



Realizing Immigrant Contributions to Workgroup and Organizational Performance

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Abstract

Although immigrants play a key role in organizations, less attention is paid to their role in workgroups. Research in diversity management does not routinely distinguish immigrants from their native-born ethnic counterparts. Instead, how immigrants' unique characteristics may contribute to workgroups and, ultimately, organizational performance has been overlooked. This paper addresses this gap by providing a cross-disciplinary approach that shows how immigrants contribute to performance. Grounded in the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) framework, we argue that for immigrants to become strategically beneficial human resources, managers must help workplaces overcome barriers that block the contextual and interpersonal conditions that foster immigrants' unique capabilities, motivations, and opportunities for group performance. We discuss several barriers that can impede workgroup and firm performance, including language proficiency barriers, cross-cultural competency and adjustment barriers, intergroup bias barriers due to immigrant status, and immigrants' strategic integration barriers. We contribute to the diversity management literature by answering multiple calls to pay more attention to immigrants and their integration in groups and organizations.

Keywords Immigrants · Workgroups · Diversity · Language proficiency · Immigrant status · Intergroup bias

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Immigrants are a growing reality in organizations (OECD, 2015), and workgroups are increasingly comprised of immigrant and non-immigrant employees. Immigrants are born and raised in a different country than their host country, in which they maintain a long-term residence (Berry & Sam, 1997). Although immigrants are increasingly present in the globalized labor market (Bell et al., 2010; Dietz, 2010; Khilji et al., 2015; Zikic, 2015) and are considered important resources to organizations (Zikic, 2015), their unique influence at the workgroup level often goes underexamined by research in diversity management (Harrison et al., 2019). The dearth of immigrants in workgroup research warrants attention for managers because it undermines a comprehensive understanding of immigrants' unique benefits and challenges in workgroups compared to their native counterparts. This is particularly important given the increased growth and widespread implementation of workgroups to enhance organizational innovation and performance. As organizations increasingly rely on workgroups as a primary form of work unit (Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009) and source of competitive advantage (Mathieu et al., 2008), it behooves managers to recognize how immigrants can positively influence workgroups functioning and performance and how managers can foster this benefit.

For instance, Fig. 1 depicts a workgroup viewed under two different perspectives. The first perspective (A) represents a traditional approach to workgroup diversity, where a workgroup member's general characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, and functional expertise are assumed to bring both benefits and challenges to workgroups. This perspective encapsulates

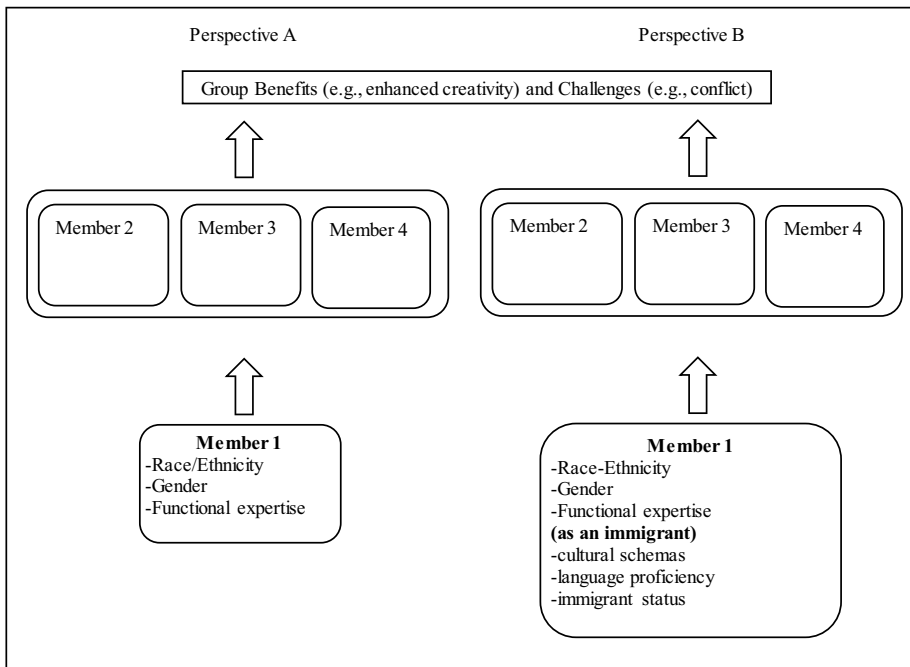


Fig. 1 Different perspectives in considering group members' diversity. *Note.* Perspective A shows a more traditional approach to diversity in workgroup research, where a workgroup's member characteristics that influence workgroup outcomes are typically restricted to variables such as race/ethnicity, gender, and functional expertise. Perspective B shows a broader view of diversity recognizing workgroup members may also have immigrants along its implications to workgroup functioning

people within a country as a single general group (e.g., Member 1 is classified solely under the umbrella of Hispanic). Conversely, the second perspective (B) represents the same workgroup, but Member 1 is classified as a Hispanic in terms of race/ethnicity and also as an immigrant. This second perspective is more representative of the increased spaces immigrants fill in global workplaces and explicitly captures unique opportunities and challenges that characteristics such as language proficiency, cultural schemas, and immigrant status (particularly as not all Hispanic immigrants are perceived the same) bring to immigrants in workgroups. Sometimes, such characteristics are encapsulated by the use of single-category diversity proxies such as “nationality” in the management literature (Tsui et al., 2007). However, such lack of specificity potentially serves to overlook the implications of these related but distinct immigrant attributes. Consequently, and unfortunately, less is known about how immigrants uniquely benefit workgroups and how managers can foster this benefit by overcoming similarly unique challenges associated with immigrants.

Drawing from a cross-disciplinary approach in international and cross-cultural management, strategic human resource (HR) management, and social psychology, we examine the unique benefits immigrants bring to workgroups. Additionally, we offer some managerial practices that address some equally unique organizational and interpersonal challenges that, if left unchecked, may hinder such benefits. We describe and explain these benefits, challenges, and managerial practices using the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) framework, a popular and frequently-used model in strategic HR management research. The AMO framework utilizes the concepts of human capital ability, employee motivation, and opportunity-enabling management practices to describe how organizations can strategically create workplace environments that unleash the performance potential of their workforce, including those of immigrants. To this point, we argue that in order for immigrants to become strategically beneficial human resources, organization leaders must create contextual and interpersonal conditions that foster immigrants’ unique capabilities, enhance their motivation to contribute to workgroup processes, and maximize opportunities for workgroup performance.

We contribute to diversity management and workgroup research by answering calls to unpack and discern immigrants’ valuable contributions (Bell et al., 2010; Harrison et al., 2019; Shore et al., 2009) and integration (Bimrose & McNair, 2011; Cerdin et al., 2014; Hajro et al., 2019; Malik & Manroop, 2017) in organizations, particularly in workgroups (Harrison et al., 2019). We show managers the importance of distinguishing immigrants (and challenges) from native-born counterparts. As immigrants are considered the new “invisible” workers in diversity management (Bell et al., 2010; Geddes & Scholten, 2016; Goodwin & Milazzo, 2017), we offer managers insights as to immigrants’ unique benefits in workgroups and managerial practices to address equally unique challenges among immigrants to maximize such benefits.

First, we describe different perspectives that underline the potential benefits of immigrants to workgroups. Second, we integrate these perspectives using the AMO framework. Third, we provide managerial practices for managing challenges commonly faced by immigrants in order to foster their benefits and contributions in workgroups.

Different Perspectives on the Benefits of Immigrants to Workgroups

Immigrants can bring a rich source of diversity within workgroups. A workgroup is defined as two or more individuals who collectively rely on each other to accomplish one or more tasks in a workplace (Gladstein, 1984; Wageman, 1995). Diversity refers to the differences among organizational or workgroup members concerning a common attribute or

characteristic (Harrison & Klein, 2007). The “business case for diversity” is often cited to depict the general benefit of diversity in workgroups and organizations (Robinson & Dechant, 1997). For immigrants, in particular, three different but highly intertwined perspectives from different research streams outline their benefit to workgroups and organizations – the information processes perspective, a cross-cultural perspective, and a resource-based integration perspective (see Table 1).

The Information Processes Perspective

The information processes perspective originates directly from the diversity workgroup management research stream. According to the information processes, workgroup members’ differences (e.g., functional expertise, demographics) benefit workgroups because they provide a broader range of ideas and perspectives, resulting in higher levels of creativity and problem solving, mainly in complex tasks (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). For example, in a workgroup (e.g., a new organizational committee) tasked with the formulation of organizational strategies (e.g., examining and making recommendations about the organization’s performance evaluation system), having workgroup members from different departments (e.g., accounting, finance, HR, marketing, operations, sales, etc.) will provide a broader range of ideas. This diversity may enrich the workgroup’s decision-making processes and enhance workgroup outcomes. Similarly, workgroups tasked with entering specific demographic markets may also benefit from members from different demographic backgrounds during informational and workgroup decision-making processes. However, this benefit assumes the workgroup members such as immigrants also possess the necessary task-related abilities and motivation to participate and function properly (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). When this occurs, information processes posit that heterogeneous workgroup members are beneficial to workgroups.

A Cross-Cultural Perspective

A cross-cultural perspective, originating from the international and cross-cultural management literature, is often used in conjunction with the information processes perspective to highlight the potential benefits culturally diverse individuals such as immigrants bring to workgroups. Whereas diversity management under the information processes perspective focuses on general diversity aspects of workgroup members (e.g., demographics, functional experience), the cross-cultural perspective focuses on how immigrants’ cultural schemas uniquely enrich informational processes and benefit workgroups (Stahl et al., 2010; Zhan et al., 2015). A cultural schema refers to what one knows, assumes, or perceives about the world (Fitzsimmons, 2013; Lord & Foti, 1986). Unlike their native counterparts, immigrants are unique in that, besides other characteristics such as race/ethnicity, their national upbringing during their formative years shapes their cultural schemas (Hambrick et al., 1998). When these unique, non-native cultural schemas are combined with immigrants’ other capabilities (e.g., knowledge, abilities, skills) – a cognitive process known as integrative (or cognitive) complexity – individuals from different nationalities such as immigrants can forge different perspectives and bring novel knowledge during information processes (e.g., Benet-Martínez et al., 2006; Tadmor et al., 2009; Tadmor, Galinsky, & Maddux, 2012a). This increased range of information has been shown to enhance knowledge sharing, increase productivity, improve decision-making, and drive up team and organizational performance (Gibson, 2001; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009; Tadmor, Galinsky, &

Table 1 Perspectives on the benefit of immigrants in workgroups

Perspective	Research stream	Emphasis of benefits	Outcomes
Information process perspective	Diversity workgroup management	Immigrants' general diversity differences (e.g., functional expertise, demographics)	Higher levels of creativity, problem-solving, and performance.
Cross-cultural perspective	International and cross-cultural management	Immigrants cultural schemas, international experience, and cognitive complexity	Higher levels of creativity, resources, problem solving, and performance.
Resource-based integration perspective	Strategic HR	The alignment of immigrants' unique capabilities (i.e., their cultural schemas) and organizational goals	Workgroup and organizational competitive advantage.

Maddux, 2012a; Tadmor, Satterstrom, et al., 2012b). This is especially so when workgroups are assigned complex tasks where access to vast amounts of information is essential to team success (e.g., R&D projects).

A Resource-Based Integration Perspective

A resource-based integration perspective, as found in strategic HR research (e.g., Khilji et al., 2015; Zikic, 2015), posits that the alignment and integration of organizational goals and immigrants' unique capabilities (i.e., their cultural schemas and international experience) can synergize in ways that provides organizations with a competitive advantage. Our application of this perspective is at the workgroup level since work teams are on the rise within organizations across the globe. Organizations heavily rely on workgroups to accomplish tasks and goals (Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009), many of which are dependent on a workgroup members' abilities and motivations (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Such dependency highlights the importance of attracting and integrating the right workgroup members to achieve workgroup goals properly. Because immigrants are prevalent in workgroups and given their unique abilities, immigrants can also help workgroups be a viable source of competitive advantage if integrated properly (Zikic, 2015). In all, managers who can attract, foster, and strategically integrate immigrants' unique abilities, such as cultural schemas and international experience, are likely to gain a competitive advantage in workgroups and consequently organizations.

Integrating the Different Perspectives Using the AMO Framework

We use the AMO framework because it is a well-established knowledge framework in the management literature that can productively describe, explain, and integrate the aforementioned research perspectives for how and why immigrants benefit workgroups, as well as how managers can foster such benefits. In the AMO framework, employee ability, motivation, and opportunity are drivers of desired work behavior and performance (Jiang et al., 2012). From a workgroup standpoint, ability refers to the person-based knowledge, skills, and capabilities individuals bring to a workgroup. Motivation refers to an individual's desire to be engaged, contribute, and share knowledge with others in a workgroup. Opportunity refers to contextual or environmental conditions that enable (or constrain) performance. The AMO framework accommodates the three aforementioned perspectives, which integrated assume that immigrants must have necessary task-related abilities, with a particular emphasis on their cultural schemas, and be motivated to provide unique benefits to workgroups. In terms of opportunity, the assumption is that the organization strategically integrates diversity (in this case, immigrants) to achieve organizational and workgroup goals. Importantly and although conceptually different, ability, motivation, and opportunity may be interrelated and should be considered concurrently (Kim et al., 2015). For example, individuals who lack a particular work-related capability or skill will be less motivated to contribute to the workgroup if a particular project calls for members to exercise that skill during the production of workgroup outcomes. This is true regardless of there being opportunities for a workgroup member to make contributions. In all, our integrated approach using the AMO framework posits that to realize the full potential benefits of immigrants in workgroups, immigrants must have the right abilities and motivation to perform, and organizations must provide the right opportunities for them to contribute.

Using the AMO Framework to Foster the Benefits of Immigrants to Workgroups

In this section, we discuss managerial practices using a cross-disciplinary approach that can foster immigrants' unique abilities, motivations, and opportunities to enhance their benefits to workgroups. As alluded to in the previous section, the benefits immigrants stand to bring to workgroups are not automatic. This is important for managers to realize and act upon since many diversity management research positions immigrants' benefits in terms of proxies of "national diversity" (Tsui et al., 2007) instead of specifically identifying their potential contributions to workgroups.

To capitalize on the power of the AMO framework, our approach proffers actionable practices that enable managers to help immigrants overcome unique challenges and hurdles that can derail their contributions and benefits to workgroups. These potentialities and hurdles are rooted in immigrants' abilities and motivations and the organizational opportunities they might encounter. Thus, we purposefully focus on managerial practices specific to immigrants in workgroups rather than those for employees generally. In doing so, we provide a layer of detail missing from much of the existing diversity management research. The practices we focus on are to: 1) address language proficiency barriers, 2) address cross-cultural competency and adjustment barriers, 3) address intergroup bias barriers due to their immigrant status, and 4) address immigrants' strategic integration barriers (see Table 2). To be sure, these four managerial practices are not the only actions managers and firms can take to leverage the potential of immigrant workers. They are, however, issues that have been shown in previous research to have important consequences for immigrants and that also apply broadly to this employee population. Importantly, our intention is not to make these managerial practices mandatory for immigrants nor serve as automatic managerial assumptions (e.g., stereotyping) representing the needs of all immigrant employees, but rather present them as options based on immigrants' (and that of the organization's) current circumstances and needs.

Addressing Language Proficiency Barriers

Language proficiency is a crucial ability often ignored in workgroup research, demanding further attention by both managers and researchers (Tenzer et al., 2014). Language proficiency refers to one's ability to communicate effectively with other members of the workgroup. It is comprised of language competence (e.g., fluency of speech, strong accent, appropriate vocabulary usage) and sociolinguistic competence (e.g., understanding and navigating cultural patterns of discourse) (Scollon & Scollon, 1995), and can be one of the most common issues concerning immigrant workers of all qualification levels and lengths of host-nation residency (e.g., Huang et al., 2013; Turchick Hakak et al., 2010). In workgroups, language serves as the main channel for the creation and dissemination of knowledge (Kirchmeyer & Cohen, 1992; Welch & Welch, 2008; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998), and its deficiency may obstruct information processes since they have the potential to reduce the flow of information and transmission of knowledge between workgroup members. In this sense, language proficiency enhances or inhibits immigrants' ability to share information from their other capabilities (e.g., cultural schemas) to workgroup members. Without language proficiency, immigrants may fail to share their knowledge and capabilities to the workgroup properly.

Table 2 Managerial practices for fostering immigrant benefits in workgroups

Managerial Practices	Examples
Address language proficiency barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide developmental opportunities including language and remedial training, mentoring, employee-led groups that can facilitate language proficiency, and funding for formal or self-directed learning. • Immigrants with managerial support may also engage in self-directed opportunities for development (e.g., identifying role models and interpersonal networks).
Address cross-cultural and adjustment barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide cross-cultural training (e.g., EMT training). • Provide organizational social support in the form of supervisory support, mentoring, career support, and peer support.
Address intergroup bias barriers due to immigrant status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster inclusive organizational and workgroup climates where minorities, especially immigrants, are perceived more as a cultural benefit and less of a cultural threat. • Foster values of universalism and openness to change, increasing perceptions of organizational justice, nurturing positive diversity beliefs, and fair treatment of minorities. • Be attentive to the various societal attitudes held against different immigrant groups.
Address Immigrants' strategic integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategically (and collaboratively) consider both the cultural schemas and capabilities needed for workgroup tasks and goals in selecting group members. • Focus on the talent management of immigrants • Clearly communicate expectations, goals, and roles.

Academic research on multinational organizations (e.g., Harzing & Feely, 2008) and international management (e.g., Peltokorpi & Vaara, 2014) provides further insights into the importance of immigrants' language proficiency as an important ability and motivation aspect in the contribution of workgroups. In this line of research, language proficiency is a paramount ability for effective communication since language proficiency may vary across groups within multinational firms (Harzing & Pudelko, 2013) and can interrupt the communication processes needed for effective knowledge sharing (Klitmøller & Lauring, 2013; Peltokorpi & Vaara, 2014; Welch & Welch, 2008). This line of research also suggests language proficiency may influence the motivation of immigrants to participate and engage in workgroup communication. Not surprisingly, those who lack language proficiency are more likely to disengage or participate less in organizational settings due to feelings of embarrassment, insecurity, threat, and anxiety when speaking a foreign language (Gudykunst, 1995; Tenzer et al., 2014; Tenzer & Pudelko, 2015). Such negative feelings emerge as a source of personal devaluation and demotivation (Kulkarni, 2015), prompting individuals to further disengage from participating in workgroups in a self-reinforcing cycle. Indeed, research has found that non-native speakers who perceive their foreign-language proficiency as weak tend to experience higher anxiety and negative emotions, hindering motivation to engage with others in the workgroup (e.g., Tenzer & Pudelko, 2015).

Extending this logic, immigrants who perceive their language proficiency as weak also may disengage from sharing their knowledge with the workgroup, especially if such

sharing requires verbal communication. Importantly, language proficiency is often based on the subjective assessment of one's proficiency against others, including native speakers (Neeley, 2013; Neeley & Dumas, 2016). Thus, even those immigrants who may be perceived by others as "proficient" may still experience anxiety and disengage from the workgroup. Consequently, immigrants' disengagement from the workgroup communication hinders integrative information processes and their ability to benefit from the workgroup with their complexity of ideas and reasoning. Therefore, research in this area provides additional support for the idea that lack of language proficiency is a crucial ability and motivational component that may influence the extent immigrants ultimately contribute to the workgroup.

To mitigate this information loss and motivate immigrants to engage in workgroups, managers should realize how immigrants' lack of language proficiency may reduce immigrants' willingness to share their knowledge with the workgroup and provide developmental opportunities to address any language issues. Such strategies might include making language training and remedial programs available for immigrants so they continue developing language and sociolinguistic competencies, establishing mentoring programs that pair immigrants up with longer-tenure immigrant workers who have successfully navigated similar issues or native colleagues who are familiar with the second language acquisition process, encouraging and enabling employee-led language learning groups or programs that can facilitate language proficiency, and providing funding for formal training or self-directed learning (such as a university-based course or computer-assisted language learning software). Immigrants with managerial support may also engage in self-directed opportunities for development. A few opportunities include (but are not limited to) identifying and following the lead of verbal and written communication role models in the firm, practicing language and sociolinguistic competencies at work and outside of work, seeking feedback on their communication from colleagues and interpersonal networks, and incorporating lessons learned into continuous improvement.

Addressing Cross-Cultural Competency and Adjustment Barriers

Within diverse workgroups and organizations, immigrants and native workers alike require cross-cultural competence in order to successfully interact, collaborate, and perform with one another (Chen & Gabrenya Jr, 2021). Immigrants, in particular, must have vehicles for learning about and understanding norms and cognitions needed to interact with others and adjust to their new cultural environments. Such knowledge acquisition often represents a challenge for many immigrants, especially those who just migrated. For example, immigrants may be unfamiliar with the behavioral norms and expectations (e.g., in terms of social interactions or customs) of their cultural environment or may not be able to accurately perceive or reciprocate cultural-specific cues (e.g., body language). The result might be jumbled communication, lack of information exchange, or strained interpersonal relations, which in turn may reduce immigrant workers' motivation to contribute to workgroups or participate in organizational processes. Conversely, immigrants who can readily access cultural competence learning and development opportunities may be more likely to become productively integrated into their host country workplaces. As immigrants become positively adjusted to their new culture and society, their motivation to make meaningful workgroup contributions increase, as does the firm's ability to benefit from their unique human capital (Zikic, 2015).

The importance of cross-cultural competencies in organizations is highlighted in volumes of cross-cultural management and expatriate research, which allow expatriates to

adjust and function appropriately in their new cultural, social, and work environment (e.g., Feitosa et al., 2014; Haslberger & Dickmann, 2016; Potosky, 2016). Consequently, expatriates are able to better understand and interact with culturally different others, resulting in more success and better performance during international assignments. For example, cross-cultural competencies allow expatriates to recognize and address cross-cultural differences in the new workplace in terms of attitudes (e.g., views on work roles, perceptions of justice, and organizational citizenship behaviors) and behaviors (e.g., participation, negotiation tactics, communication processes). Expatriates lacking these and other cross-cultural competencies are unable to address cross-cultural differences and difficulties, reducing their performance and effectiveness on international assignments. In a similar manner, immigrants who do not possess appropriate cross-cultural competencies and knowledge about host country norms and cognitions may have challenges integrating into and, ultimately, contributing to workgroups. This is the case even when immigrants possess task-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities. An absence of intercultural competencies can render immigrant human capital moot, reducing their ability to function in workgroups effectively.

The expatriate management literature offers intervention opportunities to help managers and practitioners enhance immigrants' cross-cultural competencies required for their proper adjustment and integration in workgroups (e.g., Degens et al., 2015; Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010; Ran & Huang, 2019). One example is to provide cross-cultural training to the entire workforce (and not just for immigrants). This point is especially important since research suggests that such training is most effective when it is culture-general and includes cognitive, skill-based, and affective learning outcomes transferable to work being performed (e.g., Degens et al., 2015; Ran & Huang, 2019). A particularly interesting type of cross-culture training is error management training or EMT (Ran & Huang, 2019). In EMT, participants are exposed to different types of "errors" that may occur during cross-cultural interactions due to the different assumptions, values, and beliefs people bring to the workplace due to their cultural backgrounds. For example, errors may occur in misinterpreting body expressions, habits, or actions, resulting in miscommunication and conflict. Because these errors are typically unconscious or unintentional, EMT-specific cross-cultural training offers a rich opportunity to address them by previewing realistic cultural situations. The idea is to help trainees identify where errors are more likely to occur and how to deal with them during actual scenario-based cross-cultural interactions. Similarly, because spillovers may occur between work and nonwork settings, cross-cultural training may encompass any issues adjusting to the general culture and consider family members' adjustment (Takeuchi et al., 2002). The inclusion of the development of cultural intelligence – an individual's competence to effectively engage with people from different cultures at home or abroad (Earley & Ang, 2003) – in this training might also be of benefit (e.g., Kour & Jyoti, 2021).

Several other practices to help in the adjustment of immigrants fall under the umbrella of organizational social support, including ensuring supervisory and peer support and providing networking and mentorship opportunities. All of these have been shown to facilitate expatriate adjustment and to improve workgroup and organizational commitment, motivation, retention, and performance (Van der Laken et al., 2019). Organizational social support can also be integrated into individual employee and workgroup performance evaluation and recognition systems to encourage participation and support for all workgroup members. Another important form of organizational support includes career support by helping recent immigrants transition into their careers and organizational roles (e.g., Bimrose & McNair, 2011). In all, managers who can foster cross-cultural competencies to

facilitate immigrants' adjustment and integration to their new workgroup roles (and society) can expect immigrants to reciprocate in higher levels of commitment and motivation, thus increasing immigrants' contributions to workgroups.

Addressing Intergroup Bias Barriers

Management and social psychology research reveal that when individuals perceive derogatory workgroup climates due to intergroup bias, they are less motivated to integrate and use their abilities to contribute to workgroups. Intergroup bias refers to the tendency to evaluate one's ingroup members more favorably than outgroup members and encompasses negative attitudes (e.g., prejudice) and consequent behaviors (e.g., discrimination) (Hewstone et al., 2002; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Ingroups and outgroups are formed based on perceived salient social characteristics (e.g., race, age) and associated stereotypes. In general, those perceived as more "similar" exist as part of the ingroup, whereas those perceived as more "dissimilar" as part of the outgroup (Byrne, 1971; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner et al., 1987). A unique and salient characteristic for immigrants and a possible intergroup bias source is their immigrant status (i.e., immigrant vs. non-immigrant; Deaux, 2006), often portrayed by appearance or spoken accent (e.g., DiBenigno & Kellogg, 2014). In social psychology, immigrant status reflects a meaningful social category and source of social identity when creating subgroups across social contexts (e.g., Deaux, 2006; Reitz et al., 2016) and can be a source of intergroup bias. Scholars have recently noted the importance and consequence of immigrant status as a social category in organizational contexts (Avery et al., 2010; Bell et al., 2010; Dietz, 2010).

In workgroups, intergroup bias towards immigrants may emerge based on perceived cultural threats or benefits resulting from stereotypes associated with their immigrant status especially during a workgroup's formation stage. Drawing from Threat Theory (Stephan & Stephan, 1996) and the Threat-Benefit Model (Tartakovsky & Walsh, 2016), we define *cultural threats* as the perception that immigrants disrupt a workgroup's social cohesion by injecting culturally different and unfamiliar behaviors, values, morals, ways of thinking, and decision-making styles to the workgroup. Conversely, we define *cultural benefits* as the perception that immigrants' diverse abilities and cultural attributes enrich workgroup functioning and performance. In the context of immigrants, we surmise that intergroup bias and related attitudes (e.g., prejudice) and behaviors (e.g., discrimination) will vary to the degree that immigrants are perceived as a threat or benefit to the workgroup. The more immigrants are perceived as a threat, the more likely intergroup bias will prevail, reducing immigrants' motivation to contribute their abilities to their workgroups. Additionally, intergroup bias may also increase psychological health risks and interpersonal conflict, further reducing immigrants' benefits to workgroups (Hong et al., 2016).

To reduce intergroup bias towards immigrants due to their immigrant status, managers and organizations may enact practices that foster more inclusive organizational and workgroup climates where minorities, and especially immigrants, are perceived more in terms of a cultural benefit and less of a cultural threat (e.g., Shore et al., 2017). This requires focusing not only on the more common "racial" aspects of intergroup dynamics but also on the "cultural" ones. Examples might include hosting cultural affinity events and celebrations, internal and external marketing that features employees from various backgrounds and highlights how immigrants contribute to the firm's success, and ensuring that there is diverse, qualified representation throughout an organization to include senior and top management positions. Encoding values of universalism such as tolerance and appreciation

of others and increasing perceptions of organizational justice and fair treatment (Enoksen, 2016; Triana et al., 2011) is another way managers can help bring about inclusive working environments. Similarly, leaders should also pay attention to and understand how long-standing or current societal attitudes against different immigrant groups might affect how immigrant employees are perceived and treated by colleagues in workgroups and throughout an organization. This is important to realize because attitudes towards immigrants are not all the same and vary by immigrant groups (e.g., Grimaldi et al., 2015; López-Rodríguez et al., 2014). For example, in the United States, there currently exists strong negative sentiment against Mexican immigrants. This is partly because of Mexican immigrants' negative stereotypes, such as their mischaracterization as criminals and threats to community safety and national security (Jiménez, 2008). These negative attitudes threaten to spill over into workgroups and organizational environments, potentially leading to unfair treatment of immigrants or the sprouting of a hostile work environment. Managers can combat this threat by speaking out against negative stereotypes and reaffirming an organizational commitment to zero-tolerance of prejudicial speech, treatment, or behavior. They can also facilitate unit-wide or organization workshops or speaker events on culturally relevant current events. Moreover, specifically for immigrants and other potentially marginalized employees, firms might consider providing resources and support to establish employee resource groups and other "safe spaces" where culturally-diverse colleagues can gather, get to know one another, and establish mentoring professional friendship relationships.

Addressing Immigrants' Strategic Integration

Organizational diversity is said to grant an "opportunity" for organizations to gain a competitive advantage when this diversity is strategically integrated to accomplish organizational goals. From a workgroup perspective, this means that a workgroup can gain an added benefit when the diversity and abilities of its members – including immigrants with their unique capabilities such as cultural schemas – are recognized, appreciated, and strategically leveraged to address workgroup tasks and objectives (Zikic, 2015). Consider a fictional but realistic example of a US. company planning on expanding foreign subsidiaries in Brazil. The firm creates a task force to begin exploring this possibility and strategically includes a Brazilian environmental engineer employee with a professional certification recognized in Brazil and the US. This engineer's inclusion allows the task force to draw and integrate knowledge from his/her immigrant-specific cultural schemas acquired in both countries, which may lead to greater insights and deeper understanding when addressing expansion issues (e.g., legal, social, and technical requirements and considerations), resulting in more creative and effective problem-solving and, ultimately, firm success. Indeed, empirical research has shown that immigrants can become rich channels of knowledge for organizations with an intention to expand business operations to other countries (e.g., Hernandez, 2014). In such cases, same-nationality immigrants are considered key resources to the organization as they can provide uniquely relevant knowledge and resources to establish relationships needed to survive and flourish (Hernandez, 2014). We point out that such opportunities are not restricted only to international organizations given the increasingly globalized economy and culturally heterogeneous populations within countries and organizations. Thus, the strategic integration of immigrants' capabilities and cultural schemas can ultimately maximize the added benefits to workgroups through enhanced information processes and exchanges given appropriate strategic workgroup opportunities.

When immigrants are placed into workgroups where their abilities are not fully leveraged (i.e., lack of strategic integration), a well of competitive advantage goes untapped, and organizations suffer. Immigrants' capabilities lose their uniqueness and become no different from the capabilities of other workgroup members. This lack of strategic integration in workgroups by the organization may occur for many reasons. One possible reason may be that workgroup goals and tasks are not necessarily associated with any particular use of immigrants' unique capabilities and cultural schemas. Another reason could be that managers may not realize the global implications or potential benefits immigrants may have on workgroup goals and tasks. Given the nature of globalization and the need to expand markets in organizations, we surmise that the latter occurs more frequently than the former. Besides unawareness of cultural implications on workgroup goals and tasks, unawareness of immigrants' capabilities and cultural schemas may also challenge their strategic integration in workgroups.

Overcoming a lack of strategic integration requires intentional organizational and HR strategies. For instance, both the capabilities and cultural schemas needed for workgroup tasks should always be considered in workgroup member selection, specifically when considering immigrant employees and projects with cultural implications (e.g., international joint ventures, market expansions to different cultural markets, knowledge about cross-cultural differences). This would require managerial attention and training on immigrants' talent management and the strategic nature diversity plays in achieving workgroup goals and tasks. From a talent management perspective, this means a managerial focus on strategically attracting, selecting, recruiting, developing, and retaining immigrants as a way to gain a long-term competitive advantage while acknowledging, assessing, and keeping track of their knowledge, skills, and abilities (Crowley-Henry & Al Ariss, 2018).

In turn, immigrants may be added to projects under the guidance of team leads who can make sure immigrants' capabilities and cultural schemas can be encouraged and integrated successfully. We suggest this process to be a collaboration and agreement between managers and immigrants, where immigrants also have a voice in identifying and selecting projects and tasks where they believe they are able to strategically integrate their schemas and capabilities. Because research has shown that individuals whose strengths are emphasized in workgroups tend to be more engaged and feel more "authentic" in their jobs (Bakker, 2017), capitalizing on immigrants' unique strengths may not only accomplish workgroup goals but also personal goals. Of course, immigrants should have pathways to move up in the organization's ladder so that they can assume managerial and senior leadership roles. This would further add to a firm's ability to identify and leverage immigrant human capital and performance potential. Lastly, we suggest managers fully communicate expectations, roles, and goals to immigrants regarding their strategic impact in workgroup activities. Research has shown that cultural backgrounds may influence the interpretation of job-related scripts and feedback, influencing how individuals interpret what is expected of them (Stone-Romero et al., 2003). Even when managers may have a clear picture of immigrants' strategic role and expectations in workgroups, not ensuring immigrants share the same understanding can lead to diminishing results. It is essential to ensure that both managers and immigrants are in tune regarding their strategic role in workgroups.

Conclusion

Employers, workers, and customers win big when immigrants bring their full abilities and motivation to work and are afforded opportunities to maximally contribute to workgroups and organizational performance. Immigrants are an important and increasing

reality in workgroups and firms across the globe, and astute managers will seek to foster their inclusion and enable their added workgroup benefits. In this paper, we provided a roadmap for doing just that. Namely, we utilized the AMO framework to describe how immigrants proffer unique contributions to workgroups and firm performance. Our approach specifically identifies immigrants as a unique source of diversity and competitive advantage in workgroups in an intranational organizational context rather than, for example, a multinational organizational context, in which workgroup members may not be necessarily immigrants (e.g., workgroup members in a multicultural organization working together in a project but mostly residing in their countries of origin).

With the premise of the AMO framework, we outlined four action-oriented managerial practices that workgroups, managers, and organizations can take to unleash the performance potential of immigrants in workgroups. The first strategy seeks to address language proficiency issues by providing immigrants opportunities to enhance their language proficiency and sociolinguistic competence. Relatedly, the second strategy seeks to increase immigrants' cross-cultural competence and adjustment in their new cultural settings. Our third strategy focuses on addressing intergroup bias issues by building an organizational climate of inclusivity and appreciation for cultural differences. This is perhaps the hardest of our four action items since it seeks to counter oftentimes deep-seated beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. As mentioned earlier, anti-immigrant stereotypes and prejudice can be a strong force behind workplace strife. Nonetheless, organization leaders should rise to the occasion and create zero-tolerance working environments that free immigrants and other employees to do their best work. The fourth and final strategy addresses strategic issues by offering a talent management approach that seeks to capitalize on the uniqueness of immigrants' capabilities by strategically integrating them into workgroups. Here the focus is on leveraging immigrants as a source of competitive advantage.

Notably, our approach drills down to consider immigrants' unique characteristics and challenges that frequently become masked by broader single categories like "nationality." In doing so, we further discern underlying factors in the "black box" that exists in diversity management literature between immigrant employees and workgroup functioning. Immigrants arrive at work environments around the world ready and willing to contribute unique and value-adding knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience. Managers and leaders must have the know-how and courage to provide immigrant employees with opportunities to make their maximum contributions to workgroup and organizational performance.

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