreign nationals was paramount in terms of the building of a relationship, so to speak:

Extract 14: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

P: “...a lot of foreign nationals are living on [local street] now, so foreign nationals are getting to know Irish people and Irish people are getting to know them and there’s a great understanding being created here now. People, when they see foreign nationals come to a new area, straight away, they say “what are we gonna expect from them? In the resident’s association, a lot of people ask why foreign nationals are coming in here?”

P: “...They are ghettoising themselves as well, like the people on O’Connell street, and that area, you find all polish, all living together, you go further

down O'Connell street and you find it's all Africans living together, I think it's like their safety net, it doesn't help them integrate into Irish society and I think that's a big problem as well, especially when you're learning the language because when you go home you're not speaking the language, you have your own tv channels and everything like this. Kids will go to school and speak English but they won't speak it when they go home, they'll speak in Polish or French. They find the kids don't practice when they go home, the kids will have Irish accents, but it will change straight away when they go home, back into Polish [laughs]'



Figure 4.7 Kevin speaks in great depth about how immigrants from all over can integrate them more successfully.

In summary, this theme of 'Ireland as home' provided the lived experience of immigrant workers in Ireland. Although each participant felt they have enjoyed living in Ireland, the details provided in their narratives provides a contrast between those who have integrated well and have begun to establish social capital and those who have

struggled with educational attainment, workplace issues and an underlying desire to return home at some point. Participants such as Stan and Kevin voiced their recommendations that require both Ireland and its newcomers to create a level of understanding that would allow immigrants to integrate seamlessly. The overall positive answer to the question surrounding their lived experiences up to this point creates an interesting contrast with some of the issues that presented themselves throughout. In order to delve into this further, the mind-set of the participants will be examined. This will provide the reasoning behind the eventual answer to the question that asked participants to summarise their lives in Ireland, as well as providing a background for those who have been able to accumulate adequate levels of social capital.

4.2 Theme 2: Bridging and Bonding

“I find it could be easier if I was with friends in another country”

Kevin’s earlier points about adapting to the English language and the developing of an understanding between the Irish and immigrants highlights the importance of personality, attitude, as well as ‘bridges’ and ‘bonds’ with regards to social capital. In the interviews, immigrant’s mentality and own cultural preferences in terms of levels of interaction seemed to have a significant effect on the level of social capital they have accumulated in Ireland. The mentality of each participant appeared to come across more in questions surrounding social support and whether it was exercised by the individual or given to them in return. The access to particular networks in this case did seem to have a correlation with the working situation, but what appeared more apparent was that the mind-set showed a tendency to be content with working to live within certain networks. This essentially led to situations where people have become too comfortable within the safety net of their immediate family in Ireland, or even friends they have gained that hail from a similar background. Given these elements, this section will look to cover the resilience of immigrant workers in new surroundings. In situations where barriers have been established and personal mental blocks have decreased the chances of interacting with varying networks in society; the ability of the immigrant worker to create a life and establish social capital will be discussed. This discussion will factor in the presence of bridges and bonds towards social capital, particularly in their ability to enhance or hinder the accumulation of social capital.

Extract 15: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

Ola pointed out that Europeans differ with regards to the Irish in a behavioural sense to begin with. The supposed relaxed and easy-going nature of Ireland appears almost like a direct opposite to the stern and strict environment of the likes of Poland and Czech Republic:

R: Yeah, that’s come up quite a bit. Ireland is a part of Europe, but when you talk about mainland Europe with the likes of Poland and Czech Republic, there is a noted difference in mentality

P: Yeah but we have to compare, that's the point

R: It does seem to be a case of being more straight and stern

P: I would say we are much more harsh, we are not afraid to say what you think about the other person straight. I am, but normally other people, if you are going to the shop, will say something bad straight away, it doesn't happen here.

R: It's kind of more behind the back here!

P: Yeah absolutely because it's happened to me before, but yeah it's either a case of people either being much more polite or afraid or the culture or the manners

JB held a similar point of view. Her move to Ireland was driven by an inner urge to become completely independent. Financial independence was a key factor, but this appeared to be coupled with an intent to be free of any possible responsibilities that may arise in a situation where she may have had to care for a member of the family, claiming that it was "no, it wouldn't be my taste."

have you since you've been here, or even in the last 12 months have you received any unpaid help in terms of help with domestic work or any general errands?

Extract 16: JB, Female, 37, Poland.

P: Hmm, I dunno because I'm fairly independent so I wouldn't even be looking for anything like that except for my mother who helps with the baby and even with moving home, we just got a van rental. I'd rather be self-sufficient.



Figure 4.8 JB's move was fueled by a need exercise her self-sufficiency and independence.

“Self-sufficiency” is the anchor that grounds this drive to be independent. Nell, a self-made, self-employed woman who feels that there was a growing jealousy of her in her own neighbourhood based on where she is in life. Nell believes her neighbours view her in a harsh light where they are reluctant to accept her into the wider community due to her successful business, as well as her nationality. This seems to bring about a vivid culture clash between the Irish mentality and Polish, or even European mentality in this instance. Nell is a firm believer that her upbringing in a harsher household with drastic expectations at a young age have severely determined the way in which she approaches work and to greater extent, life:

Extract 17: Nell, Female, 39, Poland.

P: “...they are some families that if they see you doing well or even your children doing well in clubs they would be quite-- they won't move their arses, excuse my language, to bring the child for the few hours a week to see them do well, they expect things to fall from the sky, so I think it is genuine Irish thing, it is more Irish people I had to experience to be with it, I find they are angry with everyone else that things don't come to themselves, they don't understand they have to get up and work and bring the child. Do it if you want things to happen.

R: I agree, 100%. Waterford specifically has this attitude has this mentality where you don't like seeing people doing better!

P: When you go back, it is like more people are less motivated, but when you think deeper, but those children, when they are adults, they weren't taught to work for anything and that would be my explaining why the way they are. I never had opportunity, they had things handed to them. I always had to work very hard, even during the summer with my dad. Even with neighbours, they wouldn't have been asked to do much on farm, during my summer, my only day off was Sunday, during the week my dad could wake me at 5 in the morning to do farming onto the eh eh summer will be quite hot in Poland. It could be 30-35 degrees, so you would work at 5, go home for 11, have a dinner, maybe a little siesta and go back farming till 3 or 4 in the afternoon, which as I say, don't get me wrong- there was not that many neighbours kids doing that much work, it was just the way my dad was, a very hard worker. That time I was very angry and upset with my dad as a teenager, why did he push me that hard, why did he treat me as a boy, you know? "Look at your brother, he's doing this, he's doing that!" I was 4 years younger, I was a girl, you know, hello? But now, where I am, is because he was kicking my arse when I was younger! I have no problem with working hard or working for what I want.

This culture clash does appear to have its effects when it comes to direct social support for Nell. The drive to be successful as a self-employed person with a strong sense of independence has created a scenario in which she has been somewhat cut off from wider society:

Extract 18: Nell, Female, 39, Poland.

R: I suppose in terms of being connected socially, and availing of social support, what I'll do is read out these statements that have come up in the background research and basically with them, you can say briefly, yes or no whether or not you can avail of this type of support. You are ill in bed and need help at home. Is there anyone you could ask for help?

P: No.

R: You are in financial difficulty and need to borrow some money to see you through the next few days. Is there anyone you could you ask for help?

P: No.

R: Lastly then, if you had a serious personal crisis, how many people, if any, do you feel you could turn to for comfort and support?

P: Hmmmm, very little.



Figure 4.9 Nell's car is effectively her main form of social support. Without this, she would not be able to fulfill her duties for her children as a single mother or run her business.

A direct lack of social support appeared to be the case for Ola, too. As mentioned previously, Ola believed there was an obvious difference in mentality between that of her own compatriots and Irish people, which firmly emphasises the point made by Nell:

Extract 19: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

P: "...but even I have broken leg or whatever I would have to look after myself. Sometimes maybe my husband or my friends, but I would never ask a friend to help me

R: Is that—

P: To be independent?

R: Yeah, it's come up in a few interviews with Europeans. In the personality of it?

P: That you have to be strong and independent?

R: Yeah! I've just found when this question comes up, they're always very briefly answered and—

P: Yeah but we have no family or friends to ask here. It comes hard for you to ask somebody, even now if I have to ask a friend, I'm kinda like "eurgh", and I can't do it, so you have to do it for yourself

R: Do you find its because you don't know your friends in Ireland as long or if you don't know them as well personally?

P: I cannot compare because I never lived with children in Poland, so I don't know what it would be like, but say something bad happened and my car was broke or something, we ask friends for help or even neighbour. Like, one time I asked neighbour to collect my courier bag or something! But first, I am never sick in bed and two, I have to survive.

This is directly comparable to JB who had stated that, "my mother moved here a few years ago to help me with the kids", but felt almost offended by the idea of asking or offering support to others. The instinct to survive due to a lack of connections in the participants new surroundings appears time and time again throughout this narrative. It appears that a difference in mindset and an almost pseudo feeling of being satisfied and content to work and live within the immediate group of semi-familiar people has a long-lasting effect on the general happiness of Ola in this case:

Extract 20: Ola, Female, 39, Poland:

P: "...Because I move in here, I had nobody, and that was hard but after 2 years I have a friends, umm, few of them are not polish, but not one of them is irish. I have friends to go to the party with, but no friends say [long pause] that I could celebrate Christmas with. I have no really really close friends or to remember about celebrations like birthday. Maybe it's my missing of the family.



Figure 4.10, 4.11, and 4.12 Holidays are obviously very important to Ola, who is reminded how far away she is from family and close friends when these times of the year come around.

Missing home and missing family seems to have resonated with Marek in this instance as well. In a fairly matter-of-fact based interview, the participants narrative became more detailed and reflective beyond what was offered previously when Marek spoke of friends back home in Czech Republic:

Extract 21: Marek, Male, 43, Czech Republic.

R: So, broadly speaking then, the next few questions will just be around your social networks and things like that, so with that, would you speak to relatives often in the Czech Republic or would you have relatives here?

P: Yeah yeah yeah, I speak to them very often. Every week I'm using phone or skype.

R: Do you find technology has made it much easier then?

P: Oh yeah yeah, that's right, absolutely.

R: With that, aside from relatives, do you have friends back in Czech Republic that you'd speak to still?

P: Yes, I've many friends there, and every time we are there for the holidays, we see them all, in the pubs [laughs]

R: And would they visit you here?

[participants mood lifts at the mention of friends in Czech Republic]

P: Yeah yeah! Actually, on the 27th, I'm going to have two visitors, again! Few days off with it as well, it's gonna be...tough!

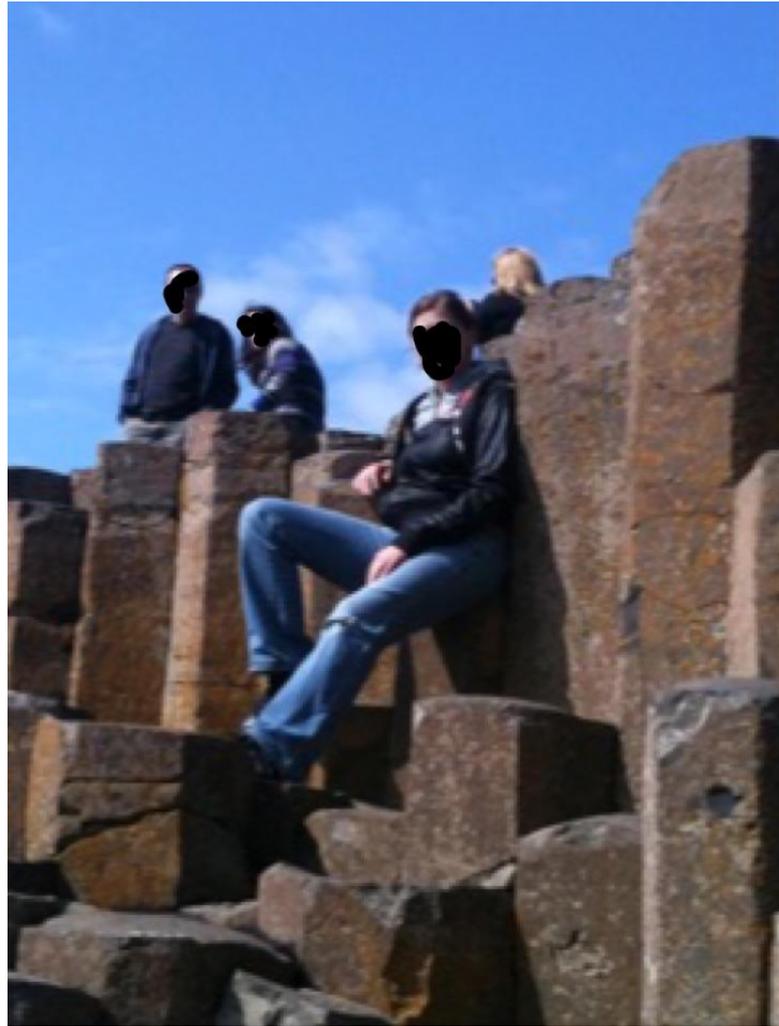


Figure 4.13 Marek speaks fondly of friends back home and actively perks up during the interview at the mere mention of them.

Earlier in the recording of these results, it was highlighted that Marek did intend to return home at a certain point with the support of his Bachelor's degree that was earned through a Czech Republic institute. This fondness for returning home is clear to see through the presence of laughter and light-heartedness shown during this transcript, but the strong connection with home ties appears to have an effect on the level of social support the participant has in Ireland. Questions specifically aimed at measuring social support were met with a great deal of hesitation and uncertainty that seemed to suggest that the participant was answering based on general clichés rather from a position of assurance:

Extract 22: Marek, Male, 43, Czech Republic.

R: "...I'll describe a couple of incidents or scenarios where people would need to call on people around them for assistance and basically you can let me know if there's any one around ye if there's that could help. Again, this all comes from the background research and that.

P: Yeah, that's fine.

R: You are ill in bed and need help at home. Is there anyone you could ask for help?

P: Yes, yeah, yeah I can ask my partner. She always...helps me! [laughs]

R: You are in financial difficulty and I say that quite broadly, but say you need to borrow some money to see you through the next few days. Is there anyone you could you ask for help?

P: Hmm hmm hmm, yes. Definitely. I say all of my friends from Czech Republic here in Waterford could help with borrow

R: No issue then!

P: No!

[laughs]

R: The last one then, say if you had a serious personal crisis, that can vary then depending on what you consider a personal crisis, how many people, if any, do you feel you could turn to for comfort and support?

P: [hums]... yeah. That's a hard one. It depends. Yeah, I think so, yeah yeah, I think I could maybe have 2 or 3 friends that I could contact if I had some form of crisis.

A lack of social capital in this instance then may not be a direct cause of the country's ability to adapt to newcomers as suggested by Stan in a previous segment, but rather it

is self-imposed by the immigrants themselves. A strong mind-set, or even an open mind-set to venture beyond your comfort zone and to dip your hand into new cultural habits and norms seems to be extremely important here. The previous participants can be viewed in a much more pessimistic view, particularly when looking at the participants who have been whole-heartedly invested in accumulating social capital unbeknownst themselves by adopting an attitude that has saw them thrive in networks that have assisted them in becoming an integrated individual.

Kevin, our reference point amongst all this information of social capital, shows how an independent mind-set can have negative effects. An independent mind-set is more likely to be adopted by someone who has assurances based on things such as geographical location and guarantees about working rights and an ability to claim welfare based on continental citizenship in the form of the European Union. Those who arrive in the country with nothing to lose are essentially in a more vulnerable position to becoming stuck within their own groups and failing to be more “outgoing”, to use one of Kevin’s terms.

Extract 23: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

R: What I found was during the interviews was some general findings and I’ve made a list of some of them here. I found that the African person I interviewed was very much more community based because there was no social welfare system back home, even the community group he was involved in was very involved in fundraising to send money back home, it was almost like their own credit union! I found with the Europeans that theyre very independent in comparison. One of the quotes I got was “you have to survive!” Especially when it came to questions about asking for help and things like that or even offering favours to people. I found Europeans were quite uncomfortable about the question, would you find that yourself from working with Europeans?

P: Well, they would be independent because they’re not far from home. They can get on a plane and within 2 hours they’re back home. Africans, there’s no going back, especially if they’re an asylum seeker or refugee, so they have to make their life here. Nigerians would be very tough. They would be more

strong and are very outgoing. Angolans, Cameroonians and Somalians as well.

R: Do you think, coming back to that notion of a safety net, that say someone from Poland can be independent here and that they can take risks here? Do you think that's where the mentality comes from?

P: Oh yeah absolutely. They can afford to take the risks here because they can just go back home and look somewhere else or go back home and apply somewhere else. That's the freedom polish and Lithuanians have and they're the most majority foreign nationals in the country so they have a support network that Africans don't have and they're not claiming asylum so they can claim social welfare benefits and unemployment benefits and family benefits. A lot of the people who are refugees won't get [punches table].



Figure 4.14 Kevin reveals that European immigrants are at more risk of developing an independent mind-set and becoming much more introverted than those from African, or even more community-based backgrounds.

Neo provides the perfect link between the chain of participants by showing how being mesmerised by new surroundings has helped him adapt and flourish in Ireland. Even having arrived in his new county and being a little stumped by its size and intimate setting; “‘this is it, this is the city centre’ and I was like- ‘what?!...it looked like suburb”, Neo was fascinated and was anxious to get up-and-running: “Noooooo! Oh, god no! I immersed myself into it, that was the most fascinating thing! Yeah, I find different cultures and different backgrounds just fascinating, you know. The difference in people in different places is something I think is great.” What has possibly assisted Neo in this instance are his bridges and bonds towards social capital. Neo has an Irish partner, and his mother and older brother live in Ireland:

Extract 24: Neo, Male, 32, Lithuania.

P: So, would you be in contact with relatives often?

R: Yeah, almost every day, if not every other day. My mum is living in Dublin and my brother is living in Waterford, so I don't even feel the need to go back to Lithuania often. My brother would, but I wouldn't. We're not too far apart, but with modern technology, you have FaceTime, Skype, calls and texts are easy, so it's really easy to be in contact with them regularly. The distance just isn't an issue anymore.

The support and access to both family and friends alike appears to be an indicator in the almost seamless accumulation of social capital in which regular contact with people who understand the countries ins-and-outs, as well as living within two hours of close family has shown to be of great assistance. From this, it is obvious to see the benefits of having access to bridges and bonds. In comparison to the previous participants who were content with being within their comfort zones and failing to fully access all possible networks in a really significant way, Neo has shown a knack of being able to

have that safety net available, but is also able to venture into new groups and circles with friends, as well as becoming actively involved in local festivals and theatre groups:



Figure 4.15 This is a picture Neo has entitled, “Chinese Tuesdays” and “Harvest Festival.”

Extract 25: Neo, Male, 32, Lithuania.

P: Exactly, outside of the family then, would you have regular contact with mates as well? Would you have a decent social network around you?

R: Yeah, I'd meet with friends at least 3-4 times a week, we just get together, grab a coffee, gossip a usual and just have a chat. I usually work the weekends, but every other weekend, I'll be off, so we'll either go out or we might go for dinner somewhere with them or my partner [partner is Irish] It's pretty much what you would expect in terms of a social life around here!

R: Sounds as if you have a decent group around you, so going on that what I'll do is explain two situations where someone may be in need of help or assistance from close friends or relatives and basically you can tell me if

these are something someone close to you could help you with it.

P: Yeah, fine!

R: So, you are ill in bed and need help at home. Is there anyone you could ask for help?

P: Oh definitely, either my partner, but aside from that I could name a few in terms of friends, they're always about, so it's not a big issue for them to help out there!

R: You are in financial difficulty and need to borrow some money to see you through the next few days. Is there anyone you could you ask for help if anything like this arose, god forbid!

P: Yeah, absolutely. It's something that's happened before. The people I know have always been there if I need to be spotted for any sum of money, so with things like that, I always feel comfortable that I have people around to help.

R: Yeah perfect! Have you ever experienced a personal crisis, I suppose that could be taken in a few different ways, but have you ever felt a bit down or going through a tough in Ireland and if so, was there someone there to help?

P: Yeah, absolutely I would. I feel I have enough built up around me to ask someone, but thankfully I haven't had to go through anything like that yet!

As stated previously, Neo is not afraid to offer a helping hand and engage with local groups and offer assistance to close friends with established networks and groups:

R: All jokes aside, have you been involved in anything, even casually within groups of people or even through the local community or offered a voluntary hand to anything that interests you?

P: Yeah, I get you! I'm not formally belonging to any group like that at all, but I have a lot of friends involved in the Central Arts group [local arts production group], so in the past I've helped them set up for shows and stuff

like that. I'm always happy to lend the hand there. Actually, my friend Jenna is the artistic director for the [local art gallery], so when it comes to things that involve heavy lifting where she's just like "oh, I can't be bothered", I'll always be there for her. The last few Spraoi's [local festival], I've always made myself available and this year I helped put together some of the decorations, costumes for those performing and even gave a hand with some of the floats that were there for the parade and stuff like that. When I'm available, I'm happy to help.

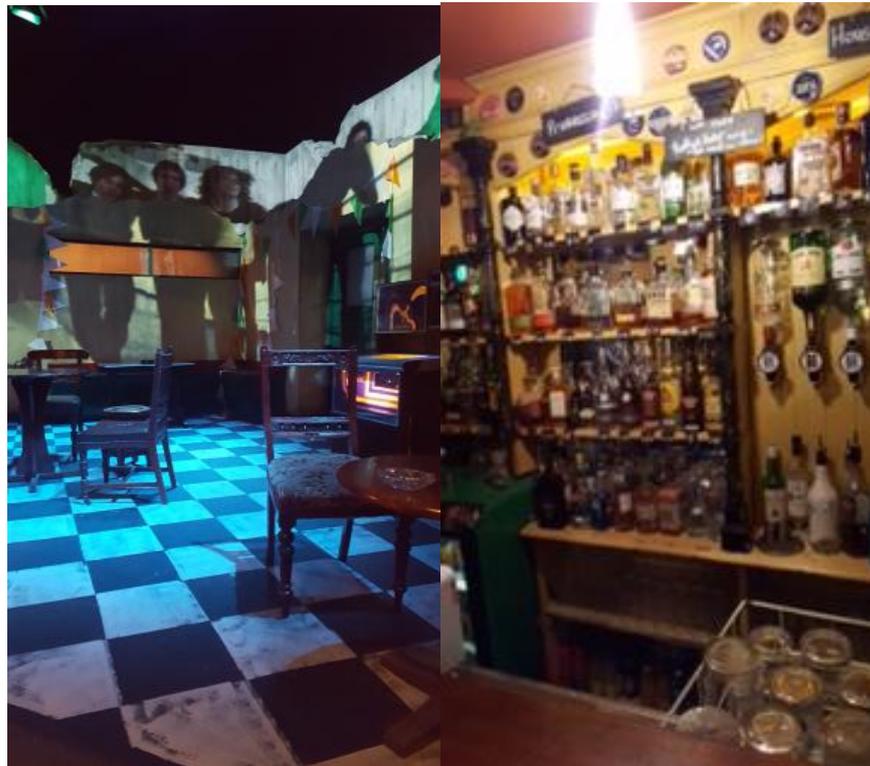


Figure 4.16 and 4.17 Neo shows us a picture he has called, "On Set" and "Few drinks."

Similar to Neo are both JJ and Dave with both participants reaping the benefits of having established Irish connections, and in JJ's case a strong Cameroonian community being based in his county. In each narrative, JJ and Dave demonstrated strong and active engagement within their communities via involvement with different groups, clubs and organisations, which was a mirrored reflection of their established relationships in Ireland. JJ's narrative is more complex than Dave's, which only further reflects the benefits of having bridges and bonds. Before arriving in Ireland, JJ faced

problems with immigration and believes that only for his Irish partner and her knowledge of accessing the correct paths and networks that he would have struggled to gain access into the country:



Figure 4.18 JJ pictured with his partner who feels was his biggest helping hand before and after arriving in Ireland.

Extract 26: JJ, Male, 24, Cameroon.

P: When I did my visa application to come to Ireland from the UK, [local politician] was a TD, I think it's Sinnott or something like that now, but yeah, I would say he gave me help because the immigration office said they would do it in like 6 weeks, but obviously it went over 6 weeks, so he sent them an email saying that this person needs to see his baby and family and it actually got it moved along!

R: Yeah, perfect. Did you know yourself who to contact?

P: [laughs] actually it was more [partners name], we got in touch with Citizens Information and they couldn't really say something because

immigration is something different, but at least with the TD he tried his best you know, but now I couldn't tell you who the TD of the area is.

R: Just on the thing about your partner contacting the TD, do you feel it helps that your partner being Irish herself helps with the settling in?

P: Yeah, it makes it easier, doesn't it? Obviously because she knows how to get around Ireland, isn't it? Even when I'm going for jobs or even start up jobs, she helped me with where to go or who to meet with and even had connections here with people to get CV's to and things like that.

R: So, having someone there with you from the country helps?

P: Yeah especially when you have questions like, "who is this?" and "why is this like this?" and that [laughs].

The answering of questions such as "who is this?" and "why is this like this?" proved to be more useful than what would be expected. Having an Irish partner not only assisted with getting JJ into the country, but also went a long way in determining his health and ensuring he was set up here successfully:

R: ...I'll just describe a few situations where someone may be in need of help or assistance and in each one you can basically tell me whether you'd have someone close to you or anyone in your contacts that you could ask for assistance. So, the first one is: You are ill in bed and need help at home. Is there anyone you could ask for help?

P: Yeah, if I'm sick, my partner is a nurse so it makes it easier [laughs]

R: You picked well there so! [laughs]

P: Emm, last year, around September I went through a harsh time, I had this condition. Obviously, I'm not going to say, but I was really sick last... winter, but between my partner and GP, they really helped me get diagnosed earlier. In Ireland, I won't say there's a delay to see a consultant but eh-hh-

R: Yeah, it's a delay!

[laughs]

P: But yeah, if I had to go through the normal process, the normal day, today I may have only seen a consultant so between my partner and my G.P. they really helped to make it go through fast because I was really worried about my health you know.

R: At least, you're well set up in that sense, I know in Ireland it could've been 2-3 years before you seen a consultant. The other one is then, you are in financial difficulty, now financial difficulty is meant here in a broad sense, but if you are in financial difficulty and need to borrow some money to see you through the next few days. Is there anyone you could you ask for help?

P: Yeah, [laughs], when I came here to Ireland, I didn't work for the first 6 months, so my partner actually helped me out.

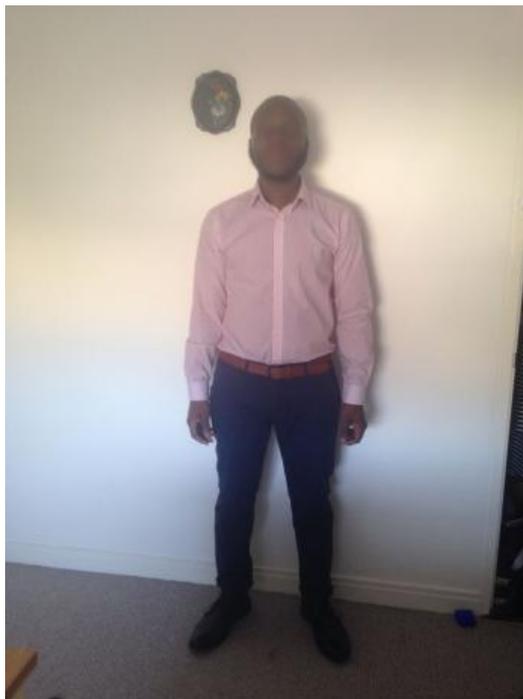


Figure 4.19 JJ shows this image to highlight the drastic weight loss he encountered when he fell ill.

The availability of social supports and assistance with accessing the job market allowed JJ then to further accumulate higher levels of social capital by establishing himself with a community that was closer to home. In some instances throughout this study, having

too many connections that directly link you back to your home country and provide too much of a safety net can be seen as a hindrance for social capital, but in this case, the Cameroonian community group looked to be as actively involved in local activities, as well as looking out for those back home. In this sense, it provides a real access point to social capital given that others have had experience in Ireland and have thrived here, as well as a space where the individual can still feel connected:

Extract 27: JJ, Male, 24, Cameroon.

R: Would you feel you have much of a social connection around here then? Would you have a group of friends around here or speak to neighbours or anything like that?

P: My friendship circle here is smaller, I'd say like my best friend in Ireland is living in Dublin, but we lived together in London, so sometimes he comes here for the weekend or I go up there. That's how I spend my time. The neighbours are ok to talk to and there's a Cameroon community group set up here too, so I have friends there too.

R: Oh, a community group thing is set up?

P: Yeah, it's an official group set up here for Cameroonians in Waterford for activities and things like that. They [stutters] have up to around 100 Cameroonians I say, maybe not 100, but it's high, definitely double figures and we meet up like once a month.

R: When you say once a month, what would you get up to? Would you mind asking what the activities involve?

P: We get involved in the St Patrick's Day parade and sometimes we'll have a luncheon, not for fundraising, but it was like a thing to, how you say, make yourself more known? We do so many things. We do fundraising, communal activities—I'm trying to think of one we did recently, but it's gone outta my head, it'll come back to me later!

R: On that note about the community group, do you feel not only having a partner who is Irish, but having a community group set up with other

Cameroonians in the area helps you feel more settled in in that sense, like, giving you the sense that you are a bit closer to home with, maybe not the 100 other Cameroonians, but close enough in their numbers around you?

P: You kinda feel like at home, with people around you, even with having the food you have at home. The other good thing is, I wouldn't say some are well of it, but some are doing really well in Ireland have had good experiences here but they help you as well, and assist you in how to get along here in Waterford.

R: Yeah, so the ones that have been here that bit longer for years and onwards would be able to help ye along in that sense! That's really good, I wasn't actually aware of that myself! I suppose then, with the community group that's set up and having your own family here



Figure 4.20 and 4.21 Group fundraising from last year and St. Patrick's Day Parade.

This is, as stated previously, directly comparable with Dave's narrative. Dave, being Scottish, may have an upper-hand in establishing himself in Ireland due to a lack of a language barrier, "but because I can speak the language as such and because I'm sort of a Kell, it was much easier. Same as going to Wales and all that, you find that people

tend to speak to you quicker.” His account suggests that having a tool or even an access point, in Dave’s case a motorbike, goes a long way in determining the networks you can access:

Extract 28: Dave, Male, 54, Scotland.

R: So, it was nearly a natural thing for ye? You didn’t have to seek out a community and then seek out people from this group and that group- it was all fairly-

P: See, with the bike, it helps as well. No matter who ye are, if you have a bike, other people with a bike will stop and talk to ye and you’d be stopped for the night talking and you can turn around and go, “do ye wanna beer mate?” And that’s that. I travelled all over Ireland, never had a problem with it. Never had an issue whatsoever, you could all sit there together and have a good craic.

R: Yeah, you’d even find it with most hobbies or even with football, if you’re all following the same team or have the same interest, there is a certain unity attached to it. Even with the bike gatherings and things like that, would yee meet up often?

P: Oh yeah! Not so much now because the winter months are coming into it, but when you’re in the summer months and the weather is good, it’s every Wednesday. So you’d pop out to [local town] every Wednesday evening. Sort of a mix and match of people all there. From Polish, to Scottish to English and it’s all good banter.

Dave’s “mix and match” of connections have allowed him exercise his charitable side and has since put together a regular event each May, in which himself and other members of the bike gatherings assist someone in need in the local community:

P: Yeah, a chat really. It all started with 4 of us just sat at a table saying “this would be a good idea”, so we put it out there, put it up on Facebook and it- just see what happens and it all just caught up, but every May, we do a charity type thing. This year- I don’t know if you’d know her, young [girl’s name] who stays around the corner, we did a fundraising thing for their garden and their car so they could get all that stuff done. All the bike lads say, “can we do that?” He’s a plasterer, he does cement. In the end, we end up doing it for free because we got donations from these places, Jacobs? They threw in the wheelbarrows and stuff like that.

R: Was that through connections then in the bike club that yee decided to do that?

P: It started with someone saying, who are we gonna do it for? And the idea was, we’d get a letter from someone saying why they wanted us to do it and they put the letters in, think they got about 4 letters in. [Partner’s name] is involved in the [local council estate] Youth Reach. She does- she put the name in for [girl’s name]. One of the lads, he did stay in [local council estate], but he stays in [local town], but he knew the family through the years and said we should do it for this young girl, I think she was something like 14, but she’s wheelchair bound, so- the drive itself was all rubble and they wanted to get it all smoothed over so they could get the wheelchair through it.



Figure 4.22 and 4.23 The bike gatherings which are the sole root of Dave's community involvement.

Dave, like JJ, has an Irish partner who has helped him gain access into different networks that have encouraged volunteer work within local communities due to the fact it is what her nature of employment is based around. Dave now finds himself in a situation where he can effortlessly participate in surrounding networks that enhance the quality of care and services provided in local disadvantaged areas, similar to the one he would have been raised in at home. Emiliano, similar to both Dave and JJ, has an

Irish partner. Emiliano felt that the fact his partner was from Ireland had no real bearing on the success of his business, but did have a part to play in helping him adapt to Ireland's accepted forms of behaviour and gaining knowledge of its morals:

Extract 29: Emiliano, Male, 42, Italy.

R: You were saying earlier that your partner is from here?

P: She is yes.

R: Do you find that helped given the fact she was Irish and from Waterford that it helped you adapt a bit quicker?

P: Absolutely yes...but in the way to open the restaurant, we both knew nothing. She knew people, but not people that could help us open the restaurant and did not affect our impact towards business.



Figure 4.24 The restaurant that has brought Emiliano so much success over the years.

The successful nature of his restaurant has, admittedly, dampened his social life slightly, but again, it is essential to note how the presence of a partner, or in some cases, already established links and connections in the country have an impact on a newcomer adapting and feeling more at home. It appears that these links allow for a person to become free of a safety net that sees them limited to certain types of social interactions, i.e. through work and occasional nights out:

Extract 30: Emiliano, Male, 42, Italy.

R: In Ireland then, would you have a network of people you would be able to meet up with, as in, a group of friends?

P: Emmm, I do have, I definitely have a lot of friends, but again, my social life is in the restaurant, when you work 9-10 hours a day, it's tough to go out, it's tough to make time because you are trying to make time for the family. I would not have a huge social life outside of the restaurant, I try with the hobbies and that's a you you time. I'm a big fan of horses, and Ireland is the perfect place to be into horse-riding, so the first opportunity I got, I bought myself a horse. It has always been a very good part of my life.

R: I know you said you have family and that here, so what I wanted to do was ask you a few questions about social support – so it's basically the same thing from earlier, so it'll be a few statements and for each one you can tell me if there's anyone in Waterford or elsewhere that could help you in that situation. So the first one is, you are ill in bed and need help at home. Is there anyone you could ask for help?

P: Yes. I have my besides my family, I do have a few colleagues and family of my wife.

R: If you are in financial difficulty or even if you had a personal crisis, do you feel there is someone there you could turn to for support?

P: We always wish that one day! [laughs]. Well, on that side, I never mix money and friendship, I don't think it's about how much friends could give you, but I do think I would have someone there this way because I've always

been helpful with people so I would expect the same to a certain level, but one of the best friends I have is called AIB! [laughs]

R: I know you were saying earlier about the horses, would you be a part of a club with it?

P: Yes, again, it has always been my passion, so I am a part of a club and have a lot of friends with it, I also have friends involved in the fox hunting, so eh yes, hunting, even if im not a big fan, the season is starting now [interrupted by colleagues]

P: I had ballinamona equestrian centre has always been my home for years because my horse was living there so it was one of the best places on earth literally. Nature. You cannot expect more. In nature, in the middle of clean air, fantastic.

R: With the clubs you have been a part of, have yee got together to do any volunteer work or charity work?

P: Yes, every year. They sponsorship, I did charity between, there is a few charities- it's called point to point, it's a big race that's done for charity and the Waterford hunting club is always involved in charity, emm, yes, every year there is something. I think it's part of the whole scenery of social or way of social life.



Figure 4.25 Emiliano finds great support and enjoyment through his involvement with the fox hunting club and equestrian centre.

Actively participating within a community or even through a club or organisation shows a strong level of social capital as it highlights how an individual can operate and access different connections, contacts and networks that are primarily concerned with their unique interests, no more so than in the case of Stan, who actively sought after establishing a new sport in Ireland:

Extract 31: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

R: ...since you've been here have you been involved in any clubs or even as part of a group of people that get together to do an activity?

P: I play hockey here. We opened a club in [county of residence], because none in [county of residence] and none in Ireland, so we started in Dublin, 2 teams, 3 teams, 4 teams, then Cork gets a team, then Dublin adds another team- so we have a hockey time and we have Ireland hockey league that is played in whole Ireland.

R: So, you go on tours and stuff to play games?

P: Yeah, every 2/3 weeks you play a game in Longford, because what happened here in Ireland, even Waterford, they support only golf, hurling and soccer, so when we ask to build a fucking place to play hockey- say uh, when you're building an ice rink or even just a rink for the skating on the rollerblades, if you not using it for hockey, you can use it for social, so people can use it for roller disco- you play the music and kids learn to skate because I think Ireland needs to learn new things, not just be stuck in same place for years.

R: So, with more people coming from different countries, you feel it's time to adapt and open up a bit?

P: Yeah, yeah. You know how many Irish people play hockey now and they're very good!

R: Something very similar happened with American Football here actually.

P: Yeah, that came here a few years ago, my friend plays for the [local team], it's good for Irish people to learn something new. Because in this moment I am turning on tv and I see English sport, American sport, but in rest of Europe, there is no Irish sport because nobody knows anything about hurling! If I show this to people back home, they think, what the fuck is this for? [mimics hurling] Is it to protect myself or hit the ball?! Because they don't show on Czech TV you know. Ireland should push a bit more to show the interest. You know, when I go to city council, I say I want to bring new sport and they go ahhh, but it's hard [mumbles], we have no room where to do this, you have to pay 6,000 euros a year-

R: Just to set the club up?

P: No, just to pay the rent for the rink, it's very hard and it's very expensive, it's even expensive to buy the gear, you know. So...

R: That's interesting about the hockey, in terms of it, have you done a lot of unpaid work to get the club up and running?

P: Yeah and it's nearly impossible to do, but even Irish man from government tried and he couldn't do it.

R: Yeah, but it's great that yee do have a team together, but in terms of it, have you offered any unpaid help?

P: Yeah, more so with the kids in the club, we don't have them anymore because it was hard to go to work and then spend my money on the kids, that should be government job, not myself you know. So now, we only have mens because we couldn't support it, families would come to us and say look it's too expensive, even the stick is like 30/40 euro, skates everything you know, it's so expensive so we had to stop volunteering it and collecting money. We even tried to go to stores and collect 2 euro from people [fundraising], make something you know for them, that's how we tried to collect money for kids to have.



Figure 4.26 and 4.27 Stan's involvement in ice hockey, as well as his active promotion of the sport has saw him engage with different networks and institutions since arriving in Ireland.

It can be said, based on the narrative, that because of Stan's connections in Ireland that he felt comfortable here to begin with and has since found himself in a situation whereby he feels "Irish friends are more friends than Czech friends". Stan has even found himself in situations in which work friends have allowed him to borrow 150 euro because, "because the baby was born and no fucking money and this stuff" and was comforted by the fact that he could pay it back whenever best suited him. Stan's connections go beyond work as it is clear to see here that upon arrival, he had already

established a strong base in Ireland:

Extract 32: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

P: Ok, eh, I was born in Czech Republic. I'm 33 years old, I was coming 13 years ago to Ireland. I was only coming visit my friend and I actually start working. He found me job, as I say, I only come to Ireland to visit and he was working in meat factory, so he says why not come working? So... I say yeah yeah, I can try it. So, I start in meat factory and that was my first start in Ireland, I was only like 20 when I came here so yeah about 13 years ago.

R: Wow, so that was your start here then. Did you come straight to Waterford?

P: Uhhh, I first come, I visit Galway, yeah. And that was only for 2 days, then after that, I come to Waterford. I was working for the uhhh, what's it called? Rymec? There was looking for people to work in the meat factory and you don't pay nothing, you don't pay rent for the house, you don't pay electricity, nothing, but everything comes outta your wages. I get maybe 900 euro each month, but they pay everything for you, little mini bus come in-take you to and from work, everything.

Clubs, organisations and friendships are not the only form of bridge available to those looking to accumulate a higher level of social capital, as Kevin articulates some of the more cunning ways of bridging through scam marriages that are becoming more commonplace in Ireland for immigrants looking to gain guarantees on their status here:



Figure 4.28 Kevin works closely with several organisations to promote the successful integration of immigrants in Ireland.

Extract 33: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

R: A big thing I looked at in terms of my own research was this ‘bridge’ to social capital, so basically how well connected you are with your networks, but the bridge towards social capital could be looking at someone like yourself and how you’ve helped people bridge their networks once they get here. Bridging social capital seems a little easier for people say if, people have an Irish partner, so if their partner is Irish, they can tell them the ‘what, where and why’s’ of the country, but what other examples would you have seen other than people meeting in English classes?

P: A few that have become friends through that have become married but there has been incidents where people have got married to gain status in the country. If you’re from Pakistan or India or Africa and even if you marry a polish person, because they’re a E.U. citizen, they’ll get in on the same rights they have. You must’ve heard of scam marriages?

R: I haven’t actually!

P: They are trying to crack down on that, so it can be an advantage and disadvantage because they are using people as well, but there is real friendships as well, so both ways

An interesting building block towards social capital that has arisen during this study is parents using their children as a bridge. Kevin has shown that “their [immigrants] children have become bigger and they’re able to interpret for them as well, they can talk to them and speak for them.” This is not only concerned with language, though. Kevin’s liaising with the FAI and GAA has gone a long way in assisting immigrant children with their integration into Irish society, which not only begins their journey into accumulating of social capital, but has major benefits for the parents of those children who, although not interested in the sport itself, are partaking in strong and stable clubs in an environment that encourages them to access more and more networks, such as English lessons, in order to become more well-rounded within Irish society:

Extract 34: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

P: I work with the FAI and GAA and schools as well, with kids in the school who are foreign nationals and we help them integrate into soccer and GAA. We hold tournaments every year.

R: Do you find the courses you’ve provided in the past are one of the better bridges towards social networks around here, especially as you said with getting people involved in GAA and things like that around?

P: Oh yeah it is, because we, when I did coaching classes for F.A.I, a lot of people just want to be in the groups but a lot of them, we would encourage them to coach Irish people, not separate, some people want their coaching time with only foreign nationals, not just Irish people

R: Ok perfect, with that kind of thing, when they’re younger as well, it helps them from the get go. Would you find it’s hard to get the involved in? Maybe not so much with football because it’s a bit more universal, but thing like gaelic and hurling?

P: Oh yeah, the adults is harder but younger people take to it. So now we have these intercultural soccer and hurling tournaments in the south east and each school team has to have at least 4 foreign nationals each. So that

encourages them to better their skills and also encourage schools to involve more foreign nationals

R: It's good for kids to have sport, but do you find with the parents the best and easiest way is to get them involved just through English classes and things like that?

P: Yeah, lot of the parents want to learn English because they feel their kids are learning English and then they can't help their kids with the homework so that's one of the big reason but the problem as I told you before is that they go home and they don't practice

Having discussed the concept of bridging and bonding and its effects on accumulating social capital and contributing to the overall lived experience on a working immigrant's life in Ireland emphasises the role of social support and its undeniable value in its assistance with helping a foreign national settle. What has been shown is that isolation from social support is effectively self-imposed and creates an almost false level of social capital where an active social life and steady working life can be lived, but still create a symbolic block from accessing certain institutions and networks based on pre-existing attitudes or slight anxiety from stepping outside of your comfort zone. Those that have shown good levels of social capital where able to demonstrate a belonging with their surrounding community and combine this with a feeling of calmness with regards living in Ireland. In the absence of a bridge or bond, or in a situation where it is not as simple as returning home whenever it suits, what is the cause for these working immigrants to show strong levels of resilience in which they continue to accumulate a further level of social capital for themselves, if they have not already achieved a great deal of it thus far?

4.3 Theme 3: Resilience

“I have to survive / There is more benefits for being local”

This section will build on the previous section by considering the participants view of the world, and in some cases, their ability to ‘stick it out’, as well as self-imposing factors that can influence the level of social capital they acquire. This will differ from the previous theme based on discussing educational background and the nature of their respected workplaces with a brief focus on two participants, both of which are self-employed, as opposed to focusing in on the availability of friends, family and involvement in organisations. In terms of the self-imposition, this section will also look at the approach taken by each participant to the English language and cite their insights into it from people they know to give a general overview. This overview will provide a background to the possibility of being isolated from Irish society and risking the possibility of hindering your own potential to acquire social capital. Sticking with this trend throughout the narratives, the competitive nature between immigrants will be looked at it and how these affect the gathering of social capital.

Examining and analysing the narratives of two self-employed participants is particularly interesting in this case as the characteristics associated with those who set up their own business are that of hard-work, resilience and an overall ability to adapt. From previous segments, it was clear to see Nell’s hard-working attitude and strong mentality. Having looked at how this attitude spilled out into education, or in this case, her stepping stone into the working world:

Extract 35: Nell, Female, 39, Poland.

P: Again I was very limited in my education and my knowledge and did not know what I was it like to run my own business, so I went and done again, a 10 weeks course in Wexford, “how to run your own business” programme in Wexford so I had a few ideas of what I wanted to do, eh clothes shop, different type of shop and then I actually opened this place as a tanning studio originally and I took a big [emphasises word] loan from the bank because I didn’t have the money, I was a single mother and didn’t have much

help from the father so I find this place where I am, so I started as receptionist in the place and hired one person to do the nails and as it expanded, she started doing different treatments in the beauty industry and in 2010, sitting behind the reception did not make enough money to make a living, so had to make decision to to partner with someone or close, which I didn't wanted. The profit would not be good enough for two of us, and the income wouldn't be good enough to cover me and my daughter with having a partner and it was hard to find anyway at the time, businesses were bursting!



Figure 4.29 Nell's business is an outstanding representation of her attitude and mentality.

Nell felt gaining an education was the most important journey she took on the path to opening her business and educating herself with regards to the English language fully reflects this, as she "went to do English intensive course so when I am applying for new jobs." This attitude shows that although she may have isolated herself in some regard to accessing particular networks, her bold approach to acclimatising shows that this in something stil in the works to her, as she came to Ireland when her "English was none:."

Extract 36: Nell, Female, 39, Poland.

R: Yeah, obviously your mentality is very strong and that, especially to get to where you're at. I know you talked a bit about training you would've undertaken and things like that at the start, so would you feel education is quite important in getting to be where you want in terms of a job or do you feel it's a 50/50 between education and self-application or would you feel it's just all about getting the degree or certificate?

P: I think education is the big one.

Emiliano's attitude is based on the fact that he always had a fascination with the "Irish and English culture" and this sparked his interest in learning the language. Similarly, to Nell, Emiliano runs a successful business and place a lot of his restaurants success down to his attitude towards education and his overall work ethic:

Extract 37: Emiliano, Male, 42, Italy.

R: I know you mentioned at the start that you went to a school where you did hotel specific training, could you tell me a little more about that?

P: Schools are different from Italy to Ireland, so the years are going different. We have 5 years of elementary school, the 3 years of 'media', and after that you choose your profession, you can go for scientist, you can go for law. My school was profession was based on a lot of different subjects, more so hotels and restaurants. It was not a course, it was literally a school, here it is more intended as a school, mainly because industry of hotels in Italy is taken more seriously, so there is schools that are good, some are less good, but all the main chefs in Italy have come from this type of school backgrounds. Obviously, big chefs don't go to study law if they're gonna be a chef, so to go to the best school for me, I had to leave my hometown and go to the south of Italy, and I did 5 years school there which you learn all the skills where you need to go into this kinda world, but the school is quite practical.

R: Do you find your education was important to how this place has gone?

P: I find it vitally important. If you don't learn, if you don't teach yourself

what it is in the back of everything. I started from the basic, I started washing glasses, so obviously if you want, if you have to start from there unless you have money in the bank and want to invest, eh that's not what I intend, the lucky one could do that, but if you really wanna have a vision of running a restaurant, you need to start from the bottom and my education was very important for this.

Aside from their similarities with regards their mentalities, their experiences within the working world are a good indicator of their levels of social capital and further stress the points made with regards it in previous sections. The nature of Emiliano's workplace is essentially a community and is surrounded by those he would consider close friends and family. Where he admittedly lacked in terms of a social life, is more than made up for with the support and level of trust he has built with his staff:

Extract 38: Emiliano, Male, 42, Italy.

R: Do you trust your colleagues then? Especially in terms of delegation?

P: I've been lucky because I've always had very, very good people around me, this kinda business is based on the capacity of people around you. Without them you could have the best restaurant in the world, but you would eh, you would be... yeah.

R: So you'd consider the people you work with as friends then?

P: We are family on that. I have a eh, for example, the manager Gianni is with me 10 years, the chef is with me 17 and a half years.

R: Wow, so almost from the start.

P: Yeah, I have a again, in my 18 years, I had the two- [paused]

P: I have changed two managers since I've been here, one I had passed away about 4 and a half years ago, but my Sioux chef is here about 12 years and another is here about 7 years, so the people and staff are here with me 4 years.



Figure 4.30 Emiliano's staff are likened to family members.

This relates directly back to his community involvement in the previous theme and earlier quotes where he shows strong levels of social capital based on his community engagement, as well as looking to provide the public with an excellent service. Paradoxically, Nell's working world has led to isolation outside of it, and the lack of contact she has with others, paired with the fact she runs the business alone has led to a situation where she feels entirely left out and closed out from the surrounding businesses and the people that run them:

Extract 39: Nell, Female, 39, Poland:

R: Going back to your mindset which would appear to be quite strong, I'd be interested in how you look at local and national issues, but do you feel in your local area, you can influence decisions? So, even if things were going a bit badly, do you feel you could have an influence in changing things up?

P: No.

R: In the last 12 months have you taken any of the following actions in an attempt to solve a problem affecting people in your local area?

P: No, I don't feel I have any access to it and I would be a little bit upset

over.

R: Yeah?

P: Yeah, I say even, where I live and more so to do with work with meetings about how businesses can be expanded, everyone in the area will be invited, but I never get invited, never any word from city council to even sit in and listen and hear about any plans or have anything. I hear from the neighbour, “oh we had a meeting last week about the business!” Nobody tell me about this, nobody send me a letter. Ring me and ask me for it.

Here, Nell is experiencing being completely disconnected and has stated that she rarely even connects with her family at this point. A combination of technically being caught up in the running of her business and cutting herself off due to commitments with her immediate family has led to a situation whereby she is limited to the amount of social capital she can obtain. From Nell’s point of view, this was largely connected to the fact that being local gave you more of an advantage in these scenarios and subtly hinted that it may be more of a racial issue than what it first appears:

Extract 40: Nell, Female, 39, Poland.

R: Do you think if you came from here or even grew up in Ireland you would have more of an access to it?

P: Probably. Not probably, definitely. Yes. There is more benefits for being local, knowing what way to solve problems, when you’re not local, you are learning to solve problems as a small child in Irish ways. So by the time when you start, as in when you start, you’ll get so far ahead and I’d only be half way through because I have to go all the steps from the bottom. So someone can send you between different people and sometimes no is the answer and you have to go to another person to get to the bottom of it, and ask advice and they say no and then you ask for the person to give you advise and they still say no so you actually give up. After a few years, it is a waste of time, so I just give up at the beginning and let it go over my head. Because

you're in the middle of going nowhere. When you're local, you'll know somebody or your family will know somebody and then you find out and it gets solved much quicker.

The notion of this being, in any way, connected to some form of discrimination prompted asking Emiliano his opinion on the matter, but he was noticeably quick to rubbish this claim and further enhance the narrative he provided in which he landed in supportive surroundings based on his attitude to adapt and integrate proactively:

Extract 41: Emiliano, Male, 42, Italy.

R: The idea to interview you came because you run one of the most successful restaurants in the county, if not the county, but in a previous interview, I did it with a person who was self-employed, but she felt she was kept away from local business meetings because of her nationality. Have you ever felt you were kept out of the loop with those kinds of things based on your nationality?

P: No, absolutely no. I think it is the more nonsense thing someone could think, the thing is, I would have seen that 20 years ago where there was no nationality, now there is foreign nationals everywhere. We are going back to the start, no matter where you're from, Irish people will treat you the same as long as you behave. You treat the people in the same respect you want to be treated. That's what I always like of Irish people, they are fair if you're fair with them. There is nothing like that.

Similarly, to Emiliano, those who immersed themselves in the English language as a result of having very little having arrived in Ireland have shown good levels in social capital, and this is clearly recognisable in Stan's case. Stan throughout the interview emphasised the importance of adapting to your new country and suggesting that the new country should do likewise for its newly arrived foreign nationals. Like Emiliano, Stan showed active participation in the networks he is involved in and this led to a situation whereby he was able to accumulate social capital via interaction with varying organisations, councils and so on. It is no surprise in this instance then how strongly Stan felt on the importance of education in the role it plays in getting you access to better jobs and superior working conditions and how this influences your mind-set to

submerge yourself in the English language in order to succeed:

Extract 42: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

R: Would you find education is important in that sense or would you feel you're just as well off coming to a country with your own drive and attitude to do well?

P: Yeah, I think it's important.

R: Would you be able to talk a bit about your educational background starting from Czech Republic and even as far as anything in Ireland?

P: Ah, yeah, now. Another one. We have 9 years normal school and then you go to high school or higher school. You cannot finish and go working yourself. I know some people 16 leave and go to job when they finish to school, it does not work anymore in my country. You need to be certificated. So I am mechanic, so after the 9 years and after the 4 years, I do another 4 years to do mechanic school to be qualified mechanic. So I was like a mechanic with machine operator, so it was the 2 colleges in one, you know, so everyone has to have that, so if you don't have that, they won't give you job. I know many my friends never finish school so now they don't have job.

Stan's attitude mirrors that of Emiliano's narrative where they look to educate themselves in order to be successful, but in relation to the English language, these two participants learned to converse and articulate themselves by doing it somewhat organically, i.e. through the bridges and bonds they had set up since arriving to Ireland. These almost matching attitudes reveal that the participants have almost directly comparable levels of social capital. Stan's idea of engaging with the English language to make a better life for yourself also holds bearings on how sees education yourself as a key component in earning social capital:

Extract 43: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

P: Yeah yeah, and another thing which is problem in Ireland is, they don't push enough people to speak English. Many jobs don't look for English language, ok, and someone go to them, can you do this for me? And they go

“wah?” Then people have to translate for you and all this

R: So, you think it should be pushed a little more then?

P: Yeah because I said same in my country, if you wanna come work in my country, speak fucking Czech, I knew coming here, they speak English, so someone from Czech come looking for job, first thing I say is: do you speak English? How good your English is? Ehh, not really. Ok, so what do you want? To clean the toilets because nobody will be there and nobody will speak to you? In meat factory especially, they say to you, you need to speak English because you can make some big fucking problem. Or you can kill yourself because you don't understand, someone tell you not to put your hand, two minutes later you lose your fucking hand!

P: For people it's easy, to say yes. Even if they don't understand the language, they tell you, oh yes! Someone say to them, do you understand me? Uhhhh no? So that's the problem, they should push people a little bit more.

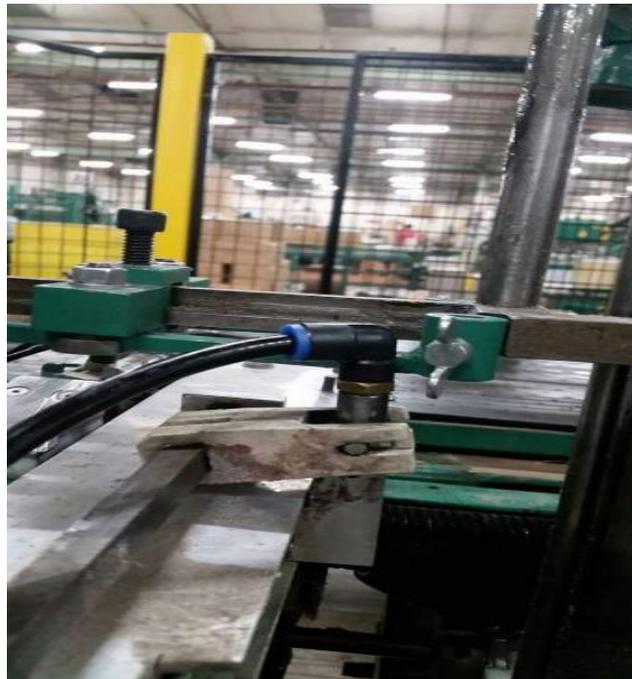


Figure 4.31 Stan's education allowed him to be qualified to operate machinery; but

being involved in this type of workplace environment requires a good grasp on the English language in order to remain safe, but also to interact with colleagues.

This contrasts then with a participant who was quite similar to Nell. JB had picked up the English language in terms of its colloquiums the longer she was here, but due to a lack of English and an intention to someday move to an English-speaking country, had sought about doing intensive English language classes before arriving. This reflects the independent mentality shown earlier and offers a comparison to that of Nell where an independent mentality that has led to simply educating yourself to work and become practically isolated from some networks due to the fact that you have limited yourself to a certain group or none at all, like in Nell's case. JB had also found that education was vitally important in succeeding in life and helping an individual establish a base to increase the chances of living a higher quality of life, but in her case it further emphasised the independent mind-set:

Extract 44: JB, Female, 37, Poland.

R: I'm quite interested in education as a base for getting employment and using it to move through your career, so basically with it, would you find education is important to help you establish a base when you move to a new country or to help you get a job that you'd rather be in from the get go?

P: Yeah, it's important. When I moved to Ireland, I wanted to be useful and contribute towards society, so I wanted to be educated, but there's other ways you can be useful to the society you know, but in my case, the thing I could bring in to this country was that I am well educated and that I can use my intellectual background and I came to Ireland, I came straight after finishing my masters in bio-technology and 10 years ago I did a BSc in good manufacturing practices in WIT.

R: Aw cool, so obviously, you're well educated here and in Poland, so were you able to go straight into the job you wanted?

P: I was lucky, because I came to Ireland in 2006 when 'Celtic Tiger' was alive and kicking and I worked in factory as general operator, that was my first job, but I really didn't want to waste my education so I got a job as a

QC analyst after 7 months or 9 month, I can't exactly remember, but yeah-

R: But it was almost immediately then you got into it.

P: Yeah yeah

R: What I've found in past interviews is that people felt that education wasn't too important, it was more so on your self-application, do you feel it was an important ingredient in it or do you think the education alone would've done it?

P: Yeah, that was ehh emm I really, eh I studied hard for so many years, and came straight here to get a job with my profession and that really drove me and helped me. I think it's really subjective isn't it?

R: Yeah, it does depend on yourself. Some people I interviewed found jobs focused more on the certificate rather than the person behind it and felt that was a bit of an issue.

P: Yeah, but education is almost like uh, I don't know how to put it in words, but it is what you're representing, but you might be a different person without it. In my case, it's what helps me, I feel more independent and more self-confident with it.

Again, and again the importance of the English language was brought up throughout the interviews that took place, and although JB had a good standard of English that allowed her to interact with a select group of people and with colleagues, the approach to it reflected her independence and echoed a lack of social capital that was shown before:

R: Obviously you said the standard of English is quite important and yours is spot on-

P: Stop, stop! [laughs]

R: Is that something you came to Ireland with or is it something that improved-

P: I have decent English but theoretically, so I have perfect grammar, really good grammar, but I have, I couldn't have normal day-to-day conversation. It's not a life language. Countries have different slang and stuff.

R: Is it something you struggled to adapt to, I know you would've got your ideal employment after 7, 8 months, but was it hard to adapt?

P: I say more accent because I could see people couldn't understand what I was saying and I couldn't understand a word they were saying but after few months, couple of years, I could understand everyone, pretty much. Even Cork people!

As shown by JB here, she is forever adapting and figuring out the "slang" that is batted about on a day-to-day basis. Similarly, again with Nell, this resilient attitude suggests that she is still striving and gearing towards higher levels of social capital through increased interaction over time, so these results are not to say that she will be stuck within this phase for the rest of her time in Ireland.

An independent mentality that reflects on the approach to work, education and the English language is a key indicator of a lack of social capital as it goes some way to showing how an individual can isolate themselves and limit the number of networks they can access. This often resonates with the lack of connections maintained and gained in Ireland and create situations like Marek's where Ireland is used as hub to educate yourself, enhance your monetary gains and then return home once it felt that enough has been achieved here, as was mentioned previously, "I am happy at the moment, as I said there will be a day when we decide to go back home." Earlier in the analysis, it was shown that Marek adopted an attitude that wanted to educate himself so that he would have something to work off of once he returned to the Czech Republic. In a later section, this narrative will reflect on overall issues of trust and how it has led to a limited lifestyle. This attitude reflects on a lack of satisfaction with a job and has created a self-imposed lack of social capital:

Extract 45: Marek, Male, 43, Czech Republic.

R: In the pipeline, with the degree and that, would you want to go looking for something more or are you quite happy to be a supervisor or a manager

of people?

P: Hmm. Yeah, well, managing people is the worst job in the world, to be honest. I like working in the stores [long pause] [participant got frustrated because couldn't think of explanation for 'stores']. Can't get the word now. I mean like, supplying the factory, these type of stores. I'd rather supply the factory than manage the people.

This notion of a self-imposition is one that should alert caution to the individual as it increases the likelihood of being “stuck”, whether that be within a safety net of trusted compatriots, a job that merely benefits you financially rather than socially or being left in a state where you feel that accessing networks and different institutions is no longer possible as shown by Nell earlier. This applies in Peter's case, which is interesting, as the participant showed good levels of social capital with access to social support and attended large community gatherings that directly related to his interests, although he felt this was interest specific and did not range beyond that in the form of any sort of support:

Extract 46: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

R: Yeah absolutely, away from family, would you speak to friends often, whether they are from here or Czech Republic?

P: Yeah, every day.

R: Ok, so every day basis, that's perfect. Would you meet with them often?

P: Yeah, I prefer to meet them rather than text them. My friends at work are older than me, you know, so I usually prefer to go for coffee with them, but I'll talk with them every day.

R: So, yee just meet to do general things like go for a coffee and that or go for a beer after work?

P: Yeah, if not every day, twice to three times a week and it's good mix so you'll have Slovakian, Czech, Hungarian and Irish.

R: I just want to ask a couple of questions about social support. What I'll do

is read out a couple of statements that were provided from the background research where people can avail of social support and for each one you can tell me if you'd have some if anyone that could help you in that situation... so, the first one is, you are sick in bed and need help at home. Is there anyone you could ask for help?

P: Yeah, my brother or my friend, when I am sick they can give me lift to the doctors or something like that.

R: Now, this one is quiet broad, but if you are in financial difficulty and need to borrow some money to see you through the next few days. Is there anyone you could you ask for help?

P: Yeah my friends, brother and family all would help.

R: If you had a serious personal crisis, how many people, if any, do you feel you could turn to for comfort and support?

P: Yeah the exact same people.



Figure 4.32 Family is very important to Peter.

As stated previously, Peter is able to avail of social support from his family, which has appeared as an important factor throughout his narrative, but this is not his only avenue in the accumulation of social capital. Peter's interest in motorbikes has given him a tool that allows him to engage with a wide community group where he can establish networks and contacts amongst other members. This particular option does not seem to be utilised to its full potential as Peter still prefer being in a state of independence when possible.

Extract 47: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

R: When it came to looking at the lived experience of immigrants in a new country, a lot came up about looking at involvement in clubs and organisations, even if it's not a formal thing, could even be a group of people you can meet up, or a group you can meet up with to do a regular activity. Would you feel you've been a part of anything like that since you've been in Ireland?

P: Right, I have a motorbike, so I can go to a bike gathering every Wednesday, well, not every Wednesday because of work, but at least every 2 weeks. I do motorsports and I go hiking and stuff like that with friends, but other than that, stuff like running, I'd rather do it on my own.



Figure 4.33 The side of Peter's life where he likes to keep active is coupled with his desire to be independent.

This urge to “do it on my own” further emphasises the lack of utilization put into the large community group that has been presented to Peter. Although he has met friends from this community group, it is important to note that he does engage in any community activities or look to participate within society the way other members have. In this instance, it appears that both his attitude and work schedule, which is a hindrance to Peter, is disrupting his full potential to participate within this group and their activities.

Extract 48: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

R: I know you mentioned a bit about the neighbourhood watch earlier and it gave off a community type vibe, have you gotten together with any one from the community for a day out or anything?

P: Nope, nothing.

R: Nothing as yet so. Even with the groups you are a part of then, have you offered any voluntary help to themselves or have these groups offered any community or charitable help since you've been a part of them?

P: No, not really, but if it ever came up, I'd be more than happy to help!

R: With the bike club then, what would you get up to at gatherings?

P: We'd meet for a coffee and stuff like this, there is sometimes we just go for spin and if there's any charity run on bike, we'll collect money, even if a member is sick and we need to raise funds we'll do that for them!



Figure 4.34 Peter pictured with a friend he had made through the bike gatherings.

Clear social connections and access to bridges and bonds were present, particularly in the form of his brother who had come to Ireland “one year earlier than me” and through that was able to establish a circle of friends that Peter could link in with. Peter’s approach to learning the English language was proactive too, realising that merely learning it within a grammar school was not enough, so sought after actively engaging with the language with his brother as his “understanding was ok, but speaking wasn’t great.” Both himself and his brother looked to learn more conversational English as he had found it quite difficult to get a job that was not associated with those within the safety net of fellow countrymen:

Extract 49: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

P: Oh jesus yeah! When I went to grammar school, so like basic school here, my English was good, then I go to high school and I find out by English isn’t good, but then I finish high school and now my English is great, so then I went to study in Prague- English language for 2 years and really think my English is great, but then I come here and realise I know nothing!

[laughs]

P: You know it really helped, but if I knew what I know now, I would definitely have just focused on languages.

R: Did you find the English degree helps or was it the Irish accent that was hard to adapt to even with it?

P: Understanding was ok, but speaking wasn't great.

R: Did you find it difficult then to get a job when you came here then because of the language barrier?

P: Yeah I would have, but I already knew I would get a job when I came here, my friend worked in a chip shop so he said he would get me a job when I came here.

In this sense, Peter has adjusted quite well to life in Ireland and has demonstrated the benefits of having social capital, but in this scenario, it is Peter's potential social capital that is at risk as he struggles to access education and has found it increasingly difficult to get himself back onto the right path in terms of his career goals. This throws back then to the discussion around how a lack of social capital; or harming your potential social capital by almost denying yourself a higher standard living is an issue for the working immigrants of Ireland. As mentioned earlier, Peter had mentioned that his job was not ideal and would rather pursue a career in IT, but it is this current job that is becoming a hindrance in gaining more social capital:

Extract 50: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

R: One of the things I was interested in, coming into this research was education and how it can act as a base for people getting the jobs they want, especially if they've come from abroad with the Ireland the way it is now, you need to be some way trained up or educated, so basically, I just want you to tell me a bit about your education from being in school in Czech Republic, to being in college and any training you might have undertaken in work.

P: Oh right yeah, I went to school in Czech Republic and went to Business & Banking Academy which is like a private school for 4 years and finished with my Leaving Cert. But my problem was I didn't go straight into the job I want here so like job in the bank or something and once when you lose it, it's gone. My friends when they come over they moved to Dublin and they got their jobs straight away in the bank and they're still working there and then in 2008 I started study in WIT. In my opinion here, everything in college is a little easier because you only need 40% to pass, let's say Maths, let's say high school in Czech Republic I was getting B's and C's, but in college here I get like 90%, you know, so it was just really easy. My only problem here is I work nights, I work nights. I work 6 to 6. So what I do is finish, 9 to 5 college, then back to work so there was times I was not sleeping at all really like two days a week, I was just sitting in a corner in college [mimics falling asleep]. My first year, I got really sick, my immune system just shot down, so that's why I'm kinda like, I had to stop, even doctors say I had to stop or I'm gone!

Although he has faced adversity, Peter again shows the common theme of resilience and has not given up on pursuing his chosen career path; attempting alternatives to earning a degree in IT to work around his working life, but it is unclear at the moment to determine whether this will be successful for him:

Extract 51: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

P: Hmm. I often think, if I had just done the college, sometimes I think I should have just left the job, done the social welfare for 3 years, finish college, I would have been somewhere else with better money and everything. You know... [participant seems quite upset]. I have started 'Udacity'.

R: Oh? And what's that?

P: It's the internet web pages from America and you pay 200 per month and they do things like coding. In America, there's job guarantee after you finish it and it's supposed to be coming to Europe, so hopefully.

R: So, it's keeping you updated and in practice with coding and programming?

P: Yeah exactly and I'm still hoping to go back to college here or somewhere else – even if I can go part time.

There does appear to be an awareness that he is primarily in a situation where he can only earn money and live within his current levels of social capital, but the longevity of the working hours and extreme absence of flexibility will surely be a hindrance in this case. JJ can be compared to Peter in this instance as he was working a job he was not overwhelmingly satisfied with, but saw its benefits for monetary gain, as well as a strong social support network and was actively involved in large community groups with plenty of presence in the bridge and bond department as mentioned earlier. The link that was made to show the connection between attitude towards education, working mentality and its effect on learning the English language is not of huge importance here as JJ claims that his region of Cameroon was “English and French speaking,” but what is important is an awareness that he must be resilient in order to avoid becoming stuck within his unsatisfactory job and so that he can prosper at a higher standard living and therefore be able to gain higher levels of social capital:

Extract 52: JJ, Male, 24, Cameroon.

R: I'm personally quite interested in education as a base for gaining different types of employment and in this sense, its ability to provide a platform for gaining social capital and for someone who, in this sense, comes to a new place and is able to throw themselves straight into it, in that kinda way! Can you tell me a bit about your education or any specific training you have undertaken either past or present?

P: Yeah, so, eh, well, when I left my leaving cert in 2008, in Cameroon they call it the Advanced Level Certificate-

R: So, it's the equivalent of the leaving cert itself?

P: Yeah, yeah, that's the equivalent. Because our university is points system, so Cameroon is English and French speaking, so the English university is points-based system. So, based on my points, I was eligible for law, political science and... geography. But for some reason the law department was full, that year there was a lot of high grades so I could not get onto it-

R: Just places taken because of the numbers wanting to do the course itself?

P: Yeah, so obviously, there was people with higher grades and points than me that would've got it, so I decided to do political science. I did political science for 2 years there but at that time, I was just out of boarding in school and into university so I found it difficult to cope not like cope with life, but life at that time you just want enjoy uni, just wanting to live life right instead of study, so I never completed political science. So, then I started up another course in another university and I was doing business there, but at the same time, I applied to do business in London and I got accepted there, so I went to London to do business and that's where I got my business degree. After finishing business, I wanted to go into accounting, so when I was there I did eh eh eh, like a bookkeeping job there with a small accounting firm, not like a firm, but like a small office where they did bookkeeping, so yeah, I got interested from there. I was going to the chartered accounted course, but when I started I had to move to Ireland, so I'm hoping it's something I can go back to.

R: So it's something you plan to return to at some stage so, definitely?

P: Yeah, yeah. Very soon I hope I can go back into it.

R: Yeah fingers crossed for ye! Would you find then it that sense, given the importance of education there, that it would give you more satisfaction in your job as opposed to [pause] a normal, 9-5 job say? Do you think it would impact job satisfaction?

P: Yeah, definitely like with education. Education helps you get where you need to be. If you don't have education you'll get a job, but probably an unskilled job, but if you want to be an accountant say, it may just take you longer if you need to do a masters or a chartered accountants course. So, in a way, education helps you get the job you will be satisfied with.

R: Yeah perfect, obviously, you're working here at the moment, em if you don't mind me asking how long have you been in employment and are you satisfied with your workplace at the moment?

P: I've been employed in Ireland for a year plus, a year and a few months. In terms of job satisfaction, I wouldn't say very satisfied but like...medium satisfaction [laughs]. It's like basic. It's fair. Because the reason I say that is because, the job I have obviously in Ireland, the reason the – the opportunity to raise up is really difficult. The job motivation, there is a little bit of a lack of job motivation but it keeps a roof over your head and stuff

R: Absolutely, as you said it keeps a roof over your head and it pays the bills at the end of the month, I understand where you're coming from with the job satisfaction, but does it help that you have a bit of comfort that you have your bookkeeping to fall back onto then. You're still pursuing that obviously, so does it help knowing that it may not be your job for life?

P: Definitely. Obviously like, the job I'm doing now, it's just part of my career path. It's not where I want to be, but it's what I have to go through to get where I want to be. It's an experience, but I'm hoping one day, I'll get to do what I want to do.

The resilience present in individuals throughout this study was evident, but some had struggles that looked to go beyond repair given the difficulties that have gone on beforehand. There is attempts to rectify setbacks and to overcome the challenges posed by new laws and regulations, but it is important to note the strength shown in order to piece together a better lived experience and to transform a strong mentality into higher

levels of social capital. The struggles mentioned here offer a representation of Ola's story, who was received many setbacks whilst in Ireland with regards to the working world and is struggling to find the balance between family commitments and getting an education that would propel her into a more stable environment. Ola highlights how important English is as a base for beginning to amass a standard level of social capital:

Extract 53: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

P: Emm, actually when we moved here, we took all the lowest positions like all the cleaning all the shops, whatever like I would say and the lowest pay which was 10-12 years ago, so many of my friends are earning more and they are in higher positions, so I would say things are changing and maybe it's because we learned better English, all my friends go to the colleges in here but from the beginning when we come here, we worked in the lower positions and the easiest jobs to find

R: Just going on what you were saying about English, it was just mentioned to me in a previous interview, and basically because of the standard of English wasn't great

P: English, qualifications, self-confidence. Yeah.

R: Yeah, they felt they were put in the lowest positions because they could not speak a good standard of English

P: Yeah exactly and you were wondering why can't I work in higher positions, why can't I earn more, why not?

In this situation, her mentality and lack of self-confidence has become an issue, and although she is willing to get better, a dearth in inner belief has become an interference in achieving better levels of social capital. This goes some way into elaborating on the fact that self-sabotage thwarts an immigrant worker from having a better lived experience on top of everything else:

Extract 54: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

P: "...I don't have a lot of self-confidence, so I'm not confident with the language but I am getting better, but I think, this thing doesn't help me to settle in here, but for many reasons, I want to go back to Poland because I feel like a stranger always. Like a foreigner. I always feel this, it is in my head because nobody shows this to me but eh I think different."



Figure 4.35 and 4.36 Although Ola was asked to provide images of her lived experience in Ireland, she had sent photos of her life back in Poland.

A lack of social capital and no real tools to help overcome this problem have led to situations where Ola feels practically helpless and is struggling to get her foot back in the door so she can be satisfied with life again, particularly when she states "I want to use my qualification because I never used it since I finished it." Personal issues and family commitments have stood in the way and although there is a want to succeed, strive and prosper, a self-imposed attitude that underlies the resilience shown becoming effective has drastically spoiled the chances of this becoming a reality:

Extract 55: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

R: I know you said you left Poland as a qualified teacher, I'm personally quite interested in education as a base for getting jobs and getting the job you want, so would you be able to tell me a little bit about your own educational background?

P: I finished a few schools, but I have a masters for teaching philosophy in Poland, so my qualification says teacher, so they hired me straight away to the crèche because of teaching but after 10 years, the rules are changing, so they are saying teaching is no longer childcare

R: So now you're being asked for a childcare degree?

P: Maybe not a childcare degree, but like FETAC levels, 5 or 6. So I started a course online, but there's no deadline so I don't know when I'm going to finish this [laughs] – eh so yeah I did this, but I also did industry course, so I have a photo technician qualification, but I'm never going to work as this, but yeah after 10 years of working in a crèche, I want to do a teaching here in Ireland so I started to do all these forms because there is teaching council forms you have to fill out and I've been doing this for 7 months [exasperated “yeah” // rolls eyes] and they need to be translated

R: It's an expensive process too

P: It is an expensive process and you have to always ask people for help and nobody wants to do it for you, so you're constantly pushing emails and calls to ask people for help and to show that I'm in need

R: Is this a case of getting people to just translate stuff for you?

P: I think the biggest problem is my university hasn't filled the forms in English and nobody wants to translate them from Polish, so they are like yeah we can do them in Polish but right now, I'm asking if these forms can be write in polish and write out in translated, so at the moment I don't want to be a teacher because you need to Irish and everything but I would like to be a support teacher



Figure 4.37 Ola is highly interested in childcare and education, but faces severe obstructions to overcome before being able to live out her chosen career.

An interesting point to note amongst this specific theme are two apparent outliers in the form of Neo and Dave who shared similar views on education and both could speak English before coming to Ireland with the former doing it all the way through school then living in London to improve on conversationalist English and the latter being Scottish. Neo's story showed how being culturally starved, wanting a new challenge and simply earning more money than those back Lithuania drove him onwards and has allowed for even further accumulation of social capital, as well as it allowing him to establish strong levels of it to begin with:

Extract 56: Neo, Male, 32, Lithuania.

R: "...I'm quite interested in education as a base – so can you tell me a bit about your education or any specific training you have undertaken either past or present? Either in Lithuania or when you came to Ireland.

P: No, eh, I'm a university dropout. I studied medicine in Lithuania for three years, but I was young, I was stupid [laughs] – during the summer holidays from university I went to London and just never went back! Yeah, I felt as if three years were pretty much wasted. In Ireland, I've gone through business management and like, people management courses, but they're more so to do with certificates, so no degree – as yet! I actually done a few in London, as well as Ireland. They were in-house training sessions to up-skill in the job so it was all done on site. Yeah.

Neo reiterates the fact that earning money and adopting the right mentality as put him “on top of the world” and has given him the life he imagined for himself. When asked about others in a similar situation to him, he backed up the belief that the amount of social capital you earn is primarily concerned with the mentality you adopt upon arrival to Ireland:

R: You're quite lucky in that sense, that you are quite outgoing and willing to go out and adapt to new places, the big thing about that is, people that might come over from countries say like, the Czech Republic that have earned their degrees in their own countries, but they not be able to exercise them or put them to use here in Ireland. In that sense, they were coming to get work, but you were coming to live life. Do you feel in that sense that an education isn't as important in obtaining a job in a new country or getting along well in a new country as it is to being outgoing and having the right mind-set?

P: No, well, I can't say it is or it isn't important. It is and it isn't, I can't say that it isn't important. I know people from Poland and I know people from Lithuania who have got their degrees and they've utilised them over here or even in the U.K. I think it's the people themselves that are holding themselves back. You know, you've spent years and years grilling before you come here and now you come here, all you have to do is go to the solicitor and get your certificate or your degree translated. It's universal! If

you are a plumber in the Czech Republic, you can be a plumber here. A toilet is a toilet. A drain is a drain. You go to Ardkeen [local hospital], how many of them are Irish? How many of them are from here?

R: Yeah, a lot get recruited to come over here, and a lot are from abroad, absolutely. From where you're coming from then, do you feel there's a mental block-

P: Absolutely. I'm a firm believer of it. You know, people are the worst enemies of themselves like they actually are. Will I be good enough? Will I do OK? Will it be different. NO! It's not bloody different! [laughs] I'm sorry but if you are a mechanic, cars are the same all over the world. You turn a screw the same you do here as you do there, if you're a carpenter, the wooden floors are gonna be the same as they are here, as they are...[pause], in America, in Europe, you know?

R: Yeah, that's another way to look at it. The assumption and some of the research that exists is quite damning of a countries acceptance for degrees that have been earned from abroad, but I suppose, where you're coming from is the more outgoing you are and then the mind-set—

P: Yeah absolutely it is the mind-set. You know, first of all, I believe a year or two coming in could be difficult if you are not proficient in English will depend on the kind of work you are going to do. Especially if you are going into something like medicine, you need to be up-to-speed with your terminology, with your science and so on. If you wanna be good at that, make sure you're good at it. Go. Wait tables for a year, assimilate. Get to know the people, get to know the language. If you throw yourself into it and immerse yourself in it, then the language and everything comes to you like that [clicks fingers].



Figure 4.38 Neo firmly believes in immersing yourself in your new surroundings to improve your chances of integrating at a more efficient rate. Above is an image he took as he participated in a local festival.

It should be noted that in Lithuania, Neo was given the English language was easily accessible on a daily basis stating that television programmes would be in English and only “subtitled in Lithuanian.” On top of this, it was mandatory that upon leaving their equivalent of secondary school that you had at least two languages; one of them obviously being English for Neo. In this instance, Dave is an interesting participant as he never had to tackle any real language barrier having moved to Ireland. Before, it was noted that Dave believed it was easier to adapt and settle as people would be faster to approach as you were a “kell” and spoke English fluently. This has provided him with such a strong base to work off of that his attitude towards education is obsolete as he has “very little education”, but evolved within the workplace and was able to exercise a certain freedom in Ireland that led to his involvement in community groups. His relaxed attitude towards living in Ireland was touched on earlier, but Dave does believe that is important for those coming from countries with a second language to come with an education to help the overcome any initial barriers:

Extract 57: Dave, Male, 54, Scotland.

R: Do you think education then is important to someone who comes with a similar language to that spoken in Ireland and coming from a similar background in comparison to someone who comes from a different country altogether?

P: To them, it would be more important to have an education to be honest with ye. With me, I'd rather be picking up a spade and digging a hole than going into school or college. I don't know what it is with me.



Figure 4.39 Dave's nationality is very important to him and in this case, provided a stepping stone to help accumulate social capital as a language barrier was removed.

Kevin found that educating yourself is important in order to enhance your freedom in Ireland, but outside factors must be taken into consideration that can have an overall effect on the mind-set of the individual. These can vary from family issues to something as extreme as persecution in your own country. Although these are presented as obstacles, they can also be viewed as pointers towards the resilience of an immigrant striving to build a better life for themselves in a new country:

Extract 58: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

R: Back then to this whole thing about mindset and showing initiative, would you think that mindset element is really important? Some people felt education was the most important thing but a lot of others felt education wasn't as important, it was more important to have a good mindset to go and be your best self, but how important do you find it is then in comparison? Do you find education is more important or that their initiative is the only thing they need?

P: Well, mindset comes first I think because if you don't have a proper mindset, you're not going to get a proper education. A lot of these people are going through stressful experiences and coming from persecution and their mindsets are not there to study, they go for education but fail the exams because they don't have the right mindsets because they're thinking about their families at home. They're trying to get this education to have a better life and get more money to send back home but when they don't have the proper mindset, they don't get the proper education they need and you know yourself, the mindset, you won't be able to focus if you're thinking of your family back home!

R: Absolutely, worrying about a family back home would certainly distract the mind

P: Yeah and they may not be alive when you phone them next.

R: One thing I wanted to bring up actually is the resilience of immigrant workers, refugees and asylum seekers. Do you find they're some of the most resilient people you've come across?

P: Well, resilience has always been in Ireland and you need to have resilience if you want to come and live in a new culture, Irish people have had experience with that in the past, they've gone abroad, they know what resilience is, when they went to England they wouldn't get jobs over there, now they all go to America and Canada, you need to have resilience to live in a new country. If you don't have resilience, you'll crack up and a lot of people have.

R: Have they looked to stick it out then or do they look to just go back home in that case?

P: Well, a lot of people have gone back home, some have been deported, some have taken to drugs and drink to make money, so that's what happens when you don't have the resilience

R: If they didn't have the resilience, do you think, you know like trying to access different networks in the country that things like institutional racism, so maybe not a conscious level of it, but a certain type of sub-conscious racism that may keep immigrants oppressed, do you find that's an issue that effects a lot of people you work with?

P: Well, it would effect a lot of them, they know they don't have a voice here in Ireland and even when it comes to election as I mentioned before, they are nowhere, except in council elections, they are allowed to vote, so I know a lot of politicians have spoke to me and said they're trying to help foreign nationals in the country, they'll only speak up for them to boost their own popularity.

Again, we come back to Kevin who provides a keen insight into the general story of the lived experiences of immigrant workers trying to gather social capital. Kevin mentions throughout the interview the 'freedom of employment' and its importance in getting a foothold in a new community and new society. Kevin states: "this is the freedom employment gives after not having the freedom in their own country, so all their culture has to change once they come to Ireland, they have freedom, language and they're able to speak." From this new-found freedom of employment, immigrants are given a tool to explore their new country in a much more productive manner, in which he believes foreign nationals must use "initiative to integrate themselves", which provides a defence for the sabotaging nature of self-imposed lack of integration and accumulation of social capital.

Having delved into the accounts given by our participants and shown their differences in mentality and attitudes, what are the effects and disadvantages that come from adopting a mind-set that does not fit in with, perhaps, the countries general stance? Kevin mentions ghettoization previously in the analysis and mentions that by not immersing yourself in the country or showing "initiative" means that you become stuck

in groups of people that you are familiar with, which evidently holds you back from earning good levels of social capital. Stan touched on the issue where he found that because people are not pushed to speak English they can become tentative about it and choose to not interact fully with Irish people:

Extract 59: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

P: Because now, I speak to you but I see some Czech who will not speak to Irish. In my place yeah, we have a friend, one Irish fella, we all speak English because I know how I feel when I was in group of Irish and they all speak English because you're stood there going, oh fuck I don't know. It's better speak, but I understand why you not speak my language, like why the fuck would you speak my language you know? [laughs]. You are from Waterford, but people should be pushed more to speak English.

Stan, who has stated that he has a good mix of friends here, believes that difference in attitudes is a key factor in this. He mentions here, with some concern, that an inability to familiarise yourself with Ireland's culture and supposed friendly and outgoing nature can lead to further incidents where people begin to isolate themselves from the wider community:

Extract 60: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

P: Yeah, that's what's great about Ireland. My cousin, she's coming here yesterday and people pass us on the street and they say, "hello, how are you?!" And she's like, "oh you know him?" So, you're there saying no and she's like, "wait, what the fuck? Why they say hello if you don't know them, it's stupid!" But it's not stupid, in our country, it's not normal, so if you walk in my country and say hello to someone you don't know, they say "what the fuck?" Look, Irish people nice about this, even if they don't know, they stop to have a chat, ye know, how are you and things like that. I think Irish people is more friendly and is more, for me, interesting because it's interesting to meet other people. Czech people and Slovakian people, they have a group, and they stay in that group and they don't move to another group because

they know everyone in that group.



Figure 4.40 Stan's fondness of Ireland leads to a situation in which he likes to get out as much as possible and dip his hand into as many activities and networks as possible. He even shows off the country's outgoing and friendly nature to his family.

This settling for what is familiar because of a personal issue is monumental and has even been linked with bringing upon feelings of shame for foreign nationals. Ola's account has shown that a pure lack of English has stumped people and even though it would be ideal to return home, it is becoming more and more difficult due to family reasons:

Extract 61: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

R: Just because you touched on it with your friends and their circles, I know a language barrier would be the biggest issue, but would you find the friends that have connected only to Polish people are happy here or would they like to go back themselves?

P: Many of my friends, say 80%, they want to go back, maybe half would like to go back because of financial problems, so say when your children are growing here, it gets harder to cut the roots and go back to Poland but my friends that don't speak English, it depends on their personality, but it is really hard to be living here and not to speak English, especially when you have

children, it's hard. When you have children, you have to go to school sometimes, sometimes to doctor, so this friend, they are aware they are trying to but it is hard for them, but they are trying to do something but it doesn't stop them living here

R: So, when they are here they are restricted to their own groups?

P: Yeah, they are stuck

R: So, if they are trying to access clubs or organisations or anything like that, you would feel cut out?

P: They are definitely cut out. I have a few friends, it is possible to live in here 12 years and don't speak because they are working with Polish people yeah, and you don't have to speak English and then they don't even walk into organisations because they don't have a need and they also feel ashamed to walk into these places after being here years.

Going on Stan's notion of making the English language a requirement based on its obvious advantages does not seem to wash with Ola, though. In this instance, a safety net has been provided and has caused a situation in which people are not motivated to venture beyond their immediate family or friends from the same country as it has become too comfortable and are therefore restricted to those networks whilst in Ireland:

Extract 62: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

R: It's interesting you bring it up, the last person I interviewed was from the Czech Republic, he said himself that the country should push the English side more to help people get along. Do you think it is something the country should push more to help people or is it something they have to do themselves?

P: Well, you know, when you have a work and you need English, they might send you for the courses, but I have a friend who needs it for work and he signed for the courses himself, because they thought "I could earn more", that's the

usual reason, but if you think it should be a general rule that you should go for courses?

R: Yeah?

P: I don't think it would work

R: Do you think it comes back to a self-confidence issue then where people may find themselves within their group and be quite happy then to just exist within that group?

P: My friends that don't speak English are quite happy

R: And they've been here for 12 years so far

P: Yeah and they could live longer like you know, they could be here 20 years! There is people from Asia who are bringing their wives and or mothers or whatever and they don't speak at all, they don't go outside then because they are not allowed outside, so you could live here at home and not speak English!

Kevin confirms the importance of English as a stepping stone for providing better access to networks, educational systems and higher paid jobs in order to increase the levels of social capital for an immigrant worker. Kevin believes it is vitally important to avoid the downside of trying to adapt to a different culture, which we will examine briefly having looked into his general opinion on the matter and his role in assisting those looking to learn English:

Extract 63: Kevin, Male, 53 Pakistan.

R: Because they come here with no English, they get stuck within their communities and never really move forward with the jobs, so one of the common jobs they said where people get stuck is cleaning jobs because you're away from everyone, which I

thought there was a big isolation factor. So, in terms of it, how important do you find the English language?

P: The English language for them, they want it to improve their chances of getting the jobs, some do it for a year or so and step back from it, or do they get jobs and step back, but since I've started 12,500 people have learned English here

Cutting yourself off from the wider society is problematic when examining the social capital of working immigrants as it can inhibit working opportunities and limit the networks that can be accessed. Continuing with this notion of self-imposition, does this merely apply to just not being able to interact with Irish people as Stan mentioned above, or does it run deeper? Kevin believes that racism amongst immigrants is rampant and makes it difficult for him to do his own job because of the pre-existing attitudes individual immigrants had upon arrival in Ireland:



Figure 4.41 Racism and competition amongst immigrants provides a difficult challenge for Kevin.

Extract 64: Kevin, Male, 53 Pakistan.

P: We have Africa day and African events. For English classes, at Christmas we have parties where they make a dish from their country so we can all experience different dishes from different countries, so these kind of activities, they would work together, but in classes, it's hard to get Africans to come to gatherings where polish and Lithuanians are!

R: Is it that much of an issue?

P: It is. There is big racism because they feel polish people are getting everything and they are not, that type of racism is especially in jobs

R: It's an interesting side to things, you think, they'd assume they'd be in the same mindset that they're both trying to make a new life in a new country.

This issue was something that had come up in past interviews. During Stan's interview he had mentioned a level of competition amongst immigrants that was fuelled by racism and how it started to infiltrate the working world. Stan had described an example of a Polish worker advertising himself as a cheap source of labour so that he could take the job from someone from Ireland, Czech Republic, etc. It is interesting to note here that some participants had mentioned the "they came here to take our jobs" phase after the economic collapse, or as David put it, "feel the grudge", but upon analysing the data collected during this research topic, it seems to be deeper than Irish workers being perturbed around the peak of the recession. In this instance, it was made abundantly clear that Kevin was told of this example in order to determine its validity:

Extract 65: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

R: I interviewed someone previously and there's a weird crossover with it, he was Czech Republican, but it seemed as if he was nearly racist towards Polish people. He made this point that Polish people would go to the employer saying "I know he's doing the job for 13 euro an hour, I'll do it for 10", so then basically the boss will go "oh alright, there's cheaper labour",

so he'll wait for the person on 13 to make a small slip up and then take on the polish person. This is something a Czech republican said, and it's seems a weird crossover between the both, where they're both in the same boat, but they're still trying to one up each other

P: Yeah, absolutely. You'll find the Africans are racist towards the polish, the polish are racist to Africans and it's like in Irish people as well, the Travellers will be looked down upon for wasting time and these kind of things. Same with Irish people with different areas saying they get all the jobs and we don't get any jobs [socio-economic backgrounds], so this kind of racism in employment is natural because people feel threatened because "I can't get a job and they can get a job", but there's a lot of people who don't want to take a job because I've come across Irish people who don't want to take a job. An Irish mother was telling me her son was getting 200-300 euro a week or something like that and his friends, what are you doing that for? We get that sitting at home on the dole! Where I come from, which is Pakistan originally, if you don't work you starve. You don't get any social welfare or anything, so in a lot of ways, because they're getting things and they know they'll get them if they don't work, they still get their money. I think they've tightened up on it lately, where they make sure you're looking for work. I know the social welfare people, they send people to me and I send people to them because they want people to attend English classes so they can improve their chances of getting jobs, but it brings a small problem. People come here for English classes and they want their letters [qualification] straight away, but I say, you can't get it straight away because I know if they get a letter, they won't come back! I tell them I only give it to you after five weeks, but even then, for the social welfare, if you're not coming, I have to tell them you're not coming, so it puts a bit of pressure on them in that way as well. That's the problem as well because you have a lot of people come to English classes that are asylum seekers, but you also have Polish as well and different countries.

This theme has discussed the attitude of immigrant workers upon arriving in Ireland through examining their attitudes towards immersing themselves within the English

language, striving within the workplace, as well as looking to discover their views on education in order to determine whether they have placed themselves in a position to acquire further social capital or to essentially put themselves at risk of becoming 'stuck'. Having put a distinct focus on the two participants who were self-employed, it was interesting to note that Nell, who had a strong, independent attitude, is now feeling isolated and hard done by in Irish society, whereas Emiliano, who has based his success on resilience, and a family-centred business is now reaping the benefits and feeling at one with Ireland. This is a reoccurring trend throughout as Stan showed that his ability to immerse himself within the English language, as well as adopting a strong attitude to wanting to further develop and improve yourself provides you with a stepping-stone to improving your social capital.

Placing a value on education does not always come with a potential to acquire further social capital though, as Marek's narrative showed. Simply using Ireland as a hub for monetary gain has meant he has minor interest in Irish social life and instead, would prefer to return home to benefit from his education. This value on education was evident with Peter as he looked to make a better life for himself in Ireland; but was becoming at risk of becoming stuck in a job that granted him no satisfaction. Peter, however, is showing great resilience and is trying several different avenues to make the life he desires. This resilience was evident with JJ, as he constantly strived to utilise the strong social support available to him in order to provide a better life for himself and his family, whilst improving upon his levels of social capital. As mentioned earlier in this analysis, this type of resilience has come to fruition, with JJ finally realising his dreams and gaining employment in his preferred field.

Resilience does not always reap benefits and rewards, unfortunately. Ola showed how constant set-backs means that her type of resilience is one in which she is desperately finding a way to be happy for the benefit of her family. Other participants, such as Neo, showed the opposite to this, as a general positive attitude meant that he is now in a more natural position to strive within Irish society and build upon his social capital. This seemed to be the case for Neo regardless of his attitude towards education as a whole, but Dave felt that it was important for those who were not familiar with the English language to immerse themselves within it in order to be successful in Ireland.

Without resilience, Kevin believed you have placed yourself in a disadvantageous position as differing factors, such as political unrest, in your own country, more often than not, meant that you have to be a success in Ireland. Showing a resilient attitude, for Kevin, meant immersing yourself in the language and looking to educate yourself in order to improve your chances of acquiring social capital. The discussion about making English a requirement in order to obtain work caused differing opinions, as Ola believed people she knew were content to remain stuck in their groups of compatriots, as opposed to improving upon your social capital in Ireland. This type of attitude appears to feed into competition amongst immigrants for cheap labour, with other harmful factors such as immigrants not being able to cooperate or attend important courses to help them integrate successfully into Irish society. Kevin believes a lack of trust is the issue, and that immigrants, as well as Irish society need to begin working together in order to establish a level of understanding to help communities move together as a whole.

4.4 Theme 4: Trust

“We didn’t feel safe”

Continuing on from Kevin’s suggestion in which a level of trust, in a supposed holistic manner, should be built, this section will propose recommendations, or even a proposal for immigrant workers for how those with weak levels of social capital can fulfil their full potential based on networks that would be available to them, whilst commending those who have established strong networks and relationships that have allowed them to build a stable level of social capital whilst working in Ireland. Through examining the element of trust, the role of the local council and Gardai who may have had a part to play in damaging or even assisting immigrants feel settled and in a stronger position to live a happy and comfortable life in Ireland. Not only have the official forms of protection and order seemed to have an effect on the immigrant workers, but so too has the neighbourhood and community the participants resided in.

Neighbour-relations will be explored here, but what will offer an interesting insight is how vibrant and active the areas are in terms of community participation. Where applicable, some of the more notorious areas of ghettoization and community unrest will be looked at and how, in some instances, that those who speak a better standard of English and are actively gaining more valuable levels of social capital are looking to avoid these areas to avoid instability and, at times, danger. More often than not, a lack of trust about the immigrants surrounding area came from the city’s nightlife. As Ireland has a significant pub culture, mentioned during the interviews by Emiliano, it is interesting to see how this can play a part in closing off possible networks of people for those who are not used to it, or even interested in it.

Although both participants displayed almost opposite levels of social capital, they shared particular similarities with regards overall levels of trust, although one appeared to be a personal issue rather than the result of new surroundings. Ola and Dave both appeared to have complications with regards trust and although it may not directly influence Dave’s levels of social capital, it certainly has with Ola and it goes some way into showing the obstacles that present themselves to foreign nationals upon arrival in Ireland.

Dave, having stated that there appears to be “a grudge” between foreign nationals and Irish people building in local neighbourhoods said it has not spilled out into any form of violence as of yet, but this does explain how Ola felt that her area was closed off and had stated that in Poland, your neighbours were like friends and family; forming a tight-knit community that you could rely on. Your base should be your home, and in this case, they do not seem to provide much stability for establishing any sort of relationship with your neighbours or even forming a basic level of trust for those around you. Given that, where exactly does this leave working immigrants? What appears to be the case in this instance is a fear to interact with those past a certain time in the night or to even partake in Ireland’s pub culture that was mentioned before. Ola and Dave were both attacked, the former being attacked on two occasions, once when pregnant. Ola believed that hers was racially aggravated and has caused her to become much more introverted since:

Extract 66: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

P: Well, I’ll tell you the story. I have been attacked twice in Dublin, but since that time I am really afraid to go out at night time, so I take a taxi everywhere and always make sure I’m with someone, or even not to go, because I’m too worried to go

R: Yeah, I understand when you come into that type of situation, you have to take precautions

P: Yeah exactly, I’m not usually going out, maybe a few times a year or I’m inviting friends to my house

R: But not much to the city centre?

P: I have been a few times, but for me it’s too much, maybe because I have these memories of what happened to me

R: Would it have happened close together?

P: Yes, hmm, and I was pregnant, 9 months pregnant [participant noticeably uncomfortable]

R: So, with Dublin and here, obviously as you're living here, would you have found people have been harassed because of skin colour, their background or even religion?

P: So, you mean Irish against others, or even us against others?

R: Yeah, a bit of both really



Figure 4.42 Public attacks mean outings such as these are not a common occurrence for Ola.

Dave has become completely uncomfortable in the city centre and past incidents have only encouraged his feelings of mistrust:

Extract 67: Dave, Male, 54, Scotland

R: So, you'd think there's an issue with people getting along with one another based on backgrounds, difference in skin colour, things like that? Any fights or rows over it?

P: Well... I've had it myself. I've had a good hiding coming through town and it was the Irish that done it, it was about 10 years ago

Aside from being attacked, he believes the general nature and make-up of the city is becoming a lot more crime focused and believes the surrounding area is on a downward spiral. Incidents such as his attack, and then a general feeling that the city is being overcome by criminal activity can go some way to cutting off particular networks of people, like we have seen with Ola:

P: No, not around this area, but there is a little bit in the last 5/6 years, whether it be drugs or drink, it's getting outta hand

R: Would you have felt it yourself?

P: I'd be very sketchy going around town now.

R: Really? In what way?

P: I'd be just very wary of it all being honest with you.

R: Even with places like [local street] and things like that?

P: Yeah, I was actually down there Saturday night, whether it's my upbringing or not, I'm just always looking over my shoulder.



Figure 4.43 Being attacked in the city centre has led to Dave focusing his social life around the bike gatherings and working on a ‘man cave’ where he can relax in the comfort of his own home.

As these attacks and feelings of mistrust fester within the individual, cutting them off from feeling safe and even enjoying what the city has to offer past the watershed, where else can the effects take place? Feelings of unsafety can go some way to further isolating the individual and cutting them off from partaking in society and cutting off any feeling of influence, particularly in terms of politics. Dave, admittedly has very little interest in politics stating, “No... not interested in politics whatsoever. They’re a bunch of muppets.” Even with this, he is not completely closed off as he has taken part in some protests: “I’ve done the protests. The water meters. I done it in Dublin and I done it Wicklow.” This essentially highlights his levels of social capital, but in Ola’s case, she is left in a position where she still is still heavily invested in politics back home. This really echoes her dependency on Poland, as she has previously mentioned that she still tunes into Polish media outlets:

Extract 68: Ola, Female, 39, Poland.

R: Would you have any experience dealing with councillors or local TD's?

P: [laughs] No, I've no experience with any of these things. Totally nothing with this- Sorry, we do have a polish embassy and we have a vote every two years, so eh, so if I chance, I always go. I'm still close with Poland, so television, news and everything else

R: And would that involve voting in the political in Poland itself or?

P: Yeah, Polish government, president and all that

This lack of trust does not always tend to filter down into political involvement, and in some cases does not apply due to some of the foreign nationals not having full citizenship and overall an apathetic approach to politics, which is not particularly uncommon amongst indigenous workers, but what is key to note is how certain areas can really hinder or promote the amount of social capital they can accumulate. This does not necessarily reflect on the roughness of a neighbourhood, but also its location relative to work and even colleges or universities if a person is looking to further their employment opportunities by obtaining a degree.

Stan and Marek have both experienced rough areas, which has led to a level of uncertainty with regards the local council and guards. Both participants have highlighted the importance of being able to move to a quieter area so that they can feel more settled and relaxed, but what has gone before seems to have a trickle-down effect to overall trust levels with the city with issues with nightlife appearing again. Stan directly links these issues to a location that is regarded as a ghettoised area and is renowned for violent incidents that are becoming more and more of a regularity. Given its growing reputation for violence, it is interesting to note that reverting to this sort of behaviour with the guards seems to cause a situation where they are less likely to get involved, in Stan's opinion:



Figure 4.44 Stan resides in a quieter, more peaceful area as depicted here. Stan feels this brings a sense of secureness as he avoids the lively nature of the city centre.

Extract 69: Stan, Male, 33, Czech Republic.

P: But have a look at fucking O'Connell street on a Friday night! They won't even go there because the Polish people and foreigner people are running that area, they love drinking and then they go mad and they have no problem to fight the guards!

R: So, they more or less back away from that area?

P: Yeah, but my area is grand. No problems.

R: Yeah, that's my perfect. In the background research, what they've done is, come up with some common problems that some people have when they move into a new neighbourhood or community in a different country. So, what I'll do is, I'll read them out and for each one you can tell me briefly if they're a problem for yourself in your area.

P: Yeah, yeah.

R: So, the first one is, how much of a problem are people being drunk or rowdy in public places?

P: No. Not really. For drinking yeah?

R: Yeah, yeah.

P: Yeah, these places, the [local housing estate] and [local area], the top you know, it's quiet. The young people and the people who like to drink, they stay around the town. The thing about the houses is, it's two houses [detached houses], so you could have a baby and someone could have a radio and they could have it on loud. Go have a look at [local street] on Saturday night and all the young ones will be there to have a drink and [imitates rave music & pumps fist].

[laughs]

P: They love there, but nobody will move to these places because they know the people will call the guards on them, it's very quiet.

R: So, you find it's a little quieter outside the city centre?

P: Yeah. Oh yeah. I was living there for maybe 2 weeks with my friend there yeah, but I said no more you know. Like even night time, you try to sleep and people throw the stuff through your window because they're drunk going home. If you're living low [ground floor], they have no problem fucking break your window.



Figure 4.45 Stan's lack of trust towards particular areas of the city means he chooses to stay in with friends at the weekend to have a few beers and play video games.

Marek is similar in this sense as he lived in an area that was far from suitable for his young family. Not only was this problematic in a strictly suitable sense, but Marek felt helpless when he had tried to gain assistance from supporting bodies in the form of the local council and the guards. Marek felt unsafe and was infuriated as he was painted with the same brush as his neighbours who were known for causing unrest in the area:

Extract 70: Marek, Male, 43, Czech Republic.

R: I remember one night coming home myself and basically a lad dressed in all black was waiting between the gaps in the houses and he was definitely waiting for someone or something, so at times, it can be a little scary, but I suppose the thing here, in terms of people being drunk and rowdy, there's a set of people that are made to control this. So, with that, would you find you can trust the local Guards?

P: Well, not sure about the guards, to be honest. I dunno. An example, I used to live in [student village], which is a really really, really crazy area with the students drinking every day and one day a guard stopped me in my car on my way to work and he wanted to test me. And I asked him, why are you testing me now at 2 o'clock in the evening when students have left to go to college at 8 in the morning and they've been drinking till 3 or 4 in the

morning, why stop and test me now? Why not 'test alcohol in morning? You could see it in his face that he was not happy that I asked these questions and he just went “[mumbles] ah, ah don't ask that, it's not up to you, it's up to us when we decide to test of alcohol and when we want to check the alcohol or whatever, so these types of things, I don't know.

R: Of course, yeah, just going back there to when you talked about [student village], knowing a bit about the place myself and that and how it can get there, when things did get out of hand or needed sorting, did you feel you could your local council or even local bodies to support you or to come and help along in that sense?

P: Well, to be honest, not really. We raised the issues many times there, but they never replied or never did anything.

A lack of assistance from the guards and the local council in times of need does appear to have a long-lasting effect on the individual as he now feels particularly frightened about interacting with the public past a certain time in the city centre. If more had been done in the past for him, it would be interesting to note how this would change his mind-set and even open up further opportunities for himself, friends and family to experience more of his new surroundings, rather than being closed off and isolated to a degree:

Extract 71: Marek, Male, 43, Czech Republic.

P: No, hmm. It's eh... not that kinda thing, but when we were going out, sometimes at the end of the night, we didn't feel safe. When you're walking home or looking for taxi, you don't feel safe. There's drunk people shouting and then shouting at you and you never really know what can happen.

Peter, who was mentioned earlier as being in a position where he could become stuck and inhibited from fulfilling his potential for further social capital, also shares this fear of the city centre, stating that: “: I think are trustworthy unless you are going to a pub and people are drunk.” This does not seem to be a particular problem as he is part of a

¹ Guards is a short term for Gardai Siochana – Ireland's police force.

reasonably quiet neighbourhood with a “neighbour watch” present, which helps in comparison to “what is happening in the city centre,” but Peter has come across problems in the past with young people in his community throwing stones through his window in racially fueled attacks in the past. Given the nature of the area, though, this was resolved once the landlord was contacted. Although his area seems habitable, it creates a hindrance for Peter. It does not appear to be related to levels of mistrust in the way Marek and Stan presented, but it does produce an obstacle that stunts his ability to gain social capital:

Extract 72: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

R: So, just trying to launch back into there? That’s perfect. In terms of [county of residence] itself and even Ireland- how long have you been living in Ireland?

P: I’d say about 11 years. I live on [local town] side- the [neighbouring county] side! It’s a nice place, I like it there. It used to be a little bit rough before but now we have neighbours watch so nobody really bothers you anymore!

R: Oh, ok. So, you’d be quite satisfied living there yeah?

P: Yeah, it’s quite good, except the traffic lights. The traffic lights they just put there make it really hard to get into the town, sometimes it even takes 30-40 mins. When I was in college, I’d have to leave at 5 past 8 to get there for 9 o’clock!

This was mentioned earlier during the analysis as Peter’s working life completely clashed with his college work. Even though the nature of his working hours highlights an immediate issue, it has not been aided by the distance he must travel to fulfil his dreams of working in IT and becoming a much more satisfied individual. This further emphasises the point that this participant is at high risk of becoming trapped within his current level of social capital and becoming increasingly more frustrated:

Extract 73: Peter, Male, 34, Czech Republic.

P: My only problem here is I work nights, I work nights. I work 6 to 6. So what I do is finish, 9 to 5 college, then back to work so there was times I was not sleeping at all really like two days a week, I was just sitting in a corner in college [mimics falling asleep]. My first year, I got really sick, my immune system just shot down, so that's why I'm kinda like, I had to stop, even doctors say I had to stop or I'm gone!

Levels of trust then do appear to have an effect on those with differing levels of social capital, whether it be strong or weak. The city's nightlife creates a podium for all of the other competing elements to take their place and ravel into one outcome; a hindrance on gathering more social capital, particularly in the case of Stan, Marek and Peter, although they are presented under different circumstances. Taking the nightlife element away from two participants who had claimed that their social life was limited on account of their self-employment, it is interesting to take into account how differing levels of trust for the surrounding area have had an influence on the social capital they have attained. Emiliano who displayed good levels of social capital based on a number of elements such as his 'bridge' in the form of his wife, his dealings with the local council and a strong community involvement with the organisation he was involved with contrasts with Nell who felt isolated from society and had become completely cut off from exploring different networks because of an overbearing independent mind-set and a passion for business.

In Nell's case, this was aided by neighbourhood issues which gave her a general opinion of what the Irish attitude is and a lack of trust for the city having had negative experiences with the local council, claiming that because she was not "local" that she was purposely left out as mentioned previously:

Extract 74: Nell, Female, 39, Poland.

R: And would you find that's a neighbourhood where people get along or do people keep themselves? Or is it a problem how rough people are?

P: They are, but they come and go, so maybe one family stay but the others will move, eh people are not very friendly. Like I have a neighbour who will

not talk to me because she thinks my kids are noisy and it's funny because they are never home! Maybe Saturday or Sunday they outside for little play, with friends coming over playing their little games as kids do, it wouldn't be annoying, they wouldn't be too loud but she is just extremely complaining person, we are actually door to door, we share a wall with our house. And also her partner is cursing to my kids so I told her the partner ever turns to my child and says fuck off, I will, you know!

R: Do you think then in the neighbourhood, people clash then because of different backgrounds, even if it is not an Irish to a foreign national or do people just clash itself or is it specifically based on different backgrounds?

P: I would be thinking it is the fact I am not Irish, but also the fact I am self-employed, that how comes she's Irish and she doesn't go to work and make money but sees me going to work and making money. I would be quite popular person and doing service for public, people know me and know about my salon and I think there's a little bit of jealousy and her kids, I would understand, older lady, no kids, but she's had 3 kids and I'm sure she knows they would be sitting on walls being a little noisy, you know, duvet all day long, you know maybe it is just her choosing the wrong place to live. It is a place full of new families and she's an older lady, in her 50s I presume, she is that she is looking for a little quiet living and living in wrong place. Very [pause] I say her personality, coming and talk to me would be my personality, but from day one with my daughter, I say there was group of them actually, sitting on steps and on her way home, instead of just asking, "ok girls move there please", I got a big letter, an A4 letter, on a Friday night about her complaining not being able to pass the steps to get home.



Figure 4.46 Nell's neighbourhood has been a major source of her lack of trust.

As mentioned prior to this extract, these incidents have fueled a negative opinion of Irish people as a whole:

Extract 75: Nell, Female, 39, Poland.

P: They are some families that if they see you doing well or even your children doing well in clubs they would be quite-- they won't move their arses, excuse my language, to bring the child for the few hours a week to see them do well, they expect things to fall from the sky, so I think it is genuine Irish thing, it is more Irish people I had to experience to be with it, I find they are angry with everyone else that things don't come to themselves, they don't understand they have to get up and work and bring the child. Do it if you want things to happen.



Figure 4.47, 4.48, and 4.49 Nell's children, who are involved in childcare facilities and exceptional sports clubs, has caused jealousy amongst her neighbours. She believes this jealousy, coupled with racial undertones, comes from laziness from those around her.

Compare this then to Emiliano who feels "50% Irish" at this stage in his life and has a healthy relationship with his new surroundings as opposed to Nell who is at a high risk of further isolating herself. Emiliano spoke in high regard of the surrounding institutions and how having a respect for a countries morals and codes of conduct in terms of general behaviour and this really reflects how well he has done since arriving nearly twenty years ago. Emiliano's overall levels of trust shine through in this interview and can be shown clearly here:

Extract 76: Emiliano, Male, 42, Italy.

R: Just keeping on the same topic of trust, I know you said Waterford was a great place and things like that, but from the people I interviewed, they found that the place wasn't really trustworthy. Saying that they couldn't go into the city centre at certain times at night because they didn't feel safe. Would you find Waterford to be a trustworthy place?

P: Emm, no I don't think- I think Waterford is pretty safe even if there is no safe place in the world. If you want trouble you'll get trouble, but people who give trouble are the ones who come out with that kind of intention- there are nice but then they become bad. They go out with the idea to create vandalism. If you are a good person, you're not gonna break cars or windows, it's about the influence of people you have around because there is a lot of kids who are nice kids, because the- in Waterford, except in some cases, you have no big criminals like you would have in a different country. So compared to my country, it's a very safe place.

R: Absolutely, so in that sense you would find it quite trustworthy?

P: Absolutely.

A strong community or neighbourhood assists the process of building a level of trust

with wider society, as well as creating feelings of stability and security. In this instance, there is no better way to encroach upon higher levels of social capital. This provides a small throwback to Peter's narrative in which his area became a hindrance in terms of his overall lived experience, as Neo, who was easily the most vibrant and active participant in this study, showed how his area provided a safe space for him. The levels of trust he had for his surrounding area meant he could attend work without a fear for his safety and further accumulate social capital as a manager in his workplace. What is particularly interesting here, is the shadowing presence of the local Gardai station over Neo's accommodation:



Figure 4.50 Paradoxically, the one photo that was sent concerning Neo's neighbourhood is one where a nearby apartment is on fire, but it does highlight how nearby emergency services are in this case.

Extract 77: Neo, Male, 32, Lithuania.

R: I suppose with that so, would you think in terms of trust and things like that. Would you feel it's a safe area, as in would the people where you are trustworthy- I suppose where you are especially... [client lives nearby Gardai station] [laughs] – would you think it's an area though, in general where you could be of sound mind and feel safe especially with the people that would be in-and-around you?

P: No, I feel—like the line of work I do, I finish at around 3 or 4 o'clock in

the morning and I don't drive myself and I would be walking through town. I haven't had the slight iota of trouble or problem at all, no. I'm lucky with it that way I suppose.



Figure 4.51 A photo Neo captioned: "Late shifts".

An authoritative figure, or some presence of an authority whose primary concern is that of its relative members safety is also apparent amongst JJ's narrative. When asked about possible problems of vandalism and disorderly behaviour in the neighbourhood, JJ provided details of the neighbourhood watch that regularly looks out for the surrounding community and reports on any immediate danger, as well as providing almost an in-house social media platform where neighbours are asked to come together for community days and fundraising events:

Extract 78: JJ, Male, 24, Cameroon.

P: Nah, and the good thing about this is, we have a neighbourhood watch, so if they feel there's anything suspicious going on, they'll send a text-

R: Right, right— so if they seen anything on camera or pick up on anything they'll send alerts out?

P: Yeah, so you'll get a text from time-to-time saying, "oh there's people going around stealing bags, so keep your bags inside or lock your shed or whatever."

R: Would that be, not a regular thing, but [pause], say something didn't happen for a few months, like would there be an issue in receiving the text or would it be guaranteed that you'd get it?

P: I think you get it like once a month, so sometimes you get stuff for community things, so in the summer we'll get a text for the community fun day or you'll get a text if someone is fundraising or things like that. How do you call it like eh when they uh, invite you for tea to raise funds [participant is referring to coffee mornings]?

Once a platform for trust has been provided, it is clear to see that participants are placed in a better position to live out a better experience in Ireland, whilst accumulating social capital. This is certainly the case with Neo and JJ, with the former living a vivacious social life with several different public elements included and the latter maintaining a strong family life, in which a stable support network has helped him actively participate in the workforce and even build a sturdy relationship with local politicians in his quest to settle successfully in Ireland.

Although a reliable neighbourhood appeared to provide a platform for trust and a further venturing towards accumulating social capital, JB who had a good relationship with neighbours showed a real independent mentality that looked to be a risk to isolating her from accessing different networks did not seem to reap the full benefits of having a strong community spirit surrounding her. JB, who had mentioned previously in the findings that her "vigilant" elderly neighbours monitored their house while they were away and that they were surrounded by "best friends who live only 3 houses down", had not looked to assist others around her based on her personality traits stating that "I'm fairly independent so I wouldn't even be looking for anything like that," and preferring self-sufficiency over dependency on others. This seemed to reflect on her social life, which tended to be based around attending live music gigs with her just

husband “every 2-3 months”. Perhaps adopting a similar mind-set to that of JJ would go a long way in providing a wider variety of networks to JB, which would cancel out the risk of isolation from society.



Figure 4.52 JB’s neighbourhood provides a good base to accumulate social capital, but the majority of her social life involves attending concerts with her husband.

Kevin mentions the importance of avoiding the ghettoization of immigrants, as this further increases the chances of creating an “us versus them” situation, in which immigrants become ‘others’ and are left out of the wider societal picture. Kevin reiterates throughout his narrative that general living areas allow Irish people and foreign nationals to build trust, as well as eradicating any xenophobic tendencies. It was suggested that English is a key component in eradicating any forms of ghettoization as the language elements removes the likely possibility of a foreign worker living in a low-income area with those from a similar background, as well as providing a stepping stone for better opportunities and a clearer pathway towards more desirable levels of social capital:

Extract 79: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan:

R: Would you find that’s one of your biggest problems with foreign nationals, that they’re coming to integrate, but the communities they end up in might be a bit more troublesome, maybe they’re a little bit more rough,

do you find the communities or neighbourhoods they end up in are not trustworthy?

P: Hmm, not all communities or neighbourhoods. Some places will help to integrate into the community, there are some that are racist where they will say they are coming in and taking their jobs, that's the first thing they will say, you're here to take our jobs and that's the big problem asylum seekers have, and they will use that as a tool to excuse their racism.

This can be paired with Kevin's holistic approach to integrating immigrants, in which he looks to expose foreign nationals to things mentioned in this section such as the local council and the guards. Kevin feels it is important to show newcomers that they are in safe hands, and can rely on the local authorities to provide a haven for them to live comfortably:

Extract 80: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan:

P: We try our best to integrate them, so we have our open days in the Garda station to show them what it's like, so we'll have like the chief inspector and community guards talking to them

R: Yeah, just to help them get more of a feel of the official side of the country?

P: Yeah because in their countries, going into a police station, it's a place where you get beaten and have to pay a bribe to get out and this kinda things, in Africa and these countries so when they come to a Garda station where the guards are making tea and coffee for them, it's a different thing [laughter], and that's what we've been trying do for years

This offers an insight to JJ, who is a well-integrated immigrant worker, as he felt the Irish guards were "very approachable," and "easy to access and ask questions." Even though JJ has found the local guards trustworthy, it is evident that a feeling of trust towards the city centre is missing, but this can certainly be assisted if the work provided

by Kevin was offered on a wider scale. Attacks on foreign nationals like Ola and Dave appear to commonplace, as is evident here:

Extract 81: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

R: how much of a problem are people being drunk and rowdy in public places?

P: Well I would say most, most area, most public places have places like pubs there is huge amount of people drunk. You must've heard of recently the case where a Brazilian was stabbed, and that was because of racist remarks and the person lost his temper, that was just at the corner here by [local bar]-

R: Was closer to the [local pub] wasn't it? Was definitely on [local street] anyway

P: Yeah, yeah. I think there was one by [local park] too because he lost his temper in the end. In public places, anything can happen and it's not just Irish people who drink, foreign nationals drink as well, a lot of the Muslims wouldn't drink, a lot of other countries like Brazilians, they would

R: What I found from past interviews, just talking about drinking and that, was a lot of the foreign nationals that I interviewed were very uneasy at the thought of being in the city centre past a certain time, a lot of them have experienced have, basically people having a go at them, so a lot of them now have a network set up at home themselves where they stay in the house and have a few cans, a few bottles, there's a really common thing about being uncomfortable around the city centre, there seems a real big thing about that being in here- in the dark really!

P: It's more so a racist thing rather than drunkenness

Tackling these issues is obviously a daunting and difficult task, but Kevin believes increased interaction between Irish people and foreign nationals in terms of even local

political issues as mentioned before can be a key component in establishing a relationship between both. In light of recent changes to the layout of the city centre, Kevin worked closely with members of the resident's association he was a part of to involve foreign nationals in their fight to protest against these changes:

Extract 82: Kevin, Male, 53, Pakistan.

R: I know you would've said earlier that you would've liaised with the guards and been involved with different departments in the social welfare and things like that, but personally, do you feel you can influence the decisions affecting the local area?

P: Oh yeah! Especially with the resident's association, new places are being built, like the shopping centre, they're changing the routes on all the roads, so we've brought people and held a lot of meetings with local council and things like that with foreign nationals and Irish people, so we put together some petitions and it stopped it for a while, but they've started back again, so there's big problems are being had with that.

A rise in the attendance of immigrants in these arenas of society would create more of a level playing field, given that the correct components such as the English language are present, would suggest that discriminatory charged attacks and attitudes would be significantly reduced. A more holistic approach would certainly be ideal, but there are many ingredients that must be added before developing a method for immigrants to integrate successfully and look towards accumulating a level of social capital that would be available to an indigenous worker who would have had an upper-hand based on locality and a knowledge of the ins-and-outs of society. This section has examined the role of bridging and bonding, resilience and an overall feeling of trust in the levels of social capital for each participant. In summary, it was found that those who had the luxury of having family and friends present had an upper advantage, but this could easily be influenced by the person's mentality, which was directly linked to their cultural background. Trust was paramount in this study, and its role was highlighted in how immigrants interacted with Irish society and whether they were held back or encouraged to exercise their full potential as a newcomer in Ireland.

To conclude, it can be seen that trust is indeed important having discussed it in terms of neighbour relations, the role of societal institutions and authoritative figures. What is clear to see is that trust is a factor in how participants interact with wider Irish society with elements such as racialised attacks, problematic ghettoised areas and the sense of security when out experiencing the local nightlife being an issue. These create an immediate sense that immigrants, and particularly in this case, immigrant workers are cut off from certain networks and are inhibited from expanding upon their social capital. However, ideas to improve on this such as JJ's neighbourhood watch and Kevin's holistic approach to integrating immigrants into Irish neighbourhoods may not be effective. Consider this in light of the previous themes, in which the attitude and self-imposed actions have created more of a hindrance in the quest for creating more social capital, and indeed, would halt the recommendations of holistic integration. Acquiring and building upon social capital in the case of immigrant workers is based on the individual's attitude and views of the world. The responsibility of gathering contacts in the forms of bridges and bonds, as well as accessing networks relies solely on themselves as they look to build an enriching life whilst in Ireland.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The theoretical framework for this study was that of social capital and how its role in promoting economic gain via social engagement is a prime indicator of how an individual, or community group strive within society (Putnam 1995). Given the concepts complexity and contested meaning, it presented itself with several pre-conditions for success and failure. Coleman (1966) states that social capital cannot be looked at purely in terms of social relations, but also the morals, beliefs and attitudes that are associated within the social structures of groups, i.e. the assumed self-sufficiency of strong Christian groups based on the religion's social teachings.

This indeed proved to be case amongst this study as it was found that those living closer to home, or in this instance, Europeans were more independently minded and favoured a more self-sufficient outlook with regards to social interactions that focused on support and even in terms of moving towards success. This appeared to vary in its influence on the social side of the individuals lived experience; but carried a general risk of those being isolated or at risk of isolation. Throughout the research process the lived experiences of immigrants was enquired into particularly when discussing whether the accumulation of social capital was hindered or improved upon by the involvement in groups, the presence of a family member, partner, a close group of friends or holding a feeling of trust with regards to the new society the immigrant workers have found themselves in.

This discussion allowed for conclusions to be drawn surrounding self-imposed elements of the participants that appeared far more influential than factors that were primarily concerned with Irish society. This chapter will look to outline a discussion of themes that surrounded this topic and look to compare and contrast these with the existing literature. Before launching into comparing the findings with current research and the present concepts, a brief detailed summary of each theme will be provided along with the relevant findings before concluding on the overall findings that look to create new knowledge surrounding the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland.

5.2 Discussion of Themes

The following sections will involve a discussion of the themes that appeared in the analysis. The themes will be compared and contrasted with the relevant literature that was examined throughout the literature review.

5.2.1 Ireland as home (“Home is where your heart is and my heart is here.”)

Throughout the theme when looking at Ireland as home, participants shared a summary of their experiences with Ireland with the main reasoning behind it being highlighted as per the answers given throughout the interviews. Each of the 11 participants indicated that they had a positive experience of Ireland, with 6 feeling as though it was their new home. Amongst these six participants was Neo. Neo has fallen in love with Ireland and pointed towards Ireland’s familiarity as a big reason behind this, having spent a few years living in London where he would never see the same face once. Neo’s feelings were similar to those of JJ, Emiliano, JB, Nell and Dave, all of whom cited that the availability of emotional and social support from family members, and even Irish society having adapted and responded positively to the culture as a reasoning behind them feeling more at home than they did in their own countries. The emotional and social support that was made from close networks of people will be touched on in more detail in section 5.2.2, but on this surface level introduction to these narratives, this seamless integration can be based on the participants adapting to strong community ties.

On a more intricate level and following on from Coleman’s (1966) suggestion; being a part of a close-knit community can be a huge advantage in advancing upon your levels of social capital. This was more so aimed at Vietnamese-American’s, who created their own tight, in-housed communities within America to advance upon their social status through pre-established middle-class status business and placing a strong value on education that would result in more success, but primarily within their pocket groups. Although this is not directly the case with this study, it does resonate with some of the results found for these participants who come from countries who value community and family in a similar way to the Irish. Emiliano who comes from a traditional Catholic background with a strong emphasis on family was able to

incorporate this into his management style, which has resulted in him running a widely successful business in his new surroundings. JJ, then, was able to build a strong and stable life in Ireland with family as the cornerstone of the foundations. JB and Nell cited the warm, welcoming nature of her neighbours was of great assistance, and Dave found it to be a more trustworthy place in comparison to the life he left behind.

As mentioned previously, each participant had a positive experience of Ireland, although it did not appear this way throughout the narrative. Ola found herself feeling disconnected and isolated due to complications with work whereby she lost a role, which she adored, due to issues with qualifications and was now in a position in which she was upset after having to work from home. The workplace was viewed as a base for gathering a group of people during the sampling process of this application as it was viewed as an ideal platform to see what degree of social capital had already been gathered, as well as showing whether or not the immigrant workers were in a position to accumulate more social capital having found themselves in a highly interactive environment where they can establish networks with others. Background research conducted in Canada found that immigrants who were in their desired positions found that they would end up in more low-skilled positions that they were over-qualified for (Campbell and Li 2007).

Ola's feelings of isolation and disconnectedness certainly echoes Campbell and Li's (2007) view that unstable working environments such as the one Ola found herself in can lead to immigrant groups becoming closed off and in isolated. In Ola's case, it appears as though Ireland is a make-shift home as she sacrifices her own happiness for her families benefit. Peter, similarly to Ola had a negative experience of achieving his desired occupation with issues of ill health and inflexible working hours in jobs that were beneath his personal aspirations. Wall and Jose (2004) found that immigrants are at risk of ending up in situations whereby the individual must take on employment that is below their credentials in order to provide for themselves. This was certainly the case with Peter who struggles to access his chosen career path and is at risk of becoming stuck. Peter appears to be aware of this situation and is considering of taking drastic options such as becoming unemployed to pursue his goals in Ireland, or moving to a new country entirely. Although Ireland has provided an overall positive experience for

Peter, complications surrounding his career and barriers for his social capital may mean it is only a temporary home.

These experiences from Ola and Peter first drew attention to the notion that Ireland must adapt for its newcomers; a notion that was explored throughout the analysis and will be throughout the discussion. Stan, who similarly to Neo, had fallen in love with Ireland felt Ireland needed to make changes in order for new foreign nationals to feel more at home. Stan felt as though Irish people should be educated in a particularly way that would assist them in terms of adapting their understanding of foreign nationals. Anderson (1983) looked at how foreign nationals can easily become ‘othered’ upon arrival in a new country, and how things such as being able to replicate the language or even slang of a particular region alleviate the daunting nature of the settling in period. Stan’s recommendation originally appeared as a strong and stable idea in terms of how Ireland can improve the conditions for immigrants who arrive here to build social capital. Kevin, who made a home out of Ireland having adapted to the culture and then proceeded to help new arrivals as an integration support director, found that developing an understanding between Irish and foreign nationals was important with things such as the English language, as mentioned by Anderson, being a helpful crutch for new arrivals to start integrating themselves. During this theme in the analysis, it was mentioned that Stan and Kevin’s opinions created a crossover in terms of who needed to adapt, Ireland or its immigrants, especially having heard the narratives of Emiliano and Neo who quickly adapted to Ireland. Throughout the rest of the discussion, it will be shown that these suggestions come with their own complications, which will draw upon difficulties for these practises to be put into place.

5.2.2 Bridging and bonding (“I find it could be easier if I was with friends in another country.”)

Throughout the analysis, the general overview was concerned with how self-imposed practices can sway the ways in which social capital is accumulated, and following on from racism amongst immigrants and accounts where foreign nationals have failed to adapt to the English language, what can help them to reconnect? As a move abroad can appear daunting and at times overwhelming, it is important for someone to have available a support group, whether that be in the form of friends, family or a partner

who is either from Ireland, or someone who has integrate and adapted at a faster rate than yourself. These forms of support are viewed as ‘bridges’ and ‘bonds’ with regards to social capital.

As stated previously during the literature review, a bond is associated more with an established connection from someone of a similar background, whereas a bridge is viewed as a cross-ethnic connection that helps you access and navigate a new country more efficiently and productively (Lancee 2010). Given their slight differences, bridging is viewed as a more direct route into accessing more networks within a new country as opposed to bonding which highlights the importance of your already established connections amongst similar peers in the accumulation of social capital (Lancee 2010). With these definitions comes the advantages and disadvantages that our participants were able to associate themselves with throughout the interview process.

Coleman (1966) states that those who arrive to familiar groups of people where close, emotional bonds are formed are at a better position to accumulate social capital, but this is more apparent in countries like America where middle-class bases have already been established throughout varying generations. In Ireland, and particularly amongst this sample, Kevin found that those who were further away from home had to take more risks and become more outgoing in order to succeed. This was coupled with the view that those closer to home actually obstructed the levels of social capital they could acquire as they become ‘stuck’ within their close-knit groups and effect future opportunities because of this. The view that formed communities enhances your chances of increasing social capital does not appear to reflect on working immigrants in Ireland as it would in larger and more competitive economies such as Americas.

This indeed proved to be case amongst this study as it was found that those living closer to home, or in this instance, Europeans were more independently minded and favoured a more self-sufficient outlook with regards to social interactions that focused on support and even in terms of moving towards success. This appeared to vary in its influence on the social side of the individuals lived experience; but carried a general risk of those being isolated or at risk of isolation. Tillie (2007) who had looked at the role of community-group involvement and its generation of higher levels of social capital, in which the results based on the hypothesis that a larger volume of social

capital is associated with better levels of social capital between Turkish, Surinamese and Antilleans in the Netherlands was indeed the case.

In this study, it was found that involvement in clubs and organisations led to higher levels of social capital, with those at risk of isolation showing lower levels of community engagement. Lower levels of community engagement and a lack of social capital, as well as social support was definitely the case with Ola, JB, Nell and Marek showing that they availed and provided very little social support and had no real community engagement. Interestingly, these participants were European. Ola had stated that a personality difference between the Irish and Europeans created a conflict as those from countries such as Poland appeared more “harsh,” “stern, and “straight”. This creates a situation in which independence and self-sufficiency is paramount. This particular viewpoint appears to be quite harmful, particularly with Nell forming a negative opinion of Irish neighbours as she feels they are jealous of her and her independent drive. The notion of being uncomfortable of availing of support was evident, but what was found was that there was no real connections available in order to ask this type of assistance. Ola cited that she had no real close friends, JB had some connections, but was primarily concerned with her bonds in the form of her family, Nell had proclaimed that she had no real social life and Marek was only really interested in friends back home, as well as his emotional bonds here.

Continuing on from Coleman’s (1966) view that close emotional bonds were key to gathering social capital; it would appear that either a happy medium or just bridges to social capital are far more beneficial in this case. Kevin found that too much of an independent view of the world can harm social capital and those who maintained this attitude were more likely to have assurances at home, for example, a steady family, a close group of friends and in the extremes, avoidance of persecution and war-torn environments.

With that, we look at a participant who seemed to find the ideal balance between bridging and bonding social capital. Neo showed the benefits of having family close by in terms of maintaining a close emotional bond that would allow him to feel more at home, but by having an outgoing and positive personality, Neo was able to branch at and build bridges to social capital that were able to integrate him effortlessly into

Irish society. JJ also experienced the benefits of having a bridge to social capital as his Irish partner assisted him in terms of his immigration, his health and in securing a job by successfully helping him navigate through the labour market. Lancee (2010) states this is due to the fact that those who have found bridges or even developed bridges have gone on to access more attractive positions within the labour market. Although the job role did perhaps not match up with horrendously high pay relative to others in the study, it was found that those with bridges felt more secure in Ireland and that no network was inaccessible to them.

Emiliano and Dave, whose partners were from Ireland demonstrated a charitable side with a keenness to accessing further charitable networks to provide for the community. Emiliano, who runs a largely successful business, did not attribute this purely to his wife's place of birth, but did admit it contributed in helping him adapt to the "behaviour and morals" of his new city, as well as allowing him to make workplace connections that becoming "like family". JJ, as mentioned earlier, found he would not be where he is geographically or even physically if it was not for his Irish partner, who helped him access the country through political interferences and essentially kept him alive in times of ill health by accessing her own established contacts in the medical field. This was particularly telling in how JJ has been able to join with community groups that celebrate his own culture, as well as seeing him involved in a close-knit neighbourhood group. Tillie's (2007) highlighting of community engagement as an advertisement of an immigrant's social capital definitely shows throughout this study, especially in terms of Stan's involvement in his attempts to make ice hockey a more approachable sport in Ireland. Stan's newly established connections have allowed him to navigate through council and government based committees in order to make ice hockey a more familiar sport. This type of interaction that has been encouraged by bridges certainly contrasts with other participants.

The majority of participants, in one way or another, have benefitted from having a connection that was indigenous to their new surroundings and this helps combat issues of mental health that arise when communities are sectioned off (McMichael and Manderson 2004). When looking at those who have not experienced the benefits as shown by Stan, JJ, Dave, Emiliano and Neo, an Australian study depicting Somali women who felt disconnected and even began to miss the treacherous conditions of

their own land due to overwhelming feelings of isolation in Melbourne (McMichael and Manderson 2004). This really resonates with Ola who misses Poland because of the strong community spirit in her neighbourhood as opposed to Ireland where she felt her “neighbours were her neighbours.” A lack of real networks and a growing sense of being closed off due to having “no friends to celebrate the holidays” with. McMichael and Manderson (2004) highlight the importance of community togetherness to help build deep-rooted trust through Maryam who found great comfort in simply chatting with her neighbours in Somalia. A move away from family and friends means leaving behind close friends and family that cannot be replicated in new surroundings, this was certainly the case for Samira who felt alone in Australia and was isolated from those she could rely on (McMichael and Manderson 2004). This certainly compares with Nell who is void of any support as a single mother trying to run her business; Ola who is starved of any real connections and as a hunger to return to Poland, as well as Marek whose deep-rooted connections are a two and a half hour plane journey away.

Granted, it is an advantage to have established connections before arriving to another country, but what was noted in the analysis, was that independent mind-sets and a disinterest in accessing further networks will lead to increased risks of depression. McMichael and Manderson (2004) states that a failure to establish some form of connection to help you navigate the rocky paths of a new country could be detrimental to your overall mental health. Rouse (1991) stated that migration can leave group norms susceptible to being rearranged and replanted as something unfamiliar to those that grew up with a set of cultural norms and values that facilitated the needs of their community. This is not something that came to the fore during the interviews, but what was evident was that your mentality and desire to establish useful and important connections is what defines how an immigrant worker establishes strong or weak levels of social capital. Kevin believes that regular and holistic interaction with surrounding communities can go a long way in establishing both bridges and bonds in an effort to deter immigrants away from a poor lifestyle that can lead to them “losing the plot” or turning to “drink and drugs” in order to mask the difficulty of building their new lives in Ireland. Aside from this notion of holistic interaction, it appeared as though the personality of the individual was far more influential, as those who displayed higher levels of social capital accessing bridges rather than becoming intertwined and stuck within their bonds that appear to be causing more of a disadvantage to accumulating

social capital than assisting it.

5.2.3 Resilience (“I have to survive” / “There is more benefits for being local.”)

This section looks to continue on the discussion surrounding self-imposing elements such as the attitude and views of the world maintained by the participants. However, having already discussed the benefits and disadvantages of bridges and bonds, looking at the resilience or ability to ‘stick it out’ of each participant was primarily concerned with their attitude to immersing themselves within the English language, as well as their attitude towards work and educating themselves. The three elements listed are viewed as contributors to helping an individual of any foreign background to accumulate social capital and will be discussed as to whether they will find themselves in a position to do having discussed the harmful nature of some of the mind-sets discussed in section 5.2.2.

Much of the ground work for this section comes from Weber’s theories around work-ethic being attached to a particular background, i.e. those from a Protestant and Catholic background. This was an interesting to consider as many of the participants came from the above mentioned background with regards to their religion, but how much of a bearing did this hold on the contested meaning behind a work-ethic? Weber (1992) historically believed that protestants were in a more advantageous position to access higher education in comparison to Catholics who preferred security to wealth. In this sample, religion was of minor concern and did not appear to have any bearing on the success of an individual and further supports the growing claims that religion does not determine your work ethic (Becker and Wossmann 2007). What we do see, however, is that those who have self-sabotaged by remaining solely independent are now experiencing feelings of isolation and are having to be resilient in turbulent times that could have been assisted if they had branched out or adopted a finer balance having begun life in Ireland. This becomes a product of their value on education and appetite to become successful in the workplace once they feel at home in Ireland.

When looking at their attitude towards immersing themselves in the English language in order to adapt and settle at a more efficient rate, we again, look at Anderson’s view on historic events in which we can see early signs of foreign nationals settling.

Anderson (1983) discussed how the likes of the Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese adapted to new languages by taking terms that may be of use to them and manipulating them to suit their own conversational styles. This was noted as perhaps early signs of foreign nationals adapting in, what was becoming, a more capitalist themed world. The idea of adapting to a language, as well as the culture was particularly interesting in this study with the consistent and continuous mention of the importance of the English language and its role in determining the socio-economic standing of an individual. The majority of this sample gave an account of either their own struggles at first, or an insight into some of their friends who still struggle with the language after a decade and have since become stuck in closed off social circles and low-paying jobs that tend to be isolated from the rest of the workplace, i.e. cleaning toilets. Accounts such as this will be discussed throughout this section.

An appropriate starting point for this theme was to place a minor focus on the two participants who were self-employed due to the general assumption that those who are self-employed are hard-working, as well as maintaining a strong attitude to develop and improve. Nell certainly showed these traits as she focused her education so that she could essentially be her own boss with nobody to answer to but herself. This was shown through her scrapping of her job as a receptionist and seeking out courses so that she could propel herself into the world of self-employment. This type of attitude, coupled with her ability to adapt to English have arrived with “none” is certainly commendable, but again, highlights an excessive independent mind-set that has had a negative influence on her social connections as we have seen throughout the analysis.

An American-based study showed that due to limited opportunities, most immigrants turn to self-employment where they rely on family ties as mentioned previously amongst Asian families in America (Sanders and Nee 1996). Zhou (1992) showed how those who have managed to propel themselves into the higher socio-economic standings make it easier for those who came afterwards in terms of providing a base, knowledge and sometimes even loans.

These are all examples of this unique form of closed-off social capital, but the difference in nations must be considered, particularly amongst this sample. Two of the participants, in the form of Nell and Emiliano came to Ireland with the former doing it

in a more independent manner, but was driven by a lack of opportunity, and the latter being accompanied by his wife, which is the only real resemblance to pursuing this type of employment through family ties, as well as his outlook in which Emiliano views his staff as “family”. Nell had decided to run her own business as her independent and home-built strong mind-set drove her to do so, with Emiliano realising it was his passion from his early days in education. These do not fit the background research in which limited opportunities lead to self-employment, rather it was the result of pure dedication and a need to do so.

Loewen (1971) showed how Chinese families businesses strengthen and expand after the arrival of more family members and even those of a similar background based on the increased pool of human capital available, but as mentioned beforehand, this typical closed off route towards better levels of social capital does not apply amongst these immigrant workers who have chased and secured their dreams by themselves, particularly in terms of Emiliano, whose passion for the restaurant business, as well as his love for Irish culture drove him to learn the English language naturally so that he could live an enriching life in Ireland. Although the background research does not directly relate to these cases, the resilience shown by families in American studies and Emiliano is certainly comparable. The two approaches to self-employment for Emiliano and Nell certainly draw up some interesting contrasts as Nell now finds herself feeling isolated and disconnected, while Emiliano feels as though he is an honorary Irish man. This whole-heartedly improved his potential for further accumulation of social capital, as we’ve seen through his community engagement in the previous discussion, whilst Nell’s individual attitude has seen her isolated in a social sense.

Amongst this sample, it certainly gave the impression that immigrant workers were the masters of their own fate. A drive to be resilient in new surroundings was set in their attitude towards learning English and looking to educate themselves to work at their best possible level with no thought of being dismissed due to their background. A study conducted in England surrounding BAME workers looked at statistics in order to see how those from ethnic minority backgrounds were overlooked for promotion or even dismissed before even interviewing on account of being ‘screened’ (Race for Opportunity 2012). This appears to be a common feeling, as WRC (2009) also

documented that immigrant workers feel as though their applications for jobs were dismissed and taken away from the line of contention with jobs, but this certainly was not the case for the sample for this study. Even in scenarios where an immigrant worker was unsatisfied or in a line of work where they felt underused, they always maintained that they could access education to rectify this, although their levels of social capital and shoddy working conditions and hours made it a much more difficult task.

Stan shared a similar attitude to Emiliano in which he wanted to educate himself to work in his required field, as well as feeling as though English was of the highest importance for immigrants who wish to make a better life for themselves in Ireland. His attitude was based on interacting with Irish colleagues and expanding his networks, whilst JB and Marek simply educated themselves just to work with minimal contact with outside networks. A certain degree of resilience was shown by JB and Marek in order to provide for their families, which is common amongst immigrant workers, but the independent approach means they have risked gathering higher levels of social capital.

Wall and Jose (2004) showed that many immigrants must take on employment simply to provide for their immediate family. In this sample, Ola, JB, Marek and Nell particularly struggled with balancing the life and work balance as their jobs prohibited them from either being socially active or being satisfied with where they were in life at present as a clustered schedule between work and home caused obstructions between themselves and networks of people that would have strengthened their social capital. Wall and Jose (2004) state that this is common amongst immigrants that look to support the next generation or even their own future goals.

At times, this sacrificial form of labour market activity leads to dissatisfaction within work and can create a scenario in which an immigrant worker must show resilience in order to combat this. Peter, for example, showed good levels of social capital that was based on his attitude for learning English, but the way in which was conducted seemed to lead to a scenario in which he is at risk of not being able to fulfil his full potential. Peter worked closely with his brother to help improve his English and because of this, found it difficult to obtain a job that was beyond his close, emotional bonded circle. This created a situation in which Peter found himself in positions he did not want and hindered the possibility of him achieving his dreams of working in business or I.T.

Peter's resilience has shown through which opens up his potential for the accumulation of social capital, but due to inflexible hours in a job that does not grant him a great deal of satisfaction, he is at risk of decreasing these chances.

The workplace is viewed as a base for gathering a group of people during the sampling process of this research as it was viewed as an ideal platform to see what degree of social capital had already been gathered, as well as showing whether or not the immigrant workers were in a position to accumulate more social capital having found themselves in a highly interactive environment where they can establish networks with others. Background research conducted in Canada found that immigrants who sought after their desired positions found that they would end up in more low-skilled positions that they were over-qualified for (Campbell and Li (2007)).

This was particularly the case for Peter, as well as JJ. JJ, similarly to Peter, is showing a great level of resilience to complete his training so that he can move from a less-desired position and launch himself into a career that will improve his social capital. JJ's resilience is a product of his attitude towards education, in which he went through grave lengths to secure it, whilst balancing a healthy work and life balance that has improved upon his social capital. Unfortunately, this is not always the case as we have seen with Ola. Although Ola showed a great attitude towards learning English and then finding her ideal job in a childcare facility, she faced constant set-backs, which begin to draw upon the self-imposed elements that are being discussed in terms of self-sabotage. Ola now works from home and faces issues with self-confidence that have halted her from educating herself to get back into her required field. Interestingly, Ola holds a (MA) in Philosophy from a Polish university, but due to the degree not translating into the required field in Ireland, she faces the reality of being underemployed.

WRC (2009) state that unemployment or underemployment are associated with an immigrants inability to successfully navigate the Irish labour market, as well as qualifications from a foreign land being somewhat unsuitable for an immigrants desired field. Sanders and Nee (1996) state that immigrants may often find themselves in a position where they cannot earn a significant amount of income in order to accumulate social capital. In Peter's case, this is based on his inflexible hours, but with Ola it is steeped in personal issues that are not the fault of any possible assistance in order to

navigate her through the Irish labour market.

In this case, ethnic background, religion and any cultural beliefs did not influence a working immigrants ability to thrive and prosper in Ireland rather it was embedded in their personal attitude. Each of the participants felt it was important to either educate yourself or to adapt and create a strong personality that would mean it was next to impossible to fail. Those who appeared fragile and defeated looked to be going through an attitude reset where they look to rectify the regular setbacks they have faced, but again this is much more a personal issue than an issue with an institutionalised form of racism. Due to this, we can look at the individual and whether or not any discriminatory behaviour has a role to play in determining the social capital of immigrant workers.

As Wall and Jose (2004) stated, these types of set-backs and tough-to-grasp opportunities can be common for immigrants based on difficulties with successfully navigating the labour market and feeling as though they have been discriminated against, like in Nell's case, but compare this to someone such as Neo, who truly is an advertisement for making yourself successful based on your attitude, as opposed to angling it towards the host countries supposed downfalls. Neo further increases the importance of adopting a socially active and overall positive attitude as he dips his hand into several different avenues of Irish society and consistently improves upon his current levels of social capital. An independent mind-set shown previously mentioned participants, is again, noted as a risk as their lack of requirement for supportive assistance can lead to complicated situations which harms the person's image of Ireland, such as Nell who feels isolated, and Ola who feels outwardly like "a foreigner". Neo's resilience and attitude towards immersing himself in the language and culture in order to establish varying networks of people is a testament to his personality that looks to include rather than exclude.

As someone who arrived from Scotland, and obviously fluent in English, Dave felt it was important for those who do not come with the English need to be resilient and strive to educate themselves in order to become an active participant in society, although this was not always straight-forward for those who had educated themselves in their home country. Kevin had given accounts of those who were not legally obliged to work in Ireland given their migrant status and in this type of scenario, the levels of underemployment were somewhat bizarre. Kevin detailed the story of an asylum seeker

he had worked with previously, who came from Afghanistan as a qualified doctor, but upon arrival in Ireland was told his qualifications did not meet the standard and was told that the last number of years he had sacrificed for his profession were redundant. On a practical side, it is fair to understand that most institutes and qualifications would stand up in arguably more developed societies, but stories given to us by Kevin of “trafficking” employees and only given figures of around two or three euro per hour for beyond remedial jobs appears to be common place. As well as this, immigrants feel they are not provided with enough assistance in interviews if a lack of English is an issue and that their experiences and skills are written off from early on because of this (WRC 2009). This appears as a slightly misplaced feeling of bias, as any worker should be required to speak English in an English speaking workplace.

This interesting crossover led Kevin to believe that immigrants must show resilience and initiative in order to build a life in Ireland stating that, “if you don’t have resilience you will crack up.” Stan felt having a good understanding of English was key to a workers well-being and safety, and Neo thought it was paramount as most workplaces in modern day Ireland are host to a variety of nationalities and compared it to a “mini United nations.” The consequences of not speaking English at some interactive level is concerned in this study with more than just safety and establishing workplace connections. It is concerned with the attitudes of immigrant workers who have opted for isolating themselves from Irish society as a whole. Ola did not agree with Stan’s idea that English should be made a requirement, stating that she has friends who have chosen to avoid the language and continue in low-skilled, low-paid jobs and therefore destroying any real chance of accumulating social capital.

Purposely keeping yourself in the lowest pay bracket has created a bizarre situation in which immigrants have begun to compete against each other for lower pay and increased hours due to their inability to speak English well enough to operate outside their closed-off work spaces. Brondolo et al (2012) states that a lack of real integration causes inter-personal racism, which has a knock-on effect with how an immigrant interacts with the rest of society, and indeed creates a situation in which immigrants essentially try to ‘one up’ one another. This is evident in Stan’s account of a local meat factory, in which immigrant workers sacrificed pay for increased working hours at the expense of other immigrant and Irish workers. Considering that showing a resilient

attitude to adapt to Irish society through employment, education and the English language would seem a natural pathway to improving your levels of social capital, Kevin, as an integration support officer, found it abhorrently difficult to get Africans, Polish and Asians to interact and agree to attend the same courses and support groups due to the attendance of the other. This is a huge factor in determining the social capital of immigrants as Kevin primarily offers courses that help new arrivals establish themselves in Ireland.

Incidents such as these seem to be left out of the research that is currently present for the majority in Ireland. Studies in Finland that the importance of mental health, especially in terms of the anxiety that can develop amongst immigrants is a huge risk as suggested by Brondola et al (2012) who feels that this will further discourage immigrants from establishing themselves in Ireland. Kouvenen et al (2008) shows how Finnish studies showed how mental illnesses were rampant for those who reported low levels of social capital as they are experiencing feelings of isolation and a disconnection with wider society. Aside from those who have engaged in competition with one another, it should also be highlighted in cases such as Ola's in which mental health issues seem to be apparent.

The circumstances that have been present show that there is not enough research conducted around the feelings and emotions of immigrant workers. Immigrant Council of Ireland (2012) attempt to focus on the lived experiences of immigrants who are put in the firing line in the working world, but it is profoundly rare to come across in the background. This report shows immigrants as the underbelly of the economy and are placed in roles that are open for the discriminatory behaviour of the general public. In order to escape this front-line workplace situation, immigrants are said to have to rely on the upward mobility of indigenous workers so that gaps appear in the labour market (Terrazas 2011), similar to the competition that has arisen. AS-COA (2014) suggests that immigrants must purely rely on these gaps in the American labour market in order to achieve higher levels of social capital, but amongst this sample, immigrants were able to participate in jobs they were qualified in or jobs they were satisfied with. Issues of unfair wages were not present, and no participant relied purely on the downfall of Irish workers in order to succeed, although this may be an interesting avenue to travel down in future research given the accounts of the local meat factory given.

Although not directly comparable, it appears the local meat factory and employment trafficking mentioned by Kevin are in a position similar to New Zealand in terms of their immigration policy in which low-skilled labourers were required in order to babysit their cost-sensitive businesses (Clydesdale 2011). This allowed for people to facilitate the labour shortages, while keeping the business costs at a durable rate, which is quite similar to the situation in this meat factory (Clydesdale 2011).

Campbell and Li (2007) state that hostile working environments such as these can lead to immigrant groups becoming closed off and in isolated working environments, but in this case, it seems to create a position of competition as mentioned previously. Stan had spoken of a situation in which a Polish worker would approach his boss and advertise himself for the same labour, but a cheaper rate in order to gain more working hours.

5.2.4 Trust (“We didn’t feel safe.”)

A distinct focus on self-imposed elements that have contributed to both strong and weak levels of social capital were discussed, but for those who have specifically shown weak levels of social capital, focusing on trust and recommendations of how the participants can become more actively engaged in wider communities in order to increase their levels of social capital will be considered in this section, as well as looking at the participants who have been able to execute their accumulation of social capital remarkably. This was based on community and neighbour relations where the key element examined the levels of trust the participants had for their society in terms of politics, authoritative figures and the surrounding area which included both their neighbourhood and host city.

Issues concerning trust for wider society were evident throughout Dave and Ola’s narratives which was interesting considering the differences in levels of social capital with the former showing strong levels and the latter showing weak levels due to isolation. Both participants were attacked during their time in Ireland which both believed were racially aggravated at the time. Dave drew attention that there appears to be a “grudge” building between the Irish and foreign nationals, but this does not stop Dave from engaging himself within the community and carrying out generous

charitable tasks for those in need, whereas Ola has closed herself off entirely. Although Dave did not have any real interest in politics, he had a good level of trust in the local guards, as did Ola due to her attack. Considering all of this, it is interesting to see how Dave has still accumulated strong levels of social capital, whereas a yearning for home still means that Ola only interacts with Polish political affairs and takes little interest in her surrounding community.

If we again, look at Anderson's (1983) concept of establishing a nation, we can consider Ballibar and Wallerstein's (1991) statement that shows how varying degree of national pride that are steeped in national identity can cause a problem if those who harness it feel as if it has been laid bare and penetrated. The presence of foreign nationals in celebrations of national pride may explain the negative details of their experiences. Things such as their feelings of isolation, attacks from Irish people, an inability to participate in their desired career path and feeling disconnected from wider society could well be the result of a sub-conscious "grudge" that was mentioned by Dave. As mentioned previously, this may provide reasoning as to why Ola feels very much like a "foreigner", but efforts from those in a similar position should encourage her to accumulate better levels of social capital.

What could pose an issue in trying to rectify situations of mistrust in society is a lack of understanding between Irish people and incoming immigrants. Hobsbawm (1990) gave an account of how the Thai government pays very little attention to their "hill people" and have no educated understanding of how they live their lives. Hobsbawm (1990) believes that a lack of understanding leads to xenophobic tendencies, which takes form in erroneous acts of violence, aimed at those considered outsiders. This backs up the point made previously of foreign nationals being nervous of simply being outdoors past a certain time in the day and is further enhanced by Ola and Dave's narratives in which they both disclosed that they were attacked since arriving in Ireland; the former on two separate occasions and the latter with the one. Racially aggravated attacks have led to Kevin suggesting that more needs to be done to establish immigrants in Irish communities rather than cornering them off into urban areas with those from a similar background.

Negative outcomes such as attacks lead to a possible image of Ireland that may appear

in a person's head is one that is suggested by McVeigh (1992) in which enforces that a unique form of racism exists within the countries institutions that actively look to hold back immigrants from progression. This is based on Fanning (2002); and Eijorh's (2007) research into how Ireland's racism was influenced and encouraged by the countries opinion on Africa as formed by the Catholic church. Media portrayals of corrupt immigrants and famine-stricken land have further increased the opinion that Ireland, as a developed European nation, is superior to anyone who stems from lands that are shown to be negative in global and local media (Horgan 1987; Guerin 2002; Joy White 2002; Mahadeo and MacKinney 2007). This is not something that is discarded or even accused of being false, especially considering the considerable amount of reports from ENAR (2014) that offer the cold, hard statistics of discriminatory behaviour in Ireland, as well as highlighting that those in Ireland who experience this feel unsafe in their own homes. This is comparable to this study given that the majority of participants felt unsafe at night, with some been attacked, but it does not offer a real personal side to the figures. Those who have experienced racial discrimination, such as Peter felt there was no real issue with it and that it was rectified having dealt with the relevant authorities and a friend of Stan's who experienced problems with those in a rough neighbourhood felt it was important to strive in order to move away from these types of areas and avoid the societal problems that are associated with ghettoization as mentioned by Kevin. Although Peter and Stan dealt with their issues, Nell felt as though she was targeted in her neighbourhood as she was a foreign national doing well and Marek believed he was focused on incorrectly due to the fact he was merely a resident in a rough neighbourhood.

As stated previously, it is not to say that these issues do not occur, as is present above, but when they do, statistics are used rather than taking into consideration how the immigrant worker is outside of the basic narrative provided. Loyal (2011) believes that Ireland is country-mile from the welcoming and warm image that is given to the rest of the world and cannot do simple, every-day things without being harassed, but none of these issues appeared amongst the immigrant workers in this sample. Ireland has a particular lack of concern for the lived experience of immigrants and instead further looks to promote this image of hostility and negativity; something that could be changed by focusing on the participant's stories whilst conducting any necessary research.

More positively, Neo, JJ, Emiliano and JB. Emiliano felt as though if you want trouble, trouble will find you whilst maintaining a mind-set that his new city was a trustworthy area that he could interact comfortably within. This view was shared by Neo, who felt comfortable enough to walk to and from work in the early hours of the morning and late at night due to the security he felt from his surrounding community. A sense of security within a community was present in JJ's narrative as he was the member of a neighbourhood watch group that also facilitated community engagement aspects through their fundraising and neighbourhood events. JB, in comparison to the three participants mentioned, showed a risk of being isolated for not taking advantage of a comfortable and welcoming neighbourhood setting and still maintains an attitude that encourages her need to be independent.

These participants feelings of trust were particularly centred around their neighbourhoods, with neither citing any interest in guards or any major concerns regarding the local council or authorities, but as a recommendation for those who have no strong community base or no real institution or setting to attach a sense of trust onto, Kevin believes integrating immigrants holistically by allowing them to engage in political and wider societal institutions at a gentle pace can help build a feeling of comfort within their new surroundings. Fennema and Tillie's (1999) look into the Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese suggests that interaction within the political sphere and societal institutions would help immigrants feel more trustworthy of their surroundings and allow them to accumulate social capital. To act on this, Kevin has led groups in protests surrounding local issues, which some participants showed through their participation in the water protests, as well as allowing them to meet council members and local guards to show them the security of the society they are entering. This may not always be necessary, but it is indeed an interesting way of combating feelings of mistrust for those who are wary of their new society.

5.3 Overall findings

Overall, a lack of relevant research leaves a situation in which existing research needs to be thoroughly probed at in order to find relevant interesting comparisons. This research has attempted to contribute to an area which is understudied in a country that has experienced dealing with large scale immigration for over two decades. Whilst this

is an issue, this thesis has addressed the dearth of research which emphasises the lack of concern for the lived experiences of immigrants in Ireland; through examining their social capital. By doing this, it can be seen that each of the eleven participants had a positive experience of Ireland, which is not captured in statistics and reports. In relation to examining the levels of social capital of the eleven immigrant workers, the intricacies and intimate details of their narratives showed the barriers, complications and issues with accumulating social capital, as well as the success stories of those who have adapted and thrived in Ireland. What was found was that the complications which hindered the accumulation of social capital were based on the independent mind-sets of immigrant workers; their reliance on close, emotional bonds and an inability or a lack of interest in adopting the idyllic approach that has seen others thrive. This idyllic approach was underpinned by extroverted personality traits that led the participant to prosper and engage in Irish society in a similar way an indigenous worker would. Self-imposed actions such as closing out society, along with self-confidence issues and a tentativeness with regards to interacting with Irish society has been at the forefront, rather than discriminatory behaviour or any form of institutional racism. In order to combat this, it was seen that those with a lack of social capital need to build up a level of trust in the wider community in order to fully address their relationship with Ireland. In contrast to those who were in a position to further isolate themselves and hinder their gathering of social capital were those who fell in love with Ireland and adapted to several elements that contribute to healthy social capital such as social support, community relations, feelings of trust and an attitude to be resilient in the face of adversity in order to be well-integrated members of Irish society.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Project information sheet for semi-structured interviews

Project Information: Study One

Dear Sir/Madam,

This information statement is for your own records. It is recommended that you read the document fully.

You are being asked to participate in an academic research project (for the reward of Master of Arts) being carried out by Jordan Kirwan, a postgraduate researcher from Waterford Institute of Technology. For his project, Jordan is carrying out an exploration of the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland. Social capital is defined as networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups. This definition suggests that people create real-world links between individuals and groups in the form networks. The project is made up of two studies. Study one consists of an interview based on a set of harmonised questions, as well as some questions formulated by the researcher, that aim to measure social capital and visual sociological study, in which participants will be asked to take photographs of their ‘sources’ of social capital in order to gain a greater understanding of the social lives and relevant experiences of immigrant employees currently living in Ireland. This information sheet will outline the details for study one.

For your part, you are being asked to sit down with Jordan for an interview, estimated to last an hour. The interview will be recorded using a digital recording device. Any material for the second study will be provided by the researcher. In order to comply with institute regulations, any content provided that could put the privacy and well-being of the participant at risk will be de-identified either through blurring or through the changing of names to generic terms or in some cases, a pseudonym.

All interviews will be analysed based on pre-existing literature and compared with the information provided by other participants. The questions posed throughout this interview will not be emotive or in any way difficult. They are asked simply for the purpose of exploring the level of social capital immigrant workers have in Ireland. No questions will be asked regarding the legality of any individual, or indeed, their work. All experiences are important and of great use for this study. As previously mentioned, the well-being and privacy of each participant is paramount in this study and where a situation arise that names have to be used, names mentioned during interviews and analysis will be replaced with fictional names. This is to protect your rights to privacy, anonymity and professional reputation as an interviewee.

All copies of records and files, physical and digital, will be securely stored in accordance with data protection laws. Access to these files is restricted to the project researcher, and the two research supervisors, Jonathan Culleton and Dr. Jennifer O’Mahoney. Do not hesitate to contact the project researcher on the below address:

Jordan Kirwan – jordankirwan@yahoo.com

Appendix B: Project information for photovoice study

Project Information: Study Two

Dear Sir/Madam,

This information statement is for your own records. It is recommended that you read the document fully.

You are being asked to participate in an academic research project (for the reward of Master of Arts) being carried out by Jordan Kirwan, a postgraduate researcher from Waterford Institute of Technology. For his project, Jordan is carrying out an exploration of the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland. Social capital is defined as networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups. This definition suggests that people create real-world links between individuals and groups in the form networks. The project is made up of two studies. Study one consists of an interview based on a set of harmonised questions, as well as some questions formulated by the researcher, that aim to measure social capital. Study two consists of a visual sociological study, in which participants will be asked to take photographs of their 'sources' of social capital in order to gain a greater understanding of the social lives and relevant experiences of immigrant employees currently living in Ireland. This information sheet will outline the details for study two.

For the second study, you will be provided with the relevant materials to provide data that is of use to the researcher. In order to comply with institute regulations, any content provided that could put the privacy and well-being of the participant at risk will be de-identified either through blurring or through the changing of names to generic terms or in some cases, a pseudonym.

All photographs will be analysed based on pre-existing literature and compared with the information provided by participants, i.e. the data provided in study one. The questions posed regarding the photographs will not be invasive or in any way difficult for the participant to answer. They are asked simply for the purpose of exploring the level of social capital immigrant workers have in Ireland based on individual evidence. As previously mentioned, the well-being and privacy of each participant is paramount in this study. To meet this demand, the consent sheet that is in conjunction with this study will give participant the possibility of withdrawing photographs they are not comfortable with sharing. Privacy will also be protected by disguising street names and other recognisable elements of the photos.

All copies of records and files, physical and digital, will be securely stored in accordance with data protection laws. Access to these files is restricted to the project researcher, and the two research supervisors, Jonathan Culleton and Dr. Jennifer O'Mahoney. Do not hesitate to contact the project researcher on the below address:

Jordan Kirwan – jordankirwan@yahoo.com

Appendix C: Informed consent to participate in a recorded interview

*Consent to Participate in a WIT Research Study interview
(for the award of M.A.)*

Title of Study; An Exploration of The Social Capital of Immigrant Workers in Ireland.

Name; Jordan Kirwan **Title;** Project Researcher **Email;** jordankirwan@yahoo.com

Name; Jonathan Culleton **Title;** Research Supervisor **Email;** jculleton@wit.ie

Name; Jennifer O'Mahoney **Title;** Research Supervisor **Email;** Jomahoney@wit.ie

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are invited to participate in a postgraduate research project being conducted by Jordan Kirwan, a WIT research postgraduate student. The purpose of this research is to explore the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland.

It is advised that you read this form and other correspondence carefully and ask any questions that you may have about the project before the interview is begun.

Project Details

Your participation is on a strictly voluntary basis and you may withdraw from the project at any time should you feel the need to. For the project, you are invited to participate in an interview that will last approximately an hour. The interview will be based on a combination of harmonised questions and questions prepared by the researcher in order to measure social capital.

It must be noted that the interview will be recorded on a digital device and analysed along with information provided by other participants. The benefits to participating include being part of an exploration into the social capital of immigrant workers in Ireland and though you may not benefit personally, your participation will be crucial into highlighting a seriously under-researched topic in Ireland.

All information will be protected as far as is reasonably practicable. Confidentiality, privacy and professional reputation are of the utmost importance, and will be protected using secure methods of data protection and security within the project. Under the Data Protection Act 1988 and Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003, you are awarded a number of rights for your own personnel and professional protection. Research data will be maintained for five years before its destruction. You, as a participant, maintain the right to have your information withdrawn after the interview should you feel it must be removed.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the project researcher and supervisors.

Subject Name (Print): _____

Subject Signature: _____

Researcher Name (Print): _____

Researcher Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Informed consent to participate in a photovoice study

*Consent to Participation in a 'Photovoice' Study
(for the award of a M.A.)*

This form refers to photographs that you supplied, or photographs that you allowed Jordan Kirwan to make, as part of the 'The Exploration of the Social Capital of Immigrant Workers in Ireland' project in which you have participated. All photographs will be securely stored by the research team. As discussed with you, photographs may be shared within the research team to help them in their analyses. We would also like to use some photographs (in electronic or print form), in reports, presentations, publications and exhibitions arising from the project. Please could you sign one of the boxes below to indicate whether or not you are happy for us to do this. We have attached numbered prints of your photographs to assist you, and for your records. We won't use any photographs outside the research team without your permission.

Please sign either 1, 2, or 3 below:

1. I give my consent for these photographs to be reproduced for educational and/or non-commercial purposes, in reports, presentations and publications connected to this research project. I understand that real names or street names will NOT be used with the photographs.

signed.....
date.....

OR

If you would like to give permission for us to publish some, but not all, of the photos please list the numbers of the photos you will allow us to use:

2. I gives my consent for photo numbers..... (please specify)

to be reproduced (in electronic or print form), for educational and/or non commercial purposes, in reports, presentations and publications connected to the research project. I understand that real names or street names will NOT be used with the photographs.

signed.....
date.....

OR

3. I do not wish any of these photographs to be reproduced in connection with the research project.

signed.....
date.....

**4. I have read and understand the guidelines in relation to taking of photographs –
Yes/No**

signed.....
date.....

Thank you for participating in our project. If you have any queries about this form or about the project or your participation in it, please do not hesitate to contact Jordan Kirwan: jordankirwan@yahoo.com

Appendix E: Harmonised interview questions

Interview Schedule

BACKGROUND: Introduction

- Male/Female?
- Age: 18-21, 22-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65+
- Country of origin?
- Pseudonym?

QUESTION 1: Views about the area

- How long have you lived in this area?
- How satisfied are you with this area as a place to live?

QUESTION 2: Views about the neighbourhood

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about your immediate neighbourhood, by which I mean your street or block.

- In general, what kind of neighbourhood would you say you live in - would you say it is a neighbourhood in which people do things together and try to help each other, or one in which people mostly go their own way?
- To what extent do you agree or disagree that this neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?
- Would you say that people in the neighbourhood can be trusted?
- Suppose you lost your (purse/wallet) containing your address details, and it was found in the street by someone living in this neighbourhood. How likely is it that it would be returned to you with nothing missing?

I am going to read out a list of problems which some people face in their neighbourhood. For each one, please can you tell me how much of a problem it is:

How much of a problem are people being drunk or rowdy in public places?

- How much of a problem is rubbish or litter lying around?
- How much of a problem are vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles?
- How much of a problem is people being harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion?

QUESTION 3: Participation in local & national issues

- Do you feel you can influence decisions affecting your local area?
- In the last 12 months have you taken any of the following actions in an attempt to solve a problem affecting people in your local area? (Examples: contacted local media, attending protests, etc.)
- In the last 12 months have you taken any actions to show your concern over a national issue? (Examples: see above)

QUESTION 4: Trust

- Another topic we are interested in is trust. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?
- Do you trust the local guards?
- Do you trust your local council?

QUESTION 5: Social networks

The next few questions are about how often you personally contact your relatives, friends and neighbours.

- Do you speak to relatives often?
- Text, email or write to relatives?
- Speak to friends on the phone or write to them either through letter, text or email?
- Speak to neighbours?
- How often do you meet up with relatives who are not living with you?
- How often do you meet up with friends?

QUESTION 6: Social support

I am going to describe two situations where people might need help. For each one, could you tell me if there is anyone you could ask for help:

1. You are ill in bed and need help at home. Is there anyone you could ask for help?
2. You are in financial difficulty and need to borrow some money to see you through the next few days. Is there anyone you could you ask for help?

- If you had a serious personal crisis, how many people, if any, do you feel you

could turn to for comfort and support?

QUESTION 7: Involvement in groups, clubs and organisations

The next questions are about involvement in groups, clubs and organisations. These could be formally organised groups or just groups of people who get together to do an activity or talk about things. Please exclude just paying a subscription, giving money and anything that was a requirement of your job.

- In the last 12 months, have you been involved with any groups of people who get together to do an activity or to talk about things? These could include evening classes, support groups, slimming clubs, keep-fit classes, pub teams and so on.
- In the last 12 months, have you taken part in any (other) group activities as part of a local or community group, club or organisation? These could include residents' associations, sports groups, parent-teacher associations, school or religious groups and so on.
- In the last 12 months, have you taken part in any (other) group activities as part of a national group, club or organisation? These could include pressure groups, charities, political groups, environmental groups and so on
- During the last 12 months have you given any unpaid help to any groups, clubs or organisations in any way? (Examples: raising money, helping at schools, campaigning, mentoring people, etc.) How often?
- Some people have extra responsibilities because they look after someone who has long-term physical or mental ill health or disability, or problems due to old age. May I check, is there anyone living with you who is sick, disabled or elderly whom you look after or give special help to, other than in a professional capacity. (For example, a sick or disabled (or elderly) relative/husband/wife/child/friend/parent, etc.)
- Now I'd like to talk about any unpaid help you may have given people who do not live with you. In the past month have you given any unpaid help?

EXAMPLES: 1. Domestic work, home maintenance or gardening 2. Provision of transport or running errands 3. Help with child care or babysitting 4. Teaching, coaching or giving practical advice 5. Giving emotional support

Now I'd like to talk about any unpaid help you may have received. In the past month have you received any unpaid help?

EXAMPLES: 1. Domestic work, home maintenance or gardening 2. Provision of transport or running errands 3. Help with child care or babysitting 4. Teaching, coaching or giving practical advice 5. Giving emotional support 6. Other 7. Don't know

QUESTION 8: Education

- I'm quite interested in education as a base for gaining different types of employment and in this sense, its ability to provide a platform for gaining social capital
- Can you tell me a bit about your education or any specific training you have undertaken either past or present?

QUESTION 9: Employment

- Given the importance of education in terms of obtaining a job or making a career, I'd like to have a discussion around employment and indeed, the nature of the workplace.
- How long have you been in employment?
- Are you satisfied within this place of employment?
- Would you agree or disagree that your place of employment is one where people from different backgrounds get on well together?
- Do you feel you can influence decisions in your workplace?
- In general, do you feel you can trust your fellow colleagues?
- Do you speak to colleagues often or even consider the people you work with as friends?
- Are you involve in any 'social clubs' within the workplace?

QUESTION 10:

- Can you summarise your life in Ireland up to this point?

Appendix F: Instructions and guidelines to participate effectively in the photovoice study

Guidelines for Photovoice Study

- Should it arise that the participant does not have a camera, a disposable camera will be provided for them by the researcher.
- Before taking part in the study, participants will be made aware of the ethical issues surrounding the study, for example: the blurring of identifiable street names and faces. Participants will also be made aware of their ability to include and exclude certain pictures throughout the study (See Appendix 4 & 5). These steps are crucial in ensuring both the participants and researchers well-being and safety.
- Participants will be given 1 week to take as many images relevant to their lived experiences in Ireland (i.e. their sources of social capital - how they travel, where they shop, etc.). They can take as many pictures as they like, but will be asked to select 10 to be submitted to the researcher. Each photograph should also be accompanied by a brief explanation as to its importance and relevance with the study.
- Photos will either be emailed to the researcher or developed at the researcher's cost and submitted in hard copy.
- After the photos have been given to the researcher, they will be analysed with other collected data and the existing literature.
- As participants will be taking pictures of their sources of social capital, it is important to note that permission must be gained by any individuals who are present in any of the pictures taken that are not taking part in this study.
- It is preferable if people are not present in the photographs. Any individuals who are present must give permission for its use in the study (see appendix 9). In the case of an adult giving permission to be in the photograph, they also have the right to withdraw this photograph at any point in this study.
- No person under 18 may be included in any photographs taken for the purposes of this research.

Appendix G: Emergency contact numbers

Contact Numbers

| | |
|---|--|
| Health Service Executive National health and social care provided | Information Line (Mon-Fri) (9-5) 1850 241 850 University Hospital Waterford 051 848000 Dept. of Psychiatry 051 848000 |
| An Garda Siochana National police service | Waterford (non-emergency) 051 305 300 Confidential Line 1800 666 111 Racial Abuse Helpline 3531663150/3817 |
| Immigrant Council of Ireland Leading NGO agency in immigration issues | www.immigrantcouncil.ie 01 674 0200 |
| HSE National Counselling Service | HSE South East 1800 234 118 |
| Samaritans | 1850 60 90 90 |

Appendix H: Informed consent card for photovoice study

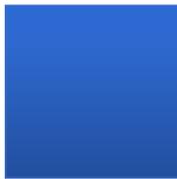
Instructions Card

Dear Sir or Madam,

You are in a photograph taken by 'Participant X'.

This photograph is part of a research study being done in WIT.

Do we have your permission to use the photo that you are in for our research study?



**Yes, I give my permission
for my image to be used in this study**



**No, I do not give my permission
for my image to be used in this study**

_____ (please initial here)

Thank you, and if you change your mind at any time, simply e-mail me at the address below, and I will take this photo out of our study.

Email address: jordankirwan@yahoo.com

Appendix I: Field Notes

Field Notes

1. Neo

- Didn't agree with assumption that immigrants are segregated pre-recording
- Was very keen to show how integrate immigrants were in Irish society
- Very relaxed throughout and stood up at times to make coffee.
- Participant laughed a lot during interview and smoked
- When talking about money, living life, etc. the participant was particularly excited and talked a lot more in depth around these areas
- Was much quieter during questions around education and politics
- Work and social life of huge importance – well integrated

2. JJ

- Calm, relaxed
- Interview interrupted by daughter once
- Was visibly upset when talking about illness – had links to his level of social capital, but was unsure about probing too much

3. Marek

- Interview took place in factory office
- Participant had finished last shift before weekend – seemed tired
- Interview was interrupted once

4. JB

- Took place in a café – participant brought her young child
- Participant had a background in research and understood what was required for study from experience
- Child was slightly disruptive
- Comfortable throughout

5. Nell
 - Talked straight with no prompting or asking of questions
 - Appeared as if participant wanted to get something of their chest
 - Children came in towards end and were disruptive – hurried last few minutes of interview

6. Stan
 - Stan brought up immigration crisis when it did not appear relevant or even where it did not seem where conversation was heading
 - Indicated a language barrier issue
 - Stan offered up some generalisations that were common during peak of recession during 2008
 - Made recommendations for country in terms of ways to settle in newcomers

7. Peter
 - Took place in café
 - Fire alarm went off just towards the end of the interview – no disruption caused

8. Emiliano
 - Participant was in middle of opening restaurant for day of business
 - Slight language barrier, but had no effect on delivery of narrative in conjunction with questions asked

9. Dave
 - Participant gave me tour of the house and talked about his interests and hobbies pre-recording
 - Was comfortable and smoked throughout interview, but had some evidently clear trust issues that reflected the brevity of answers provided

10. Ola

- Participant was the product of snowball sampling and was interested having heard of a fellow participant taking part so was extremely prepared
- Participant was attacked twice – very uncomfortable about issues surrounding trust and was anxious about probing further
- Took place in a café and was very relaxed

11. Kevin

- Integration Support Director
- Is a reference point for entire study given nature of his work
- Was interested in topic and its importance which reflected answers given
- Was keen to connect researcher with potential participants