INTRODUCTION

Immigrants have become an important source of talent as well as a flashpoint for conflict in many countries. The study is aimed at observing the identity and status changes undergone by immigrants relative to their standing in their origin country and the persistent insecurity they feel as they work and live in their destination country. We then expound on other micro-level research topics and literature that are especially relevant to the experiences and contributions of immigrant employees: creativity and voice, diversity, co-worker and supervisor support and antagonism, and social network structures. These ideas are presented to help generate broader and more active research agendas among management scholars that include such immigrant employee experiences and contributions and to promote partnerships with organizations to test interventions for integrating immigrants more fully into the workplace.

ABSTRACT

Immigrants have become an important source of talent as well as a flashpoint for conflict in many countries. The study is aimed at observing the identity and status changes undergone by immigrants relative to their standing in their origin country and the persistent insecurity they feel as they work and live in their destination country. We then expound on other micro-level research topics and literature that are especially relevant to the experiences and contributions of immigrant employees: creativity and voice, diversity, co-worker and supervisor support and antagonism, and social network structures. These ideas are presented to help generate broader and more active research agendas among management scholars that include such immigrant employee experiences and contributions and to promote partnerships with organizations to test interventions for integrating immigrants more fully into the workplace.

Keywords— Creativity, Cross-cultural, Diversity, Identity, Employee voice, Innovation

1. INTRODUCTION

Immigrants are usually figured out as newcomers who are demographically dissimilar and lower status, in addition to being from another country. Over the last several decades, the world has become a smaller and more permeable place. Not only have goods, services and information flowed more freely between nations but so have people. In 2015, nearly 250 million people migrated from their origin country to take residence in a destination country, a 41% increase since 2000. If all immigrants formed their own country, it would be the fifth-largest nation in the world. Although refugees fleeing threats of persecution or those crossing borders without legal standing get the most media attention, most transnational movement happens for reasons of interest to management scholars: immigrants seek better jobs, improved standards of living and thus, a more secure future for themselves and their families. These work and family goals, however, are becoming more difficult to realize for immigrants, defined as persons who leave their origin country intending to become an enduring resident in a destination country.

1.1 Immigration: A pessimistic view

Immigrants have become a source of political strain and domestic backlash. In some countries that have accepted immigration, there has been a lot of friction, a lot of unhappiness both for the newcomers and the people who already lived there. Population movements and the growing opposition to them create tension for firms who must decide how to manage the increasingly complex environment surrounding immigrant employees.

1.2 Immigration: An optimistic view

Corporate executives have overwhelmingly supported efforts to ease immigration, especially when the supply of native-born, highly skilled workers is scarce and expensive. And immigrants bring unique resources that can add value to their new organizations and communities. For example, Hamdi Ulukaya, founder and CEO of Chobani, and himself an immigrant has targeted hiring immigrant employees. Immigrants everywhere are easily recognized and readily stigmatized outgroup.

2. NEED FOR STUDY ON MIGRATION: A SUPPORTING FACTOR

Social impacts on the destination countries in the increased competition at the labor markets, increasing inflows of migrants impose an integration challenge in all areas of social life. In many of the developing countries, however, policies to manage immigration are lacking while control of the same is failing to curtail the inflow of migrants due to scarce resources, weak administrative capacity, and porous borders. Some of the cross-border migration is often widely accepted, but sometimes immigrants even from neighboring countries are treated as unwanted foreigners. This inability to control migration and to integrate the newcomers has at times led to dramatic actions and great human suffering. The Nigerian Government, for instance, expelled over 2 million immigrants mainly from Ghana in 1983 due to a domestic economic crisis, for which the aliens became scapegoats. More recent examples of forced repatriation can be found both in the United States deported more than 350,000 immigrants and South Africa 300,000 in 2008 alone. These instances highlight the importance of strengthening migration and integration policies in developing countries as they host large numbers of immigrants.
2.1 Need for immigrant study: A void till date
Despite the importance and prevalence of immigration concerns, management scholars have been largely absent from discussions of it, particularly in focusing on immigrant employees. Unique challenges in environments faced by immigrant employees like reduced personal status, persistent insecurity about external threat, the absence of a sense of “home” could be powerful and affecting, if we move to study them. There is a demanding research interest in these potentially vital issues. We start with an overarching question with several vibrant, micro-level research topics.

3. UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL, INTERPERSONAL, AND CULTURAL MECHANISMS THAT GOVERN IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO FIRMS

3.1 Individual Experiences

- Identity
- Status
- Insecurity

Individual immigrant employee experiences of their destination country workplaces: For immigrants, identity changes accompany falling social status and rising insecurity. The simultaneity of these sociological and psychological forces creates a unique and profound set of experiences.

3.1.1 Identity: In a new country, a new community and a new workplace, accepting fundamental shifts that are experienced as cultural identity losses: in customs, clothing, food, housing, everyday language are similar in backgrounds, values, and beliefs is unlikely, if not impossible, colleagues, friends, and even close family. Therefore, immigrant employees much more than their native counterparts likely struggle to reconcile their origin versus destination country identities in terms of “who I am becoming,” “who I was,” and “who I will always be”. To navigate these ongoing changes, immigrants often construct dual cultural identities and a separation mindset. It supports the mental wellbeing of immigrants. Immigrants might provide management scholars with new discoveries about identity changes.

3.1.2 Status: Losses in supportive social connections for immigrants mean that alongside an identity struggle, there is a concomitant drop in status: the admiration, respect, and deference received from others. All social collectives sort themselves into status hierarchies. For many reasons, immigrants are likely to find themselves in the lowest stratum of those hierarchies and thus, experience status deprivation in destination country workplaces. Furthermore, status is inherent in the relative socioeconomic standing of destination and origin countries. Finally, the human capital that immigrants bring the education, job knowledge, and credentials they earned in their origin country may be devalued or even unrecognized in the destination country.

3.1.3 Insecurity: The psychological culmination of identity and status changes for immigrants is likely to be a constant, caustic gnaw of insecurity, perceived uncertainty about the continuation or viability of one’s circumstances—inside and outside work. Job insecurity, in particular, has a broad set of negative outcomes, such as increased withdrawal, declining job attitudes and performance, and poor mental and physical health. Most temporary visa holders, for instance, will be allowed to work only for the employer who holds their sponsor. Many immigrants have greater job dependence, which further heightens employment and residence insecurity (fear of deportation).

3.2 Individual Resource Contributions

- Creativity
- Voice

Individual resources that immigrant employees could contribute: Immigrants have much to offer that is unique, and innovation is one way in which immigrants may be distinctively suited to add value to their organizations. The popular press is replete with stories about immigrant innovators such as Elon Musk, founder of Tesla, and Sergey Brin, co-founder of Google.
Immigrants or their children founded 40% of the 2010 Fortune 500. In the United States, for instance, immigrants compose 13% of the population but are responsible for 25% of all new businesses. Several countries, such as Canada, Singapore, Chile, South Korea, and others, legislate a warmer welcome for immigrants who want to start a business. Below, we consider how immigrant employees can contribute internally to their organization’s vitality by generating and voicing new ideas.

3.2.1 Creativity: Creativity refers to the production of novel and useful ideas by an individual or group of people working together facilitated from a richer variety of knowledge and perspectives from culturally diverse members. Immigrants are bicultural or multicultural, they may be able to contribute to a firm’s innovation and competitiveness by leveraging their origin country knowledge to generate novel insights and solutions to destination country problems. What’s more, being bi- or multilingual, as many immigrants are, is associated with greater divergent thinking, which in turn enhances the generation of creative ideas (Lee & Kim, 2011). Immigrants, whose knowledge is crafted and honed in an origin country and culture, should add to the novelty and usefulness of ideas generated in destination country workplaces.

3.2.2 Voice: Although having creative ideas is the first step in innovation, it is also necessary for immigrants to share or express those ideas so they can be successfully translated into new products or processes. Employee voice, defined as the discretionary expression of change-oriented ideas that aim to help the organization perform better, is an essential element of firms capturing value from immigrant creativity. It might be better viewed as a link which also serves as a strong filter between the generation of creative ideas and their implementation.

3.3 Interpersonal factors
- Stigmatization & Diversity
- Support
- Antagonism

Interpersonal factors that shapes immigrant employee adaptation and contribution: As team-based, interdependent tasks continue to become the widespread norm in modern firms, the most powerful influences on the experiences of immigrant employees will perhaps emanate from their treatment by peers and supervisors. Selection into the organization assumes at least nominal acceptance by higher-ups, but no such acceptance is assumed amongst co-workers or one’s boss. Acceptance is particularly unlikely if immigrant employees cannot “pass” as members of the in-group or of the overriding social and cultural identity shared by organizational peers.
- Accentuation by Resource Competition
- Moral Emotions
- Attenuation by Contact, Climate, and Assimilation

3.4 Social network structures
Unique social structures that embed immigrant employees: The presence of other immigrant employees from the same or similar origin countries embed coworker support, friendship ties among them collectively residing on the network fringe can have many more advantages as well. Further, enclaves of immigrants develop familiarity with community building and with success factors for employment in the destination and creating employment opportunities within the same enclave.

4. INFLUENCE OVER IMMIGRATION
International migration is an ever-growing phenomenon that has important development implications for both countries. For a sending country migration and the resulting remittances lead to increased incomes and poverty reduction, improved health and educational outcomes, and promote economic development. Yet these gains might come at substantial social costs to the migrants and their families. Since many developing countries are also large recipients of international migrants, they face challenges of integration of immigrants, job competition between migrant and native workers, and fiscal costs associated with the provision of social services to the migrants. Some 215 million people or 3 percent of the world’s population are believed to live outside their countries of birth. Although violent conflict, political persecution, and trafficking are important causes for international mobility, more than 9 out of 10 international migrants move for economic reasons. By and large, migration has positive economic impacts on the migrant household, the sending country as well as the receiving country.

5. FOR FURTHER STUDY ON IMMIGRANTS
In what direction should we point our compasses for conducting new studies? The encouraging answer is anywhere. Mechanisms surrounding the experiences and contributions of immigrant employees are universal workplace issue. The unexplored terrain of possibilities for scholarly investigation and substantive intervention that adds a platform for research on immigrants in the workplace and some highlighted richest areas are set out. That research effort, along with other investigative choices, will involve dilemmatic trade-offs of breadth with length and depth.

6. WORKPLACE GUIDANCES FOR IMMIGRANT EMPLOYEES
A final and needed form of investigation is program evaluations of interventions that firms might undertake to help immigrant employees negotiate their work and community environments, reduce insecurity, and facilitate voice. For example, basic literacy courses might be offered or underwritten for immigrants. Companies can also offer skill development to incumbent employees to encourage contact with and receptiveness to ideas of the employees who have migrated from other countries. Training of supervisors and human resource managers is also critical in providing social support and coping skills to immigrant employees, in addition to demonstrating the possibilities of their career development and progress.
7. CONCLUSION
The hope to achieve by offering this research provocation on immigrant employees is to signify the importance of studying the work-life experiences of immigrants with a business focus to understand the differences among various groups and the roadblocks or opportunities they may be facing: individually, interpersonally, and culturally. Additionally, potential constructs and mechanisms that might govern immigrant experiences in the workplace are identified. Finally, new ways to investigate and intervene on behalf of these individuals so they would be valued for the unique contributions they have to offer.

8. REFERENCES