Workers' Experiences of Workplace Bullying in Faith-Based Organizations: Developing a Policy Framework for Christian Faith-Based Organizations in South-Eastern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Workplace bullying as a growing social phenomenon has been intensively studied from various perspectives in the past three decades. What is known about bullying from these studies is that it is a complex phenomenon, constantly encountered wherever there are people with social inequity and power imbalance. While much of what we know in literature on workplace bullying comes from the experiences of workers in non-religious organizations, little is known about the practice, nature, prevalence, and impact of bullying in Faith -based Organizations (FBOs). Therefore, this study focuses on the bullying experiences of workers in Faith-based Organizations owned by Christian churches in South-eastern Nigeria (SEN). The focus on Nigeria in relation to Faith-based Organizations is predicated on the fact that Nigerians are inherently steeped in religion and tradition. More importantly, SEN is chosen because Christianity is the dominant religion there. Churches have demonstrated the capacity to integrate social and economic values through the establishment of schools and hospitals with employment opportunities. Hence, the aim of this study is to expand the frontiers of knowledge on what constitutes bullying in the experiences of church workers, then, create awareness and develop policy framework on workplace bullying for safe work environment.

This study is a qualitative design with semi-structured interviews and a purposive sample of 30 participants recruited from 11 FBOs based on their lived experiences in relation to workplace bullying. Relying on a Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA) as my philosophical underpinning and applying the six structures in a thematic analysis of the transcript, six significant findings emerge from this study. The first three findings are relevant to the question of what constitutes bullying in the lived experiences of church workers. Workplace bullying is associated

with labour exploitation through poor remuneration (below national minimum wage), work overload and miscarriage of justice. From the perspective of Ubuntu moral theory and Equity theory as my interpretive lenses, poor remuneration, work overload and miscarriage of justice are symbols of slavery and social inequity. They are commonly regarded as bullying because of the power imbalance and repetitive nature of these experiences on those who are vulnerable. Also, they are part of moral infractions against the agency of Ubuntu in African communities.

Three other significant findings are in relation to the impact of bullying on the work/ quality of services and how to reduce bullying in the workplace. One of the expected impacts of bullying as revealed in previous literature is that it leads to low productivity and quality of services. However, in this study some participants stated that their bullying experiences did not affect the quality of service they provided to their organizations. This was attributed to their spiritual values of prayer and personal love for their jobs as coping strategies. Thus, they suggested prayer, development of appropriate policies against bullying, and leadership competence as possible ways to reduce workplace bullying in FBOs. This study therefore concludes with a bullying policy framed with Ubuntu moral theory as a means of making FBOs in SEN safe for workers.

ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Full Name: Godspower Ahamefula Chiabuotu

Signature: Date: 27th July, 2022.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this PhD thesis to my wife, Chidimma Beloved Aham-Chiabuotu who has been my source of inspiration for academic excellence; and the seeds of hope we lost to death during this thesis-- (late) Joseph Chimemejoghim Aham-Chiabuotu, and Samuel Chiabuotu. Joseph's conception brought life and joy in my home, not only because we had waited for thirteen years; but that it was the very month of his conception that I got the scholarship from AUT for my PhD study. He died after four months of gestation in the womb. Samuel, on the other hand could not survive the illness that attacked him in Nigeria. Their painful deaths and that of my mother-in-law (Dorothy Uloma Uko) and sister in-law (Gloria Nwamara Njoku) during the course of this thesis, reminds me of the kind of pain and losses my beloved mother (Joy Nkechinyere Chiabuotu) went through while engaged in further studies to improve her academic qualification. Unfortunately, my mother died before the end of her study. That I survived to the end of this PhD without developing mental illness or COVID-19, when all around me in the home were COVID-19 positive is a miracle. Therefore, I am grateful to God and will forever cherish the memories of these departed souls.

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PUBLICATIONS

At the beginning of my research proposal and after the data collection, two papers were published from this thesis.

Referred Conference paper

1. Chiabuotu, G.A. (2019). Integrating faith or fear? Workplace bullying as a

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Online Symposium

1. Chiabuotu, G. (2022) Experiences of Workplace Bullying in Church Workplaces: The case of South-Eastern Nigeria. *Rangahau Aranga: AUT Graduate Review, 1*(1), 1. Retrieved from https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/rangahau-aranga/article/view/78/56[accessed June 18 2022].

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUTEC	Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee
ATR	African Traditional Religions
CA	Conversation Analysis
CFBOs	Church Faith -based Organizations
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DA	Discourse Analysis
FBOs	Faith-based Organizations
HPA	Hermeneutic Phenomenology Approach
HPDC	High Power Distance Culture
IFBOs	Islamic Faith-based Organizations
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LPDC	Low Power Distance Culture
RNC	Royal Niger Company
SEN	South-Eastern Nigeria
SMC	Supreme Military Council
TA	Thematic Analysis
WBI	Workplace Bullying Institute
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality." — **Desmond Tutu-** (Oxford essential quotations, 6th ed.**)**

1.1 General overview

The notion of bullying connotes negative and repulsive experiences, which directly or indirectly affect people's health and wellbeing irrespective of age, race, status, or religion (Byrne, Dooley, Fitzgerald & Dolphin, 2015; Ciucci & Baroncelli, 2014; Donoghue et al., 2015; Sittichai & Smith, 2015). Some of the effects of bullying include a wide range of physical, social, and psychological problems such as hypertension, damaged self-esteem, low productivity, and lower job satisfaction, which are detrimental to the victims and their organizations (Chesler, 2014; Fahie & Devine, 2014; Finchilescu et al., 2019; Hollis, 2015a; Hsu et al., 2019; Kwak et al., 2020; Skinner et al., 2018).

Literature reveals that bullying can occur at all levels of educational institutions (Genta et al., 1996; Hollis, 2015b; Kowalski & Limber, 2013; Rosen et al., 2017b), in public and private workplaces (Aljawazneh & Ziad, 2017; Lewis, 2006; Parzefall & Salin, 2010), the home environment, which includes households and neighbourhood environments (Mann et al., 2015; Oyediran & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2005; Wolke & Skew, 2012), as well as in virtual platforms and media such as Face book, Twitter, etc (Dianne et al., 2016; Margono et al., 2014).

The perverse nature of bullying has led to policy developments in private institutions and organizations (Hodgins, Lewis, et al., 2020; Thomann, 2012; Wang & Seifert, 2020) as well as government institutions (Goryl et al., 2013; Hutchinson & Eveline, 2010; Mooij, 2005; Puhl et al., 2016) as a means to tackle it; yet it is has not

brought significant reduction in bullying experiences either in schools or workplaces. Lockhart and Bhanugopan (2020) argued that employees consider bullying policies as mere tokenism because they are not implemented. In the study conducted by Harrington et al. (2012), they explained that policies on bullying are not usually implemented when managers are involved. One of the reasons given for not implementing policies when it affects managers is that some complaints against managers are complex. This suggests that there are complexities surrounding the concept of bullying, which may be a barrier preventing implementation of policies.

Some of these complexities affecting policy implementation on bullying include poor conceptual understanding of the phenomenon, which are not captured in the policies. Additionally, lack of accountability, a profit-focused mindset, inadequate social support, and a lack of awareness of programs on bullying in the workplace (Blando et al., 2015; Fox & Stallworth, 2009) can affect policy implementation. In some situations, changes in the law of a society or language of the policy may affect its interpretation, thus suggesting that policies need to be reviewed to accommodate emerging realities (Ferris et al., 2018; Rayner & Lewis, 2020). Therefore, research undertaken for developing a policy framework for effective intervention must be comprehensive, theoretically robust, and methodologically rigorous. That is the focus of this study.

1.2. Rationale for this study

Apart from the health challenges posed by workplace bullying (Kivimäki et al., 2003; Nielsen, Hetland, Matthiesen, & Einarsen, 2012), studies have shown that exposure to workplace bullying has the potential to engender suicidal intentions in the victims of bullying (Miller et al., 2020; Nielsen et al., 2016). This is my first motivation; to seek to understand the nature of this phenomenon. There have been multiple cases of

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suicidal thoughts people expressed while narrating their bullying experiences in my career as a chaplain both in education campuses and in hospital environments. Some 15 years ago, I knew a young pastor who was zealous for his faith but constantly complained of bullying experiences in his ministry, especially from leaders he claimed were jealous of his successes. One of his allegations was that his leaders threatened his life. Those he complained to never took his complaints seriously. They claimed it was an evil spirit tormenting him. Finally, he took his own life, leaving his family and son who was my student then. This is indeed one of the devastating experiences of bullying.

A recent study (Vveinhardt et al., 2020) inferred that bullying affects moral decision making especially among men. The idea that bullying affects moral decision making suggests it will impact the moral fabric of the societies led by people who are both victims of bullying at workplaces and sometimes in their family lives. When victims of bullying become leaders, they too may continue the cycle of bullying thereby reinforcing it in their homes, families, and communities. It is no wonder societies around the world continue to witness wars and unwise decisions because some of their leaders were victims of bullying. For instance, Saddam Hussein and Adolf Hitler were said to be victims of bullying in their early lives and they continued the cycle of bullying as leaders in their respective societies (Arnold, 2008; Diver, 2005).

How this happens in Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) is my second motivation for this study. As a growing teenager and passionate admirer of Christian leaders, I was fascinated with the teaching of our most respected ministers who reflected the values espoused by the Hebrew prophet Micah in the 8th century BC: "He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (New International Version Bible[1], 2011, Micah 6:8). The emphasis was on fairness, and it stood out for me as one of the

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[1] The New International version of the Bible is used in this thesis because of its gender inclusiveness in the texts chosen.

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major moral strengths of Christian behaviour that Christian leaders possessed. But when I saw pastors deal mercilessly and unfairly with their colleagues in ministry and at their workplaces, I began to wonder if this moral teaching was for a different class of people. The implication is that bullying should be seen as a social problem with an epidemic proportion that needs to be tackled (Craig & Pepler, 2007; Lee, 2000). If bullying is seen as an antisocial behaviour and a public health issue (Feder, 2007) in secular society, then people of faith and FBOs should work doubly hard to eradicate it in their midst. Therefore, my aim is to seek a deeper understanding on what is bullying from the perspectives of church workers, and the impact of workplace bullying on their services.

1.3. Significance of this study

While there is substantial literature (Beirne & Hunter, 2013; Einarsen, 1999; Escartín, 2016) on the causes and nature of bullying from the school yard to work offices, there is a significant gap in critical examination of the situation of workplace bullying in FBOs. Focusing on the developing nations like Nigeria, Akintayo (2014), Fayankinnu (2010), and Obembe et al. (2018), affirm that the phenomenon of bullying in the workplaces is a prevalent social problem which has not been deeply studied. Also, little is known about the prevalence of workplace bullying in Nigerian FBOs. This PhD research contributes to closing this gap beginning with Church Faith-based Organizations (CFBOs) in South Eastern Nigeria (SEN).

A Faith-based Organization (FBO) is a religious organization that has identifiable beliefs, structures, and mission-oriented services. It is usually sponsored by a faith community, supervised by religious leaders directly or indirectly, depending on the kind of services it renders to the public and its community. Furthermore, FBOs in Nigeria are significant employers through a wide range of sectors, including educational and health institutions, as well as other businesses that engage different cadres of professionals and skilled workers. Their roles, especially in the socio-economic

development of the nation have made them important partners with governments at both state and national levels (Onah et al., 2018). Faith-based Organizations, especially the church, are unique because their core values and mission are derived from the Judaeo-Christian scriptures, which espouse justice, human rights, and human dignity. It is the purpose of this study to explore the experiences and understanding of workers in CFBOs organizations in relation to workplace bullying and help to develop an evidence-based policy framework that contributes to creating safe workplaces for Faith-based employees.

Given that many Nigerians are inherently steeped in religion and tradition in their everyday lives, with a strong emphasis on respect for authority, it is difficult for workers, especially in church-based organizations to challenge authorities who may use religion as a weapon to humiliate, abuse and bully them. This study attempts to create awareness of the issues of workplace bullying in Faith-based Organizations, as part of the process of conscientization within the CFBOs.

1.4 Study location and focus

The Igbos are indigenous people of South Eastern Nigeria, the location of the research for this thesis. A general overview on the history of Igbos in Nigeria, their acceptance of Christianity during the colonial era and the assistance of CFBOs through schools and hospitals are covered in Chapter 5 as part of the literature review. The choice of CFBOs in SEN is predicated on the fact that Christianity is the dominant religion in that region and has demonstrated the capacity to integrate social and economic values in society (Isiani, Okonkwo, Obi-Ani, & Adu-Gyamfi, 2021). Although there are still traces of Islamic religious faith groups and their affiliate Islamic Faith-based Organizations (IFBOs) (Uchendu, 2020) as well as the indigenous religious groups classified as African Traditional Religions (ATR) in SEN, their influence is not comparable with Christianity. However, some of the social values of ATR still have

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strong influence on the indigenous people of Igbo tribe (Obiwulu et al., 2020), which is why Ubuntu moral theory and its link to Igbo socio-cultural maxims of justice and fairness are relevant in understanding the concept of bullying in these communities.

1.5 Research question

What are the church workers' lived experiences and understanding of workplace bullying in South-east Nigeria?

<u>Sub questions</u>:

a) What does the concept of bullying mean to church workers, both paid and voluntary workers?

b) In what specific ways does bullying experience impact on the job performance and quality of services of a church worker in a church-based organization?

c) What do church workers consider as the most effective approaches to reduce workplace bullying in church-based organizations?

Research questions are indicators of what researchers conceive as the problem of their studies, and what they intend to find out from their prospective research participants (Agee, 2009). At the outset of this study, my interest was to focus on the impact of bullying, having heard people complaining of the phenomenon. But the casual claim that the experience of the young pastor who hung himself was mere demonic possession rather than bullying sparked a curiosity in me to seek a deeper understanding of the concept of bullying. Also, in the literature search, I discovered it is a complex phenomenon without a universally accepted definition. More importantly, scholars like Nwaneri, Onoka and Onoka (2016), as well as Akintayo (2014) from a Nigerian context, argue that bullying in Nigeria is poorly conceptualized. Therefore, I thought the overarching question should focus on the conceptual understanding of bullying within the CFBOs, based on their lived experiences. This would then be followed by looking at the impact and policies to address the situation.

1.6. Theoretical framework

As a Christian theologian, my approach in this study is not to focus on the concept of bullying from the Greek and Hebrew languages and the passages in the Christian scriptures where such themes occur. Nor do I seek a theological understanding of bullying from the participants of this study, even though I am sensitive to those ideas because the organizations involved are CFBOs. This study explores the understanding of workplace bullying and the experiences of workers of these organizations as it occurred to them within their social and work context.

In my PhD proposal defence, I presented a theoretical framework for interpreting the data from my field work based on the literature review. But the data from the field necessitated a new theoretical framework to aid in interpreting the findings. Therefore, as outlined in Chapter 3, in this study I use Ubuntu moral theory and Adam Stacey's Equity theory as my theoretical framework. Ubuntu moral theory is an Afrocentric concept with philosophical ideas on the day-to-day social lives in African communities. The maxim 'I am because we are' is a social ethic which focuses on interdependency, belongingness, solidarity, and compassion toward one another as the essence of community (Banda, 2020; Berghs, 2017; Ewuoso & Hall, 2019; Metz, 2007b; Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005) . It suggests that being human is having the moral consciousness to identify self in shared collective values rooted in kindness, solidarity, respect, and harmonious relationships with others (Metz & Gaie, 2010; Mnyaka & Motlhabi, 2005). In western ideology, selfhood and identity are not necessarily defined in relation to others. This is one of the criticisms against Ubuntu because it is said to focus on the community, thus denying individual freedom and self-worth in decision making. In other words, it is collectivist in nature. Other criticisms of Ubuntu are that it is vague and suitable only for a small traditional society. I have detailed discussions of

these criticisms in Chapter 3 and explained why Ubuntu is the most appropriate theoretical framework for this study despite these criticisms.

The epistemology of Ubuntu holds that knowledge is generated by community as a deliberative process through relationships (Etieyibo, 2017; Tavernaro-Haidarian, 2018). It is then transmitted from one generation to the other through oral means for the sustenance of cultural beliefs, social order and spiritual wholeness (Wane, 2005). The intersubjective nature of knowledge production in Ubuntu does not necessarily mean that individuals have no place in sharing their views. What it means is that meaningful information for developmental strides and cultural growth of the society is socially constructed as knowledge for the benefit of all, not just the individual. Because the philosophy of knowledge in Ubuntu is subjective, it is congruent with an interpretive paradigm, which is the paradigm of choice for this study. A brief introduction is given in section 1.7 to this interpretive paradigm and Hermeneutic Phenomenology as the philosophical approach of this study.

Equity theory, on the other hand, is commonly associated with fairness in the distribution of resources and justice at the workplace in relation to people's input and expectations. It has been used in understanding workplace bullying, especially in the context of organizational justice (Öztürk & Aşcıgil, 2017). Its supposition is that people give things in exchange for something beneficial to them. Time, skills, and intellect are part of the input of workers at their workplaces in exchange for salaries, fringe benefits and promotions as outcome (Bolino & Turnley, 2008; Miner, 2005; Pritchard, 1969). A call to embrace Equity theory in organizational practices (Pyke, 2018) makes it a suitable combination with Ubuntu moral theory in the interpretation of findings of this study.

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1.7 Research methodology

A synopsis of the chosen paradigm and the philosophical approach for this study is given below, while a full discussion of methodology, which includes the procedures of data collection and analysis, is in Chapter 4. The paradigm of choice for this study, as previously mentioned, is interpretivism through the Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA). An interpretive paradigm focuses on knowledge generation through multiple perspectives of research participants on a given phenomenon. Interpretive researchers acknowledge their biases such as moral and ethical values in research undertaken, instead of denying them (Davies & Fisher, 2018). They rely on people's experiences and meaning attached to such experiences to draw insight for developing policies and decisions on a given social problem.

One of the philosophical methods used in interpretivism is the Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach which holds that lived experiences of individuals are critical in understanding and interpreting a phenomenon (Laverty, 2003; Van Manen, 2016). Workplace bullying is an example of a social phenomenon that can be studied using HPA from the interpretive paradigm. This is because it is a complex phenomenon with multiple and diverse definitions based on socio-cultural nuances. Attempting to understand it just from a single perspective may affect the overarching aim of policy development and implementation. Therefore, effort was made to gather the lived experiences of 30 church workers from 11 FBOs in the five states of SEN.

1.8 Thesis structure

Chapters 2,5, and 6 of this thesis are the literature review sections. Chapter 2 focuses on the concept of workplace bullying from the psychological, neuroscientific, and sociocultural perspectives. I draw my conceptual understanding from the sociocultural perspective which sees bullying as a learnt behaviour, reinforced through power imbalance within social structures. The operational definition of bullying, impact

and forms of bullying, gendered nature of bullying and overview of workplace bullying in Nigeria are discussed.

Chapter 5 focuses on a historical overview of FBOs in Nigeria. Of particular interest is CFBOs, their basic principles, and their impact on Nigerian society, particularly SEN. This chapter also considers the acceptability of CFBOs in SEN and the various reasons they were accepted. This is followed by an overview of workplace bullying in FBOs and the situation in Nigeria.

In chapter 6, I discuss the Nigerian labour system, legislative frameworks in pre-colonial Nigeria and labour practices, and the legislative framework and labour policies inherited from British colonial authorities. After this, the historical timelines that shaped and governed public policies on labour and employment in post-colonial Nigeria are outlined. Finally, I look at the concept of public policy and its process in Nigeria.

Chapter 3 is where the details of the theoretical framework of this study are discussed. It begins with the prominent theories explaining the concept of bullying in previous studies and why Ubuntu and Equity theories are chosen for the interpretation of data from this study.

Chapter 4 provides the details of the research methodology. It begins with the chosen paradigm and the philosophical approach for this study. It continues with the procedures followed in data collection, ethical approval, my positionality, and a discussion of the demographic information of the participants. This chapter also covers the experiences encountered during the data collection, and the procedures followed in data analysis.

Chapters 7-10 are the result chapters, while chapter 11 is the discussion of the findings. Chapter 12 is the policy framework, research contributions, recommendations, and conclusion.

CHAPTER 2:

THE CONCEPT AND CONTEXT OF BULLYING

2.1. Introduction

This chapter begins with the concept of bullying from three academic discipline perspectives: the psychological, neuroscientific, and sociological perspectives respectively. I start with the work of Olweus, who is recognized as the father of bullying studies (American Psychological Association, 2004). Although the context of his early study on the phenomenon of bullying was in the school setting, his work serves two purposes in this thesis. It is the earliest empirical study on bullying, as well as the first within the field of psychology. Therefore, I introduce his work from the historical and psychological perspectives, then go on to critically examine the concept of bullying to differentiate it from similar concepts used in literature. I also provide the operational definition of bullying used in this study. The following discussion will focus on the neuroscientific and sociological perspectives of bullying. Thereafter, I discuss forms of bullying, the impact of bullying, the gendered nature of bullying, and provide a general overview of workplace bullying in Nigeria.

2.2 The first empirical study on bullying from the psychological perspective

Olweus, the first in the English-speaking world to delve into the study of bullying, approached his study on bullying from a psychological perspective. Although it was grounded in school setting scenarios (Olweus, 1978, 2011), it was a starting point towards uncovering the social phenomenon called bullying. Therefore, to understand the phenomenon of bullying from a psychological perspective, Olweus systematically studied behavioural patterns of students in 42 schools, in order to arrive at a better understanding of the concept of bullying. For instance, in his 1970s epoch-making studies on the bullying phenomenon among students in Norwegian schools, he

considered concepts like aggression and mobbing as various patterns of behaviour in the school setting. However, he did not leave anyone in doubt as to what he considered as bullying. According to him, "a person is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons" (Olweus, 1994a, p. 98).

The above definition was later modified to include bullying as "a special form of aggressive behaviour that violates the rights of another person" (Olweus, 2011, p. 151). In other words, bullying is not an accidental occurrence; it is a well calculated and goal-directed act of harm, which may also be a subtly concealed form of aggression against a targeted individual who may be perceived as weak. He argues that it is a misconception for people of equal strength or position to assume they are bullied when they can defend themselves (Olweus, 2013a), and thus concludes that for bullying to have occurred, it must be intentional, repeated and directed against perceived weak or vulnerable person(s). However, it is important to add that the victim(s) may not always necessarily see themselves as weak as bullies perceive them. Certain reasons may make those who are physically able and socially connected not to fight back. Some of those reasons could be religious and moral convictions. For example, one of the cardinal Christian doctrines says "But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also" (New International Version Bible, 2011, Matthew 5:39). Therefore, in this view, not fighting back is not necessarily weakness in some bullying situations.

Prior to Olweus' study, there is evidence that such phenomena had featured in studies of fictional works (Fox, 1968; Sonnichsen, 1969). However, the concept of bullying in the workplace is the main focus of this study. I will now introduce the concept of workplace bullying, differentiate bullying from other terms used in literature,

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present other perspectives and then outline the operational definition of bullying used in this study.

2.3 Workplace bullying

The term "workplace bullying" was popularized in the early 1990s by a British journalist, Andrea Adams. Her popular radio programs featured various spectrums of the phenomenon of "bullying" in the workplace, which brought more insight to the negative impact it has on the workforce in Britain (Adams & Crawford, 1992; Beasley & Rayner, 1997). Prior to her radio programs and publication on workplace bullying, Heinz Leymann had begun an expansive study on the phenomenon of workplace bullying, though he described it as "mobbing" (Leymann, 1990). Olweus insightfully distinguished mobbing from bullying in his conceptual framework (see Olweus, 2013b). Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI), one of the leading organizations on matters of bullying in the US, defined workplace bullying as "a repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more persons (the targets) by one or more perpetrators" (WBI, 2014, para.1) . It is an unreasonable behaviour that is capable of harming a worker in the course of his/her work. In 2003, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted a code of practice to ensure that the workplace environment is conducive for every worker, irrespective of gender, race, or religion (ILO, 2003). Therefore, the ILO and World Health Organization (WHO) conceptualized the phenomenon of bullying in the workplace thus:

> [It] covers a spectrum of unacceptable behaviours. It includes incidents where staff are abused, threatened, discriminated against or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, including commuting to and from work, and which represent a threat to their safety, health, and well- being (Boyle & Wallis, 2016, p. 2).

The above definitions from two high ranking global institutions did not consider power imbalance as a factor in their definition of workplace bullying. While WBI identified repetitiveness as a factor in workplace bullying, the ILO and WHO focused on the incidence of abuse, threat, and discrimination, ignoring power imbalance and repetition of such acts. However, for the purpose of this study, I will define workplace bullying as any systematic attempt by an employer or a fellow worker to humiliate, threaten, and inflict pain or suffering on a 'vulnerable worker' (see Rogers, Anderson & Clark, 2009) or subordinate that worker repeatedly over a period in his/her work, which may result in social stress and health problems. This includes, for example, continuous: (1) spying into a worker's privacy for the purpose of causing him/her to lose reputation, when it is not part of the job agreement; (2) intentionally frustrating a worker's morale in his/her job, either by not providing adequate tools for the job as required or by additional workload outside of work agreement; (3) denial of promotion, allowances and other opportunities when qualified, and the resources are available. It is not bullying when a worker is corrected for contravening the operational policies of the organization. Also, it is not bullying when a worker fails to do his/her work as expected and he/she is reprimanded, provided in such cases there is fairness and respect of individual rights.

2.4 Differentiating bullying from other terms used in literature

Olweus indicated that bullying is different from aggression. While aggression is a negative behaviour that is intended to harm another person (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2011), it is not yet bullying until it is repeatedly carried out over time. He argues that the term "mobbing" was increasingly used in Scandinavian nations to represent bullying. Based on the evidence of (Olweus, 1978, 2011) in some schools within the Scandinavian nations, he posits that mobbing connotes a group of people who are incited to harm an individual, especially in the school/classroom situation. Although there may be a ringleader who incites others, yet his/her roles or contributions in the act

may be hidden. Bullying, on the other hand, creates opportunity for one-on-one individual involvement in the act to be known. Hence, mobbing incidentally does not really delineate the phenomenon he studied in his early research. This idea brought a relatively coherent meaning and understanding to a hotly debated problem ravaging Scandinavian society at the time of his studies.

Whereas Olweus' definition is insightful and receives wide acceptance among scholars (De Angelis et al., 2016; Mazzone et al., 2016; Rosen et al., 2017a), Guerin and Hennessy (2002) argued that repetition, intention and lack of provocation, are not major considerations in understanding bullying. They argued that bullying can occur when a person upsets another, even without an intention to harm. Therefore, hurtful behaviour occurring once or twice is enough to be described as bullying, in as much as the threat has been registered in the mind of the victim. Similar studies from other scholars (Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012; Monks & Smith, 2006; Naylor, Cowie, Cossin, Bettencourt, & Lemme, 2006) affirm that repetition and intention are not considered in the understanding of bullying among young people. So far, the argument raised centres on repetition, intention, and lack of provocation. However, I agree with Smith (2014) that apology for an action that is capable of causing harm to another person erases the idea of negative intention. Nevertheless, it is still bullying, when it is repeated over a period of time, especially where the person cannot defend himself/herself.

Having distinguished mobbing and aggression from bullying, related concepts such as violence and terrorism (Bowie, 2005), incivility (Eka et al., 2016), and harassment (Gadit & Mugford, 2008) have also been used to facilitate understanding on the phenomenon of bullying. However, Brion-Meisels and Garnett (2016); Cascardi et al. (2014) have argued for a modified definition to capture different contexts and settings, rather than multiple terms for the same subject. Drawing from a review by

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Chirilă and Constantin (2013) of those related concepts, it seems that scholars used familiar terms within their social context to discuss the phenomenon of bullying. For instance, bullying is a popular term within Northern Europe and other English-speaking nations, mobbing is popular within the Scandinavian nations, while North America uses broader concepts like violence, terrorism, abuse, etc. It is these other concepts used in literatures as cognate terms that add to the complexities on the phenomenon of bullying. Therefore, there is need to distinguish and exclude them from bullying.

Violence primarily denotes physical force that may lead to destruction, confusion, and disorder. It is a broad term that may include bullying, mobbing and all kinds of physical as well as psychological assault (Berlingieri, 2015; Chappell, Martino, & ILO, 2006). Terrorism on the other hand is usually considered "a team sport" (Saathoff, 2017, p. 2). While that seems to be an incongruous metaphor for terrorism, the idea is that terrorism is usually planned and funded by a group, though an individual may execute it. The primary aim and focus of terrorists is not their immediate targets who receive attacks, but it is to take control of a community and create fear through sporadic attacks (Bruce, 2013). Bullying, on the other hand is not funded and is usually focused on the vulnerable as the ultimate target who may not defend himself/herself.

Incivility is considered a deviant behaviour within interpersonal relationships that does not extend to bullying because it has little or no intention of causing harm to the other person(s) (Lim & Cortina, 2005; Lim et al., 2008). For instance, silly jokes or ill-concealed amusement directed at a colleague that may cause others to laugh is not necessarily bullying, because there is no clear intention to harm. It can escalate to bullying if it is continuous, especially when the target cannot handle it.

The last term to exclude is harassment. It represents a kind of behaviour in which a person is intimidated or humiliated, based on distinguishing features or

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differences, yet it could be persistent. These differences may be in religion, race, gender, sexuality, or even status. A single exposure to any intimidation or humiliation based on gender, sexuality and other unique differences is harassment (Caponecchia & Wyatt, 2009). However, harassment can lead to bullying when it is repeated often with an intention to harm or cause pain.

With the above clarifications of the cognate terms used for bullying, and carefully establishing what is considered bullying from the psychological perspective, other conceptual understandings of bullying from neuroscience and sociocultural perspectives will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.5 Neuroscientific perspective on bullying

Rossouw (2013) argued that scholars have defined bullying without considering a neuroscientific perspective and such a disconnect invariably shows in the intervention programs provided. He claims that bullying behaviour can genetically develop as the conditions in the neurobiological development of the human brain change during the antenatal period. Then with time, this behaviour can be activated in a toxic environment. In other words, those who had the imprint of such behavioural trait in their genes are likely to manifest negative aggression, if they live in a hostile environment. Rossouw's supposition was classically demonstrated in a study on infant rats exposed to stressful conditions and maltreatment, which resulted in a lasting methylation mark in their DNA up to the next generation (Roth et al., 2009). Further studies (Buss et al., 2017; Cecil et al., 2016; Milagro et al., 2013; Provenzi et al., 2018; Tammen et al., 2013) corroborated these findings of Rossouw (2013) and Roth et.al (2009), respectively.

2.6 Sociological perspective on bullying

From the sociological perspective, bullying is a social pathological problem that exists in human society through interactions—be it in the school playground, family,

workplace, or in communities. Social scientists see bullying from the micro and macro levels, and situate it as a consequence of socio-structural power imbalances, which are usually sustained or reinforced in big and small social groups (Hong et al., 2018; Poláková, 2018). This power imbalance, which is typically individualistic in Olweus' definition of bullying, is rather systemic in the sociology of bullying. Each society or community has values and norms that are accepted as binding on all who live and work in such a place. As people interact, they imbibe and learn the norms along with the social structures, which invest authority and power in certain groups of people. This power is either a result of the position they occupy or is inherited by age and wealth. For instance, a recent study on workplace bullying argues that "Nigeria is deeply steeped in the traditional culture of 'respect for elders and authority', followed by the dominant male role in the society" (Adewumi & Danesi, 2020). This is common in a society with a cultural orientation where elders are not only tolerated, but revered. Sometimes, some of these elders take advantage of the respect accorded to them to inflict pain on the younger people at the expense of truth and justice.

2.7 The perspective of this study

Complex as the concept of bullying may be, the above is an overview of the phenomenon from interdisciplinary perspectives. From the ensuing discussions, bullying has been conceptualized as either inherited, adopted or learnt behaviour. The three perspectives also provide insight on how bullying can be an inherent danger to the health, economic and social wellbeing of people in society if left unchecked. However, while all these perspectives are meaningful, the sociological perspective is well situated for this thesis. It identifies the multiplying effect of bullying as an antisocial behaviour apparently reinforced through power imbalance within social structures. These social structures could be the family, the school, the church, or workplaces.

Having drawn together some of the perspectives in bullying studies, I will approach this study from a sociological perspective and a socio-cultural theory based on the premise that bullying is culturally and socially constructed (Salin et al., 2019). While I recognize the individual one-on-one bullying incidences within an organization, I argue that the social structure of a society and organizations can facilitate and reinforce bullying through their policies and how they implement them. The second reason for approaching this study from the sociological perspective is because bullying is dependent on context (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2013). This context may be a specific setting, e.g., religious organization; a specific culture, e.g., African culture; or a specific profession, e.g., the military. For instance, one of the key questions of this thesis is: what does the concept of bullying mean to church workers, both paid and voluntary workers? The responses and perspectives of church workers may differ from the perspectives of workers in non-religious organizations based on the uniqueness of their environment, values, and experiences. Therefore, in the light of these discussions, I believe a sociocultural perspective is most relevant to my thesis. The ultimate goal is to develop a policy framework for church-based organizations in South-Eastern Nigeria.

2.8 Gendered nature of workplace bullying

Cultural orientations determine the expected role of each gender, and the occupations people choose in a given society (Shinnar et al., 2012). In patriarchal societies men are expected to take up leadership roles in the home and the workplace, while women are subordinates relegated to domestic care and services at home (Adisa et al., 2019; Bui et al., 2018; James-Hawkins et al., 2017; Sultana, 2012). This unequal social arrangement, which leaves women at lower status, even when they are qualified to handle certain roles as leaders, creates disaffection in workplaces (Adisa et al., 2021). When it comes to bullying experiences, studies have shown that workplace bullying is a gendered phenomenon (Salin & Hoel, 2013; Simpson & Cohen, 2004). Women are the

more likely targets and, in most cases, they report these experiences but nothing is done because those who would take action are men (Simpson & Cohen, 2004). This is because it is predicated that those men may perceive bullying differently from women. Female leaders as well as female groups are more likely to act than male counterparts because of their perception and understanding of bullying (Salin, 2009; Sinclair, 2021). Therefore, differences in understanding what constitutes bullying among male and female genders affect the way it is handled.

Contrary to the view that females are the likely targets of workplace bullying, a broader perspective adopted by Salin (2021) shows that interpretations of workplace bullying studies on a gender basis should consider certain characteristics and cultural differences. For instance, in certain jobs or occupations where there are more female workers than male, it is normal for bullying cases and reports to come from more female than male workers. Therefore, studies carried out in occupations or cultures that represent a particular gender in the workplace should not be used to generalize prevalence of gendered bullying. In response to the report that females are the more likely targets than males, Alsawalqa (2021) argued that male counterparts tend to perceive reporting of bullying experiences as a sign of defeat for them, especially when it is coming from more female colleagues or managers. Therefore, they would rather endure their experiences than open up to others. Commenting further on this, Berdahl (2007) concludes that it is men who do not demonstrate masculine features that are bullied because they are seen as being like women. What that suggests is that targets of bullying are those who are perceived as vulnerable and weak, not necessarily the biological gender. Also, as previously mentioned, perception of weakness may not necessarily suppose inability to fight back but may be a choice based on moral convictions.

2.9 Overview of workplace bullying in Nigeria

A number of empirical studies through diverse methodologies and methods in Nigeria, revealed that workplace bullying is prevalent (Akintayo, 2014; Fayankinnu, 2010; Nwaneri et al., 2016; Olajide et al., 2015; Owoyemi, 2010). Although scholars from Nigeria used various concepts to study the phenomenon of bullying, some of which I have distinguished in the earlier sections of this chapter, it seems that the concept of bullying is mostly familiar within secondary school settings. Owoyemi (2010) appears to be claiming that his work titled "From School Yard to Work Yard Workplace Bullying: An Undiagnosed Social Problem in Workplaces in Nigeria", was published to create awareness of a subject that has not been researched in Nigeria. In other words, not much was known about it in workplaces at the time of his publication in Nigeria. Nevertheless, I must acknowledge that considerable work has been done since this assertion except in FBOs. This is why I am approaching this study from the context of FBOs in the hope to uncover personal lived experiences of church workers on the phenomenon of bullying. Usually, a social problem would require diverse expertise from different sociological points of view to uncover the root cause.

2.10 Major themes in workplace bullying in Nigeria

2.10.1 Conceptual factor

One common theme identified in literature on the subject of workplace bullying in Nigeria is the attention paid to conceptual factors. Owoyemi (2010) focused more on a literature review that explored the conceptual meaning of workplace bullying, linking the concept from the school experiences to an advanced stage—involving adults at workplaces. He highlighted various definitions presented by key scholars on workplace bullying. Also, he emphasized that there are broad issues of concern with constructs like harassment (sexual), incivility and, aggression (direct and indirect) as forms of

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workplace bullying. However, scholars convincingly concur that workplace bullying includes any negative behaviour, which results in an "unpleasant working environment, labour turn over, absenteeism, reduced job performance and in some extreme cases led to loss of life of the victims" (Owoyemi, 2010, p.4). Owoyemi (2010) further argued that categorizing bullying in the workplace is difficult and dependent on what is identified as bullying. This assertion resonates with Nwaneri, and Onoka (2016), as well as Akintayo (2014) whose studies revealed that workplace bullying is poorly conceptualized among certain sectors of the Nigerian populace in both the private and public work sectors.

2.10.2 Cultural factor

Studies by Fayankinnu (2010), and Gbenga-Akinbiola (2018), show that patriarchal organizational culture is a common problem within the Nigerian work sector. Akintayo (2014) observes that one of the reasons workplace bullying is prevalent in Nigeria is because people do not challenge authorities. Rather than confront the authorities on systemic corruption and cultures that encourage bullying, people would rather devise coping mechanisms. Some would resort to prayers, while others for fear of retribution and loss of employment, endure the stress and psychological trauma workplace bullying brings.

Discussing further the cultural factors in the Nigerian workplace, Fayankinnu (2010), whose study focused on workplace violence in Nigerian prisons, captured another interesting aspect of the cultural factors in workplace bullying. This I will refer to as occupational culture. He argued that female workers in prison services feel their interests are not adequately protected because they are few in high-ranking positions. This power imbalance is even evident in panels where cases of disciplinary actions are

required. Hence, they experience bullying in their work. This is especially significant in male dominated occupations, like the military and para-military occupations.

It is also important to acknowledge that prisons in Nigeria have paramilitary structures with chains of command. Occupations which have this culture of command and control are more likely to have experiences of bullying. This is not just because it is male dominated as argued in the Fayankinnu (2010), but the structure is inherently power based with codes of conduct and discipline. For instance, Archer (1999) affirms that intimidation through discipline is common in paramilitary organizations. At the point of recruitment and induction, potential workers are expected to obey the last order from the top because it is one of the processes of socialization acceptable in military structure. In fact, those who belong to paramilitary organizations accept High-Power Distance Culture (HPDC) in their power relationships.

The concept of HPDC was used by Geert Hofstede to identify societies in relation to power distribution—be it physical, intellectual, or financial power. Societies where unequal distribution of power is perpetuated as a norm are classified as High-Power Distance Cultures (Hofstede, 1983). As with all HPDC, Nigeria is categorized among societies where upward social mobility is very limited and resources are meant for few individuals in authority (Anakwe, 2002; Elele & Fields, 2010). In such circumstance, it is expected that bullying might prevail because it is a game of survival of the fittest. For instance, education is one of the tools for upward social mobility in Nigeria. Even in politics, some level of education is required for one to occupy elective positions. Some of the political elites who are in authority frustrate educational projects by siphoning monies meant for mass education so that the poor will be kept ignorant (Chris, 2010; Esidene & Nuhu, 2012). Ignorance and poverty increase the likelihood of lower socio-economic status. As a result, such people tend to accept every odd

condition at the workplace because they are struggling to survive, or they bully others to get to the top. Some people seem to rise above their situation, by threatening, humiliating, and inflicting pain on others.

2.10.3 Policy factor

Lack of policies on workplace bullying was mentioned earlier as a contributing factor for the prevalence of the phenomenon in the service sectors and workplaces in Nigeria (Fayankinnu, 2010; Nwaneri et al., 2016; Olajide et al., 2015; Owoyemi, 2010). In Akintayo (2014) some of the participants in the study argued that accepting lack of policy as a reason for workplace bullying is a mere excuse, as Nigeria is known for poor implementation of policies.

Therefore, taking all the points in this review, regardless of policy matters, which have been identified as a major focus in this thesis, the conceptual meaning of workplace bullying is not clear in the context of Nigerian workplace. This is because the idea of bullying as a phenomenon is seen only in the secondary school sector for some workers. They combine violence and sexual harassment as bullying. Therefore, developing policies without a coherent understanding of what is bullying within the context of the community may be difficult to implement. This is a gap this thesis seeks to fill.

2.11 Forms and impacts of workplace bullying

Workplace bullying may also occur through electronic media or technologies, generally termed "cyber bullying". Dianne et al. (2016, p. 2) defined cyber bullying as "inappropriate, unwanted social exchange behaviours initiated by a perpetrator via online or wireless communication technology and devices". Presently cyber bullying is gaining attention in the workplace as an alternative to face-to-face workplace bullying (Privitera & Campbell, 2009). Bullying can be overt or in physical form (Espelage &

Swearer, 2003; O'Moore, 1990; Olweus, 1994b, 1996; Salmon et al., 1998; Wang et al., 2009). It is important to mention that bullying may occur in varying settings including the sports arena, household, and prisons among many others.

Another form of bullying according to scholars (Sharp, 1995; Teicher et al., 2006) is psychological bullying. Some scholars (Dal Pai et al., 2018; MihĂIlescu & Tomescu, 2017; Mortensen & Baarts, 2018) argued that in some workplaces, it is usually easier for bullying to take place in psychological than the physical form. This is because some bullies who perpetrated physical bullying in the schoolyard, eventually change their tactics as they grow older and move on to the workplaces (Sweeney, 2007). This idea was further affirmed in the study conducted by Rigby (2016) when he said that physical bullying reduces as children get older. Avery, Tonidandel, Volpone, and Raghuram (2010); Trépanier et al. (2021) added that work overload in the form of unnecessary disruptions, and unrealistic deadlines are forms of bullying that invariably affect the health and emotions of workers. Other authors have revealed that poor remuneration is also a form of workplace bullying that affects the psychological well-being of workers (Ariza-Montes, Muniz, Leal-Rodríguez, & Leal-Millán, 2014; Lloyd, 2020).

Apart from the individual health challenges caused by bullying, there is a general consensus that bullying costs employers of labour heavily when evaluated (Fattori et al., 2015; Indvik & Johnson, 2012; Lippel, 2010; Mundbjerg Eriksen et al., 2016). These costs range from litigation to loss of productivity. Indvik and Johnson (2012) report that the United States economy loses about $43.3 billion yearly as a result of workplace bullying, so that organizations have started considering stringent measures to screen out possible bullies. Anti-bullying laws have been passed in some states in America. Also, a group called "Dignity of Work Partnership" reveals that bullying cost

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UK £13.75 billion a year (Giga et al., 2008). Victims leave their jobs, as well as those who witness high incidence of bullying in the workplaces. In Australia, about $AUD eight billion is the estimated loss annually as a result of work-related problems like bullying and job strains (McTernan et al., 2013). Studies (Bailey et al., 2015; Yang et al., 2016) revealed that one major reason for a continuous loss of productivity in these organizations is because of the poor psychological safety climate of the work environment. In other words, a hostile workplace is an economic risk for any business. While there are commonalities on the impact of workplace bullying and forms of bullying in these areas (Monks et al., 2009), this study seeks to uncover the situation in CFBOs in SEN.

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CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

The subject of workplace bullying has been reviewed from various perspectives in the previous chapter with relevant insights on the Nigerian situation and with a focus on the gaps in knowledge. The focus of this chapter is to discuss theories that frame the analysis and interpretation of my findings in chapters 7-10. The first section draws attention to approaches and theoretical frameworks used in the past studies on workplace bullying. In the second section, I discuss Ubuntu as a moral theory in African society, its features, criticisms, and relevance in interpreting the experiences of the participants of this study. Adam's Equity theory is another relevant theory which sheds light on the concept of workplace bullying from the perspective of fairness and social justice in the experiences and stories of the participants of this study.

3.2 Approaches and theoretical framework in past studies

The complexity of bullying in a wide variety of occupations has caused scholars to use various approaches in the study of the phenomenon. One such approach is to use theoretical frameworks and constructs (Quine, 1999), considered relevant in understanding the phenomenon. From the outset of studies in the emerging field of workplace bullying, a clear theoretical framework was rarely considered (Branch et al., 2013), as the focus was mainly on causal descriptive analysis of the phenomenon (Olweus, 2013). Leyman, one of the first researchers into the concept of bullying in the workplace, used mobbing deliberately to emphasize the contextual realities in his research environment. His work considered psychological conditions like stress evolving from the workplace, rather than psychological behaviour (for example, bullying) that leads to the conditions of stress (Leyman,1996). Nevertheless, as studies

and time progressed, the focus was on the behavioural profile of bullies and the experiences of the victims (Saunders, Huynh & Goodman-Delahunty, 2007), especially in non-religious organizations.

The study of workplace bullying is generally considered a part of organizational research (Hodson, Roscigno, & Lopez, 2006; Salin, 2003; Spagnoli & Balducci, 2017). Hence, some organizational theories like Catastrophe theory (Escartin, Ceja, Navarro, & Zapf, 2013), Learning theory (Altman, 2010; Lewis, 2006), and Attribution theory (Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Gadit & Mugford, 2008; Nielsen, 2012) are applied to explain the phenomenon of bullying and how it can be prevented. However, from the sociological perspective of African society wherein this study is located, cultural knowledge is useful in evaluating and understanding a social phenomenon like bullying. Hence, imposing dominant theories on qualitative studies without considering perspectives of the study participants is what I try to avoid. I consider Ubuntu moral theory relevant for this study because of the data from the field. In this chapter, I explore the theoretical perspective of Ubuntu with the work of Lutz (2009) Lutz and Desta (2013), Metz (2007a, 2007b, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2018) and Mugumbate and Chereni (2019). Then I consider Equity theory, with the work of Miner (2005), and, Kilbourne and O'Leary-Kelly (1994) respectively, as linked to the original author Adam (1963, 1965).

3.3 Ubuntu as a theory

Ubuntu is generally considered in literature as "African humanism, a philosophy, an ethic, or a worldview" (Gade, 2011, p. 303). Humanism in particular focuses on the meaningful values placed on human beings above everything. The central tenet of Ubuntu philosophy is 'I am because we are', which means individual human beings are part of a greater whole (Banda, 2020; Ewuoso & Hall, 2019; Letseka, 2013). In the

community, a person finds greater fulfilment because he/she belongs and shares in the decision-making process. Ubuntu hold that human beings are interdependent in life; therefore, they have a moral duty to show compassion, forgiveness, respect, love, solidarity, generosity, and seek reconciliation (Ewuoso & Hall, 2019; Gade, 2012). These features, which are normative claims of Ubuntu philosophy, are sometimes regarded as vague and ambiguous by critics of Ubuntu (Louw, 1998; Sullivan & Tifft, 2007).

One may wonder how Ubuntu, a secular theory, will be used to interpret data from FBOs, particularly Christian FBOs, on workplace bullying from a moral perspective. I contend that the features outlined above, which are indeed African moral values are not mutually exclusive to Christian tradition moral values. For instance, the Christian faith teaches "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself" (New International Version Bible, 2011, Luke 10:27). This principle requires that love should be central in human relationships, whether in business activities, family life or communal life. Within the Christian tradition, God is love epitomized. A brief exegetical exploration of this term 'love', which is 'agape' from the original language of the text--Greek, connotes the act of benevolence or affection. When applied to communal relationship it is a "social or moral sense" of responsibility (Strong,1890, p.7). God's love (agape) extents to all humanity without limitation to secure their well being. A demonstration of this love was manifested in Christ Jesus' ministry as a foundational principle in Christian faith. Hence, love (agape) to one's neighbour is a social character or sense of moral responsibility CFBOs must demonstrate towards their workers. It will significantly promote harmony and secure their wellbeing without limit. The motive is to do good to all without greed; treating the worker fairly for their own wellbeing and benefit.

Ubuntu also conceptualizes love as what binds community together. In the context of Igbo culture and language, which has subtleties of meaning in their worldview, 'love' in literal translation is " ifunanya"--meaning "what you can see". In other words, love is visibly demonstrated through actions and behaviours of people towards others. Another subtlety of meaning to the concept of love in Igbo language is 'nmesoma' literally translated as kindness or compassion. The ability to demonstrate kindness in this sense is the direct opposite of bullying, which is described as "iji ike emegbu mmadu" in Igbo language(Igbo.English-Dictionary.Help, n.d), loosely translated in English as "forceful maltreatment or injustice against a person".

Another divine command, as noted earlier, is "He has told you, O mortal what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (New International Version Bible, 2011, Micah 6:8). In the original language of this text--Hebrew, (mishpat) 'justice' (hesed) 'mercy' and (sanea) 'humility' (Strong, 2012) as used in Micah 6:8 builds on the earlier ideas expressed on love. Firstly, it will be impossible to demonstrate love (agape) without a clear measure of justice (mishpat). Hence, Micah used the term (mishpat) justice to indicate an act of pronouncing sentence for or against anybody without biases.This is a requirement in the governance of CFBOs. Secondly, mercy (hesed), as used in this passage connotes showing favour towards all mortals without discrimination. This is an attribute of God bequeathed on the Church to demonstrate in their communities as part of their culture and philosophical principle. Thirdly, humility (sanea) as used in this context indicate an attitude of consistent submissiveness and modesty as against arrogance or haughtiness in social relationships and spiritual life.

These values are also cardinal in Ubuntu moral philosophy. For instance, the traditional values of solidarity, compassion, respect, and dignity (Molose, Goldman, &

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Thomas, 2018) are general core moral principles in Africa. Therefore, those values inherited from African culture that are not in conflict with Christian faith organizations are useful combinations that should inform the discussion on workplace bullying. Gade (2011) noted that Ubuntu has been known as a traditional way of life in Africa, prior to its emergence in literature as a theory or philosophical method of research. Nevertheless, there are some criticisms about Ubuntu that need to be highlighted.

3.3.1 Criticisms of Ubuntu philosophy

Ubuntu has been criticised and described as a declining concept unsuitable for philosophical argument on the bases of "vagueness, collectivism and anachronism" (Metz, 2011, p. 534). Responding to these criticisms, first on collectivism, Lutz (2009) demonstrated that the concept of collectivism in African philosophical thought is different from Marxist collectivism where a person cannot experience good unless such a person's good is subordinated to the group. Rather, the idea in Ubuntu is for individuals to recognize the need to promote the good of others while seeking their own. For instance, to be human in an African concept of identity and personhood, is to value relationship and contribute towards the good of the community. Nobody exists alone. Rather, people identify themselves as part of the larger community. These principles of solidarity, compassion, respect, and dignity are some of the moral codes in communal and family relationships in Africa. A subject like workplace bullying, which falls under human relationships, needs to be studied from the perspective of the cultural values of the participants of study and the values of their organizations. This will aid the development of a policy framework that can be implemented in the workplace to enhance safety and productivity.

Secondly, the criticism of anachronism is that Ubuntu is not suitable for a sophisticated industrial society of this era. There are numerous instances of evidence in

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the literature that the concept of Ubuntu as an indigenous practice is useful in management (Kamoche, Chizema, Mellahi, & Newenham-Kahindi, 2012; Mangaliso, Mangaliso, Knipes, Jean-Denis, & Ndanga, 2018; West, 2014); healthcare industries (Komparic, 2015; Munung, De Vries, & Pratt, 2021; Pratt, 2021), educational fields (Akpey-Mensah Tabita & Muchie, 2020; Masitera, 2020; Ogunniyi, 2020); and social research and works (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019; Schreiber & Tomm-Bonde, 2015; Seehawer, 2018). Just like Lutz (2009) argued, people who consider Ubuntu as an anachronistic concept are those who think that local knowledge and culture is insignificant in management, yet their individualistic theories have not brought success in communal cultures as expected (see Huang & Kleiner, 2005; Pan Fan & Zhang Zigang, 2004; Scott et al., 2003).

The third criticism of the vagueness of Ubuntu focuses on semantics. This is perhaps, because of the multiple interpretations given by scholars. One of the reasons, I presume, for the multiple interpretations of Ubuntu is because it is described as an ethnophilosophy. Over the years some people see Ubuntu as a myth of oral traditions that is neither real nor practical. Thus, the ideas of Ubuntu as knowledge and historical practices were passed down to generations by word of mouth. However, Lutz (2009) noted that in moral philosophy and other schools of thoughts, there is no consensus on interpretations and perspectives. So, the fact that many interpretations are given to Ubuntu is not a sign of weakness, he concluded.

I would liken that conclusion to the many diverse interpretations given to bullying, too. The fact that there are many perspectives on the experience of bullying does not make it non-existent, yet there are features that must be present for bullying to occur. Similarly, there are expectations on the major features of Ubuntu moral theory to help interpret actions that are right or wrong in the cultural parlance.

To strengthen his argument, Lutz (2009) referred to Metz (2007a, 2007b), who logically responded to the criticisms of Ubuntu through various philosophical interpretations. Metz attempted to present six principles that captured African moral theories in literature and posited that the sixth principle stands out – "a*n action is right just insofar as it promotes shared identity among people grounded on good-will [and truth]; an action is wrong to the extent that it fails to do so and tends to encourage the opposites of division and ill-will*" (Metz, 2007b, p. 338). Although Metz's views were contested by some African scholars, especially (Oyowe, 2013) in respect to values and human rights, I still find some meaningful contributions in Metz (2007a, 2007b) on the moral principles in African society. Therefore, the sixth principle will serve as a benchmark for interpreting morality from the perspective of African context, and particularly Igbo culture, on workplace bullying as a moral issue in this study. Some of the Igbo cultural principles that are specifically linked to Ubuntu are: respect, valuing of human dignity (*mmadu ka aku*), hospitality, solidarity, brotherhood/fellowship (*Onye ahala nwanneya/igwebuike*), justice and fairness (see Akpan et al., 2019; Ilogu, 1974; Kanu, 2019b; Umeogu, 2012).

Another potential tension one may raise is the superimposition of Ubuntu on a different culture as if it is transcultural. As explained earlier, in the Igbo culture of Nigeria, the Ubuntu concept is linked to the socio-cultural maxim of justice and fairness: *"Egbe bere Ugo Ebere nke si ibe ya ebena nku akwapu ya [meaning] let the kite perch, let the Eagle perch, whichever says the other should not perch, let its wing break off"* (Ilogu, 1974, p.131). The underlying assumption of this maxim is that Kite and Eagle, belong in the same category as birds of prey, though they have different hunting styles. Each of them should tolerate each other to live and enjoy the benefits available in nature. This indigenous proverb on relationships within communal settings stimulates deep explanatory understanding of what participants of this study perceived as workplace

bullying. Therefore, in this study Ubuntu hold hands with the socio-cultural maxim of Igbo culture as appropriate moral theory for the analysis and interpretation of my data on the concept of workplace bullying. The most valuable aspect of Ubuntu in this study is justice and fairness.

3.4 Equity theory

Equity theory is proposed as another theoretical framework for the analysis and interpretation of data in this study, because it is suitable in any social situation where there is exchange (Adams,1963). The fundamental proposition of Equity theory is that people strive for equity in the workplace when they perceive there is evidence of inequity (Miner, 2005). This is otherwise referred as the equity norm. The second component of this theory is social comparison. For instance, when workers compare their input (skills, time, education) and the output (pay, fringe benefits, positions, conditions of work) in reference to others and perceive they are not fairly placed or paid, then they are demotivated and determined to seek equity. For inequity to be determined, there must be exchange of something with the hope of getting something back. Work or services for instance, are rendered in exchange for a decent wage, or good working conditions. Also, there must be a reference source of comparison to establish there is a degree of equity or of inequity. The third component of this theory is how inequity is resolved. In organizations where injustice is perceived, whether real or imaginary, it is capable of instigating tension (Oberman et al., 2021), emotional stress and even workplace bullying. But when that happens, what effects will that perception have? The norm is there should be fairness. In Fig 4 below, this idea is illustrated as the flow of inequity in the workplace.

The theory predicts that employees are angered when they observe inequity (under reward) in their workplaces, and those who are over rewarded have a sense of

guilt or satisfaction, depending on their moral values. Some studies (Bolino & Turnley, 2008; Carrell & Dittrich, 1978) posit that over rewarded situations create controversy. One of the criticisms of Equity theory is that it is difficult to determine how an individual would react to inequity. This is because the pattern of allocation of resources

Fig 1 *A flow of feelings of* inequity[2] *at workplace*
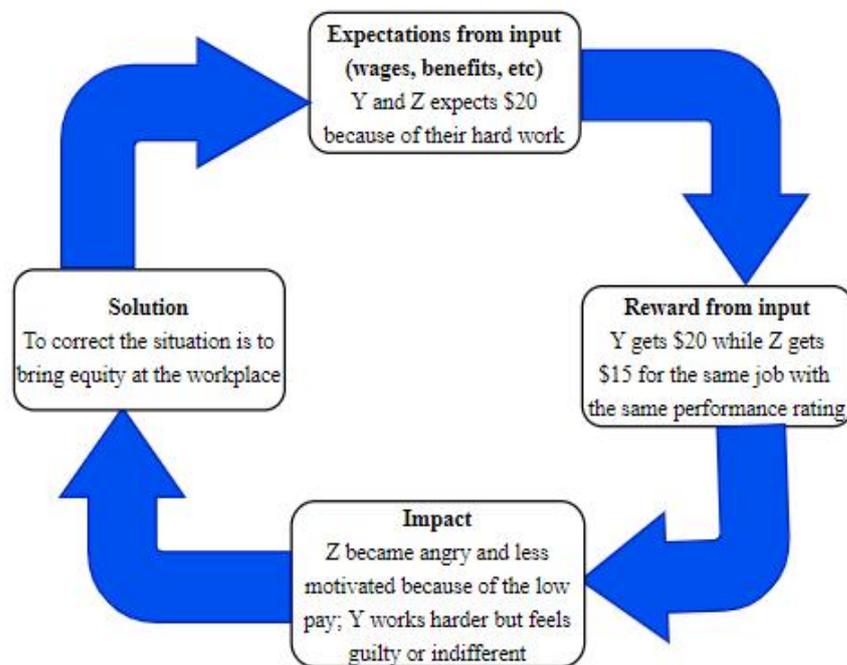
varies in organizations and cultures. Sometimes, social group affinity or hierarchy, rather than equality, individual needs and personal contributions are used to determine allocations in some cultures. At other times, the focus is on distributive justice, whereas the procedural aspect and interactional justice is neglected (Bolino & Turnley, 2008). Indeed, this has caused a lot of problem in organizations where there is no transparency in decision making. When this happens, people tend to redress inequity by altering their labour performance (input), to match the level or ratio of inequity they perceived had

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[2] This flow of inequity in remuneration of work can lead to all kinds of challenges in the workplaces, including bullying. It may not only be on remuneration. Different treatment given to a worker doing the same job either in remuneration or other fringe benefits can spark a feeling of inequity. The impact could be disastrous, affecting other areas of work and relationships.

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happened (Miner, 2005). It is this aspect of employees' perceived unfairness based on social comparison without proper understanding of the standards followed in decisions that makes it difficult for organizations (employers) to deal with inequity in the workplaces.

3.5 The concept of justice as fairness: similarities of Equity theory and Ubuntu

Just like Equity theory, the norm in Ubuntu is fairness. Ubuntu holds to the principle of fairness in dealing with each other because a person is a person through others. Injustice to one is injustice to all. For example, Miner (2005) raised a question on the responses of people to the injustices of others and themselves. To answer this, he referred to a study on social construction of injustice, where Lind, Kray, and Thompson (1998) demonstrated that experiences of others are taken into consideration to form opinions on justice, even though personal experiences are weighted higher. In other words, Equity theory supposes that collective experiences of unfairness are accommodated in the minds of others when reports of injustices of others are shared among workers. This collective connection to an incidence of injustice to another, simply represents the claim of Ubuntu regarding communal solidarity, that it is through our relationship (empathy) with others that we can become real human beings.

Ubuntu's epistemological position is congruent with Hermeneutical Phenomenology, which is the qualitative methodology of choice for this study. Ubuntu is also relevant because of the indigenous worldview participants of this study bring. However, it may not be sufficient to address all the research questions and streams of ideas arising from the data. Drawing from the ideas of Mayer and Sparrowe (2013), integrating theories, especially those with common purpose, helps researchers address a phenomenon of interest from different perspectives to elicit new insight. Therefore, I

integrate Equity theory as a relevant theoretical framework to complement Ubuntu moral theory in this study.

Finally, the benefit of understanding and interpreting social issues in an African environment, especially workplace bullying experiences, through the lenses of moral principles embedded in both Ubuntu and Christian faith, is to give attention to cultural values and the heritage of the participants of this study. Indeed, cultural values that are for the welfare of all can coexist with Christian principles. In addition, the case studies are Christian organizations. Hence, the Christian moral principles embedded in Ubuntu African humanism combine to give greater insight into the participants understanding of the concept of bullying. Also, how their experiences impact their work, families, and organizations are explained to develop a policy framework for FBOs in SEN.

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CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH OF THIS STUDY

4.1 Introduction

Generally, adopting a research methodology and method is dependent on the subject of inquiry or phenomenon, as well as questions the study proposes to answer (Curry et al., 2009; Walker, 1997). Also, what has been discovered from previous studies should be relevant in deciding the alternate approach to take in new studies. All the research on workplace bullying in Nigeria that I have reviewed suggests that the concept is poorly conceptualized (Ayodeji, 2010; Fayankinnu, 2010; Nwaneri et al., 2016; Olajide et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important to develop a critical understanding of the concept to inform future research. From my review of literature and different methodologies, I have chosen the interpretivist paradigm through Hermeneutic Phenomenology as the appropriate approach for this study. The aim is to address the gaps by engaging a cross section of participants to examine the concept through qualitative research. Before I discuss Hermeneutics Phenomenology as my methodological approach, I will give a brief background on interpretivism as the paradigm that frames or ties together this study.

4.2 Constructionist-interpretivist paradigm

The construction of reality in social inquiry is within the purview of constructionism. Constructionism is a philosophical concept embedded in the interpretive paradigm, which posits that reality is constructed, rather than being discovered by human beings. As human minds engage with an already existing world, they create meaning from what they observe. It is based on social interactions and understanding mediated through culture and language (Aliyu et al., 2014; Crotty, 1998). Interpretivism and constructionism, though both embedded within the interpretive

paradigm, are slightly different. Aliyu et al. (2014) argue that the difference between the two is on an ontological level. In their view, constructionists see reality as human construction in all areas of life, while interpretivist researchers restrict their views on the construction of reality only to social phenomena. The implication is that studies applying constructionist-interpretivist worldviews will adopt an ontological stance that espouses multiple realities (Avramidis & Smith, 1999). This belief in multiple realities and truths in the social realm, is a baseline for the interpretive paradigm (Crotty, 1998; Grant & Giddings, 2002), which is grounded in Hermeneutic Phenomenology (Kafle, 2011). Hermeneutic Phenomenology as a methodology is appropriate in exploring multiple/diverse lived experiences of people of the bullying phenomenon in order to uncover the meaning which they make of those experiences.

4.2.1 Phenomenology

In order to discuss Hermeneutic Phenomenology, it is important to start with the basic understanding of phenomenology. Prior to the development of the phenomenological approach to research in the 20th century, so much emphasis was on objectivity of reality in the realm of science and philosophy through quantitative measurement (Kuhn, 1981). Inquiries and investigations on social phenomena were conducted within the objective realities of a scientific and philosophical framework, thus disregarding qualitative inquiries, irrespective of the fact that some of the phenomena of study can be investigated from the subjective realities of human perceptions. Husserl, the founder of phenomenology (Byrne, 2001;Converse, 2012; Ehrich, 2005; Jasper, 1994), demonstrated that human experiences in the social world can be investigated through a phenomenological approach (Beyer, 2010). His argument was that while science attempts to predict, control, measure and study the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world, the reality of nature and the physical structure of the

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world are perceived and known to human beings first in their consciousness (Moran, 2005). Therefore, investigation or study about phenomena in the social world from the perceptions and lived experience of human consciousness, is the focus of phenomenology.

Phenomenology is both a theoretical-philosophical position as well as a methodological approach (Greenfield & Jensen, 2010; Kafle, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2016). Two main methodological approaches in phenomenological studies are Transcendental and Hermeneutic Phenomenology (Creswell, 2007). Husserl's approach to the study of phenomena is called transcendental, eidetic or descriptive phenomenology, which posits that knowledge about reality of any experience should be outside of the personal perceptions of the researcher. In essence, the experience of reality can only be accurately presented when the researcher detaches his/her professional and personal prejudice from the data and its interpretations. Thus he (Husserl) introduced the concept of bracketing one's personal ideas in order to have credible data on the subject of research (Dahlberg, 2006; Lopez & Willis, 2004).

4.2.2 Hermeneutic Phenomenology Approach (HPA)

The Hermeneutic Phenomenology Approach was developed by Heidegger, a student of Husserl, the father of phenomenology. Heidegger brought further insight on phenomenology from an ontological stance. What he described as Hermeneutic Phenomenology, (and extended by Gadamer and van Manen as a methodology) is that researchers can bring to light subjective experiences of individuals of a phenomenon through their shared lived stories. This is accomplished without the researchers necessarily concealing or detaching their own existing knowledge and experiences (Kafle, 2013; Laverty, 2003; Smythe et al., 2008). The contrast with Husserl is that the individual researcher's presuppositions and experiences on the phenomenon of study should not be bracketed or put aside (Conklin, 2007). Heidegger's background in

theology perhaps shaped his ideological integration of hermeneutics and phenomenology. This is because hermeneutics is a methodological principle of interpreting a text (Abulad, 2007; Schmidt, 2016), mostly used in religious literature. Heidegger emphasized the ontology of being, which captures existing consciousness as part of the structure in human being.

For this study I have chosen Hermeneutic Phenomenology as my methodological approach because the study seeks to understand the concept of workplace bullying from the lived experiences of participants within the context of FBOs. These experiences form the basis for developing a broad understanding of workplace bullying, which will be derived from a critical analysis of the themes that emerge from the interviews, and data collected from available documents provided by CFBOs relating to how they understand, define and address issues of bullying in their organizations.

4.2.3 Reasons for Hermeneutic Phenomenological Approach (HPA)

Despite the different philosophical perspectives in Transcendental and Hermeneutic Phenomenological approaches, in terms of data collection and analysis, these approaches often use in-depth interviews with a small sample population of people with lived experiences on a phenomenon of study. Creswell (2007, p.79), claims that circumstance may warrant the use of "documents, observations, and art" in generating data for analysis. Based on Creswell's (2007) views, I collected a couple of hand books from my research participants on matters of bullying policies in their organizations. It was useful in synthesising information on the availability of bullying policies in some of the organizations that claimed they have bullying policies. As the researcher embarks on data analysis, the focus is on the emerging meaning of the

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participants' experiences and how it relates to their corporate life, families and communities (Willis et al., 2016).

HPA can be used to explore in detail, sensitive, social issues in which there is limited knowledge, as in the case of workplace bullying in Faith-based Organizations (Crist & Tanner, 2003). For instance, some versions of Christian morality teach people to be submissive to authority and exercise patience in the face of hardship. Internalizing these values may hinder abused and molested workers from taking appropriate actions to prevent, resist or seek redress for bullying. Therefore, HPA seeks to bring out the hidden layers of such experiences that may not be known to policy makers through interviews and rigorous analytical interpretation of data. It is also used when a phenomenon is poorly conceptualized (Conklin, 2007). Furthermore, it is suitable for researching vulnerable and marginalized groups because it creates opportunities for affected individuals to give voice to their experiences.

A basic weakness of all qualitative research is that it is contextual, and there is a limit to where findings can be generalized. I have chosen HPA because it allows for additional theories (in this case, Ubuntu, and Equity) to be incorporated into the study and provides an opportunity for a wider understanding of the phenomenon. This study seeks to develop a policy framework that will enable churches across SEN to address the issue of bullying. Even though the number of case studies is limited, the experiences expressed by the participants provide a basis for developing a policy framework using HPA because of its unique nature in studying human experiences.

4.4 My positionality

Interpretive researchers acknowledge that no research is value-free. This understanding gives opportunity for openness; the researcher states her/his preconceived notions and experiences (positionality) in their research (Creswell, 2007). Some issues

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in positionality are naturally assigned at birth or fixed. For instance, a person's biological sex, ethnicity and nationality are fixed. Personal experiences, religious and socio-political views are subjective and can change rapidly given certain conditions (Chiseri-Strater, 1996). The idea of being naturally fixed does not negate the fact that people of certain ethnicity can think differently and act freely from the prescriptions of their cultural norms. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, I present my positionality in three important areas. The first aspect focuses on my preconceived ideas on bullying based on interactions at work and in the family. The second is my religious background and values. The final segment is on the participants and my views about them before going into the field trip for data collection. My reflexive perspectives are brought to bear in my analysis and reviewed in Chapter 12.

4.4.1 Work, education, and the subject of bullying

My understanding of bullying is that it is a complex phenomenon. As a complex phenomenon, it can be triggered within a community through language and culture. Thus, people with bullying experiences present multifaceted stories. In Chapter 1, I gave a brief introduction on the rationale for this study and highlighted some of the motivations I considered important. In this section more insight is presented.

As previously stated, I have worked as a chaplain, pastor and teacher in church institutions and private organizations owned by Christians, both in southeast and southwestern states of Nigeria. I completed my first and second degrees in Theology, with emphasis on pastoral/practical theology, and completed a postgraduate diploma in education. In the course of my work, I received continuous reports on bullying from students in the high school where I taught Christian religious studies and pioneered youth ministry studies. Often, they complained that senior students would send them on errands and their personal provisions (milk, milo, biscuits, which are part of the things students bring from home as food) were stolen or forcefully taken from them. I did not

go through boarding school as a teenager. So, I did not experience such maltreatment. However, I served in committees that investigated some of those cases. Also, I witnessed what appeared to me like bullying among teachers who were not in the good books of their leaders in the school.

I listened to the complaints of staff members as one of the chaplains, because they needed a sympathetic listener who would affirm their experiences, frustrations and give them hope. This indeed required wisdom as an insider who knew much of the politics in leadership tussles going on. It was a critical time of uncertainty in the organization. Some leaders were looking for justifications to lay off workers, and, as a chaplain, what was most crucial was to minister hope, both to leaders and workers under threat. Although they were not part of this study, because the location of this study is different from where they work, I wished I had the privilege to recruit them in this study because of the uniqueness of their experiences and stories. Therefore, the confluence of emotions shared by those I had interacted with on bullying experiences, both students, faculty and staff are part of the ideas that have shaped my understanding as an interpretive researcher as I went into field for data collection.

4.4.2 Close relatives and family experience on the subject of bullying

As one who grew up in a single parent family, my mother served as caregiver in a church institution and suffered depression as a result of bullying from senior colleagues. Although she was not diagnosed as having depression, some of the symptoms manifested at home whenever she came back from work included persistent loss of appetite, sadness, and low level of energy. Sometimes, she wanted to resign, but could not because of the burden of paying for bills, and long service entitlement she may lose. More importantly, her Christian beliefs gave her a reason to endure the bullying experiences. I listened to stories shared by her colleagues who visited our home occasionally on their experiences. In fact, those stories made me sad, especially as

the names of those who bullied my mother were mentioned. Hence, I worked casually even as a high school student to ensure my mother's burdens were reduced. Going into this study as a PhD student was an opportunity to be an empathetic listener to co-create knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of workplace bullying with participants who have had lived experiences of this kind (Groenewald, 2004; Maxwell, 2008). I chose CFBOs within the cultural context I was born.

4.4.3 Religious background

I am a seventh-day Adventist, still growing in faith and character, looking to Jesus Christ as my model. I believe in the Adventist philosophy of education, which focuses on the harmonious development of the head, the heart, and the hands (White, 1952). I bring into this study openness to new ideas and knowledge, and with my God-given abilities to think, critique, and interpret ideas, and experiences as I see them. I am not just a mere reflector of other people's thought. Also, I believe that human reasoning and knowledge is historically constituted, which means their understanding of truth is in relation to their historical knowledge of the culture in which they were raised (Canale, 2010). For instance, I expect that participants in my study will reason along their cultural and historical patterns. However, that does not mean they are not capable of thinking outside their cultural values and norms. This is because the influence gained through education can refine human reasoning to a certain degree. More importantly, a surrendered life to Jesus Christ will surely impact human reasoning.

Some of the values I cherish are knowledge, learning, spirituality and standing for those who are unjustly treated. Yet, those who are victims of unjust treatment are not spared from backlash against wrong doings if they are guilty. As the first son in my family, I have known that my responsibility is to provide support for my siblings in their pursuit of success, without taking responsibility for their wrong choices.

The above-mentioned values are brought into my understanding of workplace relationships. Leaders in organizations, especially FBOs, are responsible for the growth and the safety of workers and the work environment. Yet, they are not responsible for bad behaviours or choices of workers if they do not aid them to take such actions directly or indirectly. My intention in this study is to vividly shine a light on the experiences of workers in CFBOs as much as I understand their peculiar stories respectively. It is not intended to be an avenue to vilify leaders who may have been named in the reports on the interview extract. I acknowledge that leaders must be respected and valued because the burden of leadership is great. However, I also acknowledge that indiscretion in leadership leads to misery in an organization and may affect those who serve there. Hence, this study does not shy away from pointing out that leaders need to be reminded of the sacred trust reposed on them.

4.4.4 Views on research participants and field trip

In preparation for my field trip, I believed I had connections with friends, who would link me to research participants who had experienced workplace bullying in their respective workplaces. My views on the research participants concerning the concept of bullying were guided by the body of literature reviewed from Nigerian scholars and past reports from close friends and family. As previously mentioned, the notion in the relevant literature was that bullying is poorly conceptualized among the Nigerian workforce both in private and public sectors. Therefore, rather than following the pattern highlighted in the interview processes of Akintayo (2014), which centred on the familiarity of the participants on the term workplace bullying, I was going to ask them to share experiences they had that they considered bullying in their workplaces. This was to provide an opportunity to interact empathetically with their concrete conceptual understanding based on experiences, not just abstract conceptualization of what is

bullying in the work environment. Their perspectives are the primary concern, which are evaluated with findings in literature.

Having lived in SEN and worked in FBOs, I was not expecting absolute truth in the experiences of participants, nor presupposing those participants are not capable of sharing realities that hurt them in the past. Nevertheless, I assumed there might be some degree of error in recollecting in details their past experiences. Also, with exposures in western education, Christian religion and interactions with other cultures, participants' views are likely to be embedded with multiple perspectives that enrich the data production. Therefore, from these perspectives, I made myself available as an empathetic listener to co-create knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of workplace bullying with participants who were willing, available, and had a lived experience (Groenewald, 2004; Maxwell, 2008).

Concerning my views on the planned trip, I have not lived in all the states in the south-eastern region, although I was born and raised in Aba, Abia State, formerly part of Imo State. My interest in going back to that region was based on the popularity of Christian faith in Igbo land. Secondly, as a pastor and Igbo man, I was easily accepted in most of the CFBOs I visited. Moreover, my network of friends was helpful to me in gaining entrance to some of the church institutions where I recruited research participants. Even though security issues were generally on the increase during the time of my visit, I relied on the hospitality of friends and family to support me to move round. Therefore, I did not struggle much with getting participants.

4.5 Ethical approval

Ethics of research is a very important aspect considered in studies undertaken with Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. Prior to my field trip to Nigeria, I sought ethical approval from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics

Committee (AUTEC). And it was granted after rigorous scrutiny (see appendices).

Some of the issues highlighted as concern were:

1) Maintaining privacy of the participants

2) Clarification on the inclusion and exclusion criteria

3) Avoiding recruitment of participants through organizational leaders because of power imbalance.

These concerns were carefully followed in the recruitment process as reported below.

4.6 Methods: sample/recruitment/data collection

Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting participants, bearing in mind the setting and the subject of inquiry. This is because purposive sampling technique is designed to elicit rich data and enhance knowledge based on lived experiences of people (Devers & Frankel, 2000; Ploeg, 1999). The sample size in qualitative research does not depend on large numbers, but on the scope and purpose of the study (Morse, 2000; Sandelowski, 1995). A relatively recent study on how to determine sample size and saturation for PhD studies, reveals that sample size should be between 15-50 for qualitative study, irrespective of the methodological approach (Mason, 2010). In this study 30 participants were recruited. I used semi-structured interviews. With semi-structured interviews, there is room for clarification, realignment of questions to prompt spontaneous responses as well as probe for deeper experiences that may facilitate the emergence of new ideas and different perspectives on the phenomenon of study.

4.6.1 Recruitment of research participants and organizations

The research participants recruited are paid and volunteer workers in CFBOs that provide social services in education and health within SEN. Usually in FBOs, volunteers and paid professionals are needed to accomplish the goals and mission of the

organization (Chum, Mook, Handy, Schugurensky, & Quarter, 2013). There are three major Christian denominations in SEN: Catholic, Protestant and Pentecostals. Following the features of identifying FBOs in Clarke and Ware (2015), as well as the framework for CFBOs in (Chapter 5), participants of this study were recruited from Catholic, Pentecostal and Protestant Church organizations and their affiliates. In each state of the SEN region, I recruited a maximum of seven church workers from organizations belonging to or affiliated with Catholic, Pentecostal and Protestant denominations. Protestant denominational churches in this study are those with large hospitals or community health centres and schools ranging from primary to tertiary institutions across the five states in SEN. Each of them has a large number of employees, both volunteers and paid workers across the regions. While I did not recruit participants from all CFBOs in all of the five states in SEN, I was able to recruit participants from the three major Christian denominational groups in SEN. The criteria for inclusion were people who had worked for or are working in those organizations, at least for a period of one year and had experienced bullying while working in those organizations. The reason for choosing people who have worked at least a year was to ensure they have some understanding about the way the organization operates. The information gathered from the 30 participants proved they were not just newcomers, hence were useful for this study.

4.6.2 Initial contacts

I visited prospective CFBOs that provide social services in health and education in SEN and introduced my study to potential participants. Prior to my visit, I checked through the government information booklet on health and educational facilities owned by churches within each state in the federal government of Nigeria. Furthermore, I called on friends and relatives who reside in such communities for more information about such organizations to enable me to plan my trip.

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Table 1: *Research interviewees demographic characteristics*

Faith-Based Organizations	Interviewees	Gender	Years of Service	Level of Education	Age Range
(A) Secondary school, (Girls) Abia State	Interviewee 1OA	Male	8.5 yrs.	BSc	30-39
	Interviewee 2OA	Male	1 year	High school	20-29
(B) Secondary School, (co-education), Abia State	Interviewee 1OB	Male	17 yrs.	B. A	40-49
	Interviewee 2OB	Male	15 yrs.	BSc	40-49
	Interviewee 3OB	Male	40 yrs.	High School	60-69
	Interviewee 4OB	Male	22 yrs.	M.Ed.	50-59
	Interviewee 5OB	Male	21 yrs.	M.Ed.	50-59
(C) Hospital, Imo State	Interviewee 1OC	Male	2 yrs.	BSc	30-39
	Interviewee 2OC	Female	2.5yrs.	BSc	20-29
	Interviewee 3OC	Male	5 yrs.	HND	30-39
(D) Primary School, Imo State	Interviewee 1OD	Female	a year	HND	30-39
(E) Hospital, Imo State	Interviewee 1OE (Volunteer)	Male	1 year	High School Diploma	20-29
(F) Secondary School (Co-education), Ebonyi State	Interviewee 1OF	Female	4 yrs.	Certificate in Computer	20-29
	Interviewee 2OF	Female	21 yrs.	MSc	50-59
	Interviewee 3OF	Female	6 yrs.	BSc	40-49
(G) Primary School, Ebonyi State	Interviewee1OG	Female	19yrs	BSc	40-49
	Interviewee2OG	Male	13yrs	BA	40-49
	Interviewee3OG	Female	5 yrs.	B.Ed.	40-49
(H) Secondary School (Co-education) Ebonyi State	Interviewee1OH	Female	10yrs	B.Ed.	50-59
	Interviewee2OH	Male	3 yrs.	BSc	30-39
(I) Junior Seminary (Co-education) Enugu State	Interviewee1OI	Female	8 yrs.	M.Ed.	40-49
	Interviewee2OI	Male	4 yrs.	B.Ed.	30-39
	Interviewee3OI	Male	6 yrs.	BSc	30-39
	Interviewee4OI	Male	6 yrs.	BSc	40-49
(J) Hospital, Anambra State	Interviewee1OJ	Female	2 yrs.	RN Diploma	30-39
	Interviewee2OJ	Female	2 yrs.	RN Diploma	30-39
	Interviewee3OJ	Female	5 yrs.	RN Diploma	30-39
(K) Hospital, Anambra State	Interviewee1OK	Female	1.6yrs	Lab Tech Dip.	20-29
	Interviewee2OK	Male	2 yrs.	Lab Tech Dip.	20-29
	Interviewee3OK	Male	1.3yrs	OND	20-29

Table 1 provides demographic information on the research participants recruited for this study. I began with organizations close to where I resided, Umuahia and Aba, Abia state, my state of origin. In the initial contact at various CFBOs, information sheets (see Appendix A) were given to potential participants with details of the study. I clarified the information contained in the information sheet, although not because it was written in technical language. I did that because in Africa we are inclined to oral rather than written communication. At this point, it was easy to get familiar with the individuals and the community in preparation for the next visit. Interested and willing participants gave their phone contact to me (the student researcher). I contacted them through the mobile phone numbers and scheduled time for interviews. Each interview session took place in a public place, close to their workstations. It was easy to recruit participants in those areas where I had childhood friends.

In communities where I did not have families, friends, or relatives, it was difficult to recruit participants. I lodged in guest houses and motels for a few days with my flier in order to advertise my research topic and recruit participants in CFBOs within the communities. It was difficult to advertise my research topic in areas I had no link or friends, because some of the church schools and hospitals I visited refused to place my advert on their notice boards. Given the nature of the subject of this study and the vulnerability of prospective participants, it was important that I avoided management support in recruiting their workers. Therefore, I developed a short questionnaire (see Appendix E) to enable me to gain entrance. In such areas, it was difficult to advertise or recruit participants openly. This approach worked for me because it is a familiar research approach in Nigeria, particularly SEN (see Bakare et al., 2008; Onwujekwe et al., 2010). I observed that some people were afraid to grant interviews, even after assuring them that their privacy will be ensured. This reticence was either because they did not know me or because of the troubled political situation in the country at that time.

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For instance, Nigeria at that time attempted a social media gag order (Omilana, 2019) and people construed certain opinions or granting interviews to journalist on their experiences was part of hate speech. Hence, freedom of speech was threatened.

However, at the end of those visits, I contacted various people who completed the questionnaire through their mobile phone contacts, and we scheduled interviews at their convenience. A consent form was given to potential participants to sign, as a way of authenticating their willingness to participate in the study. 25 research participants received $13.00NZD (₦3000.00) each for their time, while 5 refused to accept any financial reward. Those who refused financial rewards were mostly management level workers, who considered the time spent as their contribution towards this study. The themes for the interview questions were on work experiences that they considered were bullying. Through active listening and probing questions to facilitate discussions, I asked participants to provide examples of cases in which their bullying experiences occurred.

4.7 Data analysis

All interviews were transcribed and coded in order to develop themes for analysis. This was accomplished using thematic analysis (TA), incorporating the hermeneutic circle as a strategic tool for interpretations. Thematic analysis has been identified as a method for data analysis useful in qualitative research across various theoretical frameworks (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun 2017). The overarching usefulness of TA when compared to other methods like conversation analysis (CA), Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and Discourse Analysis (DA), is that Thematic Analysis (TA) is very innovative and can be adapted to all qualitative research. According to Clarke and Braun (2017), TA's usefulness includes the systematic way of identifying and interpreting basic themes emerging from data collected, while relying on the research questions, irrespective of the sample size, whether heterogeneous or

homogenous groups (e.g., focus groups and individual interviews). TA follows rigorous

steps to maintain quality analysis.

I adopted the six phases in TA outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.87) and

shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: *Thematic analysis*

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself With your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definition and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

At this stage the hermeneutic circle idea is incorporated. This involved using

Ubuntu moral and Equity theories respectively. They are suitable in interpreting the

exact description of the experiences of my research participants, while focusing on the

research questions. Creswell, 1994 (as cited in Tavallaei & Talib, 2010) states: "In

qualitative research, one does not begin with a theory to test or verify. Instead,

consistent with the inductive model of thinking, a theory may emerge during the data

collection and analysis phase or be used relatively late in the research process as a basis

for comparison with other theories" (p.575) to understand and interpret social

phenomenon. While I had identified theoretical frameworks that informed my initial

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inquiry on workplace bullying prior to field trip, those theories did not fit into the analysis and the interpretations of the themes of this study.

Still on the hermeneutic circle activity, participants' experiences and worldviews on the phenomenon are the focus of interpretative researchers (Romani et al., 2011). Hermeneutic circles according to Sparks (1993) involve a process of bringing out the truth about an experience embedded in the text through a dialogical approach. The process as corroborated by Kezar (2000) means that the researcher immerses himself/herself into the transcribed text to allow voices and ideas emerge, which may differ from his/her presumed views on a given phenomenon. Knowing and accepting that there are diverse perspectives on knowledge on any given phenomenon, the researcher interacts with the (data) text as the lived experiences through which new understanding emerges.

My aim here is to understand the meaning participants attach to workplace bullying and the general understanding given to it within the socio-cultural context of the CFBOs in SEN. This is because "[t]ruth in hermeneutic interpretation emerges in a fusion of horizons of interpreter, text, and topic" (Spark, 1993, p.7). Available documents of the various church-based organizations, with their vision statement and policies were critically analysed and added to the data from the participants in order to develop an emerging policy framework for the CFBOs in SEN.

4.8 Emerging themes in Faith-based Organizations

This section is a general introduction to the narratives and findings of this study. The primary concern of chapters 7-10, which constitute the major result chapters of this study, are my findings relating to the main research question and sub-questions (a), (b), and (c) raised in Chapter 1. The main research question is: "What is the church workers' lived experience and understanding of workplace bullying in Southeast Nigeria?" The

sub-question (1a) is essentially part of the first question with the addition of paid and volunteer workers— "What does the concept of bullying mean to church workers, both paid and volunteers?" Critical analysis of the interview data from 30 FBOs workers across 11 FBOs in SEN, revealed three major themes and six sub-themes (See Fig 2 below) that capture the lived experiences, and understanding of church workers on workplace bullying.

Figure 2 *Thematic map[3]*

(C) 1. Under Constant threat.
      2. Victims of
         Conspiracy.

(A) 1. Poor
     Remuneration.
        2. Work Overload.

Labour exploitation (A)

Intimidation (C)

(B)
Procedural unfairness

(B) 1. Lack of fair hearing
    2. Denial of equal
       Opportunities
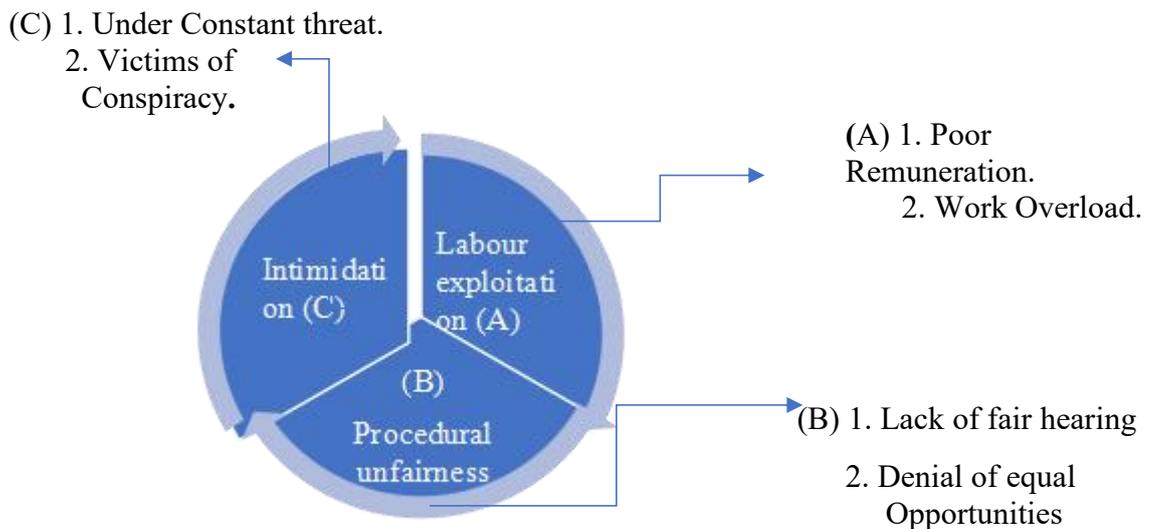
The first major theme is "labour exploitation", and the sub themes are: "poor remuneration" and "work overload". The second major theme is "procedural unfairness", and the sub-themes are: "lack of fair hearing" and "denial of equal opportunities". The third major theme is "intimidation", and the sub-themes are: "under constant threat" and "victims of conspiracy". Chapters 7, 8 and 9 are dedicated to each of the themes and sub-themes on sub-questions (1a).

Table 3 below is a summary of the number of times the sub-themes were mentioned by the participants across all the interview conversations in the organizations.

[3] The tittles inside the circle are the major themes, while others are the sub-themes for each theme inside the circle.

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One may wonder why a table with such quantitative data is presented in a qualitative study. In my data analysis, I considered it important to reflect on the primary concern of my participants on workplace bullying. Such information will help in developing policy framework. For instance, Table 3 indicates that the concern on workplace bullying lay mostly with poor remuneration and lack of fair hearing. Therefore, in developing a policy framework, this information gives a clear idea of specific contexts that need critical evaluation.

Table 3 *Classification of themes and the interviewees experiences of workplace bullying*

Sub-Themes on Research question (1)	Number of times sub-themes were mentioned by participants.
Theme A (1) Poor remuneration	55
Theme A (2) Work overload	38
Theme B (1) Lack of fair hearing	49
Theme B (2) Denial of equal opportunity	43
Theme C (1) Under constant attack	38
Theme C (2) Victims of conspiracy	11

While the themes in Chapters 8 and 9 focus on lived experiences that touch on one-on-one bullying at the workplace, Chapter 7 provides an idea of a coalesced structural exploitation that leads to bullying as reflected in the data extracted from interviews. This structural exploitation is a pyramid that connects the government at the top, some of the employers of labour (church leaders) and general society which reciprocate and reinforce such exploitations that leads to bullying. Highlights of some bullying experiences were presented in the literature review on Nigerian society. Some of those experiences correspond to what my participants shared. They are further reiterated in the discussion chapter.

The sub-question (1b) focuses on the impact of experience on quality of services: "In what specific way does bullying experience impact on the job performance and

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quality of services of church workers in church-based organizations? Sub-question (1c)

seeks to know "what would a church worker consider as the most essential steps in

reducing or solving workplace bullying in church-based organization?" Chapter 10

captures the impact of the bullying experiences on the job performances and the quality

of services of church workers in church-based organizations, as well as strategies and

steps to reduce bullying in workplaces. It is related specifically to the findings in sub-

question (1b) and (1c) respectively.

Table 4 below shows common responses participants made on the impacts of

workplace bullying experiences, which is sub-question (1b) research question. The

responses grouped as (A) on the left column of the table are normally expected from

those experiencing bullying at workplaces—less commitment to work, low productivity,

unhappy and withdrawn attitude at the workplace. The responses grouped (B) on the

right column of the table are not usual in the workplace bullying literature. Therefore,

both responses will form part of the themes in Chapter 10.

Table 4 *Commonly described responses to the impact of workplace bullying experiences with themes on research question 1(b)*

Response (A)	Response (B)
Work anyhow, less commitment and low productivity	Uninhibited passion for service of a lifetime occupation.
Thought of humiliation, withdrawn rather than being joyful exuberant worker.	Step up and intensify in prayer.

The final part of this section deals with the sub-question (1c). Two major themes

emerged with the responses of the participants on sub-question (1c): "what would a

church worker consider as the most essential steps in reducing or solving workplace

bullying in church-based organization?" The main themes are: (1) Developing policies

and channels of complaint on workplace bullying. (2) Leadership competencies.

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Therefore, in Chapters 7-10, I present these varied lived experiences with brief comments to facilitate understanding of the socio-cultural nuances surrounding these experiences—an exchange that is essential in Hermeneutic Phenomenology. Detailed comments on significant matters are discussed in Chapter 11. Furthermore, I draw together the significance of my findings to my research questions and compare previous research findings on workplace bullying in Chapter 11. Ubuntu moral theory and Equity theory are fully integrated as sociological theories that frame my interpretations.

CHAPTER 5

CONCEPTUALIZING FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR ROLES IN SOUTH-EASTERN NIGERIA

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I begin with a general background of what FBOs are, and their basic principles. This is followed by a brief historical overview of CFBOs in SEN through Christian missionaries. The religion on the ground, prior to the entrance of CFBOs in SEN, was African Traditional Religions (ATR). Therefore, I will focus on the influence of ATR on the socio-political and moral development of the communities within SEN prior to the entrance of CFBOs. The focus is to reveal the significant value placed on religion in Nigeria vis-à-vis SEN, which provides both useful backgrounds to understand the culture and people of SEN before colonial incursion. Furthermore, this historical overview will provide an opportunity to probe the reasons for embracing Christian faith in SEN. I will conclude this chapter with an overview of workplace bullying in FBOs.

5.2 Overview of the concept of Faith-based Organizations

Faith-based Organizations (FBOs) as a nomenclature appears confusing to some people because, technically, it includes non-congregational Faith-based services that are commonly associated with various religious organizations with similar functions, yet complex identities (Thomas, 2004). This complexity is obvious on one hand, because the term is used for religious establishments that render social services to society. For example, denominational bodies with various establishments in education, health, and other human services are classified as FBOs. On the other hand, it is used for congregations as well, in their places of worship (De Vita, 2010). The question arising from this situation is: what are the criteria for identifying FBOs in this study?

While there are overlaps of ideas on religious rituals, structure, and values, the complexities in identity on a closer examination, seem to be the motifs and the belief systems. Each faith group has ideals, values, theories of faith and theological perspectives on every matter and motifs of belief that make them unique. These motifs and belief systems inform their function in the society and the ways their adherents make sense of the world around them. Consequently, they influence the thoughts and shape the attitudes of their followers in daily life. Former US president, Jimmy Carter, once declared "It is not possible to separate what people feel and believe in the spiritual realm from what they will do as a matter of public policy" (Albright, 2006, p. 8).

In terms of identifiable organizational structure, sociologists have categorized religious groups into organized and unorganized religions (Ammerman, 2016; Jeldtoft, 2011; Possamai, 2015). Organized religious groups include but are not limited to the main three monotheistic religions: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism; which some scholars (CarterBayindir & Ustaoglu, 2018; Carter Hallward, 2014) identify as Abrahamic religions. Other organized religions are Hinduism and Buddhism. While there is no coherent list of unorganized religions, Korean Shamanism has been identified as one example of unorganized religion (Kyong-Geun, 2014). In the words of Kyong-Geun (2014, p.33):

> Shamanism has a well formulated system of beliefs as well as behaviours and conduct but its practices and its canons are not well organized. Consequently, shamanism plays a latent function in society similarly as systems of values, morals, manners, and emotions.

Similarly, in Nigeria the African Traditional Religions (ATR) practised among ethnic groups in various communities may be categorized as an unorganized religion in terms of written canon. This is probably because of the oral tradition of African people. However, it is grossly misleading to think ATR is not organised because it has no written canon. There is evidence of institutional structures tied to ATR for social

engineering towards community development (Olupona, 2014), which had kept the

indigenous people of Africa united before the arrival of colonial authories and the

missionaries (see Ekeopara, & Ekpenyong, 2016; Ilechukwu, 2014).

Having given this background, I will consider features outlined in Clarke and

Ware (2015) below as my framework for conceptualizing FBOs, especially within the

context of this study:

(i)   FBOs directly linked to a local congregation or religious leader.

(ii)   FBOs directly linked to a religious denomination/sect/ branch and
        formally incorporated within the institutional organization of that
        religious body.

(iii)   FBOs directly linked to a religious denomination/sect/branch but
        incorporated separately from that religious body; and

(iv)   FBOs that self-identify as falling within a broad religious tradition from
        which they draw their motivation (p.40).

For definition purposes, FBO is a religious organization that has identifiable

beliefs, structures, and mission-oriented services. It is usually sponsored by a faith

community, supervised directly or indirectly, depending on the kind of services it

renders to the public and its community. In Nigeria today, the above-mentioned

categories of FBOs provide a wide range of social services, which include health,

education, agriculture, and finance, to name a few. However, the dominant services

within Southeast Nigeria are in health and education. Some of them have the capability

to recruit more workers for the services they render. For example, FBOs affiliated with

Catholic and Anglican churches with many educational institutions from primary to

tertiary level and hospitals within the SEN have capacity to recruit more workers than

those with one or two hospitals /schools. Also, some of them, which are popular within

the communities because of their collaboration with the government to provide social

services and amenities, may have a larger workforce than others. More details on the

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selection of the FBOs for this study were provided in Chapter 4—the methodology chapter.

5.3 Basic principles of FBOs

Traditional societies in Africa have been involved in the work of social services (e.g., caring for the poor, orphan, sick and the less privileged) prior to the coming of the missionaries. This was usually undertaken by families or extended family members (Foster, 2000; Foster et al., 2005). However, religious groups have taken significant steps in developing strategies to keep these social services running by partnering with donors to build hospitals, orphanages, and schools. The formative principles undergirding these actions (love, justice, mercy, human rights) are derived from various sacred books, while some without sacred texts are orally transmitted from one generation to the other. Among the CFBOs, their basic principles are derived from the Judaeo-Christian scriptures. As previously quoted, the Hebrew prophet Micah in the 8th century BC emphasised that God required human beings to be humble, kind, to do good and to uphold justice. This was further demonstrated by Jesus Christ in the Gospels (see Matthew 8:5–13; Luke 9:12-17; Mark 6:31-44) where he healed the sick, fed the hungry, taught valuable lessons on love, empathy, social welfare, compassion, and human rights/justice.

These basic principles of love, empathy, compassion, justice, mercy, and human rights are still the cardinal principles of CFBOs. As followers of Christ, some of the missionaries would have used these principles to distinguish themselves by building trust to evangelise SEN communities. Since my focus is specifically on CFBOs in SEN, below is a framework for the CFBOs in this study.

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Fig 3 *The framework for the CFBOs of this study*
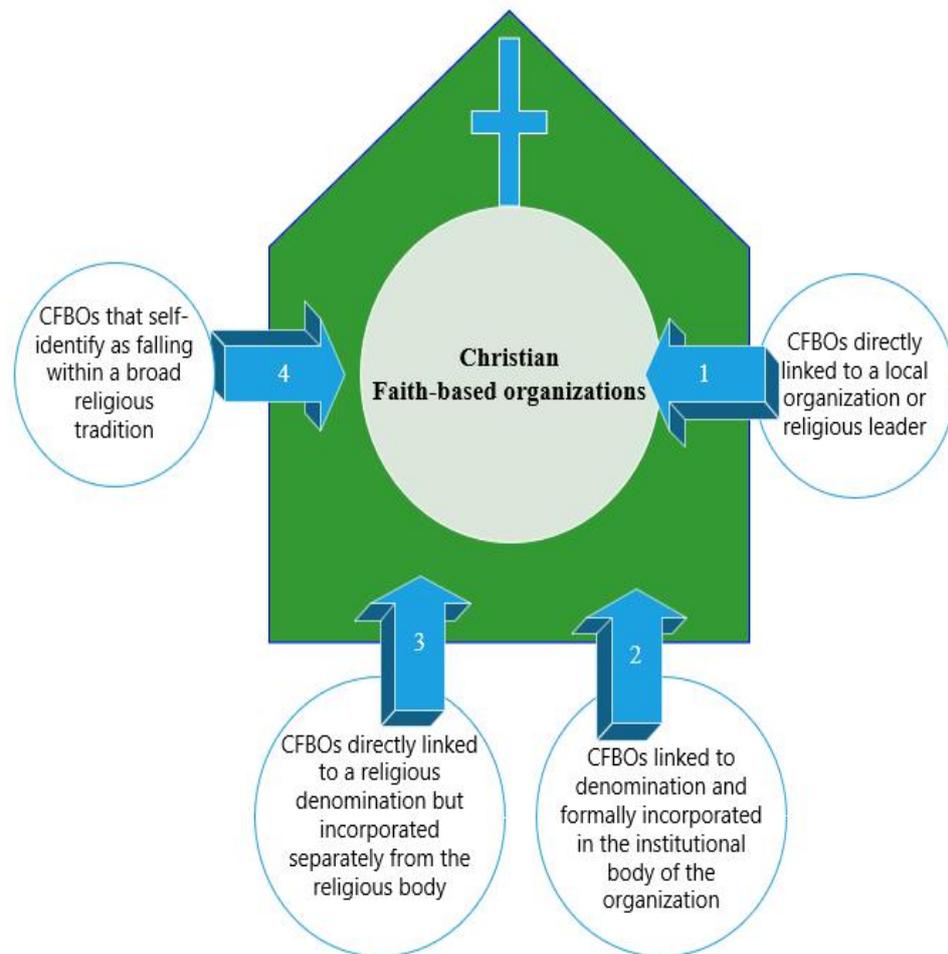
5.4 Historical overview of CFBOs in South-Eastern Nigeria

The Christian faith was introduced in Nigeria through the Portuguese traders to the Benin Kingdom in 15th century (Abu, 2013; Aremu & Ediagonya, 2018; Okpalike & Nwadialor, 2015). At this point, it did not spread because the focus was on trade (both tropical products and humans as slaves) with the people of the Benin empire and other coastal lands (Ryder, 1961). Christianity did not appeal to the interest of the people, even though the king (Oba of Benin) was at one point said to have converted to the religion, probably with ulterior motives (Nwaoha & Njoku, 2020; Ryder, 1961). Portuguese priests concentrated their effort on the royal family because it was their hope

that the Oba would expand the new religion to his subjects. This was because the realm of Oba of Benin's rulership extended to the coastal lands/West African forest region. His acceptance of the religion would influence his subjects and neighbouring communities to accept it too (Nwaoha & Njoku, 2020; Ryder, 1961). The above approach may have yielded fruit in the propagation of Christian faith in the Benin Kingdom, but it did not last long. According to Nwaoha and Njoku (2020), the two Obas who converted to the Christian faith later reverted to their traditional religion.

5.4.1 The 19th century attempt

The second attempt to introduce Christian faith in the 19th century through the British missionaries was more successful. At this point, it spread to Igbo land, particularly Onitsha in 1857 through a team known as the Church Missionary Society (CMS) with a Nigerian ex-slave, Samuel Ajayi Crowther (Nwaoha & Njoku, 2020). The CMS group was formed as a representation of the evangelical denomination supported by the British parliament to spread the gospel to Africa as well as introduce developmental projects like schools and hospitals for mission and colonial government purposes (Isiani, Okonkwo, & Obi-Ani, 2021; Nwaoha & Njoku, 2020; Wetherell, 1949). It was much later that other missionaries from the Catholic Church, the Adventist Church, Baptist Church, Church of Christ, and Presbyterian Church established their missions in Igbo land.

It must be emphasised that the consolidation of the three main ethnic and heterogeneous cultures of "the Hausa peoples of the North, the Igbo peoples of the East and the Yoruba peoples of the West", (Ojiako, 1981, p. 1) into one nation by Lugard, in 1914, increased the spread and establishment of Christian faith to the Southern region of Nigeria. This was through the combination of trade, the imposition of indirect rule and evangelization. Nevertheless, the Christian faith was initially resisted in SEN because

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they had a traditional religion. I will now give concise background information on the values the people of SEN attached to their traditional religion.

5.4.2 African traditional religions in SEN

ATR, which lives in the minds of its practitioners is traceable to the very beginning of the communities in Africa. It has had a huge influence on the socio-political and moral development of the indigenous peoples of SEN prior to the coming of Christian religious groups (Aderibigbe, 2015; Awolalu & & Dopamu, 1979). Each community had distinct ritual practices they performed for protection, which were tied to their social structure, economic prosperity, and healing. For instance, prayer is one of the essential rituals practised in ATR. Traditional healers and herbalists add prayer rituals, and are counted as part of the African religious faith groups that support the socio-economic developments of Nigeria and the indigenous peoples of SEN (Aderibigbe, 2015; Builders, 2019; Obika & Eke, 2019; Obiwulu et al., 2020). They provide medical care services through herbs combining rituals and cultural beliefs, thus meeting the needs of the people (Builders, 2019). In terms of environmental sustainability, the people of SEN through their religious practices of sacred groves/forest protect their land and natural resources from depletion (Onah et al., 2016). ATR became firmly entrenched in the minds and culture of the peoples of SEN so much so that any new religion was keenly resisted.

From their cultural and religious worldview, one can deduce that they were not mere ignorant people whose views could be discarded (Chukwuezi, 2008; Nwoye, 2011).They were intimately connected to a religious system that recognized the importance of spiritual beings and the benefit of divine guidance. This is why the task of introducing Christian faith was not without serious challenges in Igbo land. The missionaries had to learn their belief system and demonstrate genuine interest in their

welfare in order to offer something better. But the first challenge was the connection of the Christian missionaries to the colonial authorities. Some indigenous people of SEN saw the colonial authorities as slave masters. Hence, those missionaries were seen as agents of the colonial authorities who worked together to enslave them. A number of authors (Ekechi, 1971; Kalu, 1977; Okwu, 1980) who challenged the integrity of the missionaries in relation to the welfare of the people of SEN, claimed that some missionaries took advantage of the colonial rule with their military expeditions, abuse and forced labour in SEN to gain converts. Therefore, the local indigenous community felt that the new religion was a cover up to perpetrate economic exploitation, social engineering, and destruction of their traditional values. In the words of Kalu (1977, p. 76):

> There is no doubt that missionaries collaborated with traders and the colonial government. Their racial identity and common image of Africans bred an underlying ideological homogeneity. The quests for Gold and Glory were sanctified [by] spreading the Word of God. The traders ensured transport and supplies for missionaries while the colonial government provided grants-in-aid and security. Missionaries, who appear to be the weaker of the trio, domesticated European culture and supplied intelligence data on the communities whose souls they sought to capture.

Similarly, Mackenzie (1993, p. 46) further argues that "The principal role of the missionaries was to prepare Africans spiritually and mentally for physical domination". All these are real issues that stood against the acceptance of the Christian gospel in SEN.

The second challenge to the already problematic situation was having genuine Christian converts who would live and demonstrate the principles of the gospel. This is evident in one of the reports:

> In 1912, for instance, the C.M.S. station teacher at Egbu, Owerri reported that on one Sunday service alone, over 3,000 people were in attendance. This unusual augmentation of the church congregation, he explained, stemmed from the people's conviction that 'association with us' would enable them 'to escape Government work', or be freed from the exactions of the chief (Ekechi, 1971, p. 106).

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Ekechi (1971); Nwaoha and Njoku (2020); Okon (2014) would agree that some people accepted the new religion to escape persecution, forced labour and economic hardships. Those who accepted the new religion—the Christian faith, were protected from the incessant military invasions and destruction of their communities. Therefore, embracing the Christian religion was for social identity and to exploit immediate opportunities it brought rather than genuine faith in the teachings of the new religion.

While it is possible that some missionaries and CFBOs took advantage of the gospel for their personal gain, and that some converts were merely seeking protection from immediate dangers associated with the Christian faith, CFBOs have helped in the development of SEN in tangible ways. Within the period of their evangelistic expansions to date, CFBOs have demonstrated their genuine value in establishing a western educational system (Nwaka, 2012; Okpalike & Nwadilalor) comparable to what is available in developed nations. Also, they helped develop Igbo indigenous language typography (Igboanusi, 2006; Van Den Bersselaar, 1997), built hospitals, and schools for the socio-economic development of SEN (Nwadialor, 2014). During the Biafran war, some CFBOs demonstrated care through the supply of food and medical assistance (Faseke, 2019; Nwaka, 2013). Drawing upon the arguments concerning the Igbo resistance to missionaries because of their alliance with colonial domination, Okwu (1980, p. 47) concluded with this:

> The Igbo resistance to the missionary culture encroachment did not, however, impair their love for novelty and adventure. Thus, some Igbo of the riverine area, especially the ex-slaves, accepted missionary teaching jobs and became primary Igbo innovators and avant-garde agents in the proselytizing program. Others learned from the missionaries, particularly from the lay female missionaries and the brothers, the arts of sewing and dressmaking, carpentry, masonry, cobbling, tool repairing and maintenance. This widened and strengthened the training in skills and occupational opportunities in Igboland.

Indeed, beyond what may be the circumstances surrounding the entrance of Christian religion with their affiliate CFBOs into the shores of Nigeria and SEN, it no longer

seems strange that it is the dominant religion in SEN. According to Nwaka (2012) the greater part of mainline Churches in Nigeria is relatively dominated by Igbos, thus affirming its acceptability among the Igbos of SEN. In fact, some people in Igbo land evaluate their traditional belief systems and cultural practices through the prism of Christian doctrines.

There is also a growing belief that the Igbos are a remnant of African Jews in diaspora (Afsai, 2016; Andreeva, 2021; Lis, 2009; Shragg, 2015; Wellansky, 2017). Culturally, they had a number of similar practices with the Jews, like the eight-day male child circumcision and other Old Testament Bible rituals in Jewish culture (Lis, 2011; Omeire et al., 2017), even before the missionaries brought Christianity to Nigeria. Hence, those practices against the teachings of the Bible were rejected as people of the indigenes converted to Christianity (Njoku et al., 2017). In fact, this great influence of CFBOs in Igbo land is one of the reasons this study seeks to understand the experiences of church workers on workplace bullying there. Moreover, this is especially important now that European missionaries do not have significant power over the daily decisions there.

The map below, Figure 4 shows the current configuration of Nigerian geopolitical Zones. The yellow background is the geopolitical zone known as South-Eastern Nigeria, which is made up of five states—Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo state.

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Fig 4 *The Nigerian geopolitical zones map*
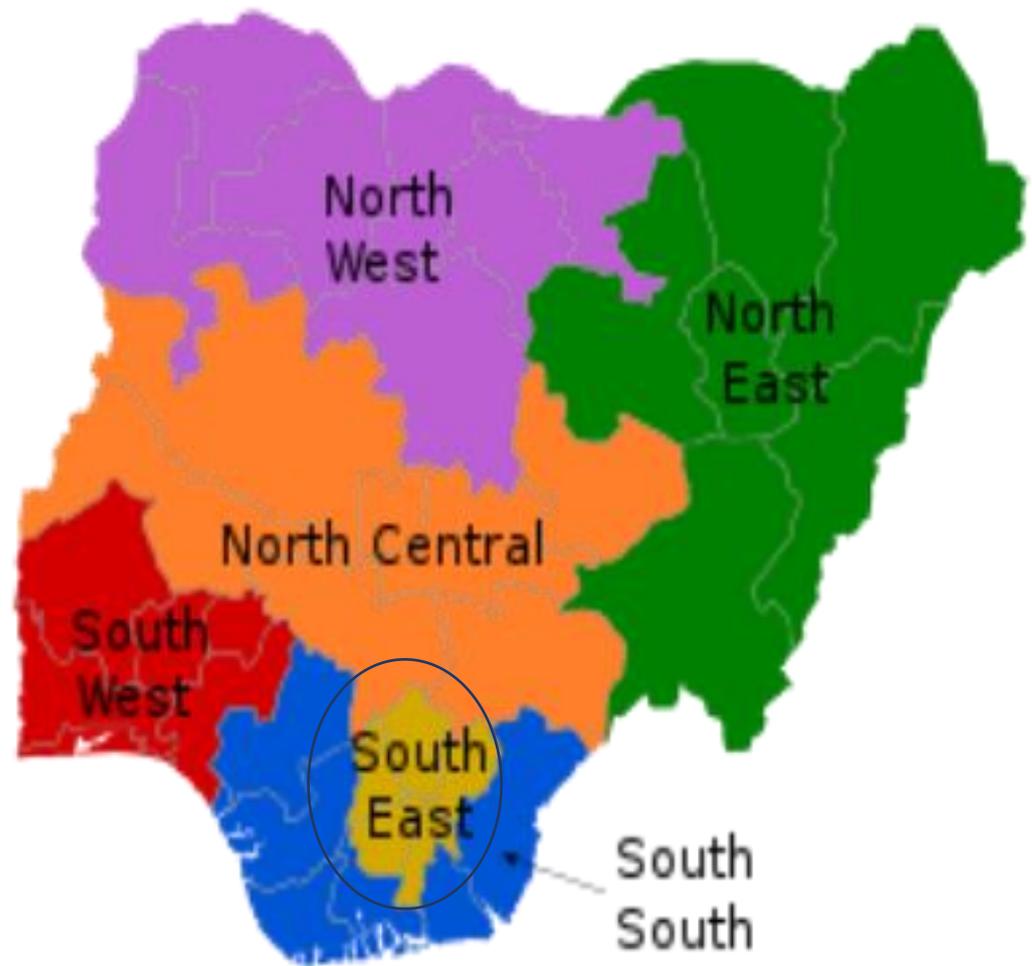
From Wikimedia Commons, the free media repository "Geopolitical Zones of Nigeria.svg" [map], retrieved October 3, 2021.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Geopolitical_Zones_of_Nigeria.svg

5.5 Overview of bullying in Faith- based Organizations

Having given a brief historical overview of CFBOs in SEN, and their contributions to socio-economic developments in that region, this section provides a general overview on workplace bullying in FBOs. The objective is to situate workplace

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bullying in CFBOs in Nigeria within the broader concept of Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs).

Generally, studies (Andersson & Pearson, 1999; Fougner, 2013; Garner & Peterson, 2018; McDuff & Mueller, 2000; Nuñez & Gonzalez, 2009; Sulaiman & Bhatti, 2013) reveal that FBOs are not immune to the phenomenon of bullying, which appears common in secular organizations. In Nuñez and Gonzalez (2009), it was conceptualized as mobbing; Sulaiman and Bhatti (2013), defined it as workplace deviance; and Garner & Peterson (2018) identified it as member abuse. However, in this study, the collective term for such phenomenona is workplace bullying. While Sulaiman and Bhatti focused their study on Islamic Faith-Based Organization. (IFBOs), Nuñez and Gonzalez (2009) , Fougner (2013), Garner and Peterson (2018) focused on CFBOs. Inspite of the conceptual differences on bullying and the phenomena of studies in Islamic Faith-Based Organizations (IFBOs) and CFBOs, there is a strong assertion that all the workplace bullying phenomenona are against the ethical principles of FBOs.

For instance, Sulaiman and Bhatti (2013), suggest that injustice or unfair treatment are some of the ways bullying is reinforced within the IFBOs workplaces. According to their findings, workers who perceive organizational injustice are quick to flout rules and regulations, particularly rules on anti-social behaviours which are unacceptable to the organization and its environment. These anti-social behaviours from workers are violence, fraud, theft, workplace sabotage, bribery, absenteeism and embezzlement. They argue that one of the reasons for those behaviours in the workplace is because of unethical principles, such as denying people promotion when qualified, which is a form of bullying. Parzefall and Salin (2010) identified organizational injustice as one of the reasons that might lead to breach of contract both for victims of bullying and bystanders, who see the organization as unjust. Sulaiman

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and Bhatti (2013) also assert that lack of ethical awareness, weak management and non-transparent policies are other reasons for the prevalence of deviance or workplace bullying. In conclusion, they claim that Islamic spirituality, which includes the fear of Allah and proper implementation of justice as a cardinal principle in Islam, will reduce deviance and bullying in the workplace. This is very critical in FBOs where fairness is not just a doctrine (orthodoxy) but ought to be a way of life (orthopraxy).

Among CFBOs, Fougner (2013) reveals that showing no concern in response to someone else's grief, joy, or opinion is considered rude. The act of listening to people's opinions, misfortunes, or joy and empathizing as the situation demands, is an unwritten rule of relationship. But being indifferent, yelling and gossiping about co-workers are classified as bullying. These claims further reveal the importance of maintaining Christian ethics at the workplace. More importantly, these experiences are common in FBOs, whether it is in IFBOs or CFBOs. In fact, mobbing, incivility and member abuse, which are terms used for bullying as previously discussed, are sometimes spiritualized in CFBOs by perpetrators as a way of hiding their insidious activities. While tolerance is a concept used among Christians to encourage stability in relationships, it is more challenging when domineering leaders create fear and intimidation, yet draw support for their actions from the Christian Bible. In essence,

> Spiritual abuse is a misuse of power in a spiritual context whereby spiritual authority is distorted to the detriment of those under its leadership. It is a multifaceted and multi-layered experience that includes acts of commission and omission, aimed at producing conformity. It is both process and event, influencing one's inner and outer worlds and has the potential to affect the biological, psychological, social and spiritual domains of the individual (Ward, 2011, p. 913).

In other words, it is assumed that victims should submit to the abuse; keep silent, and seek no legal actions, based on faith and overall mission of the organization. Sometimes these perpetrators of bullying invoke church discipline on those who appear to be

dissenting voices, thus, causing other members to feel guilty for speaking up (Garner & Peterson, 2018). Apart from the fact that victims suffer from psychological trauma, they may also lose their employment when bullying affects employees' productivity and this is used in performance reviews to dismiss them. In some cases, employees may not grow in their careers as they are not motivated to give their best (Nuñez & Gonzalez, 2009).

5.6 Organizational culture

Similar to the challenges in non-religious organizations, Fougner (2013) identified organizational culture as part of the reasons for workplace bullying in CFBOs.In workplaces, like the church-based organizations, people communicate freely, and familiarity may bring contempt. He acknowledged that love, unity, and tolerance are expected principles in CFBOs. However, people in his study reported that keeping silent in the situation of bullying actions such as yelling and other unwholesome attitudes was the best way to respond to bullying. They assume that perpetrators may be stressed, hence those who are slighted or yelled at would rather keep silent. Consequently, they are expected to call attention to the issue afterwards for honest discussion as a "family" to reconcile. While this may seem idealistic, in the case of bullying where the intention is to harm, silence is dangerous! In a similar study on CFBOs, Garner and Peterson (2018) found that members, especially volunteers who had courage, left the organization over what they considered as bullying and toxic culture. Studies have shown that people do not report bullying experiences because of the culture of respect, and fear of losing their jobs and retribution from bullies (Carter et al., 2013; Normandale & Davies, 2002). Such fears, in my thinking, have allowed bullying to grow to be a social monster. Therefore, reporting bullying matters through the appropriate channels should be encouraged in all settings including churches and CFBOs (see e.g. Fritts, 2016).

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That cultural differences affect perception of some phenomena is a truism, and it is one of the determining factors for bullying in the workplaces (Jacobson et al., 2013). Evidence from a cross-cultural study on workplace bullying, suggests that some cultures accept bullying as part of normal work life, while others see it as an aberration (Power et al., 2013). For instance, in cultures steeped in individualism, like the US, people may show no concern over the bullying experiences of others if they think it may be perceived as undue interference in their lives. This is because bullying is not yet seen as a serious offence with appropriate legislation in some states (Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984; Lippel, 2010; Sanders et al., 2012). Also, it is possible for an employee of a different ethnic group, even in Faith-based Organizations, to maltreat employees with different ethnic backgrounds, especially where ethnic ties are stronger than religion (Shumba, 2009). Therefore studies (Mallory, 2016; McGarry, 2017; Yip et al., 2010) from FBOs indicate that cultures of organizations, lack of policies on the phenomenon of bullying in the workplace, proper implementation of policies where they exist, and neglect of ethical principles are some of the compelling reasons for the prevalence of workplace bullying. This is one of the gaps this thesis seeks to address through the development of a policy framework for addressing workplace bullying in CFBOs in SEN.

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CHAPTER 6

THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK, LABOUR AND PUBLIC POLICY CONCEPT AND PRACTICE IN NIGERIA

6.1 Introduction

Workplace bullying is a pervasive and entrenched social problem across all work sectors in Nigeria, even though it is not explicitly discussed under the current Nigerian labour law. The literature review provided evidence that workplace bullying has not been given much attention in Nigeria. This is because it is not yet a common discussion topic in the political space among policy makers in the way gender and domestic violence as well as sexual harassment are widely discussed in the social media in recent times (Ojigho, 2022). Therefore, there is a need for a proper discussion on this matter at the National Assembly. A robust legislative process and a policy framework is required to address the problem of workplace bullying in Nigeria. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the gaps in the public policy making process in order to develop an effective framework that supports employers of labour and employees in dealing with workplace bullying.

The first part of this chapter gives a concise description of the pre-colonial system of governance and practices among the three dominant ethnic-tribal groups in Nigeria, namely, the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba, and the Igbo tribal groups. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the legislative framework introduced by the British colonial authorities, highlighting key developments in employment and labour practices between the 1860s and 1950s.

The second part provides three critical historical periods that shaped governance and public policy process in post-colonial Nigeria and their impact on labour laws/policies. Considerable attention is given as to why the labour policies need an

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exhaustive review given the current state of workplace bullying in Nigeria. I will then highlight the place of public policy and those capable of influencing and changing laws in the Nigerian context.

6.2 Pre-colonial system of administration and legislation in Hausaland, Yorubaland, Igboland, and labour practices

Before the British colonial rule, the various ethno-cultural-tribal groups in what is now known as Nigeria had distinct legislative procedures, which enabled them to make laws to guide their communities. Although they may not all have had elaborate legislative procedures, their system functioned well to meet their needs at that time. The pre-Islamic Hausa-Fulani empire and the majority of other ethno-cultural-tribal groups from the Northern part of Nigeria (now structured as Northeast, Northcentral and Northwest geopolitical regions of Nigeria) had native leadership structures that enabled laws to guide their communities. For instance, in the pre-colonial era Hausaland had a seven-city state ruled by a king, *sarkin kasa* with a small council of elders. The council consisted of nine members and decided who was to become the next king. The second tier of leadership was the chiefs, *sarkin gari* who ruled the smaller villages. The third tier of leadership was the family clan *gida,* which was part of each smaller village (Cartwright, 2019). The king did not make political decisions or policies without consulting the council. Even when Islam was embraced in the Hausa-Fulani empire with its legal system and administration, the Emirs in the Northern region did not take political decisions without consulting the council. The members of the council were the Emir, ministers and provincial officers (Shehu, 2011). It was easy for British indirect rule to prevail because there was a structure in place. The indirect rule could only work as much as the Emirs and the native leaders were allowed to rule their subjects, while taking instruction or advice from the colonial administrators (Oyebade & Falola, 2003; Sodiq, 1992).

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The people of the Southwest region of Nigeria had a three-tier leadership structure which were the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary. The Oba (king) also known as the *'Kabiyesi'* (executive leader whose authority cannot be questioned), did not govern the community and make public policies without consulting the council of chiefs known as *Igbimo* who formed the nucleus of legislative council. They were chiefs from various villages representing the people. Although the chiefs debated and came to consensus with the king in making laws and public policies, the wishes of the masses were taken into consideration (Edo, 2010; Onadeko, 2008; Oyebade & Falola, 2003). The next tier was the judiciary, which was divided according to villages and town, yet there was no manipulation in handling of cases because of the checks and balances in the process of leadership (Edo, 2010).

On the other hand, the people of the Southeast region practised republicanism. Republicanism as a system of governance with democratic structures, provides citizens with inalienable rights and jettisons monarchical tyranny. The Igbos structured their society and political administration linking the nuclear family, extended families and kindreds which made up the villages together. From these structures, elders' council emerged (Kanu, 2019a; Ndukaihe, 2006) as representatives of the people for making major decisions and public policies in the community. Hence, democracy as a concept of governance was part of the Igbo political system.

Apart from Onitsha and parts of Arochukwu, which had a king (Obi of Onitsha), every other community followed a republican system (Igwe, 2011). The social life in Igbo land was controlled by the law of the land, which relied heavily on traditional culture and religion (Onyeozili & Ebbe, 2012). Also, the intricate and intimate connection of religion with the economic and political structures in Igbo land, made their legal system strong in fighting crimes (Aja, 1997; Igwe, 2011). It was difficult for

indirect rule to prevail in Igbo land (Eze et al., 2014; Oyebade & Falola, 2003),

probably because of the suspicion the population had regarding external authorities

invading and controlling their communities. Given that the monarchical system of

government was not widespread in Igbo land, the British colonial authorities had to

install warrant chiefs where there were none, to help them achieve their aim. Despite the

apparent difficulty in introducing indirect rule to Igbo land, its success in the northern

region gave the British colonial administrators impetus to expand into other regions

with the new legislative framework initiated in 1861.

With regard to labour, prior to the colonial administration in sub-Saharan Africa,

social culture was mostly based on cooperation, not a waged economy. The major

source of labour was the family (Green, 2013). The indigenous people of Nigeria

cultivated their lands with the help of family members and were adequately

compensated, but not in monetary terms. Exchange of goods and services was the most

common way of compensation. For example, in northern Nigeria where feudal

production was the norm, the peasant farmers who served the landowners (feudal lords),

had the privilege of living in the communities and they received a small portion of the

land (Cornelius et al., 2019).

Similarly, in Southwest and SEN, Asechemie (1997, p. 377) pointed out that

labour practices were also not measured monetarily. The traditional labour process was

a "communal labour system, apprenticeship system (Imu oru - aka) and service system

(Ye se nweni konma)". Under the communal labour and service system, farms, and

other labour-intensive jobs like building of houses, involved family members, in-laws,

and people of the same age groups to support one another. The family that received such

assistance had the moral responsibility to feed the workers and in return support them

for their own farm work and other labour activities. This is in the spirit of Ubuntu

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philosophy "I am because we are"—captured in the Igbo axiom "Egbe bere Ugo ebere" literally translated as let the kite and eagle perch together (Onebunne, 2018).

In the case of apprenticeship, a prospective candidate stayed with his/her master/mistress for a specific time, learning the skills and doing other domestic services. At the end of the fixed time, resources and tools were given to the apprentice to begin either trade or provide specific service to their community (Asechemie, 1997). The emphasis here is that labour practices among the indigenous people of Nigeria prior to British colonization were informal and cooperative in nature. Members of the community assisted one another harmoniously in economic activities. Although, these systems of labour and services on rare occasion were abused, thus leading to conflict, and withdrawal of support, it was generally a harmonious relationship. Labour was not commodified. It had a highly dignified social value.

6.3 Brief historical overview on the evolution of British colonial legislative framework and administrations in Nigeria:1860s-1950s.

I will now present the colonial system of governance and the resultant changes in labour and employment practices that occurred.

The current legislative framework in Nigeria evolved with time. It can be traced to the 1861 British legislative framework, which was introduced as a political tool to control the Lagos economy, immediately after a treaty was signed and it was annexed as a colony (Aremu & Bakare,2021; Hopkins, 1966;1980; McIntyre,1963; Smith,1979). Then, it was further developed with the 1914 amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorate by Fedrick Lugard. Although Henry Freeman was the first official governor of the Lagos colony to begin this legislative framework with ten members in the 1861 legislative council, it is believed that the Royal Niger Company (RNC) had already been administering the Lagos territory (Pearson, 1971). This is because they

were one of the successful private companies that received a royal charter authorized by King Charles II of Britain to trade in Africa. They established their company and had full military support from Britain as they occupied the territory. Hence, they served as a surrogate imperial power to control the territory. British colonial authorities took over the territory when the charter was repealed and paid £865,000 to RNC in 1900 (Cornelius et al., 2019; Royal Niger Company, n.d).

The first legislative council had six official members, and four unofficial members. The unofficial members were two European (probably from the trading companies) and two handpicked indigenous representatives (Muheeb, 2019). The fact that two indigenous people were appointed in the legislative council does not mean they had any legislative power. As Tamuno (1969) noted, one of the conditions for their appointment as unofficial members of the legislative council was that they must co-operate and be loyal to the British Crown who approved their appointment. They were not expected to oppose the policies of the council. After all, they were not elected; it was a mere political advisory appointment. Therefore, the members of the community they represented in the council had no confidence in them.

Iweriebor (1982, p. 509) argued that though Britain had what he described as "parliamentary liberal bourgeois democracy" in their own political system at that time, they imposed on Nigeria a "capitalist democracy". This means they controlled almost all the natural resources, labour and production and excluded the indigenous people from proper participation in deciding who represented them in making public policies. Lugard, on the other hand introduced an indirect rule, as a means of involving the northern Nigeria Emirs in administering the territory. While it is not part of this study to discuss Islam, perhaps it is important to add that Lugard is believed to have introduced indirect rule in northern Nigeria because he admired the civilizing effect of the Islamic

religion to maintain law and order in the community as opposed to the traditional African religion (Reynolds, 2001). Although this idea is debatable, Lugard, to me, seemed to have avoided dabbling into their religion as he had a Christian background and was aware of some experiences of other British authorities with Islamic faith (see Motadel, 2012). He rather wanted to maintain the status-quo and control all the resources that were available. Therefore, he used indirect rule as a tool to support the local leadership to get all he needed from their community.

However, Lugard's administration had a legislative council of 36 members, with 6 appointed indigenous representatives (Chilaka et al., 2021). Lugard's 1914 legislative council had increased membership, but one thing that was consistent in the two legislative councils (Freeman and Lugard's legislative council) was that the indigenous members were hand-picked and remained unofficial members. This was after a series of petitions to the secretary of state of the colonies to allow indigenous participation in the British colonial legislative council (Ogbogbo, 2009). The demand for participation was important to these indigenous people because decisions on governance and public policies in their communities were critical to their survival. Hence, they needed to make meaningful contributions to policies about their future through representative participation by people they could trust.

On matters of labour and employment practices, one critical function of the legislative council was to initiate socio-political policies for the benefit of the British colonial office and generate revenue. To generate revenue from the natural wealth of Nigeria, which the British colonial authorities had discovered as the second industrial revolution began in 1850s (see Mokyr & Strotz, 1998), they gave consideration to labour and the policies that would guide its use in generating revenue. Meanwhile, at this point the slave trade, which was the main source of labour for Britain in the first

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industrial revolution, was dwindling with the abolition law (Richardson, 2007). Hence, Lugard introduced waged labour as an acceptable replacement for slave trade on moral grounds (Cooper, 1989), although a few scholars (Ajayi & Fashagba, 2021) have argued it was still for the benefit of British economy.

This waged labour came with taxation policies to generate revenue for the colonial government. As people earned income, they were taxed by the British colonial government and their welfare was not considered. Nevertheless, levying taxes on subsistence farming of staple food was difficult, except where the produce was sold in the market (Bolt & Gardner, 2020). In fact, people did not accept taxation nor waged labour. They were rather interested in farming their own land and eating from their farm produce.

One of the significant protests in Nigerian history on the burdens of taxation, poor conditions of work and challenges of indirect rule to the indigenous people of Nigeria was the Aba women's riot in 1929 (Abdullah, 2018; Onwuteka, 1965). Having established indirect rule as a means of controlling the local authorities and quenching possible resistance from the indigenes, according to Cornelius et al., (2019), Lugard enforced cheap labour. This cheap labour and employment policy during Lugard's administration seemed to have been a centralized matter. As Afigbo (1971) noted Lugard preferred a wider policy for the southern and northern protectorate to reduce the administrative cost. The cheap labour policy resulted in a shortage of labour. Cornelius et al., (2019, p.14) clearly demonstrate the situation when Lugard authorized forced labour through warrant chiefs:

> Indeed, the Native House Rule Proclamation No 26 (1901) in the Oil Rivers area of the Southern Protectorate allowed the employment of members of a homestead (the dwellings of a senior member within the society). This included waged labour, forced labour (referred to by the colonial administration as *political labour*) and slaves (the latter largely in the North), by the head of the household. The head, who was expected to recruit labour for colonial

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government received a portion of the earnings and punished the failure to
perform by a labourer or slave with a fine £50 or a prison term of one year.

With the threat of imprisonment or a £50 fine, forced labour continued. For example,

Newbury, (1975 as cited in Cornelius et al., 2019, p.14) also reported that forced labour

in some parts of the Northern region in the mine was 6d/per day (i.e., 6pence,) while

voluntary labour was 9d/per day. A penny is 16 cents US dollar equivalent in early 2022

conversion rate. However, the period under discussion 6 pence was half a shilling, 12

pence was 1 shilling, and 20 shillings was 1 pound. This element of inconsistency in

work conditions and inequity in the wage policy of Lugard is similar to what Ariza-

Montes, Muniz, Leal-Rodríguez, and Leal-Millán (2014); and Lloyd (2020) noted as

forms of workplace bullying in Chapter 2. Therefore, British colonial labour policies

during this period reinforced workplace bullying in the public sector. Labour

relationships in the public sectors were characterized by tension, stress and disharmony,

thus making people resist waged labour. Rather than dealing with the issues causing the

strike actions and agitation of workers through dialogue and revamping policies on

labour, Lugard went further to recruit workers from Ghana and Sierra Leone

communities as a new strategy to meet the critical needs of labour (Cornelius et al.,

2019).

In view of all that has been presented, one significant benefit of the 1914

amalgamation to the British colonial authority was that it provided economic gains and

administrative convenience. Through the indirect rule system, all the resources available

were smoothly coordinated. Secondly, the benefit of the amalgamation to Nigeria came

when the three main legislative councils were inaugurated through the 1946 constitution.

The most important benefit of the amalgamation of 1914 to Nigeria was the 1960

independence status.

6.3.1 British colonial legislative council and administration 1922-1956

The situation with the constitution of the legislative council changed a little with the 1922 Clifford constitution, which gave the right for only four Nigerians to be elected into the legislative council (Aremu & Bakare, 2021). According to Iweriebor (1982, p. 509), they had two tiers of government—the central government and the provincial authorities:

> The central colonial authority was made up of the Governor, the advisory council and later a legislative council, the bureaucracy, the judiciary, the police, and a military contingent. The second tier of government was the provincial (or regional) level. It was made up of the lieutenant - governor, the regional bureaucracy, the regional judiciary and a " native " police force and, the all-important and powerful provincial residents who [supervised] the administration of the provinces which were purportedly still under their "traditional" rulers. The system of governance at the provincial level was referred to as the Indirect Rule system because the colonial authorities claimed to administer these areas indirectly through the pre-existing political institutions and leaders.

The emphasis here is that few representatives were elected by the indigenous Nigerian communities. Gradually, the indigenous participation of Nigerian people in the British colonial legislative council started gaining political relevance during Arthur Richards' 1946 constitution, and Macpherson's 1951 constitution respectively. According to Ogbogbo (2009), the three main regions in Nigeria at that time were recognized in the 1946 constitution and regional legislative councils were inaugurated. It became a significant milestone in the evolving legislative framework as indigenous members of the council had legislative powers. For example, the 1951 constitution introduced two legislative chambers (central house of assembly and regional house of assembly). Also, it provided the southern and northern regions of the country the opportunity of having 136 elected representatives in the house of assembly as members of the central legislative council. The representation from the Northern region of the country was 68 seats (based on population), while there were 34 representatives from the Eastern and Western regions respectively (Ogbogbo, 2009; Utuk, 1975). These indigenous people

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were outspoken and started forming political parties led by indigenes. Also, they could critique economic and social policies which were against their communities, yet under British hegemony. Furthermore, the 1954 Lyttleton constitution prepared them for independence status in 1960 and made Nigeria a federation. It reinforced popular representation through elections and provided jurisdiction in the two legislative chambers in relation to the regional legislative functions. For example, the regional government legislative councils were permitted to make policies on labour without the interference of the central legislative council (Ayoade, 1975; Ogbogbo, 2009).

Turning now to labour issues and employment practice, it is significant to state that waged labour became popular and people were migrating from the rural areas to the cities for waged labour (Ọṣọba, 1969). This was possible because of the great depression and economic turndown of 1929. It affected the traditional ways people made a living. Ayoade (1975) indicated that Southwest regional government championed the improvement of workers' wages and it compelled other regions to do the same. Also, human resources development through various skill training programs and educational institutions became popular. People were awarded scholarships to go overseas for specific training and labour departments were established as part of the strategy to develop and harness employment practices (Akpala, 1971). One significant thing that must be mentioned in relation to labour and public policy of this period is the support of the international labour organization (ILO). As organized labour unions pressed the British colonial government for better wages and welfare of workers, the Colonial Development Act 1929 was enacted. This legal document stipulates that forced labour must end and wages must be paid at the standard rate (Akpala, 1971; Cornelius et al., 2019).

Although the 1929 public policy on forced labour and standard wage rate did not immediately end forced labour and other workplace bullying tendencies, it was a significant milestone. The fact that a policy was initiated through the relentless effort of the works and unions at the local level (via public opinion and strike actions) and the support of an international organization draws attention to a bottom-up approach public policy process that is needed at a time when workplace bullying is becoming a pervasive social problem in Nigeria. This is one of the ways of closing the gaps in Nigerian public policy process. This is because the process of changing laws and policies from the top in Nigeria is very cumbersome, expensive, and may require a lot of advocacy and time. I will expand on this in 4.5 as I highlight the concept of public policy.

6.4. Historical timelines that shaped governance, labour, and employment policies in post-colonial Nigeria

Having provided a background upon which the Nigerian legislative framework was developed, and the labour issues involved, I now briefly present historical timelines that shaped public policy on labour in post-colonial Nigeria. There are critical historical timelines that shaped governance and labour policy in the post-colonial Nigeria. These are: the 1960-1963 first republic constitution, the 1966-1978, 1984-1998 military decrees, and the second republic constitution of 1979, then the fourth republic constitution of 1999 onwards. For the purpose of this chapter, I will highlight four specific periods, 1960, 1963, then the 1966 military incursion and its resultant effect on labour (See the timeline as presented in Fig 3 below). Then I will combine second republic (1979-1983) and the fourth republic (1999 till date) because both constitutions have labour under Exclusive list.

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Fig.5 *Historical timelines that shaped governance and labour public policies in post-colonial Nigeria*
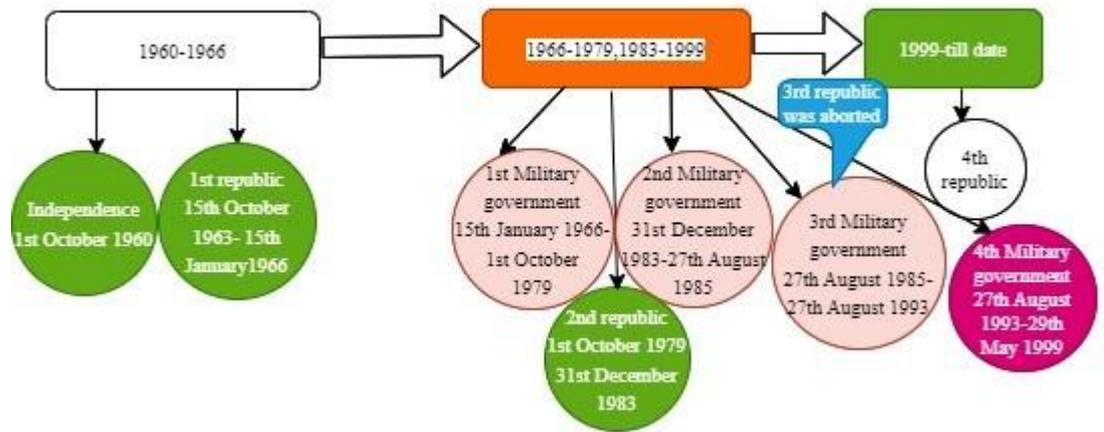
Beginning with independence in 1960, Nigeria as a sovereign state adopted a parliamentary system of government inherited from Britain with a bicameral legislature. Then in 1963, a republican constitution was enacted which allowed Nigeria to remove the Queen of the United Kingdom who was the monarchical head of state. Thus, the constitution can be classified as a parliamentary republic with a bicameral legislature. A bicameral legislature is a framework that adopts two law chambers for the drafting of laws and policies that guide governance as well as other legislative functions and oversight in the smooth running of a nation. A parliamentary republic system of government in a federal state allows all parties, whether minor or major parties to have a voice in policy making through their elected representatives. There is a Governor (in the case of Nigeria, a President) and a Prime Minister, but the real executive power is with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister leads the executive arm and signs bills into law. The President on the other hand performs ceremonial duties, accredits ambassadors and other function prescribed by the constitution. Usually, a government is formed under parliamentary system through party coalitions if none of the parties wins a majority vote (Murse, 2021; Panchal, 2020). The 1960 Nigerian government under a parliamentary system was formed through a coalition of the Northern People Congress

(NPC) and the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC) party (Cole, 1960) later became the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens. One of the priorities of this government was to make public policies that would increase economic development as the country transitioned into self-government. Among such policies, the most significant one in relation to labour and employment was the Nigerianization policy.

The Nigerianization policy was considered important in the economic development of Nigeria because of the new political dispensation premised on self-reliance, self-governance and building a robust civil service system (Cole, 1960; Kalu, 2010). The statistical record on employment prior to independence showed that the majority of the labour force was in public employment rather than in private sectors. Most of the top and critical services in the federal government, regional governments, and public corporations were in the hands of expatriates. Hence, the policy was intended to prioritize the employment of indigenous people over the expatriates (mostly Europeans) in government parastatals as 60% of the workforce were in the civil service (Cole, 1960).

However, there were some missing links to the Nigerianization policy that caused it to fail. It is important to note that labour and employment were in the concurrent list between 1960-1966. Hence, regional governments had autonomy on labour policies. It was not clear whether the Nigerianization policy was initiated from the masses or imposed from the top. But the implementation process was faulty. In the first instance, there was a need to have a robust framework to train successive expatriate replacements before thinking of implementation of the Nigerianization policy. For instance, in the northern region of Nigeria where the version of the policy was known as northernization, it was reported that most of the vacancies in the regional government

could not be replaced because they lacked professional training to do most of the jobs. Indigenous people from the southern region were not offered the opportunities because of the northernization policy (Cole, 1960; Ozoigbo, 2008). The same thing was replicated in southern and western regions of Nigeria respectively, thus leading to ethnic divisions (Anazodo et al., 2012; Cole, 1960).

The second cause of the failure of the Nigerianization policy was personal interest over public interest and inability to abide by the rule of law. Cole (1960) captured the controversies in the agencies of the civil service established to implement the Nigerianization policy:

> At best, the relations between these agencies are complicated. On paper, the Federal Establishments Office of the Ministry of Pensions approves the need for the establishment of a new post; the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, acting for the Minister, decides whether funds are available for the post; and the Public Service Commission recommends the person for appointment after the Nigerianization Officer of the Ministry of Pensions has determined whether a qualified Nigerian is available. But, in actual fact, there is lack of clarity in the shifting relationships between the agencies,' and their functioning depends heavily upon personal contacts and extra-legal arrangements (p.324).

The shifting relationships mentioned in the above extract between the agencies are linked to trust issues and personal interest. Political elites focused on ethnic division using their personal influence and tribal sentiment to gain control of the policy. The attitudes of the political elites posed a threat to social stability in the public service. It prepared the way for the breakdown of laws, bullying and ethnic conflicts, and the sudden end of the civilian government in 1966. These are some of the challenges Nigeria is facing in policy making and implementation today.

The above-mentioned problems led to the next historical timeline that shaped governance and labour policies in post-colonial Nigeria. The military on January 15, 1966, through a coup d'etat acquired power from the civilian government. They alleged that the politicians were corrupt, and promoted ethnic politics rather than concentrating

on the national interest (Ajayi, 2013). In a bid to restore normalcy in the civil service where the Nigerianization policy had caused ethnic divisions and disharmony, they introduced a different structure of governance. At the central level of the government was the Commander in Chief of the armed forces, who was also known as the Head of State. The Supreme Military Council (SMC) was now responsible for laws and public policies through military decrees. A combination of civilian and military personnel were appointed into the Federal Executive Council as ministers. Also, 12 states were created out of the four existing regions recognized by the Republican Constitution of 1963. Throughout the states of the federation, military officers were appointed as state governors or sole administrators to preside over the affairs of the state, with their respective appointees as commissioners of different ministries (Iweriebor, 1982) .

Just a year into the military rule, war broke out in Nigeria in 1967, leading to loss of lives and labour, especially for the Igbos and their neighbours. While this section is not focused on the Nigerian civil war, it is important to note the impact of the war on labour movement and policies under the military rule. There was mass movement of labour, especially in military and other public service agencies. The Igbos from the South-eastern-region moved en masse to their state of origin to defend their region in the war.

One of the policies which affected labour and employment the most was the Decree No. 21 of 1968, which introduced a national development fund requiring compulsory contribution from the workforce. It was accompanied by a freeze on wages (Isamah, 1990). It is not uncommon to have a policy of a national levy and a freeze on wages when a country is at war against itself. This is because the Nigerian military government of 1966 was preoccupied with war not labour matters. Secondly, war is very expensive and can drain the economy of a nation. Isamah (1990), also added that

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Trade Unions were controlled, and strike action was considered a crime. One would not expect strike actions of the Trade Unions to be tolerated under military rule, even more so when it is happening in war times. Therefore, a freeze on wages, a ban on Trade Unions and a compulsory levy were all justifiable policies at that time, although they were forced on the Nigerian workers through military decree.

Even though Nigeria was independent politically, with the military in power, it was as if they were back to the early days of colonial subjugation. The military coup d'état of 1966 significantly diminished the gains of the previous democratic system of governance, which began with 1960 independence (Frank & Ukpere, 2012). This was followed by the civil war of 1967-1970 and continued military rule until another democratic process came in 1979 -1983 before another military coup d'état happened in 1983.

The final historical timeline for consideration is the 1979 and 1999 constitutions respectively. After 12 years of military rule Nigeria witnessed another democratic system of governance in 1979 commonly known as the second republic. Then, the fourth republic after another 13 years of military rule. At the time of completing this thesis Nigeria has had uninterrupted democratic governance for 22 years beginning from 1999. In 1979, Nigeria jettisoned the parliamentary system of government inherited from Britain and embraced a presidential system of government with a bicameral legislature. This continued in the 1999 constitution. A residential system of government is characterized by democratic elections, which produces the head of the government through popular vote. Also, it encourages separation of power among the three arms of government—the executive, legislature, and judiciary (Adejumobi, 2002). The main difference between the presidential and parliamentary system of government is that in parliamentary system, the Prime Minister is a member of the parliament and

the head of government. The government in a parliamentary system is part of the parliament and reports to parliament. All ministers appointed by the Prime Minister are also members of parliament. In the presidential system of government, there is a clear-cut separation of power between the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary. While the Prime Minister and executive are members of the legislature in parliamentary system of government, in the presidential system the President and executive are members are not. The executive arm of the government headed by the president in a presidential system are all outside of parliament.

Another important difference between the presidential system of government and the parliamentary system is that the head of state is also the head of government in the presidential system. In the parliamentary system of government, the head of state is different from the head of government. For example, in UK the Queen is the Head of State, while in New Zealand and Australia the Governor General represents the Queen as the Head of State while the Prime Minister is the head of government. In Nigeria's case, prior to the Republican Constitution of 1963, the Queen was the Head of State in a parliamentary system. This changed and from1963 an elected President became Nigeria's Head of State as Nigeria operated a parliamentary republic system of government. The role of the Head of State (the President) was more ceremonial with very limited executive powers.

On labour policies, Ubeku, (1986 as cited in Gbosi, 1993) emphasized that no major changes nor new labour laws were enacted in the 1979 constitution. For instance ,Read (1979) noted that forced labour remained prohibited in the 1979 constitution as it was in the 1963 constitution. Also, Gbosi (1993) acknowledged that the civilian government of 1979 increased the minimum wage and added fringe benefits to encourage workers both in public and private organizations. According to Offiong

(1984), Nigerian workers benefited from housing, transport allowances and even car loans with only 5% interest rate stretched out for 6 years. This was early in the new administration of Shagari, specifically, 1 April 1980 before the financial mismanagement of the economy led to austerity measures, incessant strikes involving teachers, electric power agencies, and even taxi drivers.

I will now make a little digression to capture another military incursion, which abruptly ended the 1979 civilian government under President Shehu Shagari. When Major General Muhammadu Buhari overthrew Shagari government in a military coup d'état on December 31,1983, the military regime overturned the 1979 civilian government's policy on fringe benefits and car loans given to workers as encouragement. Unfortunately, many workers were retrenched from their jobs, others were given compulsory retirement before their due date and some politicians were jailed. According to Gbosi, (1993) private organizations followed the policy of Buhari in retrenching workers in their organizations because of economic recession, thus causing mass unemployment in the country. The successive military governments after Buhari did not improve the condition of Nigerian workers. Administrative coercion and poor labour practices continued.

In my opinion, one could not think of having a better labour practice and policy in the Nigerian political system outside of a democratic government. This is because the tenet of democracy involves freedom of speech, and inclusiveness, which outweighs military options of force. It was because these principles of inclusiveness, freedom of speech and dialogue that the second republic public policies on labour favoured workers. The Trade Unions could attempt to negotiate with the civilian government of 1979 to get higher wages, allowances, and car loans, despite the corrupt practices of the political elites.

Just like the 1979 civilian government, the civilian government of 1999 introduced wage increases. It encouraged public-private partnerships to diversify the economy and increased employment opportunities. Labour matters remained in the domain of the Exclusive list even after several amendments of the 1999 constitution in recent time. With respect to the legislative responsibilities within the federating states and the National Assembly, the 1999 constitution classified their roles into Exclusive list, Concurrent list, and Residual list respectively. The Exclusive list are those legislative duties and oversight functions assigned to the National Assembly. The Concurrent list is shared between the National Assembly and state Houses of Assembly, while the Residual list is the business of the state Houses of Assembly (Elaigwu, 2006). Highlights of the Exclusive list include but are not limited to "labour, pensions, commercial and industrial monopolies, winding up of corporate bodies, other than those established by state Houses of Assembly". Also, the Concurrent list includes, but is not limited to, "industrial, commercial, or agricultural development; scientific and technological research; statistics; trigonometrical, cadastral, and topographical surveys; universities; technological and post primary education" (Elaigwu, 2006, Distribution of power Section, para.3-4).

The fact that labour is currently in the domain of the Exclusive list makes it difficult for important legislation like workplace bullying policies to be handled by local governments and state governments respectively without the approval of the National Assembly. More importantly, labour law has no specific clarification nor discussion on workplace bullying. These are some of the reasons why an exhaustive review of labour and employment policies is required.

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6.4.1 Nigerian labour laws and challenges

As indicated in the preceding paragraphs, the Nigerian labour law falls under the jurisdiction of federal lawmakers as responsibilities in the Exclusive list. This law, which is an embodiment of rules and regulations guiding relationships between the employers of labour and the employees did not explicitly mention workplace bullying. At some point, the federal government of Nigeria added other statutes to guide and improve labour and employment relationships. Some of these statutes as identified by (Adeshina et al., 2017) are:

1. Trade Dispute Act

2. Trade Unions Act

3. Employee Compensation Act

4. Factories Act

5. Pension Reforms Act

6. Personal Income Tax Act

7. Housing Act

8. Industrial Training Fund Act

9. National Health Insurance Scheme Act

10. Immigration Act, and

11. National Industrial Court Act etc.

As important as the above listed statutes may be in the Nigerian legal acts, none of them directly mentioned, defined, nor discussed workplace bullying, even though they are subsidiary legislations under the Nigerian Labour Act. For instance, the Trade Dispute Act, Trade Union Act, and Employee Compensation Act focused on issues of workers/employees welfare or dispute between the employer and the employee/worker. However, most of these policies do not cover employees under contract, or manual

labourers within private organizations. For example, casualization of the workforce, dismissal of workers without compensation and refusal to pay the minimum wage are troublesome issues within labour and employment policies in Nigeria that affect workers in private organizations (Adewunmi & Ogunnubi, 2019; Aderemi, 2017; Ajonnadi, 2015). Even when the International Labour Organization (ILO) in their 2015 conference emphasized the need for member nations (Nigeria included) to promulgate laws against workplace bullying and implement minimum wage policies; Nigeria seems not to enforce such laws. With the third alteration of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2010, one would have expected that a section of these acts will address workplace bullying clearly without any ambiguity.

Factory Act and National Health Insurance Scheme Act, deal with issues of health and safety of workers/employees and their work environment. With the challenges on health and unforeseen circumstances that might affect the wellbeing of the workforce of the nation, a National Health Insurance Scheme Act was initiated in 2005 (Monye, 2006). Yet nothing is said on workplace bullying in this act. It is believed that such laws would help guarantee labour protection and social justice if clearly stated and implemented (*Labour protection in a transforming world of work*, 2015).

6.5 Public policy process and concept

As previously indicated in Chapters 1 and 2, one of the aims of this study is to develop a policy framework on workplace bullying for FBOs in SEN. It is one of the items in Chapter 12 that will be discussed. However, I need to introduce the concept of public policy and the plethora of ideas here, before developing a framework in Chapter 12. More importantly, in the introduction to this chapter I indicated that I would give an overview on public policy, and actors that influence public policy development in Nigeria. In order to do this, I find it helpful to begin with the concept of public policy.

This I believe will underpin further discussions on the development of a policy framework in Chapter 12.

Public policy as a concept is essentially about a government agenda, which encompasses a wide range of issues that affect socio-economic levels, political, religious and the general wellbeing of society. Crable and Vibbert (1985) posit that public policy is a by-product of the interactions involving the public—citizens, corporate organizations, and the government. Yet, the final decision to turn ideas generated in those interactive discussions into public policy rests with the government. Anderson (2014) notes that public policy is a deliberate action or actions taken by actors (group of political actors) or individuals to solve a problem. Such action must be for public good. On the other hand, Smith and Larimer (2018) argued that it is difficult to pin down exactly what is public policy. This is because it is a broad concept that has different attributes. John (2013); Knill and Tosun (2020); Moran, Rein, and Goodin (2020); Peters and Pierre (2006) took the same position. Taking a cue from a US Supreme Court judge's description of pornography as a difficult concept to define, Smith and Larimer (2018) concluded that "there is no precise and universal definition of public policy, nor is it likely such a definition will be conceived in the foreseeable future" (p.4). Rather than defining public policy from a restricted viewpoint, they suggested that an alternative approach would be to focus on the fields of public policy study, namely: policy analysis, policy design, policy process, and policy implementation. One outstanding benefit with this approach is that it provides a conceptual framework in seeking answers to policy issues. For instance, it is not enough to define public policy as government action or inaction in the words of Dye (1984) without asking questions on how those actions were conceived—which inevitably leads to policy process, design, analysis, and implementation respectively.

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I recognize that public policy is a multi-disciplinary focused area of study that seeks to solve societal problems from different orientations. Also, I recognize that in a democratic setting, the state actors or governments are not the only instruments to decide what should be public policy. In other words, public policy is a collaborative effort of private organizations, NGOs, cultural groups, and international community.

Given that policies can be developed by individuals, groups, and organizations, irrespective of their size or number, public policies on the other hand are usually the prerogative of the government. Therefore, in this study, public policy is defined as the conglomeration of ideas, opinions, and cultural beliefs from cultural groups, NGOs, religious organizations, and other interest groups which a government adopts towards solving problems affecting societies. It also involves choice of actions because not all ideas and opinions will go into the policy document, especially if the agenda of a government in power is contrary to those opinions.

6.5.1 Actors in Nigerian public policy process

In Nigeria, the public policy making process involves three different actors, namely the government at the federal, state, and local government levels, the business/corporate sector, NGOs, and citizens (Philip & Peter, 2013). However, the final decision on any public policy matter rests with the government. Within the government circle, the legislative bodies, the executive (president and cabinet) and various government agencies and the judiciary are involved in the policy making process. The legislative bodies (upper and lower chambers, i.e., the Senate and the House of Representative known as the National Assembly) critically evaluate all issues surrounding the policy proposals introduced as bills in the National Assembly. Usually, before a bill (a draft of proposed law) is passed into law it is presented first to the appropriate committee in both chambers. It is reviewed by the committee, if appropriate,

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then it is gazetted for the public to be aware of the proposed bill. It is presented to the floor of the house (the Senate and the House of Representative) through their clerks. The first reading is the introduction of the bill, it does not require debate. If the bill came from the president, it is an executive bill. If it is initiated from a member of the Senate or House of Representatives, it is known as a senate bill or a house bill respectively.

During the second reading, a member of either the Senate or House of Representatives makes a motion for the bill to be discussed, identifying the subject matter and the benefit of the proposed bill. But if the bill came from the President, the Senate President or Speaker of the House of Representative makes a motion for the bill to be discussed. A bill is discussed when a motion is seconded, and the majority agree to discuss it. During this stage, a bill is debated on the floor of the two chambers in session. If the bill goes through, it is sent to respective committees if it has multiple areas, but the committee in charge of the subject matter will be responsible for major consideration on the areas of concern. After the third reading it is voted on and sent to the either the House of Representative or the Senate to discuss and vote accordingly. It is when the bill is accepted at both chambers that it is sent to the President (in the case of state Assembly, it sent to the Governor) for assent to become law or an Act of Parliament. It is only when it has received assent from the President or Governor that it becomes law (see LAWPA, 2014; The American Government., n.d).

There are situations in which the President may refuse to give assent to the bill either because it is not well structured, or it does not capture his/her interest. In that case, the bills are sent back to the chambers. In the past, there have been cases of fracas and political impasse between the National Assembly and the Executive (president) as well as state Houses of Assembly and the Governors over assent on bills and other

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acrimonious disputes (Animashaun, 2021; Oni, 2014; Osunkoya & Basiru, 2019). In such cases, both the economic activities and socio-political situations become turbulent, thus affecting public and private organizations in their businesses. Normally, the legislative chambers both in the National and State Assembly use a committee system to scrutinize bills initiated either through the President/Governor or members of both chambers through their constituencies before passing it into law (Fashagba & Nwankwor, 2021). The aim is to give ample opportunity for each party in the process to discuss areas of disagreements. At some point, the National Assembly holds regional meetings with federal or state constituencies, seeking the opinion of the citizens on important social issues before taking the final vote on them.

The Judiciary are involved in the process of public policy because public policy embodies legislative acts that need to be interpreted within the ambit of the constitution. According to (Popoola, 2016) there is no provision in the Nigerian constitution mandating the judiciary to formulate public policies. However, their insight on matters of law is brought to bear in policy directions. Some of the ways they make valuable contributions towards public policy formulation is through "judicial review" and "judicial activism". Egomwan (1991 as cited in Popoola, 2016) explained that judicial review is the verdict given by the members of the judiciary on the constitutionality of actions taken (in this context) in policy formulation. While a variety of definitions of the term judicial activism have been suggested (Brown, 1986; Kmiec, 2004), in this thesis it is considered to be significant landmark judgements delivered for social change.

Finally, while the process of public policy includes civil society organizations (CSO), political parties, and government agencies, I need to emphasize citizens' involvement. Through their constituencies, they can share opinions on social issues, conduct research and lobby for critical social issues to be deliberated upon. Nigeria has

reached the point where citizens need to initiate referenda, demonstrate and sometimes write petitions that will bring about social change. For example, this study—workplace bullying—is one of the social issues that should be presented to the legislative bodies for policy decisions. Although the focus of this study is CFBOs within SEN, literature from Nigeria suggests that workplace bullying is a growing social problem across all sectors of work. The crux of my discussion thus far highlights the gaps in the labour and employment policies from the British colonial government in Nigeria through to the current Nigerian government. One of the times a grassroots coalition brought a social change was the 1929 labour movement. The Aba women's riot and ILO support put pressure on the British colonial government to enact the 1929 Act that prohibited forced labour and low wage rates. So, it is possible.

Therefore, rather than waiting for the policy makers to set the agenda from the top, my argument is for citizens to start from the lower level and initiate a move for the review of labour policies. Public policies in Nigerian political history seem to have always followed from top to bottom. The masses have the capacity to influence the policy makers who represent them at the legislative chambers both in the state and federal level. It is time to galvanize people from the local level to initiate public policies on labour and employment to end this social monster called workplace bullying.

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CHAPTER 7

LABOUR EXPLOITATION

7.1 Introduction

Labour exploitation as one of the emerging themes in this study is used in a general sense as the central theme that captures the strong feelings of FBOs workers' lived experiences in this result chapter. This labour exploitation, in the form of underpayment or poor remuneration, and together with work overload, has negative impacts on workers as previous studies have reported (Avery Derek, Tonidandel, Volpone Sabrina, & Raghuram, 2010; Greenberg, 2006). It is a common issue across the 11 FBOs in which I interviewed church workers. In some cases, the experience is mild. but others are at the extreme end, resulting in making workers sad, stressed, and compelled to live in penury. The situation is more complex because of the continuously high rate of unemployment in Nigeria. The insight I draw from the data analysis is that some of the employers of labour in FBOs use the economic situation in the country, and the vulnerability of the workers, as an excuse to underpay them, sometimes below the national minimum wage. Therefore, participants in this study, who experienced an asymmetrical relationship with their employers and supervisors in FBOs, conceptualized underpayment or poor remuneration and work overload as workplace bullying. (See the operational definition of workplace bullying in Chapter 2).

7.2 FBOs workers' lived experiences of poor remunerations

One of the participants in this study, (Interviewee 2 OD) explained her bullying experience thus:

> *It has been a bullying experience, because here I am told to do a work that two persons at least do. But single-handedly I am being the one doing that. And instead of being paid for the two persons' work, I am being paid for one person's work. In the sense that the actual money that supposed to be paid is not*

what is being paid to me; because I have made a lot of research in other schools and people working elsewhere, they have told me what they are being paid, while doing the two persons' work, which I am being done here (Interviewee 2, Organization D, 5th November 2019).[4]

The above statement focuses on the two themes "poor remuneration" and "work overload," but I would like to focus on her understanding of bullying experience in view of remuneration because that was the major part that infuriated her during the interview. Her job description was to come out early in the morning and join the school bus to pick up students from their homes and to accompany them to school. Usually in Imo state and other neighbouring states in SEN, parents who enrolled their children or wards in schools where distance and accessing transport are barriers, pay for their children's transport fare to the school. So, some schools create a transport unit to generate funds. Hence, they employ capable hands to assist in running the unit. It was based on this need for the transport unit to run smoothly that (Interviewee 2 OD) was employed. In most cases, it is the working-class parents who have the means, but not the time because of heavy early morning traffic, that pay for this service. Therefore, attention is given to this unit as a customer service unit. Although (Interviewee 2 OD) did not disclose the amount she was paid for the job, her story indicates it was far below the minimum wage. Secondly, because she had been a teacher and holds a degree in food science, she was compelled to teach:

I read food science, so in my school… in my field, so I didn't do education, but at least I have taught in another place before here. For like two months, I left there too because this issue, this kind of issue too; so, I left that place. So, coming back here, thinking that it will be a better ehm… opportunity, but still seeing the same thing. But decided to manage it for now. So, for now I am doing a bus caregiver and also teaching work.

The issue she was referring to that happened in her previous place of work, which may be poor remuneration, though not stated, seems quite common and is expected in some

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[4] I use italics for direct interview quotes.

of the private schools, but not in FBOs. She was relieved to be at the FBO, perhaps, because she believed that this organization would treat her better. This is because it is expected that FBOs will keep to the values of fairness, equity, and love, which are cardinal principles they advocate as previously stated. Unfortunately, to her dismay, the management of her school assigned her a class in the early childhood section to teach, and in addition to go for the morning and evening bus run every day. This experience she described as horrible and unacceptable. Below are some of the extracts from the interview:

> *I was actually told that the work is bus caregiver, then come back sit in the class till the closure of the school; then I follow the driver to drop the kids back to their… give them back to their parents. But coming here I am seeing the opposite of what I was being told. And being that in the situation I am tangled with, I have to at least for now manage it... [A]actually handling of the children, you know, the level… at their level now, they do not know anything, they cannot really… some of them cannot even speak. And some of them cannot express themselves, they can't tell you what really, they want. And even if, when you try to tell them what to do, they won't do it. They mess up the class, they defecate on their body, some urinate in the class, at least you saw me fetching water… the water was used to wash their clothes—some of them that urinate on their body. And seeing all those things, and after all this hard work and the time spent not being paid, I think I am being humiliated. I have complained about the time being given to me to report to school, because I leave my house 6:06 am every day, from Monday to Friday. And I wake up around 3:00 o'clock am, to prepare in order to meet up the school driver, in order for us to overcome the trafficking on the road. So, seeing waking up by 3:00 o'clock every day from Monday till Friday, leaving my house and my kids by 6:06 and being given the token I am being given to, honestly, it's not a good one.*

As a mother with children, the stress of waking up at 3:00 am every day to join the bus run is enormous. Meeting children from reasonably rich homes who pay well for their children to be taken care of and then receiving a pay far below the minimum wage was humiliating in her estimation. She felt deceived by the management. To accept the bus run work, and then to be assigned a class where she had to teach different subjects without pay was very distressing. Also, considering her qualification and experiences, accepting the bus run work as unskilled labour apparently diminished her sense of personal worth. An accurate description of this feeling was captured in her reference to

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cleaners who are considered the lowest of the unskilled and are paid better than her: "*The organizations here, they like bullying their workers. Paying a token and over-labouring the worker, from what I have seen. I have been in Lagos; I have seen how much they pay even ordinary cleaner*". With limited access to job opportunities in the food technology industry, which is her area of expertise, she had to manage such a stressful job that keeps her away from home for very long hours. One would be wondering, why would she keep on with such suffering? She identified reasons for tolerating the bullying treatment:

> *Yes, really, not, not seeing another place to go. [is a partial reason] I can see another place to go, but the issue is: I am still a childbearing young woman. And you know, not every organization... or school will allow you to come to with your child. So, that's another thing I am considering. So, they gave me that privilege. I must recommend them wherever they have done well. Yes! They gave me that privilege of coming with my little baby and though she is not a disturbing type, she eats, she plays, she doesn't disturb me from doing my work. Even when she tries to do, I will back her to make sure that I carry all... out my duties as demanded.*

Her story and experience demonstrate the resilient spirit of many Igbo and indeed Nigerian ladies who endure hardship to support their husbands and families, especially when there is an increase in gender education that focuses on reducing inequity. Instead of sitting at home with the children, she preferred to go and work, carrying her baby on her back while offering her services (Akanle & Nwaobiala, 2020). At least, she has a sense of financial contribution in her home, even if it is very insignificant in paying family bills. Although she was aware of what others are paid in surrounding FBOs and the economic progresses made in her own organization, she chose not to resign because she is allowed to come with her baby. This appears to be a reason to continue working, despite the poor remuneration, but she commented that it was not a peculiar privilege given to her because other nursing mothers there are allowed to come with their little children.

> *I don't consider it to be so because I am not the only one having a little baby there. And they are doing only one work they supposed to do, while I am doing two, and some of them are being paid more than me. Why in qualification, my qualification is more than some of them. So, that's where the difference.*

But she expressed bitterness over her poor remuneration for the additional job of teaching because it is an unfair arrangement. I asked further if there are resources to pay the money she expects and her response was: "But *all I know, seeing the tuition fees or school fees of the pupils and the population, the number of the teachers; I think we should earn more than what we are earning*". This feeling of poor remuneration is based on the fact that she is doing double jobs *"for the double work I am doing, there should be an exception there. It should not be like others that are doing one work. So, there should be an exception*". She believed she was not treated as part of the community in the real sense of equity and the cultural values. Therefore, such disparity in wages would naturally evoke a sense of inequity and injustice, which is the opposite of what Ubuntu theory and Adam's theory of equity espouse.

Currently, the minimum wage is Nigeria is ₦30,000 .00 per month, yet in some FBO, workers are still paid below ₦11,000.00. It is not unusual to see workers keen to compare their pay with other colleagues who render similar services to determine if they are fairly paid. In organization K, another participant (Interviewee 1 OK) in this study with this experience said:

> *When I was employed, that was 2010… nobody knew[e]w [this school]. I was made the PR [Public Relation officer] and my job was just[to] move around Abakaliki and advertise the school. For this school for one day never went to media house, to do any advert. Then they were giving…they started me with ₦10000, and I go round every day, I will move out of my house, I did that…then in September, I was given …to start a class, to be in the class. (Interviewee 1, Organization K, 13th November 2019).*

As she went around to advertise her school, she knew what other schools paid, and the privileges their teachers enjoyed and realised that she was experiencing what Orozco (192/2016, p. 162) considered 'wage theft'. This is a situation where employers

are failing their legal responsibilities to give adequate pay according to the wage policy of the respective state. Sometimes, FBOs use sophisticated strategies that may appeal to the spiritual sense of the prospective worker who is desperate for a job to succumb to their whims and caprices. This was the of case of this woman, as she had been unemployed for 3 years before she accepted the work at the church school. She considered her service as ministry in her faith community. As a member of the church, she was putting in all her skills and resources to advertise the school that represented her faith in the neighbourhood and was paid ₦10,00.00 a month, an amount that was below the national minimum wage of 2010. Prior to joining the school, she had a very good job in Lagos, but had to relocate to join her husband in the SEN for the sake of family stability—a value that is culturally significant to Igbo women in southeast Nigeria (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004). And when the school grew and became popular, she was relegated. This was not because the organization was lacking funds, because she had served in the account department too. This was revealed in the interview:

> *I was called to be in the class. I went into class from my…to primary 3, just one session I was in that class, I was moved to be the bursar. I was in charge of receipts, every new receipt, I mean, keeping the account to an extent, because my boss is… I read education management in education, but she is an accountant by profession. So, somehow, I was just supplementing her job, she does a better part of the job, I was just supplementing.*

From the above statement, (Interviewee 1, O K) has a clear understanding of her church organization where she works, especially its financial state. Therefore, she believes that her experience is an example of bullying through poor remuneration, as revealed in her statement below:

> *From classroom to this office, there's not been financial attachment to that. It has been the same thing I was earning while in class, that I am still earning till date…. The few schools that can compete with [us], they see that they are reasonably paying well, comparing the thing we are paid, but here…we that are inside…ah…when we look at how far the school is growing. Because we know when I came here, all these mansions were not [here], even this one. It was just that building, the classrooms, the whole of this place is like swamp…so the school is growing very, very well, compared to that, when we who are here start*

looking back at that and now where we are, we now feel… where you as an individual, we should be growing along with the school (Interviewee I Organization K).

Indeed, some of my participants in this study expressed emotional distress and distrusted their organizations. Nevertheless, the majority said it did not affect the quality of their service and input in the organization, which is a bit strange. I began to imagine, what would have been responsible for people who were underpaid to render quality services? This will be explored in response to the research sub-question on the impact of workplace bullying to quality of services in Chapter 11.

Still on the rapidly growing reinforcement of workplace bullying through underpayment or poor remuneration among other factors, a participant (Interviewee 3 OG) in this study referred to her colleagues in the Northern Nigeria, in the same organization, as better paid when compared to workers in SEN. To buttress this feeling, she said:

> *I witnessed one of us who came down from north was complaining bitterly that teachers working in Southeast, especially in church schools are being humiliated. That they are being rejected, that they are not being taken good care of! That where she was working in North, before Boko haram crises broke up, that they were being paid very well, where a teacher will be going home every month with not less than ₦50000-₦60000. And that the end of the year, that they will also pay them… ehm… what do you call it? PTA ₦4000, ₦4000 for each month by every parent, by each child. So, if this organization will borrow a lift from those of them in North, where such a thing is being done, there is no how a teacher working in a mission will be looking for other jobs elsewhere (Interviewee 3, Organization G,14th November 2019).*

In another organization in Enugu state, four mid-level career teachers who participated in the interviews shared their grievances on poor salaries too. They felt grossly exploited because the owners of the organization are aware that unemployment is really a big issue in Nigeria. For example, they said they put in their best for the organization to grow so that they may have prospects for social mobility and salary increment. But as

the organization grew in number and size, they were ignored, and their welfare was not considered relevant. One of them (Interviewee 2 OI) said this:

> *first of all, we have a problem of… just like I told you before, there is no structure when it comes to salary. Let me shock you: there is somebody here who almost started with the school, the person has worked for 9 years, this school is 11 years old, the person has worked for 9 years here, he is one of the least paid; and he is teaching a core subject and he is competent! They placed him in an exam class because it's only competent people that they place there. He is one of the least paid. The proprietor gave us a promise that he will… that he … by September we should see increment, changes and so on and so forth, but as we speak, nothing has been done. (Interviewee 2, Organization I, 7th November,2019).*

Another scenario is where a staff member (Interviewee 1 OI) who experienced wage stagnation for a long period was resentful about the pay check of a relief teacher that came to relieve her for few weeks. She demonstrated the weight of her frustration on the kind of treatment she receives with a long sigh of hopelessness. According to her:

> *The system here is that the new people earn more than the old teachers. That's the system we are in… they use the situation of the country to pay you or your bargaining power. I don't know… we don't have ehm… we don't have a system… we don't have salary structure here; we don't have a salary structure. I will give you an instance; when I was pregnant, I pleaded for them to employ someone that will stand in for me when I put to bed, the person was employed, and he is earning ₦20,000.00 more than my salary. So, you see that ehm… [she became emotional with a long sigh ehm…] there is no structure. There is no structure, it's based on how they feel, what they feel they can pay. So, we who have been in the system are the one suffering it, the newer people are paid higher than we are. (Interviewee 1, Organization I, 7th November 2019).*

In the same Organization I, three of the participants interviewed are of the opinion that they are competent and skilful, have master's degrees, and there are massive resources to pay the minimum wage stipulated by the government. In the words of (Interviewee 3 OI):

> *They are making it overwhelmingly … I mean when you have a child paying over ₦200,000.00 and the kids… population we have are over 400 and something and then your staff, which the number is less than 40 or just around 40, the highest paid person earns less than ₦60,000—then you should begin to imagine what then the kind of profit they should be making (Interviewee 3, Organization I).*

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The second participant (Interviewee 2 OI) added:

> *They have… let me not exaggerate, but the resources are massive. Let me give you an idea: the fee per student here is above ₦200,000, but some of us are not earning up to ₦40,000. It's as bad as that! Some people are not earning up to 50, some people are not earning up to 60, but an average student here pay over ₦200,000 as fees. So, it is, it is… the resources are massive, more than enough, more than enough. By the time you interview more people you discover that we have similar complaints. You discover that our complaints are similar, it may vary in some personal experiences, but they are similar, generally speaking.*

In Imo State, the situation is the same. Mission schools are perceived by workers as oppressing and exploiting them through poor remuneration (Interviewee 2 OD):

> *[Y]you see in most of these private schools [these are schools not owned by the government, it also includes church owned], they will want to use the worker and overuse the worker, thereby paying lesser of what they supposed to pay, using the person to get what they want. That is what is in most private schools here" (Interviewee 2, Organization D, 5th November 2019).*

The variety of these experiences and the economic situation in Nigeria suggest that a lot is going on behind the scenes among FBOs and other private sectors. The extent to which poor remuneration, underpayment or even late payment of the salary occurs, is not well established, but there is need for a social change. "Using the person to get what they want" as presented above in Organization D is an expression of overt or covert subjugation experienced in her workplace. In fact, some FBOs take pride in their ability to provide employment where there is a scarcity of jobs, even though they owe salaries. Hence workers are threatened with piles of applications from others seeking jobs and are ready to take any amount as remuneration. One of the participants (Interviewee 3 OI) in this study alluded to this about his organization:

> *So, to them they feel they are doing the staff a favour, so to speak; because most times when they call for meeting, they shout at us and tell us that we have piles of resumes, that the moment you walk out they have about three, four, five substitutes waiting for them in the office. So, that you're walking out today, doesn't make any difference (Interviewee 3, Organization I).*

Putting it differently, he said:

> *proprietors do what they do because they know that… in fact to them they see they are doing the Nigerian government a favour. You know, by taking people*

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> *out of the street and employing them to pay them whatever they think they are paying them.*

What else would you expect when a nation's economic development is grossly depleted through corruption and graduates seem to roam through the cities in search of livelihood? Even those who work do not have the assurance of social security. For example, in relation to the situation of the pension scheme, some FBOs are not ready to comply with the law of remitting 7.5 % of workers earnings into the national contributory scheme against retirement of workers. This was noted by (Interviewee 4 OI), who described it as one of the experiences among the issues of poor remuneration:

> *the school doesn't really have such [welfare of workers at heart] because there was a time, they were coming up with 7½ part of the salary to be kept for you, like all these pension scheme… it is not existing… they only told us, but it has not been implemented. You know it's until we begin to see it that's when we will… it's on paper, they will put it on your appointment later, but it has not yet been implemented.*

> *I don't know [why it has not been implemented], because they've brought in a pension scheme body, they have taken our data, you [know]sometimes, to release money [he giggles slightly] he…he… it's not always easy; but to bring in money—e-hey… is very easy to… bring in money, bring in money, but to give it out, it's not always easy. So, it takes maybe intervention (Interviewee 4, Organization I).*

The employers of labour, especially private organizations may not wish to participate in the scheme because of the level of corruption and fraudulent practices with the scheme. They seem to have growing distrust both in their relationship with the scheme and their employees who may benefit from the contributory scheme (Amaka, Chizoba, & Edirin, 2017; Casey & Dostal, 2008; Ekpe, 2016; PriemumTimes., 2020). Nevertheless, in the case where the employee sees the employment offer as help, as was seen in the case of (Interviewee 1 OG) in Ebonyi state, it is possible for them to ignore such a scheme. After all, they are made to feel they are only given the job out of sympathy. Hence, they are not expected to talk about the minimum wage, let alone the pension contribution. Below is her statement on remuneration:

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For example, that I have been in the pay…ehm remuneration stand for a particular… for some years and I wish that it has to be changed. Ehm…and…ehm, when you, you …you make such complain and nothing is done, you keep quiet over it, and then you manage… like I told you that they are helping!! that is just, you know when somebody, someone is helping you, e-hey! You don't have any job, and someone has just offered you a little, e-hey! You always, you know, obey to say yes sir, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir, yes sir!!!! Just like that! (Interviewee 1, Organization G, 14th November 2019).

Nonetheless, having presented the stories that portrayed the lived experiences of the participants in this study, the Headmistress' (Interviewee 1 OG) understanding of workplace bullying in relation to poor remuneration is significant too. It raises a point that would serve as a voice of the management of FBOs whose voices were not represented in this study, because of the complexities involved in getting participants. Contrary to the views of other interviewees, the Headmistress in Organization G, brought an insight that suggests she does not consider poor remuneration as part of workplace bullying in FBOs. When I asked her what she considers as bullying in her work experience, she said:

Uhm…ehm…bullying can…I see it as an intimidation given to someone, denying someone his or her right, making the person not to feel important, so many other negative aspect… you can give to someone, and the person will see it as you are bullying him or her. In the right senses, it is, in the senses, it is. But because of the organization, because you…you begged for…begged to be employed…ah…that is where I am coming from, I don't see it. But in the actual sense, for example that even if it is in the civil service that such a thing is happening it…it is outright bullying, because my right of better condition of services are not given, but because of the society we are in, there is no job, so whatever, anyone you find, you…that will make you to be coming out of the house, not staying in the house, so the little you're been offered with, you feel happy over it, and then you go on with life. You compare it that, had…if …you are not doing anything that this one is better off. But in the actual sense, all those things are the things that serve as bullying someone, deny someone of his or her right. Just like I told you that at the beginning, you might just be given a…appointment, e-hey, that your appointment letter, that you are being appointed, you have to render your services according, and then, if you want to resign, you give them a month notice, e-hey, so that ehm…they won't feel bad; that's just the thing that will be contained in the letter. So, your remuneration, services and other that…e-hey, it is what they decide, and you accept. Because I know that ah…as a… a degree holder, in the civil service job, at least you would expect a certain amount of money to get…to be…paid, but in this case, you don't expect that.

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In the above interview extract, she excuses poor remuneration as part of the realities of the economic situations in the country, which some FBOs would struggle with to meet their obligations and mission. She accepts it as the major bitter experience in her work, even as part of the management in her faith organization. As the Headmistress, she affirmed that she is totally unable to change the unfortunate situation but considers lack of job opportunity elsewhere a possible reason to cope with the poor remuneration. However, I observed that she was jittery and defensive during the interview. A church member and a friend took me to her house very early in the morning to negotiate for this interview and allow me to get the views of other staff members. The reason for being jittery may have been because she was not too sure where the interview would be used, even after assuring her that it was mainly an academic work and that her identity, and the school's would not be revealed. Nevertheless, she gave sufficient clues on her lived experiences of bullying to some of the questions.

In her estimation, poor remuneration is considered bullying if it was experienced in government workplaces, but in FBOs, it is not considered bullying. Part of the reason for such belief is that government establishments have resources at their disposal to pay more, while the FBOs are providing essential services for the benefit of their communities without governmental support. However, she claimed she had pushed for adequate compensation for the services the staff under her were rendering, and nothing came out of it. In the face of extremely sensitive and difficult matters like remuneration, she had to remain silent and remind the employees under her to keep quiet, for two reasons: they begged to be employed and they have the option to resign.

Another key management staff member (Interviewee 2 OF), a bursar in a popular Christian secondary school in Ebonyi State, alluded to poor remuneration as workplace bullying, when she was suggesting possible ways to bring harmony and peaceful workplace in SEN:

If you do not pay somebody very well, you are bullying the person…oooo!!!
hunger strike…from hand to mouth is another bullying. So, as they gather and
have their meeting [the board of directors], they should also look into the pay
package of the workers and make them happy (Interviewee 2, Organization F,
14th November 2019).

One major issue these management class interviewees have confirmed in this study is

that poor remuneration among the FBOs workers in SEN is understood as workplace

bullying, even though the headmistress was trying to avoid being judgemental about her

faith organization. Hence, she shifts the responsibility to government establishments.

However, her response has raised a critical question concerning the funding of FBOs

and the justification for paying minimum wage if government does not support their

funding. A broader perspective on this is further considered in the discussion chapter.

Let me now move to the next sub theme—workload.

7.3 Work overload

Work overload is another experience participants in this study said occurs

regularly and is perceived as workplace bullying. It is established that certain

occupations demand physical and mental energy simultaneously (Nel & Coetzee, 2019;

Van den Broeck, De Cuyper, De Witte, & Vansteenkiste, 2010), which some

individuals may not cope with the rigours involved. For example, care giving jobs like

nursing and teaching are some of the jobs that may demand physical and mental energy.

Most of the participants in this study who are teachers and health-related professionals

said they are passionate about their careers and competent, but the exploitations are too

much to bear. So, to them, it is not a case of inability to deliver, or not knowing what

the job demands, but work overload and poor remuneration. For instance, in

organization A, C, D, F, I, J, K, research participants complained bitterly of work

overload. While some were concerned about the overload of work and poor

remuneration, others focused only on working beyond the time agreed plus extra duties

given to them either because their organizations are not ready to get more hands or due

to low staff retention. One of them, (Interviewee 2 OI) an economics teacher, recalled that what he was told during his job interview, what was written in his appointment letter, and what finally became his job description were totally different:

> [B]e in school before 7:30 am, school dismisses by 2:30 [pm], that was what I was told when I was interviewed by the then Bishop, the proprietor. But when I started, I notice, you can see now it is to 4:00 [pm], I am still in school waiting to teach evening lesson paid for [by the students], but I am not being paid. The service I am about to render 1hour 30minutes class I will render now; I will not be paid for it, but these students paid for it. Each and every one of them paid for it, but a dime will not enter my pocket... my experience as a new staff here was horrible, because I was loaded with work. In fact, if not that we are in an environment where we don't have enough opportunities for job, I would have withdrawn. I would have withdrawn, in the sense that I was given the whole of JS1; JS1 we have 3 classes, I was given the whole of JS2; JS2 have 3 classes, I was given the whole of JS3. I was given 3 classes of JS3, I was also given SS2, one person, one person! The contract was to teach Economics. I was interviewed based on economic teacher. I came, they started given me jobs, not only that the job was or is still far more than the pay; yet I did it with all their compulsion, that you must do this, you must do that, I did it. That alone to me is bullying! (Interviewee 2, Organization I, 7th November,2019).

The above case is basically one of work overload, underpayment or poor remuneration and forced labour, beyond the contract he signed with the school. The idea of forced labour is another twist in the work overload experience in some FBOs. Two participants from two different FBOs (B and F) presented similar cases, when one of their workers left because of the frustrations of the system and they were mandated to take over their jobs as an extra workload, permanently yet paid poorly:

> [A]teacher who was teaching basic technology left for his service. So [the principal] wanted to employ another person to take up that position, but they were beating the price, did not, they didn't agree on the price. E-hey! The person went out, left. And she interviewed like 2 or 3 more people, but they didn't agree on a particular price- their salary. So, she now started looking out for CV's, searching CV's that she has. She found that I have taught that subject where I was coming from. She now said, okay, that there's no need looking for somebody outside, that I would take up the subject. So, when she told me that I should be teaching Basic Technology, I told her that that was not why I was employed in the school. And… if I should take up the subject, that you[she] have to tell me what will come with it (that is compensation). She said no that, ehm…., I should take it up! I didn't accept that because she was not fair to me when I was in need. So, I don't feel as helping out. Because one, the subject will make me to take double, double period: teaching from jss1 to jss3, with the subject-mathematics, that I teach. So, and that is what they pay somebody for! E-hey! So,

> *I don't think it's right for me to take it without anything, coming out from it. So…, she called, she even called panel for me, called emergency meeting, called everybody, invited so many people on the issue. So, when I was asked why I refused to take the subject, I told them this story I am telling now. So, they all saw the reasons with me and said, well, you are on your right. And told her to do something for me, at least even if it is one over four of what she paid that person that left… that she should give it to me…She told me okay… "I will do something", continue with the subject. I took up the subject, till now, she hadn't, she hadn't given me any kobo out of it. When I went back to her, I was threatened! That unless, I want to lose my job, unless I want to leave my job. (Interviewee 1, Organization B, 30th October 2019).*

The case presented in Organization B is an attempt to resist tyrannical leadership. There are many episodes to this encounter, according to (Interviewee 1 OB) that gave him courage to demand compensation for carrying the extra teaching load, but because the story is connected to another sub-theme, I will shelve that for the context in which it will make more sense. However, part of the lived experience, which he considers workplace bullying, is excessive workload and he was compelled to take it or lose his employment. Absolute loyalty to leadership is essential and expected in FBOs, but in the face of a tyrant leader dogged by obsessive jealousy, it will be difficult to put up with. This seems to be the situation playing out in Organization B.

In organization F, a similar scenario was reported, though the management foreknew a situation that may arise for this participant (Interviewee 1 OF) to be assigned other duties, therefore they added it in her employment letter. Nonetheless, she saw her job as work overload, based on what she was paid:

> *I applied for computer operating secretary, that's work in the computer ITC …lab[oratory]. But, as the case maybe, we were two for the job. Then, so…I was rescheduled to enter to lab attendant. The other was taken for computer operator, but she withdrew [resigned] after a year. I had to takeover that office, making the job two for me, for one person… [a very tedious job], not only that, but I also take care of 3 labs…no increment, nothing, nothing, it's just the same way it has been, the first [day] I was employed… The role that was given to me was a lab attendant—chemistry, physics lab attendant. The job there…it says, with other jobs attached... and there was a …a specific salary amount that was fixed there. That was ₦10000 only (Interviewee 1, Organization F, 14th November 2019).*

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It is normal to carry out some other duties to support the mission and vision of FBOs,

but when it becomes a permanent routine, in addition to the core job one was employed,

then it is perceived as cruelty in the judgement of FBOs workers. Hence, they

conceptualize it as workplace bullying, even though her employment letter included

"other duties". When the computer operating secretary resigned, she was asked to take it

because that was what she had trained for and was passionate to do:

> *I am typing exam, I am not supposed to do that, but I am just adding it, just as the appointment says 'with other jobs'…I was just adding it. It was, it's just from my heart, because I like computer. The thing that drew me to this work is computer. I finished my secondary school, I enter…I said, I will not stay idle, I want to do something. So, I found, I told my dad, "Place me in this computer centre, I want to learn in six-month time, I will be free, and I will work". But in three-month time, I was able to teach others and I was employed in that particular place. So, I came here with zeal, the joy that I…I received from staying and working with computer system—because at times I watch movie where all this white people do many things with computer, I say I will do higher than this.*

Instead of employing another hand to assist in the laboratory, she was used

continuously in both jobs. Most FBOs have the tendency to overwork professionals who

are skilled in their work without considering the impact on them. This seems to be the

situation of another participant (Interviewee 3 OC) in his job:

> *Anyway, I try to cut it short, it was tough, it was I think for 3 years, it was disheartening because I worked beyond the normal time, the workload became excessive. Nobody was there to assist, I was calling for assistance, nobody minded what I was saying, just had to cope with the whole thing; it was like work here, so many… you have to fix so many things in so many departments. Even when the time for closure is at hand, nobody cares, what they want to know is: is this thing done? That is in summary of what I have seen in more than 5,6,7 departments in this place (Interviewee 3, Organization C, 4th November 2019).*

Those in the medical professions have their own stories on work overload like their

counterparts and the common phrase used to describe the experience is "workplace

bullying":

> *Ehey work overload is also bullying because all of them are telling on someone, they are all stressors. Ehe… work overload nna, work overload because there is shortage of staffs here, very much. You can see one nurse handling… we have 23 beds here. At times the ward will be filled up, with 23 patients, one nurse on*

duty, especially night duty; you know night duty is really very long, till daybreak. The one nurse will be doing everything, taking the vital signs, giving drugs, to feeding those on NJ tube: it's really very tough. Even during the day, as we have less patients now, about 8 of them, it's one nurse on duty. It's really a work overload. And also, the much time you spend here (Interviewee 1, Organization J,18th November 2019).

Sometimes, it seems that FBOs workers are so overwhelmed with the work overload that they are unable to meet deadlines. Hence, they are reprimanded when actually it is not their fault. This was the case of a new laboratory technician (Interviewee 1 OK) in one of the famous FBOs hospital in Anambra state:

The experience of bullying is just like if, let me say we the junior cadres working, you now see the senior one's going up on down in the office, they will now leave the workload on you and if you could not be able to complete the workload, the query will now land back on you. So, that is the experience I have on the bullying (Interviewee 1, Organization K, 16th November 2019).

Another example of work overload was reported by (interviewee 2 OK). As a laboratory technician, he is expected to work under the senior colleagues who qualified as laboratory scientists. He acknowledged that certainly, there are things you cannot argue with senior professional colleagues about when experience and knowledge is involved, but not in work overload:

We have job description—a technician and a scientist does not have the same job description, even in our license it is categorically stated that every medical laboratory technician must work under the supervision of a qualified and licensed medical laboratory scientist ... So, you as a technician do not do the work of a scientist, because they have their own duty, the technicians they have their own duties as well (Interviewee 2, Organization K, 16th November 2019).

The impression he gave was like running errands outside his core duties, while his jobs were still left for him to do whenever he was done with the non-essentials:

It is an additional duty, because it was not stated in my appointment letter, I was only employed as medical laboratory technician. Though they were like telling me verbally that I will be taken care of the store, which is an additional duty. They should employ somebody that should be… I told them okay, let me be there permanently, they said no. I said I cannot be doing bench work and be doing that thing perfectly, no it is too much on me and I will still do call duty, i.e., night shift. So, most times I get angry going to that store; there are long processes there, you will record in the tally card, put kits inside the system, all these things, you still run back to perform your bench work. It was too much on me then, at a point I stopped putting it in the system, because it takes much of my

time, especially when new stocks will be brought by our suppliers—that you will check, write everything they brought inside the tally card, with receipt numbers, expiring dates, all those things. Maybe in a day I have not even finished it and [have not] finished my work (Interviewee 2, Organization K, 16th November 2019).

7.4 Concluding thoughts for discussion

Based on the findings of this chapter, CFBOs workers in SEN have shared through their lived experiences stories that validate the claim that bullying is "a ubiquitous part of human life", just like aggression (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2011, p. 7), and can be found in any organization where human beings interact (Ireland & Snowden, 2002). Therefore, it is not surprising that bullying exists among workers in FBOs. Nevertheless, in response to the first research question "what is the church workers' lived experience and understanding of workplace bullying in Southeast Nigeria?" there are shades of unique experiences uncovered. The major one is poor remuneration. For instance, the poor remuneration experiences of workers in FBOs are only possible and prevalent because some FBOs refused to pay minimum wage. The second is work overload, which is a full manifestation of power imbalance that characterizes societies with the culture of respect for the elderly at the expense of truth and justice. Therefore, the first question posed to this finding is: (1) are there existing theories and literature on workplace bullying that support the conceptual understanding of workplace bullying as poor remuneration and work overload? (2) How do they differ from previous findings? These are thoughts for discussion in Chapter 11, using Equity and Ubuntu moral theories from a sociological perspective, as indicated earlier in Chapter 2.

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CHAPTER 8

PROCEDURAL UNFAIRNESS

8.1 Introduction

Procedural unfairness focuses on unethical principles and ways organizations make decisions that seem to threaten worker's sense of belonging and safety at the workplace (De Cremer et al., 2008). Some of the participants interviewed in this study presented cases that suggest a breach of the principles of fairness and justice. Therefore, as anticipated in any human organization, when it is obvious to workers that they cannot get justice or be treated fairly they lack confidence in the organizations and its leadership. This chapter has two sub-themes that are linked to procedural unfairnesses as part of the lived experiences of CFBOs workers in SEN, which they consider as workplace bullying. The first sub-theme is lack of fair hearing.

8.2 Lack of fair hearing

In Organization C, interview data from participants indicated a lack of fair hearing by the organization. The first incident was a case of suspension without pay for one month. Interviewee 1 OC, was employed as a radiographer and in the course of his work, he discovered that the machine was malfunctioning and needed a technician to repair and service it. Hence, he alerted the management to the situation.

> *June 2017, our x-ray machine broke down. So, I informed the management to call their … technician, the engineer that use to fix it up. So, … they asked me to call the engineer by myself, which I did, but the engineer refused to come because according to him... the last work he did for them the money was not paid to him. So, he cannot come again until the money is being paid. So, when I reported to the management, the management just overlooked it and asked me to look for another engineer, so which I did. So, ehm… he now came, my own engineer, the engineer that I called, he now come and do the work. After every, every, he couldn't discover the fault. So, ehm… when I reported to the management because it[took] him so many times, close to one month so, which ehm… management was angry, they started quarrelling at me, taking it as if it's my fault* (Interviewee 1, Organization C, 4th November 2019).

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Being one of the famous FBOs in Imo state with hospitals and other health facilities both in the city and rural areas, people in the rural communities commonly seek medical services there because it is closer to them. But the faulty x-ray machine became a challenge for some of the essential diagnostic test required for the treatment of patients. Both the management and (Interviewee 1OC), were anxious as the x-ray machine was not yet repaired. After one month, it was given to a technician for repairs. Many of the regular patients were seeking medical services elsewhere:

> *It now lingered up to a month + and the management was angry that their patient[s] are [going] out and it is not good. Any patient that comes here you start telling them story, you are here to save live; anybody that comes for any radiological service, you attend to the person. Yes, so they were complaining that their patient they are sending them out, they are losing money and they are losing patients as well. So, which they are right also, they are right, but I wish the money they paid the engineer that has been doing the work for them since 2015; you understand, and the engineer now come this time, I think that such thing wouldn't have happened.*

Therefore, the head of the management team decided to suspend the Radiographer, (Interviewee 1OC), who doubles as Head of the Department for the radiographic unit. This was after the technician he brought could not repair the x-ray machine, and he resorted to calling their former technician, who would not come because he was owed money for the repairs of two previous years.

> *You know, the mistake the guy did is that, instead of him to tell me that he was not trained with this old machine, because he is a young guy like me. Yes, he should have told me that no… this is not the type, this machine is too old, that he was not trained with this old equipment, that what he was trained is [with] all these new, new ones. So, he was just trying ehm… what we call trial and error… to see if it will work if he can get it. So, it took him so many times until he now gives up and said that he cannot do it, you get. So, ehm… that was when management and management did not even give me a listening ear.*

It is the one month suspension without pay that prompted him to share his experience —lack of fair hearing, and the dishonest treatment meted out against the former technician. All these he considered as workplace bullying. And when I asked him why he was not given a listening ear he said:

I don't know. Because the time, the time duration. They are complaining that after this … they now said that I am the one that went and called the…ehm … quack engineer, which when this thing started, I asked them to call the one that have been doing the work… the work for them. So, they called me to call it by myself, which I did, but the man complained that the last work he did to them, that was 2015, that the money was not paid to him, 2015; therefore, he will not come this 2017 to do the work. The last time that the man repaired the machine was 2015, late 2015—so that services now run them the whole… till the end 2015, the whole 2016 till 2017 when it now broke up[down]. So, the man was complaining bitterly, the charges for 2015 job that he did for them was not paid to him, that he cannot come here again until the money is paid to him…., after that time wasted, they now called the engineer, the management now by themselves called the engineer, started begging him to send his account number, and the man did send his account number. The money was paid to him. The even management now promised to provide a car that will come and take him from the place where he is staying, because he is staying in another State.

Of all that he mentioned in his lived experience, the most touching was how and where he was mandated to go home, not to return again until a month later.

Now, that suspension, there was not any letter, they did not issue me letter till now; letter of suspension of what I did. What they just told me that HOD, from here you have been suspended and just start going from here, because they called me outside, just start going from here don't… I asked them that even my house key is inside my room, you understand, that let just go… they just stopped me. They had to send my subordinate to go and open my office and bring that key for me... Seriously speaking I feel so bad, I feel so humiliated. Yeah, because I wasn't given a listening ear, and I don't see it as my fault, yes! I don't see it!

Undisclosed reasons for suspension and demotion of a worker at will, are part of the unfair treatment that hinges on absolute power without recourse to principles of fair hearing. This was also highlighted in the experience of the second interviewee in this organization. The second (Interviewee, 2 OC), was employed as an accountant, but as soon as she resumed work, the organization was under audit and the independent or external auditor requested that the management should send one of their accountants to work with him. The auditor approached her to work with him as a new staff member in the system, and suggested the same to the management, who later accepted the arrangement for a new entrant to work with the auditor. Unfortunately for her, she had surgery, which kept her away from participating fully in the audit. However, when she

returned to work, there was a change of administration. It was in the new administration that her challenges of bullying became obvious. The external auditor resigned and advised her to resign, or else she would suffer challenges in the new administration. Below is part of the extract of the interview:

> *Actually, I was given an appointment letter to work as an accountant, but I was directed to work with the external auditor then. So, they…, after working with the… I was working with the external auditor, so I moved to his department working with him. It was a little bit challenging because I have not worked with an auditor before, but I learnt a lot from him. So, I now had health challenges, I had to withdraw small, and which he permits that I should come back after the challenges I had; I had surgery.*

> *So, ehm… when I came back, there was a change of administration. So, maybe he [the auditor] felt that ehm… he cannot work with the new administrator or something; so, he decided to withdraw back, he said he's leaving—he's no longer working, that I should come along with him. I said no, the place you are inviting me to is very far; I am married, I am a married woman, so I cannot, this place is more convenient for me. So, let me just stay here and wait for any other better opportunity, than to be working as an ad hoc staff. So, he said okay, since I want to stay, he's leaving. So, he later told me that he has disengaged with them, so which I met the new administrator, asking him my fate; he said I should not worry that he will put me in a better place (Interview 2, Organization C, 4th November, 2019).*

The invitation to resign was not accepted, firstly because she is a married woman, and needed the income. Secondly, she was not sure of a better job offer with the auditor. However, the point of emphasis for not changing her job was her marriage. She spoke to the new administrator of the hospital for a placement. The new administrator fulfilled his promise, but it was not to her best interest. This was because she felt unsafe in the new department where she was asked to work with her new skill in auditing. The staff in the department were not comfortable working with her. She reported her experiences to the administrator:

> *He now transferred me to checking department as cashier; I should work there for a mean time. And I should be there as someone that has worked with external auditor. So, I will have a lot, based [on my] experience to go there. So, I said okay, I accepted, I was working there with them. But as someone who has been invigilating their work before, I became a threat, I was… they were seeing me as a threat to …them. So, they were not comfortable having me in their midst. So, after, which I told them that they should relax, that I am not here, I am no*

longer working with an auditor, so they should relax ... external auditor. They should relax and do everything, but within them, I found out that they are not comfortable working with me, which they are not free with me there. So, I later met the administrator, telling him that this is the issue, remove me from there, there is conspiracy, and I would not like to be hurt or harmed... [she sighed as if in that same situation as she relieves her mind] chm... I am not comfortable there. And I was having health challenges, during that cold weather, I was having fever and everything—night shift, morning shift and even on Sundays, even my husband was not comfortable with the shift—working in the night, on Sunday I will come to work and every day.

The administrator seemed not to consider her complaint for a change as necessary. She however, confirmed during the interview her fears of rejection even if she was sent to work in the accounts department. She chose to be in the cashier unit, and work shifts since the hospital canteen runs 24 hours. The reason for her fear of working with the accounts department was because the audit report showed fraudulent practices there. Hence, it may have resulted in the removal of the former administrator of the hospital. This seems to be one of the reasons she was advised by the external auditor to resign.

So, during my period there, after telling him [the new administrator] he did not say anything; so, he said okay, let me continue maybe one day they will change mind and remove me, maybe put me in account department or any other place. But I really know that even account department too, they will not want to have me there; because I have worked against them [she laughs and giggles] hum...hahaha! e-hee...! Fraudulent practices and everything!

So, ehm... although the external auditor warned me that I should move out... because of that, that the work is very risky and ...I said I am not external, he is the external. I am just reporting... [she laughs] hahaha.... So, I felt like ah... why will I leave now.

Her ordeal started when she resumed with the new department and they did not give her an orientation to the work there. She decided to pick the night shift for the purpose of understudying the trend of business there.

So, this one ... so I was there working with them and a lot of things...so... you know, when you come in a new place, there will be an orientation...e-hey, so that I'll get familiar with the background and everything. But they were not ... they were not... they did not open up too much about .... So, I took my time, even when they said that I should work permanently I said let me take that night, since in the night there is less crowd, let me.... In the night I will just carry their books be checking how they are doing it and using it for my own work. So, if I

have any mistake, I will tell them…see oo, you understand. I will fill them, tell them to correct if there is any mistake. So, I was thinking that they are okay, but within them they are not comfortable .

When she discovered she was not wanted at all, she became extremely careful with everyone in the unit, except the HOD who she had worked with in the account department previously. Unfortunately for her, the HOD also started attacking her:

when I was posted there, she [the HOD] was like happy, aha… I have seen someone I can talk to, as if, it was because of herself, that I felt relaxed, since she is the only person, I know that I can talk to. Until a time, she changed; I don't know whether they found out that maybe both of us were communicating well. They now, those people, they now conspired because they posted her there as HOD new. I don't know, she now changed, as in, was attacking me seriously. I told her I cannot, even though I have… I quarrel with anybody here, not with you, because we married from the same place. And I don't know why you are attacking me. Even you that showed me how to go to your church's catechism and everything. So, she insisted in every slight thing, that was it, although after the quarrel I will still talk to her as someone as a friend or something. But I don't know whether she is having any grudges in her mind against me or something—or maybe, what she heard, what they told her. And when there is conspiracy behind you, you don't know what they told the person.

(Interviewee 2OC), emphasized there was a case of conspiracy against her. Although it is not clear what necessitated the conspiracy charge against her, her audit work and discovery of fraud with the external auditor in the organization, seemed to pit her against workers in financial services. My interview with her was possible through a recommendation from one of the lecturers and a Head of Department (HOD) in the computer unit of the hospital. The hospital was one of the hardest places to penetrate for interviews during my field work. However, I met this kind Head of Department who told me he had experienced bullying in this workplace, but would prefer I interview a lady whose case is very recent and painful. This shows her situation was known to people who knew her. She did suggest her attackers focused on her audit experience and skills as a threat to

whatever might be going on secretly. Hence, her coming to that unit might

expose them.Therefore they conspired to push her out:

> *I came to work, carry my bag, just drop everything, I was laying…. So, their HOD told me that I should take my bag out, I told her, "if I stand up here, I am going to fall…, I don't have strength to stand up from here." But I was just laying down writing things for them… although I have asked for sick permit, they refused. I said okay, let me work with the health challenge. So, that day I did not go and drop the bag. After everything, I dropped everything, just ran home. And the second day she came with a key and gave me the key, I carried the bag and go and drop it there. The third day, I carried my bag and go and drop it in Dietician office, I was dropping it there with a Dietician. So, she was like, ha… this one you are dropping bag here, I said yeah, let me drop it there they said we should not carry bag to the office. But I didn't know that, that first day I carried the bag, she went and report me that I brought them bag there. I was unaware of the report and the thing. So, all of them they were fighting tooth and nail to just throw me out so that they will be comfortable with whatever they are doing .*

The aim of her colleagues was to find evidence to incriminate her, since she

is now in their midst to monitor them as an auditor, but she played it smart.

Nevertheless, her colleague, the HOD, had perfected her trap and reported her to the

administrator before she raised her voice on what was happening.

> *So, there was a day that, that after calculating my money, I saw about, in my drawer, I saw about ₦14000 something… ₦14350 [about $70 NZD]. So, I checked my money, checked my receipt very well, my money was complete, but there is, there was extra ₦14000 something. I said aha… is this one a trap or what! Who put this kind of money here? So, I said okay, and their HOD was not around, she went out before then. I said okay, let me keep the money, I have a bible where I used to keep things, I put it inside the Bible and said, if I come tomorrow, if nobody asked of it, I will now say, let me just wait, know whether there is anybody looking for money, so I can bring it. I kept it in a Bible and went home. The next day I came, nobody asked of it. The third day, I brought out the money, I told the HOD, although the HOD has been tackling me, attacking me seriously, which I told them, but I don't know why. For within me, I know that they are not comfortable with me. So, I brought out the money and told her "see …ooo I saw money in my this thing… drawer, she quickly responded, ' I know, I know, I was waiting for you to say that there was money in your this thing, I saw it in your Bible, how will you keep such money with you kia'… I said aha… you have not even allowed me to land, 'no! I was waiting for you, to say something like that.'" I said okay, how is… I don't know how this money came into my drawer, she said it's my work, it is in my work. So, the next thing I see is the secretary giving me paper, that I have been posted to school of midwifery as attendant to principal.*

The steps taken by the administrator to send her to the school of midwifery as a cleaner, without any discussion or any investigations to ascertain what transpired between her and the HOD was rather strange. That was the reason people in the midwifery school raised a rhetorical question *" why will they put someone that is holding BSc, a BSc holder, how will they put her ... [down] now?"* Below are some of the extracts on her response to the paper of transfer to a new department as an attendant:

> *I said ha… what happened? You people did not tell me. She [the secretary to the principal] said I should know. When I met them, they said no, no, no, no .... I said okay, I now went to this place to report, the woman wasn't around then. I came the next day, I told her, she said that the person they changed me with was their cleaner. So, it's the cleaner that I am replacing, not attendant. So, she said a-a… why will they put someone that is holding BSc, a BSC holder, how will they put her…[down] now? ...I told them ... what did I do… I said I don't know, they don't really know, but I know there was a conspiracy that I don't know about. I wasn't observant then to…That was how I got myself here.*

While I was interviewing her, I observed she was well dressed, suggesting she had not accepted the designation of a cleaner. This also goes a long way to conveying a message to co-workers in the new unit not to address her as an ordinary cleaner, a phrase that is derogatory in the Nigerian workplace. I asked her *" Do you feel humiliated?"* She responded:*" I felt demoted!"* She used a stronger verb, which connotes punishment. Then I asked if she considers this experience as bullying she said:

> *Of course, of course because even when I tried to handle it my own way, but people coming to me—their facial experience [expression], their question, their… why… what is it? You know, I would like to… although my own I have tried to say let me manage it for now, and just praying for a better opportunity— because having worked in the organization, before as in account department I was and coming down, it's bullying! No matter how I try to see it, people will not see it that way, they will always in one way or the other point finger, like this person is here, this person was humiliated, demoted, or bullied… it was humiliating.*

The people who tried to reach out to her in this humiliating experience gave the impression that it is normal practice in the organization and that she would

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eventually get over it. To support their remarks, they referred her to a few others who had experienced the same thing. She insisted it was bullying. That is why she emphasized "*No matter how I try to see it*" [as bullying], co-workers who sympathized with her seem to have understood it as part of the organizational culture. More importantly, apart from the fact that this experience is humiliating and she felt demoted, her salary was not affected. "*My salary they… in as much as they demoted me, they did not… my salary still remain the same. But in the other way round, I don't find joy, as in, doing what I read*". In view of all that (Interviewee 2 OC) mentioned about her experiences, one may suppose that the intention behind sending her to be a cleaner, and still pay her as an accountant is not to suggest she was incompetent, but an attempt to shame and conspicuously silence her. There was no opportunity to discuss these things with the the administrator and the HOD because of the sensitive nature of this study. The emphasis on conspiracy and lack of fair hearing is evident. This raises questions on workplace bullying policy, which I address in the in policy framework chapter. These I give a broader context to this experience, with similar stories by other participants from various CFBOs.

In Organization B, workers were privileged to be housed within the housing estate of the organization. This made it easier to manage accommodation problems and reduced problems associated with transportation. Interviewee 3 OB was one of those who had served many years as office secretary to various Presidents of his Church within the south-eastern region. Hence, he was accommodated with his family in church premises. Because many of them lived in the church premises, they were doing things together, the workplace and the staff quarters were seen as part of the system. Issues that happen at the workplace are transferred home, whether good or bad. Interviewee 3 OB, complained of intimidations in the office after he had worked for a few years, but the most challenging one was the cruel unbearable living situation in the staff quarters.

Well, ehm… in first place, I … when I was employed and worked for few years, for example, I started experiencing ... intimidation ... By the superior officer. So that officer asked… I mean, installed a plant [generator for light] in the same line of building where we were quartered, a very heavy plant. And I told him that animal/Tiger cannot live with a human being, that was the adage, then he insisted because he is a superior officer, the highest in rank, that he feels he can do and undo. He insisted on planting that big heavy generator in the same line of queue where we were living, not I alone. But I reported, reported, and was crying bitterly. Because when the generator is on, you cannot live there, you cannot sleep, not…you know, do any… you won't be comfortable. You will be outside until that generator is put off (Interviewee 3, Organization B, 28th October 2019).

He approached his boss several times and complained about the noise and how he was suffering, but that was ignored. Each day he slept late at night and must report to work at 8:00 am. He respectfully presented his message with an Igbo adage that "*Tiger cannot live with a human being*"—meaning it is dangerous to live with noise and fumes from a heavy diesel generator night after night because it is a health and safety issue. But his boss insisted it must be on till late in the night. Perhaps, because nobody can override his orders.

From the time we close the work, may be from 5 o'clock [pm] because we use to work from 8'oclock [am] to 5'oclock [pm]. And the thing will ... since they are living there, the superior officer, though we were living there too…

Yeah, in a quarter, but I decided not to go ahead continue condoning such a situation, because we will be outside, you know between the time we came back from work, till the time will be, you know … till 11 o'clock [pm] late in the night pm. Until the gen[erator] is off.

So, one day I decided not to continue to stay in such a condition or situation. So, I decided to go take laws into my hand and off the generator, and thereby I was suspended.

This was the beginning of his bullying experience, a circumstance that inevitably involved both his work and home life. When I asked if he reported the matter officially, he said he had, but because he was under the junior cadre, he had to put up with the noise and fumes of the generator. *"Yes! Even him and others, even him and others! And some were pitying for us… because he thinks we are junior staff, then he can decide to do what he likes to do to us….*" When he decided to turn off the generator on his own

volition, because he could not bear the suffering any longer, he was suspended without fair hearing. He packed his things and went back to his hometown, which was 5-6 miles. After his suspension, he travelled to work from his hometown. He lost the privilege of being accommodated in the quarters, until a year later, when the impact of the noise was devastating to the health of others. They built more blocks of staff quarters and housed him.

> *Then I came back and was ... I packed my things ....to leave there, yeah. I have made up my mind not to come there again. So, I left to my home and was coming from home with bicycle about 5-6miles from my village. After many months, the following year, because of that condition, they realized that they did not do the proper thing, then they built another—they called a contractor and award a contract to a contractor and build other quarters far from that place, and they re-allocated us to that place, all of us. So, I think he realized that he made a mistake by you know, imposing that on us because we are junior workers. Finally, even he said I am not going to work with him, but when he realized he made a mistake, he finally called me back to his office and continued to work....*

It is apparent from this narrative that (Interviewee 3 OB), had the will power to resist the intimidation by turning off the heavy diesel generator that would not allow him to sleep, and suffered the consequences. Nobody came to rescue him as every other person living in the apartments seemed to be afraid of losing their jobs, and the accommodation. This is usually the case in traditional conservative FBOs where the head has absolute power to hire and fire, without recourse to committees or established procedures. Although, he was brought back to the staff quarters after more buildings were erected and continued in his official duties as the office secretary, the later part of his story revealed that he was to face more challenges for standing up for his right. The mere fact that he was re-absorbed and brought back to the office to work with the same person who did not consider his health and safety seemed to be a ploy to set him up. This is because bullies are skilful in making their targets feel a bit relaxed, while they seek other avenues to attack them. This part of the story is contained in chapter 8.

A quarter of the participants of this study who were victims of workplace

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bullying and never had fair hearing from their various FBOs ended up either in suspension, demotions, or outright dismissal. A few more cases are narratives from (Interviewee 2 OB, Interviewee 2 OC, Interviewee 3 OJ, and Interviewee 3 OK) respectively. In Organization B, one of the participants in this study, (Interviewee 2 OB), shared his experience, which he considered bullying at the workplace thus:

> *Two years ago, we once had a JAMB [Joint Admission and Matriculation Board] centre in this place. So, that was … this is 2019, about 2007, [he corrected himself] 2017, we had a centre. In the course of running that exam, ehm… we had external supervisors, I enrolled there as an IT support team. Along the line our centre was proscribed [somebody interrupted, and I had to politely tell her we shall see later as we are in a discussion]. So, the centre was proscribed as a result of exam malpractice. So, they carried out investigation, not thoroughly investigated to know people's level of involvement. But because the panel is biased about some certain persons…, fair judgement was not given in that panel. And that affected so many people. Some people were affected, some people were exonerated, of which I am one.*

I said to him, you were exonerated. He replied:

> *Yes! With some punishment attached from the exoneration too. So, and you know it was an external exam, and with external supervisors. So, we hadn't much influence to control the external people. We were judged based on our faith system…. The image of the school that we connived with those people to allow malpractice to take place. So, of which the external people were never called to hear words from them; but because they have access to us, and we just saw ourselves as the victims...*
> *All of us stayed at home without salary for one year. For one year! That's part of the punishment* (Interviewee 2, Organization B, 22nd October 2019).

The experience of (Interviewee 2 OB), which led to a one-year suspension without pay was investigated by the Board of the organization and a decision was made to exonerate him from dismissal. However, he considered himself a victim of workplace bullying, based on previous experiences he had with his principal, then one-year suspension without pay as unfair treatment on the examination malpractice incident. I asked if he ever appealed about ill treatments he said, "most *times when you make … ehm … appeal or complained of an ill treatment, so most times it is not properly handled—especially when you don't have much affiliation to the ruling body*". He gave the impression that seems to suggest an executive preferential treatment in dispensing

justice. Nevertheless, one issue about workplace bullying and punishment is that it is very easy to misjudge motives behind the decisions of the employer when employees' expectations do not come through. For instance, in Organization G, Interviewee 2 OG requested permission to attend a family burial and was granted it, but the management of his organization sanctioned him for failure to return to work the following day.

> *My sister in-law who is marriage in Anambra state lost her mother in-law, and she informed me of the burial, and I was having financial problem that time. I was taken there under the help of some other family members. I wrote a permission to the management to grant me a day, which they accepted. Then, when I got there, there was a new development that stopped me returning as of the day I supposed to come back. I have to explain to them, they could not listen, if not for God's intervention, I was nearly expelled from the school. I was made to face heavy sanction* (interviewee 2OG, Organization G, 14th November 2019).

In his views, the management did not listen to his explanation as he had expected them to see reasons for his absence to school the following day. Hence, the heavy sanction and the attempt to expel him was seen as unfair treatment, especially for someone who was bereaved. Similarly, the expectation of Interviewee 2OB, who was exonerated from the case of examination malpractice was not to go home for a year on suspension. He argued "*The centre administration is from here, who supposed to have borne the greater brunt of what happened, because he is a high-ranking officer… he was exonerated because he was part of the Board, he has his friend in the Board, he has relatives there, he had people who could talk to people who matters and they will listen. So, he was exonerated*"! It seems difficult to apply sanctions in a Christian context for irresponsible behaviours or neglect of duties if there are traces of preferential treatment or certain people appear to be above the law. Therefore, this raises questions about the organization's decision-making process in terms of transparency and accountability, which are addressed in the discussion chapter.

In organization C, (Interviewee 3 OC), presented a situation that is somewhat different because his was a dismissal that was instigated by a wounded administrator,

who wanted his pound of flesh for undisclosed reasons. Interestingly, he was the same

administrator who was removed from office over a discovered fraud as alleged by

(Interviewee 2 OC) above. Interviewee 3 OC had worked as the only electrician in the

organization, covering both the repairs of the organization's diesel generator, and

maintenance of all electrical gadgets, until a new department was carved out, leaving

him with electrical issues of the organization. He presented his experience on workplace

bullying thus:

> [T]he one that has left a strong part in my heart that I would want to call
> bullying experience was my dealing with the former director of this place. I
> think he left about 8-7 months ago. Uhm… so, I had some many things, he called
> me while he was about to go, two weeks to his going out. He met me and called
> for a meeting, and he told me that my colleagues were complaining of sabotage,
> that I was sabotaging them. So, I was like wao! So, I said, "I don't understand!
> What areas have I been sabotaging them?" uhm… he gave them, he gave them
> floors to talk openly, ground for them to talk. So, after talking, they were
> actually complaining that ehm… when they call me to come and assist them, that
> I don't assist them, that I tend to go my way, but they were all false; they were
> lies! So, I tried explaining myself, because I told the director, I said, at some
> point, after a large complains he decided to separate these departments. And
> created two HODs in this same department, one for the generator, one for the
> electrical department and he said I should man the electrical department. And
> this other person should man the generator department or unit. And ordered us
> to strictly obey, a memo was issued, which I did. I have been obeying that memo
> to the letter, making sure that things were done the way you said it. So, I don't
> see sabotage in it. If they don't know what they are doing, they should come to
> me and tell they don't know what they are to do, and then I can assist
> (Interviewee 3, Organization C 4th November 2019).

When that report and the defence of those who complained did not yield much, an

allegation was raised against him on the breakdown of the generator:

> So, that one passed, he now said…salt that… one of them said there were salt in
> the generator; the oil left the generator, and that they are claiming that I was
> the one. So, I said how can I, for 4 years I have been working here, and we've
> not heard this kind experience, how is it that we are hearing this now! The last
> one he said, he bought a generator, 60kva generator and he said, why should I
> allow the breaker to burn. So, I tried explaining to him what transpired that
> made the breaker got burnt. So, all the things I said was to no avail, and he said
> he was not going to leave me alone. That I must go with him. So, the end of the
> day, he gave me a sack letter, then I left, and he also left.... I went before him
> because he was still the boss, he was to leave on the 26th of February, and he
> gave that letter on the 13th of February.

I said to him, "that sounds like a love letter because the following day was 14th February!" He said:

> *Exactly! It sounds like…hahahaha, it sounds like one. So, that was the greatest bullying because it was coming from somebody I could not challenge in any form, because he was my big, big, bigger boss. And so, I had to let the sleeping dog lay, I decided to just leave the place.*

I asked him if there was a query, he said no. I then asked what the content of the sack letter was he said: "In fact, in the letter it was written "on reasons clearly known to you"." There was nothing that was stated as okay, these are the reasons why they decided to disengage him.

While these experiences are painful and devastating, one question arising from it is: when someone is reprimanded, disciplined, or punished for offences that disparage the image of an organization he/she is working in, is that workplace bullying? This question is very important, because it seems to me that discipline for wrongdoing is sometimes misconstrued as bullying. This why I provided operational definition of workplace bullying to help engage with the stories what constitute bullying at the workplace. The case of Interviewee 3 OC, who was called back to work when a new administrator of the hospital reviewed his case and asked him to re-apply, provides insight on leadership competence in dealing with bullying. This story is captured in the extract below:

> *Okay, when the new one came, he heard so many stories from the background, and he called me on a day, and introduced himself. And called me for a meeting, I attended. I have stayed here for a long time, I know the terrain of the place, when it comes to electrical wiring. And so, so many of them, who were left behind, that's when I left, could not actually do their best when it comes to electrical installations around the place. They were still struggling to fix things, struggling to correct errors and all that. I think the new management having looked at it, the new director called and said, he has looked at the pros and cons of both argument and that in every argument there must be a winner. Though he did not proclaim me a winner, he just told me to rewrite an application, which I did and… he approved, that was how I came back.*

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The administrative insight of the new director and the outstanding skills of Interviewee 3OC seem to be at play in the circumstances that brought him back. Nonetheless, departing from the principles of fair hearing apparently reinforced and informed the feeling and perceptions of workers on workplace bullying. Whether the previous administrator of Organization C, or the Board of Directors of Organization B, acted on intense feeling of dislike for those employees who shared their experience of bullying or not, one thing that stands out is that bullying is not addressed as a policy. This recalls the insight from literature reviewed in chapter 2, according to Nwaneri, Onoka and Onoka (2016), as well as Akintayo (2014), the concept of workplace bullying in Nigeria is poorly conceptualized because it is often excused. This issue also forms part of the discussions in Chapter 11 and the policy framework development in Chapter 12.

8. 3 Denial of equal opportunity

One of the situations that could whittle down enthusiasm, trust, and commitment to duty in an organization is when a hard-working employee is repeatedly denied his/her promotion, financial reward, or other ancillary benefits expected from the employer, while others are considered and rewarded. This is part of the experiences some of the participants in this study shared and conceptualized as workplace bullying. One of them, (Interviewee 1OB), who had spent 17 years in his current job as a teacher in Organization B, revealed a demoralizing experience that focuses on relinquishing his faith to be considered for ancillary benefits others were enjoying in the organization. To situate the context of this experience appropriately, I asked him how he secured employment with the organization and the initial experience:

> *Actually, when I came in here to begin this work it wasn't easy. Reason[is] because of the way and manner I sought the job here. And what gave me consolation was because I am the one that applied. It wasn't an easy experience, it was very hectic, so to a point that one may think that every bit of job going on*

here will be like that. But at a time, I summoned courage by myself, since I am the one that applied. Then I mellowed down, and the thing became easy (Interviewee 1OB, Organization B, 24th October 2019).

Interviewee 1OB's initial experience on securing an employment in a FBO outside of his own faith as indicated in the excerpt above, portrays the struggles of new entrants in workplaces different from what they are familiar with, in terms of organizational culture, structures and work procedures. Sometimes, proper orientations are taken for granted by employers of labour and new employees as well; hence unnecessary difficulties arise in catching up with the work demands and various organizational procedures. Although he did not mention the specific aspect of the job that was not easy and hectic, but as one would expect, FBOs normally seek to employ members of their own faith because of the unique doctrines, lifestyle and commitment required from a would-be employee. Having secured the job as a competent and qualified teacher, without the aid and influence of key member of the organization; he refused to give up on the initial challenges he encountered. In view of all that he mentioned above, one may conclude from his final statement "I mellowed down, and things became easy" that there was a tendency to resign from the job because of anxiety and pressures from the new job and the environment. But when he accepted to relax and learn the procedures, perhaps accept things he could not change, he found the work much easier. It was then that he saw full acceptance as he progressed and was carried along in some aspect of the work to his satisfaction:

> *[S]surprisingly, surprisingly I was carried along to a certain stage or level, then before the table turned upside down. simply because may be things are not easy in the society. Then I will not question God. I had to! So, the issue is that I must relinquished my own faith, which I stated categorically in black and white, this is, I am of this faith. Then and things were palatable, things were easy then, then somewhere along the line I started seeing things that made my spirit to go down.... [prior to this time] I enjoyed every benefit other [staff] were enjoying. Only that at the end of the month my ... before I will take home, my take home, I will receive my take home, then my tithe will be deducted. Then every benefit [they] enjoyed, I enjoyed them from that 2003 till 2011. Then even the promotion, then by 2012, the table turned upside down. I know that there was an*

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> *increment that was made, then and my counterparts or my contemporaries then received arrears worth over ₦100000, [equivalent of $400NZD] I did not... I pressed, I went further and further, but the... the whole thing, the scenario changed. Then from that 2012 to 2013, then they said that they have converted that I am now, even as I am talking to you now, I work here as a contract staff.*

He enjoyed all the benefits albeit as a non-denominational worker. But when the leadership of the organization was changed, he was advised to join the faith of the organization or lose all the benefits. Unfortunately, he refused to accept the advice to join the faith and lost the ancillary benefits available to those who belong to the faith; consequently, he was made a contract staff after 9 years of full-time permanent staff. It is this experience of losing the ancillary benefits he had enjoyed prior to the new leadership of the organization and sudden change of work status as a contract staff without any criminal offence for more than 5 years that he considers as workplace bullying. This is because there was no initial agreement that he would be made a contract staff after 9 years of service if he refused to join the faith of the organization. One would wonder if this were a valid employment practice for FBOs, seeing that it seems to give no opportunity for religious liberty. Another participant in this study, alluded to a similar situation that led to his resignation in his former employment –a FBO:

> *There are some practices that were not in conformity…with my faith. e-hey… like they will do the angelus and you will be compelled to observe that time. The time of the angelus and when you don't observe it you will be sub-charged. E-hey… and all that, so we were two in that organization, so the other one was a retiree and me a young man at then. So, he said my friend, your faith is not compatible with the environment you have to leave, and I had to leave* (Interviewee 2OB, Organization B, 24th October 2019).

Other cases of denial of equal opportunities, which participants in this study conceptualised as workplace bullying included exclusion from further studies arrangement to enhance competencies and improved earnings, while their colleagues are allowed; and rights to get fringe benefits on welfare. On the issue of further studies, Interviewee 2OB, complained about a case involving him and others who were denied

opportunity for postgraduate studies to enhance their competence, while a back door was opened to those who were not qualified based on the years of service rule of the organization:

> One example, when we wanted to do PG (post graduate diploma in education), that time we were told verbally that you have to work for five years before you could ... before you could be allowed to go for further studies. We discovered that people that just came in when we are waiting to…while we were waiting to clock 5, they are already enrolled in PG (Interviewee 2OB).

I inquired further if he appealed on that and he said yes, "They referred us to George Orwell's literature in *Animal Farm* that all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (p.6). This statement suggest that certain individuals were considered worthy to benefit from the further studies arrangement, without meeting the criteria set out by the organization.

In organization I, (Interviewee 1OI) complained about the denial of fringe benefits added to others who had served in the same girls' hostel as administrators prior to their marriages, but her own was taken away immediately she got married "I *am the third person to leave the dormitory; two other people have left at the cost of marriage. So, when this happened, I asked them, were their salaries removed, they said no.*" (Interviewee 1OI, Organization I, 7th November,2019). Similarly, in Organization F, (Interviewee 3OF) reported her experience on continuous denial of equal opportunity as one of the hard-working employees of the organization. Firstly, she expressed bitterly the suffering she went through during her pregnancy with the Principal of her school:

> The experience I had for the 4 years he [the principal] stayed here…[sigh] it was a bitter experience, which I don't like to continue in my life. Ehm… one is that, when I delivered a child, e-eh… even the day the … the day I was in labour, I came to school, so I came to school two days before the day I delivered, and they charged me for those two days I was in school, because of the hatred the man hated himself not me. Because he doesn't want to work, he only listens for the gossip... After everything, they now arranged against me in order to cut my salary and be paying half salary (Interviewee 3 OF, Organization F,14th November 2019).

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Suffice it to say that (Interviewee 3 OI) considers half salaries paid to her for three months after post-delivery of her baby as bullying. Although it was not clear what the policy of the organization indicated on her situation, she however, presented a case of hatred from the School Principal that has been on-going. Furthermore, she alluded to her two days' pay cut before her delivery as one of the most painful experiences she had in her workplace. She felt her School Principal hates her and that was why she could not get equal opportunity as given to others prior to her pregnancy and delivery. It is not very clear whether the pay cut was a mistake from the management, but the second part of her experience under the same Principal suggests that a reoccurring deduction of her fringe benefit has been ongoing. She alleged that the Principal would cut part of her money out of intense dislike for her and greed.

> *Okay, the second experience is that there was money they are paying for extension in this organization, for teachers to teach extra lessons. So, once in a year that's how the students are paying—they are paying ₦5000, ₦5000 once in a year [$25NZD]. So, after collecting the money, the man in-charge called principal of the school, will collect the money, and divide it into account. So, me that will work the work, they will... they use to give me ₦2500[$12.50NZD], but since the man came in, the man cut ₦500 [$2.50NZD]out of it and said that I am not going to collect because the money they are giving me is too big; how can people will be collecting twenty, twenty thousand, eighteen thousand, sometimes, just only ₦2500 they are given to me as the person that work for it, the man will collect 500 out of it—then I will say the man should go with the money, should package it for himself and eat the money.*

I asked her if she went to him at any point to pour out her grievances to him and she replied thus: "*Anyway, I have been... I 'm going to him to apologize if there is anything I committed unknowingly, so that I will know where the... my problem lies. So, I come dey find it out that the man just has ehm...[sighs] bad mind for human being, not even me self.* Obviously, Interviewee 3OF, merely ignored her Principal who had been cutting her pay and never bothered to report it because of the fear of losing her job. Another participant in this study, the School Bursar, who is part of the management team, confirmed that workers were sacked at will: "*...the boss will tell you I will sack*

you…ooo, you will be sacked, you will be fired! And that becomes every day…, you feel that…I don't have security" (Interviewee 2 OF, Organization F,14th November 2019). Therefore, in such a tense work environment, an alternative strategy for survival is to keep mute and forget one's right or fight to lose one's job. After all, unemployment is already a nightmare for many youths and graduates in Nigeria.

8.4 Concluding thoughts for discussion

In this chapter, the findings of research question (1b) "what does the concept of bullying mean to church workers both paid and volunteers?" include: procedural unfairness in relation to the stories of abrupt suspension, dismissal, demotion without fair hearing, and denial of opportunities to fringe benefits. These experiences are indeed part of the issues in Equity theory, which focuses on a unidimensional approach to fairness and social justice in organizations. How workers perceive fairness in the workplace is connected with the procedures followed in decision-making, discipline, and staff welfare. While some workers are able to resist intimidation and suffer the consequences, others passively wait for time to decide their fate. This is because in most faith communities, resisting tyrants and authorities who indirectly reinforce bullying as demonstrated in the narratives is usually misconstrued as rudeness. Therefore, it is critical to know that procedural unfairness and denial of equal opportunity also informs their perception of bullying at the workplaces. This is further discussed in Chapter 11.

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CHAPTER 9

INTIMIDATION

9.1 Introduction

In the previous result chapters, I presented two of the three major themes that constitute the findings of this study on the first research question— "What is the church workers' lived experience and understanding of workplace bullying in Southeast Nigeria?" In this chapter, I present the last theme in continuation of the result findings on the first research question. The sequence of my presentation begins with a brief description of the theme –intimidation, then some of the experiences captured under the sub-themes. Finally, a concluding thought on the findings for discussion in Chapter 10.

Intimidation as the last major theme on the main research question is used in relation to experiences wherein attempts of forceful actions or threats were issued against workers in the course of their work. Some of these experiences, which participants in this study considered as workplace bullying include seizing work equipment intentionally; assaults and calling of odd names; and removal of files. Even though a small number (a little above one-third, i.e., 36%) of those interviewed in this study indicated they had these experiences in their workplaces, it is significant in evaluating bullying. Intimidation of workers in whatever form is consistent with experiences considered as workplace bullying in previous studies (Courtney-Pratt et al., 2018; Hicks, 2000; Hosseini et al., 2020; Lamontagne, 2010). These experiences are captured under two sub-themes in my analysis. The first is 'under constant threat'.

9.2 Under constant threat

One of the cases of constant threat presented in this study was the lived experiences of (Interviewee 2 OF). She had served as part of the management team

under three different administrations without any problem, but her experience with the last administrator took a different turn. The problem surfaced mainly in situations where the administrator wanted her to release money for things which she considered unnecessary:

> *Initially when we started newly, we were, you know, in good rapport in good relationship with the management. And being a missionary…there is a changing of administration... which I think we have had up to four administrators that manage here. Well, the first administration was okay, second one was also okay and good. But as the last administration we had was not all that boardable. Uhm…, and knowing those in account, all eyes on money. People feel that once you are there, you are eating money. And…there must be back pay and work, [she spoke gruffly] so that when you do not cooperate to some issues…can have enemies around, friends around, spies… ehm…those who come, friendly and unfriendly, come around you* (Interviewee 2 OF, Organization F,14th November 2019).

Her story, essentially, offers a glimpse of what happens in FBOs where two high ranking officers in management are at loggerheads. The impression she gave was that the last administrator, who was eventually ousted from the position of power as the school Principal a few months before this interview, wanted monies spent on fraudulent projects, but she refused. She did not elaborate on the 'back pays and work', she emphasised must happen, otherwise there will be no friendship. It is expected that friendship and cordial relationships exist in the management team, but not when money is involved, and individual interest overrides the organization's ethics. Perhaps, paradoxically, the claim that all eyes are on money, suggests that even the previous administrators often pressured for the release of funds. However, in the case of the current administrator, he was not 'boardable', meaning, one cannot work out things with him. He seems to be a controversial personality.

Issues on claims for travels, hotel expenditures, usually known as per diem, are some of the paybacks that can cause problems in some organizations, especially where receipts are required for such claims. I observed her speak gruffly about this experience and drawing insight from the story, a possible scenario would be that friends will turn

against her, as indicated in the excerpt. Some may be spies who will come around to get secret information. Furthermore, she alleged that she had been constantly threatened by the School Principal to the extent she was uncomfortable and had to report to the Board of the school.

> *Personally, I was not comfortable, I was not happy! ah…I was not, but when I found that the people that have the school, or those that have taken over, they are not tired then I piped… piped low and go on with my work. And sometimes, when we have orders, I report to the people [who indicated they] heard. And, you know, when they heard, the people who employed all of us, it becomes an issue, all of them will pipe low* [calm down].

This narrative also, illuminates the complexities of bringing administrators who may not share the values and mission of the organizations they lead. Although what is presented here is one side of the story from the perspective of (Interviewee 2OF), a common view amongst the interviewees in this study suggest that many of the FBOs have compromised their values and mission because of the calibre of leaders they chose. This is partly presented under values and missions of FBOs in Chapter 9 as one of the prominent issues from the interview data. Part of the evidence in support of the constant threat she received from the School Principal and considers it as bullying is in the extract below:

> *I had experience where…while we were still [working], another person has been invited to takeover without the stakeholders knowing of it. That is one of the things, while you are still on seat [as the bursar], somebody had invited a bursar, so as he is a superior, or your boss; and also come and take over your position—while the people that employed you are still comfortable with you.... Then we see a lot of struggles…of taking your work at your back, trying to do your work, and then cajoling that you do not know what you are doing—when people that put you there are comfortable and audited you up to five times and did not see anything wrong with you. Just because somebody feels that you are blocking their way. So, … somebody is brought, and the person has been informed that "we don't have bursar", we need a bursar, and the person [was]called, come, and take over from you when you are still there. And the stakeholders went to inquire whether it is true… and the Principal said that you resigned when you did not resign.*

The most sensitive part of the struggle in her experience is that the Principal did not stop at threatening her by mere word of mouth, he had already advertised that the school

has no bursar, without the knowledge of the school board. He also brought a replacement to start work immediately. This same Principal was reported to have seized one of the interviewee's monies in Chapter 7 and sacked workers abruptly, suggesting he was an obstacle to the organization and the mission of the church. For more than two years this continued until the Board resolved to remove him. She argued that her offence to the Principal was her transparency with issues of finance in her work:

> *Ehm…the bitter challenges… is that I am a Christian—and I love transparency, I will not tell lie. When things are not going well, I will tell you that is not the right thing to do. So, because of that…I … am being looked at …a threat! And also bridging some areas. So, [the principal felt] the best thing is to remove her, so as we can bring somebody, we can work with. My offence is: let us not do this thing, or…we do not have money for this…uhm!*
> *Can we leave this thing where we do not have money, when we get money e-hey…so, if that happen or let us pay salary before any other… and the person will now say…[boldly] WE MUST DO THIS THING WHETHER SALARY, FORGET ABOUT SALARY LET US DO THIS THING?*

Suffice it to say she was a threat to corrupt practices in the organization, especially the practices coming from the leaders, and as the maxim goes "when you fight corruption, it fights back" (see Ejiogu, Ejiogu, & Ambituuni, 2020). Besides, the school Board had passed a vote of confidence in her and had audited her work five times without any fraud as stated above. However, the school Principal seems not to believe in her capacity as the financial expert in charge of the school finances. In the interviewee's view, he desired to work with someone he can trust, perhaps making her a mere appendage of the school bursary unit. Looking beneath the surface of this narrative, the question then may arise: could her bullying experiences be attributed to her gender?

As reiterated in Chapter 2 on the gendered nature of bullying, bullies target those who appear weak, not necessarily because of their biological characteristics. A number of interviewees in this study within the managerial or high-ranking offices, who experienced bullying at their FBOs, are women. However, that does not suggest it was mainly because of their gender. Among the three who were part of the management

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team, one experienced most of her bullying experiences from a fellow woman. In the case of Interviewee 2OF, even though she did not mention that her experience is mainly because of her gender, it is a common knowledge that in a patriarchal society like Nigeria, the office of school Bursar, which falls under the accounting profession, is usually a male dominated occupation (see Ogharanduku, Jackson & Paterson, 2020). Therefore, it would not be strange if she experienced bullying as the odd one in the profession majorly occupied by men. As mentioned in the literature review, those who found themselves working in a male or female gender dominated occupation maybe seen as victims of workplace bullying because they are in the minority.

Another participant (Interviewee 2 OJ) with a similar experience, narrated a case of intimidation and threat from one of the medical doctors in a mission hospital where she works. This experience was very recent at the time of the interview because it happened about a week prior to the scheduled interview:

> *Something happened here a week ago let me just say a week ago, I was in the ward, I was busy attending to my patients, a doctor walked in for rounds. He has a patient he came to see... it is normal here, when they come forward round, you ask the relatives out. You understand, so that they will see the patients for confidentiality. That is why you ask them out. So, when he came in, I was busy with my patient, I was attending to the patient. So, he came in, I did not see him when he walked in. so he walked up to me, that I should send the relatives out. So, we have a bell we normally ring to ask them and being that my hands were soiled, and I have my gloves on. I told the student[intern], please ring the bell let me make the announcement for them to leave, he [the doctor] said no... the student must not do it, that I should be the one to do it. I should ring the bell; I must be the one to ring that bell... or else he will make sure I am sacked* (Interviewee 2 OJ, Organization J, 11th November 2019).

Interviewee 2 OJ's story draws attention to what would be commonly experienced in healthcare facilities where few nurses attend to many patients. The pressures on work are enormous, and some people, perhaps, may lose their endurance under the provoking circumstances like hers. She was already attending to a patient when the doctor came on ward round. Hence, she maintained her focus on the patient, not fidgeting and the doctor walked up to her, signalling he was in for his own part of the duties. Because she had a

student nurse on internship, she considered it appropriate to call on her to ring the bell, after all, she can still delegate or send a student on errands. Part of the reason students are posted in the hospital wards is for practical experiences [clinical placement]. It is not clear whether students can be delegated to ring the bell to draw the attention of patient's relatives when doctors come forward round. Nevertheless, the doctor's insistence that the student must not ring the bell or else she (Interviewee 2 OJ) will be sacked was a threat that had been consistent as she mentioned in the extract below:

> So, that I should or else he makes me leave this hospital, he will make sure I am sacked. So, I was like why? He said I must do it; I will be the one to do it. Okay, I did not even ask why, so the student was like; ah-ah, let her ring the bell nna. Then one of the nurse assistants there rushed and rang the bell. He then said ah… so, I allowed someone else to ring that bell, he then said okay, that he is going to report me to the management and make sure I am sacked! Then out of anger I said, do I have to kneel down for you, each time you come into this ward, you say this thing. That was what he held on and said, "why must I say that?" he now left, I went to the matron in that the matron herself, the management are really… I do not know what is happening, she [the matron]is afraid, she does not want to lose her job... in fact, I cannot tell.

In her story, one can deduce that there has been a problem prior to the present encounter with this medical doctor. A previous incident with him was traced to be part of the reasons for the threats against (Interviewee 2OJ). What happened was that in the past, they had a full ward with patients in need of cares and attention. So, the doctor walked into the ward, expecting two nurses in the shift to leave the patients and rush to him for his ward round. But when they requested the student nurses to join him while they finish up what they were doing, he [the doctor] felt insulted because student nurses were the ones that followed him on the ward round during his visit to see his patients. Below is part of the extract:

> So, we were busy trying to meet up when the doctor walked in; we said okay, let us share this duty so that it will be more… [her little boy of about a year was sneezing and that took her attention] I now told the student okay, just follow him on rounds so let us be attending to the patients and do other things. Do you know after the ward that he came back to us, to my colleague that this is an insult; that we are not supposed to ask the student nurses to follow him, that we are disrespecting him, that it is not supposed, that we are looking down on him

> *that is why we send the .... So, I think that was the problem, the genesis of the whole thing, you understand.*

Therefore, it is anticipated that a repeat of such insult, in the views of the doctor, will not be overlooked. I asked to know if it was the practice in their work to follow the doctors on ward round, she replied "*We are not ... this is mission*" (p.9). Her view was that the doctor had been excessively demanding and some of those demands are beyond their routine practice and job description. This appears to be a known challenge in the literature among nurses and medical doctors (Manias & Street, 2001; Pullon, 2008; Smith, Palazzo, Grubb, & Gillespie, 2020). Moreover, some categories of workers are seen as more important than others, thus those considered less important are vulnerable in the workplace. She continued:

> *Uhm.... While other doctors, whenever they come, because they themselves are... they understand what is happening here; they will even be happy to see the students around them, you understand. If you go to other hospitals, other government hospitals, who will even... which nurse will follow you go around like Mumu... [she laughs], nobody will even look at you, you understand; but here they treat us like chm...[sighed] we are nothing! I do not know.*

She seems to know the boundaries in her professional practice and would not want to be held up as an object of ridicule or be bullied by following the doctor like "*mumu*," an Igbo derogatory expression of extreme stupidity. While other doctors in the same hospital do not take offence when students follow them on ward round, this particular doctor desires that nurses leave their work and follow him around in his own duties. One would think that a situation where nurses and doctors in a mission hospital seem not to work as a team and respect each other, patients will be the ones to suffer. Also, such controversial arguments for instance, "*please ring the bell let me make the announcement for them to leave, he [the doctor] said no... the student must not do it, that I should be the one to do it. I should ring the bell; I must be the one to ring that bell... or else he will make sure I am sacked*", and "do *I have to kneel down for you, each time you come into this ward, you say this thing*", which were expressed before

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patients in the ward, will ruin the organization's image. Indeed, another story narrated by a participant (Interviewee 3 OJ) in the same organization confirmed the danger and embarrassment which unsafe work practices such as the threatening of workers can bring to an organization.

Interviewee 3 OJ had waited for many years for a child, but it did not happen until many years after their marriage. While she works with organization J, her husband's job takes him out of the city to nearby states in Nigeria. However, they managed to keep up with their parental responsibilities. It happened that her husband was not able to come back while she was on night duty and her son of a year and six months could not stay alone. She decided to come to work with her son against the policies of the organization, however, the manager gave her a suspension for one month that same night:

> *When my baby was a year and… 6 months, I was on night duty, I came to duty. So, that time our ward was filled up, so I came with my baby. So, on getting to the ward, the staff that was on evening duty was still busy in the ward, so I was like let me keep my baby in the office and put net for him before resuming duty, immediately [the manager] arrived.... He now came and said, why did I come to work with my baby, have I not heard that you should stop bringing your babies to the ward. I said I have thought that my husband is not in town and my baby is still sucking breast, I cannot leave her with anybody—that he should please have mercy on me, if my husband come back, I do not think I will still carry her. He said that I should take that baby and go home, that I am going for one-month suspension, I was like ah… (Interviewee 3, Organization J, 11th November 2019).*

In analysing her story and the circumstances of that night, she did not expect the manager to visit the ward that night, hence she was caught unawares. However, she had not yet resumed work, she went to put her baby to sleep, then went back to the ward for the handover from the afternoon shift nurses. Her excuse for coming to night shift with her little baby was not considered as the order was immediate suspension. However, the point that buttresses the danger of open arguments and threats in the workplace is captured in the next extract:

He said I should not talk to him that he is very angry with me, this, and that, that the ward is filled up and I am here with my baby.... Immediately he left, out of anger, I said there is nothing as important as this my baby. I never knew that he overheard me, he now came back and said, "what did I say," I said [sir] that this baby is very important to me even more than my work, that I got married because of this baby. He now said, for saying that I will go for one-month suspension and my night is remaining that night to end. I have worked for one week, that was the seventh day for me to go and rest, and that time we have 4 patients, feeding through the nose, that I must go with this my baby, I am going for one month suspension without pay and after that I will come and write letter of explanation this and that. Immediately, I packaged my things, packaged my bag, and left.

In response to this threat and immediate suspension of the nurse who had taken care of them, patients and their relatives went out in protest the following morning, refusing to eat any food in sympathy for the nurse who was suspended for coming to work with her son:

. ... I never knew that some patient relatives overheard us, when I left one of them went into the ward and said, their staff has been sacked ooo. So, the next morning, that supposed to be the end of my ... they now went and brought one nurse from theatre to come and manage the ward that night, so that in the morning... so that nurse came, she did not come to work with her uniform, she had to go and borrow. The next morning the whole patient gathered themselves to the management office that they heard that one of their staff was sacked, that if they eventually sacked that staff that all of them will take their patients and go [meaning they will seek health services in other hospitals]. That it is only that nurse that give them attention, despite the fact that she has a baby in her hand. So, I was in my house that afternoon my ward head called me that [manager] said that I should come the next day.

This was indeed a huge embarrassment for the organization. They lost their goodwill with the singular act of threat and suspension of a worker patients and relatives considered as a hard-working staff. This would not have happened if not for the threat and expressions of anger in the presence or hearing of valued customers. Finally, to erase the shame, the manager took a more dignified approach, begged the nurse to go and appeal to the patients that she had received pardon and had been brought back to work. These are contained in the following extracts:

I dressed up and came, it was like that all his time in pre-med, that he has never heard of a nurse that's been sided by patient relatives—that for that he is forgetting the whatever thing that happened between us, I should go and tell my

patients that I have been pardoned so that they will not go that they have threatened him this morning, that all of them are leaving, that it's because of what happened that night, that they did not eat; even this morning they did not feed them very well. That I am the only person, even though I normally come with my baby that I am the only person that show them attention and all that, that they want to go. [The manager] was like, that he never knew me, that he is just seeing me for the first time, but he is happy the way all the patients are saying about me. That he has forgiven me that I should go. I was like, do you know that that day, three people started looking for work for me to resign and work in hospital section; that the service I am rendering there they cannot pay me, that I am working as if I am doing it to my own mother, my relative.

If we now turn to the previous narrative of Interviewee 2 OJ, where angry words and threats were issued, one will realize that it is unhelpful to engage a fellow worker with threats before customers, whether it is a weak or highly esteemed worker. Firstly, Interviewee 2 OJ's emphasis was that she had often been threatened in her career as a nurse by this particular doctor, hence she considered it as workplace bullying. Whether the patients and relatives heard the conversations or not, we do not know. Whatever the situation may be, the patients hearing it or not, indeed, Interviewee 2 OJ considered it as workplace bullying and a misuse of power—this is because the uniqueness of the bullying phenomenon as expressed in the narratives is evident, even though there are complexities in the stories.

In analysing the case further, one possible explanation that may have given an impression of workplace bullying is the fact that a nurse assistant, who was less busy rushed and rang the bell, not even the student; yet the doctor resolved to make sure she [Interviewee 2 OJ] would lose her job, suggesting that the issue is workplace bullying. Secondly, the narrative revealed that the past issue was not yet resolved, which means there is a case of repetition, even though the number of times was not mentioned. To further buttress the view that he [the doctor] had an intention to bully nurses, Interviewee 3 OJ's description of the same doctor who had been a problem to nurses further corroborated the account of Interviewee 2 OJ:

The second one is some doctors that are insulting in nature, they will talk to you in a way that, if there is something you can chip in to help facilitate healing of the patient… diagnosis, you tend to like… leave them. There is one doctor that came to do his housemanship here, he was insulting and even if to set iv [intra vein] line, we go and call him. But at times, normally if the doctor is not around, you as a nurse can assist to save life. You know how to set the line or the infusion to give before the doctor's arrival, but you find out that doctor is insulting and pompous, you leave everything to the person, to avoid being insulted (Interviewee 3 OJ).

These dual accounts from different nurses, describing the attitude of the doctor in question, evidently affirms workplace bullying is present in their organization. Further evidence from Interviewee 2 OJ, suggests this act of bullying perpetrated by this particular doctor is tolerated by the management:

He is now a permanent worker, that he can do anything with nurses here because he has seen the way nurses are being treated here. So, he feels he is … at least if he reports that something must be done. At least, when he said, "I will report you and they will give you query and from there you are going home," aha! He knows that if he reported to the management something would be done, that is why he has the liver to go and report.

One of the ways managements reinforce bullying is when they refuse to act on reports immediately, or take sides, rather than dealing with issues transparently and confidently. Interviewee 2 OJ perceives that the doctor she describes as a bully is esteemed above other workers, perhaps, as a consultant. Hence his wish is the command of the management. While the doctor was in his internship, he could not report any worker because he was still a casual worker, suggesting that casuals do not have a voice in the organization, even when they are victimized by fellow workers. Besides, there is no explicit policy on workplace bullying in the organization. This is one of the key limitations in all the organizations where participants shared their lived experiences on workplace bullying.

It would be easy to conclude that Interviewee 2 OJ was repeatedly threatened because she did not report. Furthermore, that when workers do not report they are bound to be victims. The following example also presents, however, evidence that the issue may not be about reporting:

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My ward head was not around that day, but when she came back, I told her all that happened… all that transpired, she was like… why would he talk like that, is it because we used to follow them on ward round, uhm! So, I do not know. So, here everybody is just, nurses especially, we are just here because there is nothing we can do, you know. Because there is no job in the country, you understand, if there is job, nobody… [would endure these experiences]
(Interviewee 2 OJ).

Finally, when the complaint was sent to the hospital Matron, maybe from the doctor, she [Matron] demanded that Interviewee 2OJ should write an apology letter, kneel before the doctor, and beg for forgiveness:

The matron called, like, what happened? I told her what happened, she said e-hey! So, that I should have removed my gloves and ring the bell. I said ah-ah, asking the students, okay, don't we have the right to tell the students what to do? To delegate the students, she was like eeh… why did I even tell him that… why did I tell him that I do not have to spread before him each time he enters the ward, that I am wrong, I said okay, those things he said to me: is he right for him to say those things to me? She was like, eeh… even if he is not right, that I should do whatever he said. I said, even if he steps on my… she said yes! Everything I must do it, that I should know that this is mission hospital. That this is mission hospital, that I am going to answer query, after answering query, that I will go to the ... doctor, write apology letter, kneel before him, and beg him to forgive me. That if he refuses to forgive me, then that hm… that my punishment will be very serious… I said ah-ah, what did I do? That was it ooo. I answered query, after answering query, I had to write apology letter to the doctor. After writing apology to the doctor, I brought the copy to them… to the matron.

Unlike the ward unit head, the matron focused on her response as rude and heightened the already tensed situation by asking her to write an apology letter. Her ability to reveal where Interviewee 2 OJ was wrong is a demonstration of value judgement, which sometimes, is needed to chastise an erring worker. However, the mere fact that she was asked by the Matron to write an apology letter for her speech which was considered rude, beg, and kneel before the doctor and nothing was said about the constant threat from the doctor is considered bullying in the estimation of Interviewee 2OJ. It also indicates that bullying is reinforced by those in leadership roles when they fail to condemn the flagrant abuse of power through careless statements from those who are esteemed workers.

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Other interviewees with similar concerns shared their experiences of seizing of files and work equipment. In organization E, (Interviewee 1 OE) is a volunteer worker in the church as a band boy and laundry service provider. He alleged that he has been under constant threats and that his work equipment was seized. He plays the musical instruments in worship but desired no payment for the duties he perform in the worship services of the church. Thus, he is one of the two participants in this study considered as a volunteer worker:

> *...I have been a church worker for a very long time, and I know the challenges most church workers face; being that most of them need to be paid, but the churches would not meet up with the payment. And to a large extent I do not really think that workers in church should be paid. Because I believe it is God we are working for; and the church should cater for the needs of people. So, being paid means it is not God you are serving anymore, you are working for someone. When you are paid, if we are working for God, then God should do the payment. So, but that does not mean some[one] who is working in church or working for God would not feed or would not meet their financial needs* (Interviewee 1 OE, Organization E, 5th November 2019).

While his view on church work and payment is not altogether contradictory to the Biblical teachings of serving God not for money, the challenge is when it is used as a pretext to exploit church workers who do not have any other engagement or trade to support themselves but have dedicated themselves for the services of the church. The issue of whether church work should be voluntary service or not, is not the main focus of this study. However, his response to what the church should be doing is to '*cater for the needs of people. So, being paid means it is not God you are serving anymore, you are working for someone'*. This sums up what seems to be the intuitive understanding of most of the church workers who participated in this study. This is further elaborated in the discussion chapter. Nevertheless, in the case of (Interviewee 1 OE), the arrangement was to serve the church with his musical skills and playing the church drum sets, while the church offered a space and electric power for him to engage in laundry services that would help him be self-employed and extend the same services to the mission hospital.

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> *I am a drummer in the church, and then I am working on a contract basis with the hospital as their dry cleaner, a laundrist, [a strange term he uses] so I do the washing for them, and they provided me with a workspace. And also, they provided me with light. So, this agreement was to help me still serve the church, while I do my job. So, I will be able to be financially independent* (Interviewee 1OE).

Having drawn attention to the voluntary nature of his services, issues of bullying experiences in these services are the main focus. The case as presented below varies from misunderstanding of work relation boundaries and voluntary services, even as Interviewee 1OE, complained about constant threat:

> *on some occasions, I have been threatened… ehm… the workspace… I have been threatened that I would forfeit the place, on the grounds that I am not doing my… playing my part. And although the fault is not 100% mine! Because I am supposed to be the one doing the washing and the ironing, but one of the staff decided to help me out, and I let him do it—because he felt his own job would also be threatened if he does not do. He is employed by the hospital to do washing; he was employed by the hospital to do the washing. And so, he felt if I take up the job alone, it might threaten his own job; and so that is why he offered to do the washing for me. And it is actually… it was actually an agreement between I and the person. So, I still give him some incentive, I still tip him at the end of the month for the services he is rendering me* (Interviewee 1OE, p.3).

The inability of the church leadership to streamline its operations with the services of the drummer (Interviewee 1 OE) in the church, and the laundry at the hospital, just to make sure they retain his assistance in the church musical worship leadership remains problematic. They duplicated services at the laundry, without considering the impact on the relationship with him. Firstly, the purpose for having a laundry is to maintain an effective and efficient service delivery in the care of patients, who, presumably are charged for the bedding and laundry services provided. Secondly, the new service provider (Interviewee 1OE), agreed to wash all the bedding materials of the hospital with the hospital equipment free of charge, and to charge outsiders who may need such services. But where the problem lies, is in retaining a paid employee as laundry assistant, yet agreeing with Interviewee 1OE to provide same services, denying him the choice of who to work with. This is clearly stated below:

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The hospital management asked me to stop letting him [their employee] ... as in, to discontinue him from washing, doing the washing... ah... because I am the one who is supposed to do the washing. But I feel that should not be an issue, because the agreement is that I do washing and I do ironing, who does it directly should not be a problem; because I have the right to still employ my own staff to do the washing. So, who actually does it should not be a problem? The problem should be ... where there will be a problem is if I do not deliver as required, as and at when due. But provided the clothes are washed and they are being ironed to their taste, I do not see any issue in someone else doing the washing for me.... So, them coming to threaten me that I will lose this workspace, because I am not doing the washing directly, it is actually not welcoming.

Interviewee 1 OE complained of constant threat because of the laundry assistant who is willing to work for him too and receive some pay. His perception of the issue is that he has the right to hire anyone to work for him and with him in delivering such services required of him. On the other hand, the employee of the hospital is afraid of being made redundant, especially with the level of economic recession and unemployment rate in Nigeria. Hence, he made himself available for the work, perhaps with other jobs in the hospital, but the focus is: why must he do the job that was left for Interviewee 1 OE? This is one of the issues Interview 1OE considers as workplace bullying. Furthermore, he argued that the management was attacking him indirectly with threats for allowing their workers to come into his workspace for their personal ironing:

...They have an iron here and I brought my own iron. And they told me I can use their equipment.... So, as regards the iron, ehm... they had to take their own iron, they collected it from me. And the reason was that I was permitting their staff to come do ironing here. And I was permitting the staff on the basis that I felt it was their right to come iron here initially, and so I permitted them. But there was a time when I received ehm... a direct order from the matron to stop the student nurses specifically from coming to iron here, which I did. I stopped them from coming to iron here. Aha... but I was surprised when one day I came, and I did not see the iron again and when I asked, they said she collected it. And her reasons were that I was also permitting staff to come iron their clothes here too, and when I met her, I explained to her, and I pleaded with her to give me back the iron because I did not know that staffs were included.... But, up till now she has not given me the iron, and it is really affecting my job.

The act of seizing his work equipment in a broader sense, illuminates the ordeals encountered in such a complex business strategy. It was rather challenging to efficiently provide the services they had agreed together. This is predicted in the context that his

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refusal to stop their employee from supporting him in the services was already a reason for constant threats. If he eventually fails, then it will be another valid reason to relieve him of the space and the contract. Following through his story, I asked him if he had formally complained to the pastor, who introduced him to the workspace opportunity with the mission hospital. He replied thus:

> *I have actually not complained to the pastor himself, and the reason being that I am trying to handle it on my own first, to see how far I can handle it. So, if at any point I feel I cannot handle it anymore then I will complain to the appropriate authorities.*

When I asked him to share more about his experience on the voluntary services with the church, he further clarified that he does not equate the church with the hospital, nor his services as voluntary in totality; hence his bullying experience is not from the church, but the hospital:

> *I actually would not necessarily consider it voluntary, based on the fact I see this as a help from the church. Because like I said I have worked with so many churches, and very few churches would actually want to help people like this one has actually done. I am not sensing this bullying from the church; I am sensing it more from the ... I am receiving it more from the organization, the hospital itself. And, although the hospital is affiliated with the church, I feel they are an organization of their own. They have a body and a structure of their own, and the church does not actually have much say in the affairs of the hospital, although it is the same person who owns the both of them. But the church does not have 100% say of what happens ....*

This response goes further to project the thought and understanding of some workers about FBOs and church. I have explained the framework for the FBOs in this study in Chapter 5. Organization E falls under the category of CFBOs directly linked to a religious denomination, but separately incorporated from the church. In the first instance (Interviewee 1 OE) does not see his work as voluntary but business because the hospital is not run as a charity organization on free services. Also, he had declared earlier that the church should not pay people for the services they render in the church. The church is not for business, but those affiliated services outside of the church are

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business ventures. He tries to separate the church from its affiliated organization, thus exonerating it from any bullying experiences that goes in the hospital.

Still in relation to threats against FBOs workers, Interviewee 3 OB, and Interviewee 4 OI respectively, shared their experiences on how they received threats and their personal files were hidden to make way for their possible dismissal from their work. In Nigerian workplaces, employees' files, which contain personal information, are part of the performance evaluation management procedures for decisions on either promotion or suspension /dismissal. A number of authors (Asogwa Brendan, 2012; Eme & Ugwu, 2011) have reported cases of missing files and vital information about workers, especially in public/ civil service in Nigeria. These occurrences either delay important decisions for or against such workers. Mischievous people could distort such vital information to suit their inordinate ambitions. In the case of Interviewee 3 OB, whose work with his organization had spanned over three decades, the decision for his retirement was delayed because his file was missing. While he was worried about losing his benefits after 40 years of service, if his records were missing, he was accused of hiding his file to avoid going on retirement.

Prior to the missing file, he was transferred to another branch of his church institution, but he tried to resist it:

> *When I requested for them to revoke the transfer, the boss told me there is no vacancy again in that place [as the office secretary] that the place they have a vacant post now is in the mortuary! I told him I am not a mortician; I will go on transfer. I decided to come, if there is air at this place that it is air that sustains human being, I will be sustained, I and my family* (Interviewee 3 OB, Organization B, 28th October 2019).

Rather than serve as a mortician, he preferred to go on transfer, but unknown to him, the aim of transferring him was to see if he would resign:

> *And, when I came … the principal told me after trying many, you know ways to… for me to resign, he told me that he was asked to give me a machete to cut*

the field, so that I will use my hand to resign. Because they have not found any fault that they will, you know, write for my termination or dismissal. So that when I, because I have not tried such a thing, it is not my work. I have been in the office all this while, ehm… when I was employed, I have been working in the office, from this office to this office. But he told me they told him to give me a knife to cut the field, so that when I am frustrated, …I use my hand to resign, but I told them that since they want to frustrate me, they cannot frustrate me, I am working for the Lord, and they could not do that.

All these he bravely resisted and was diligent in his work. Sometimes, leaders who have played along with authorities or friends to perpetrate evil in their organizations turn back to confess. Some do it to appear innocent, but in this context, it is not clear why the Principal would reveal such a previously unknown secret to him. However, the last trap had not been revealed until his retirement was announced:

when I was told to retire, I was given retirement form to retire, because I have put many years in the service. Without any notice written or oral, pre-information, I was just given a retirement form abruptly. Then I began to fill it after studying, then I went back to my boss to give me a service record—because in that form, the form you are filling must tally with the service record. That service record was removed from the file because, you know, our work is continuity. A church work is continuity, if you work anywhere, when you are going the service record must go with.

Abrupt retirement is usually a nightmare to families with young children because of the financial strain, especially where there is no social security. But in his case, he was calm and made an effort to fill his form accordingly. It was in the process of filling the form that he requested for his service record from the principal. As can be seen from the extract above, his '*service record was removed*'. The question would be: who removed his service record? The same Principal who had revealed that he was told *'to give [him] a machete to cut the field, so that I will use my hand to resign'* was the same person he met for his service record. This is because a missing service record will affect the retirement benefit and that was the reason, he requested for his service records to fill the retirement form:

So, I demanded for my service record in his position so that I will fill the form, but when I did that, because some people may ask me, what did you do when

they were looking for your service record. So, I had to write officially then he said that I have given him a query.... I told him no, because in that this thing, I stated here ... now I said, I have made several verbal demands for the service record from you for onward update as policy demands, but to no avail, then now I am writing officially to you, humbly demanding for it because it is still in your possession. Your prompt action to this is very much needed, for delay may be dangerous and may affect my long service, you know, thanks anticipating a positive response from you as you remain blessed, yours faithfully in God's service. I signed my name. He said that I have given him a query and start telling me everything and asked me, walk me out, you know, because he invited me. Am I the one that wrote? I said yes sir, [he was] telling me that I will [be] dismissed... after going through this ... ehm... query that I have given to him, that I will be dismissed without any benefit, you know, he said such a thing. Okay, I walked close, he asked me to "get out from this office, get out!" I went out from his office, you know, I went out and handed everything to God, I was praying.

He verbally pleaded for the service record, it was not given, then, he wrote officially.

Attempting to make an official request for his service record was misconstrued as a query; hence threats were issued, suggesting that it could have been premeditated that he should be dismissed without a benefit. At the end of this narrative, I asked him, "would you consider this as workplace bullying?" He answered thus:

Yes, because I was walked out from that ... humiliated, told me to get out, and asked me that I will be dismissed without any benefit, is it[not] humiliation? After working for about 40 years in an organization, is it not humiliation? It is bullying!... I was praying, so after two days, the boss went for a meeting, and they had the meeting for two days and he was transferred from here to somewhere and he did not give me the service record until he handed over to a new boss. After two months, the new boss asked his secretary to come and look for a document, then on looking for that document, she saw those service records.

It is evident from this narrative that a threat was issued. While it is possible the file was not misplaced by the administrator, the anxiety he created for Interviewee 3 OB, through threats of dismissal without any benefit, after 40 years of service, suggest bullying had been entrenched in the system.

Similarly, in organization I, Interviewee 4 OI narrated his ordeals at the hand of the son of the Spiritual leader of the organization. Ordinarily, nothing should get the son of the Spiritual leader into the administration of the organization; but in FBOs where the

church leadership meddles with its institutions, members of his/her family can gain absolute power. According to his account, the problem began when he was helping the school Principal to succeed in her roles:

> *I always love to help [people], if we are in a place to survive, nothing minding immediate reward. So, I have helped principal, helped some colleagues in their chosen assignments so that they can forge ahead. In fact, sometimes I have been a kind of secretary to the principal of the school and because of that, people that have been fighting the principal, eventually they were now fighting me! In fact, to the ... there was a point... they got to a point that ehm... they went... somebody went to look for my file from the staff office, so that they will look for one way or the other to sack me* (Interviewee 4 OI, Organization I,8th November 2019).

The struggle for power and position is part of the reality of FBOs where people can do anything to get into power structures of the organization. For Interviewee 4 OI, his interest was to help anyone in leadership succeed, but he never knew he was kicking against the will of some people who were close to the son of the Spiritual leader. To his dismay, the Principal called his attention to the continuous pressure for his personal files, meaning that he may be dismissed.

> *He [the son of the Spiritual leader] only told me that he wants to see me, then he went to principal's office to collect the... my file, then I got to know, because principal told me that see, so and so person have been threatening to collect your file. And because he has been coming and coming, she had to release the file.... And that time, everybody was afraid of the son... everybody.... if you make complaints, your complaint may earn you sack letter. Sack letter! So, there was fear everywhere because of the son of the proprietor.*

I enquired further to know the implications of taking one's file by the son of the spiritual leader. His response revealed the reason for the heightened fear:

> *Because I have been told ...by the principal that this person is looking for my file... to look for one thing or the other, maybe enough queries, so that they will have ground of sacking me. Uhm... policies... for example, maybe sometimes if you maltreat students, you can be sacked. And then maybe, they warned you, they gave you warning letter and you did the same thing again, at least three times, then you can be sacked.*

It is not clear if he had offended previously with warning letters, but the fact that an external person meddles with the administration of the school to the extent members of

staff are worried about their job conveys a message about the internal issues in their workplace.

9.3 Victims of conspiracy

Conspiracy is one of the tools bullies use against their targets at the workplaces (Hutchinson, Vickers, Wilkes, & Jackson, 2009). It is usually a secret strategy to harm, without the knowledge of the would-be target. But where one is conscious or sensitive to this plan, he/she lives in fears of the unknown in the course of his/her services at the workplace. The theme 'victims of conspiracy' surfaced in a number of stories shared in this study, but few of them stand out as examples for consideration in my analysis. The first example is related to the experience of Interviewee 4 OB, in organization B.

Interviewee 4 OB, began his story by acknowledging the times his work and experiences were full of joy, energy, and enthusiasm because there was a healthy atmosphere to thrive:

> *I would say, as a Faith-based Organization, this environment was more of spiritual association, more of get together of people and working with team spirit and achieving goals, taking at objectives, and getting them, achieving them. You know this issue of teaching, making sure that our children [are]aware, you know holistic knowledge, we tackled it and it was yielding dividend at that material time. It was a wonderful experience, in fact, people you know, I will say loved impact of, you know, the teaching crew this place. But over time, things have actually changed. Many things have eroded* (Interviewee 4 OB, Organization B, 27th November 2019).

The changes he mentioned in the course of time was attributed to leadership:

> *You see, but when we started, you come here on a Friday, you notice a kind of atmosphere, spiritual atmosphere that will, you know, seem as if you want to meet your Lord Jesus Christ. You know, you see singing, you see the euphoria of happiness and joy all over... our children sing like angels. You see them do some activities, spiritual activities. You, know, but then administrations come and go, and people... children come and go, workers come and go and as they do so; several things keep watering down, that is the true position. You know, it is just like starting from top and the thing keeps ebbing low and ebbing low down to the point where we are now.*

In fact, it was at the point of his involvement in the leadership as the second in the line of authority that he became a victim of conspiracy:

> *Take for instance, in terms of discipline, if you are disciplining students, you need to hear them fairly. And if you do not hear them fairly, you have not given right judgement and the Bible abhors that too. But here in most case, you see administrators meting out sanctions, even to the point of expelling students, without properly hearing them and handling their cases with love and empathy. You know, a child would commit an offence, we hear from that person, hear from the other person, hear from the other person. After hearing you make your conclusions, you will not hear the other side, you will not hear the child out. And the child keeps crying in himself or herself. That that is not what happened, that this thing is against him, that it is an allegation and at the end of the day, the child could be expelled or could be punished.*

The issue shared in the above extract focused on his relationship with students in terms of discipline and other members of the management team. He seems to be attached to students as a father 'in loco parentis' in the school. He is interested in fighting for their rights to the point his colleagues are not comfortable. Even though, he mentioned it cut across everyone, and he fights for staff too:

> *You also come to the staff area, you discover that if you do not belong and may be clap hands, sing praises to a leader—and you are not the type that will always ehm… say yes, yes, and do eye service, your name will be written in a black book that will never be erased; whatever you. And so, it has happened, and I am a victim of that, that those who say the right thing should be done or who say, let us mete out justice, are tortured, suffocated, marginalized, and trampled upon, in this institution; of which I am an example.*

He seems to link his ordeal and the bullying experience as presented above to '*not belonging*' to the group of praise singers. Praise singers in organizations usually seek every opportunity to show leaders that they are solidly behind them. They are spy agents of the leaders they support, gossiping and seeking incriminating information to crackdown on opposing groups or individuals who do not agree with their mentors and leaders. Therefore, he considers himself marginalized and trampled upon for being transparent. However, a dominant aspect of his story is that he is from a different clan or community. Therefore, those who consider themselves as most eligible to occupy positions of authority in the school, were jealous of his rising profile.

I have a personal testimony, the most, not the most recent anyway, but let me just point it out—leaders that are not transparent do not like honest and transparent people to work with them. For reasons I do not know, but I have found it out in our leadership hierarchy. That is the problem I have with leadership! Now, there is something that happened, they went and how they did it and called me I should be a vice principal in this school, you know, some two years ago or so.... They said I needed to help that principal, considering my experience, considering my age, considering everything. And so, I took it upon myself to make sure that the school is intact.

Despite the challenges of not belonging to the praise singers, he testified he was appointed into a leadership position, perhaps, he believes he had contributed immensely to the development of the organization:

So, I went on working, you know, hard and relentlessly... I never knew that there was this other ulterior ethnic interest coming up from among members of the administration, including the leader himself. So, they ganged up, they wanted to move me, you know for ulterior reasons, so that they can impose their own people... Unfortunately, they could not find any fault from me. What they did was to go behind me, did some re-writing of my son's examination answers in one of the internal examinations. They went and altered the things, scores given to my child in four subjects. When they did it, I did not know, nobody, they did not show me. They went…constituted a committee behind me, even when I was next to the principal.

At this point, according to this participant, it became clearer that there is a powerful group, who are politically motivated, and desired to ruin his career. Since they could not find any fault with him, they alleged that his son participated in examination malpractice. A committee was constituted without his knowledge, even as co-principal. It was presumed that he must have been involved; hence the committee was constituted behind his back, in his view, as a tool to smear his reputation. I inquired further if he was suspended, he said:

Much as I was not suspended, officially that was a spiritual torture, it was more than bullying, because, even as I am talking to you, such things could be going around, you know, be meted out to some others who may not have disclosed their own aspect of this bullying, so all these things I consider are serious bullying. And there are people that cannot tolerate this, they will go and kill themselves. It came to that point, if not for my extent of spirituality in this church, I would have gone out of this church, I would have done that. But I have faith in the church, so tell me what else is more than this kind of thing when you talk about bullying.

His allusion to thoughts of suicide in relation to workplace bullying is a significant insight to what goes on in the mind of some of the FBOs workers who are victims of workplace bullying. Recently in Nigeria, a qualitative study conducted with 30 participants randomly selected among public and private organizations, confirmed that suicidal ideation is part of the psychosomatic signs of excessive bullying (Owoyemi & Akintayo, 2019). Nonetheless, for Interviewee 4 OB, he considers his experience as serious bullying. He had used terms like gang up, marginalized, trampled upon, put one's name in a black book, but the one that captures his emotional pain most was spiritual torture.

In understanding his pain as spiritual torture, one need to consider being in the presence of a supreme power that is omnipotent to vindicate him/her; yet he/she cannot escape from the flames and the wrath of such a power. This understanding is connected to his leaning on church leaders to save him from his supposed enemies at the onset of his ordeal.

> *I personally went to the [the church leadership]to meet the ... president, I told him, see I have served this church not just as an educationist, but in other capacities ... as a youth, if not as a pastor, even I personally have trained pastors who are serving today, who are directors, if not presidents. So, I do not have any reason why I should come to mutilate my child's result. My child who does not even need any help to pass. I do not have any reason to come to mutilate his result in order for him to pass, after all, that is not an external exam. What will it profit me to go to do that? That somebody has done this. That was when the president said I do not ... but I am, because they have their way, they have what they want to do, I am not preventing anybody, I ready to relinquish even my office for them that is what they are looking for, I made it plain to the president. He said I should go and write a report, if I am sure that I am saying the truth I should write a report, that he has a way.*

He was required to make his complaint official through writing, which he did, hoping that a formal and transparent approach, in his views, will be followed. The reality from his story is that he does not believe his son was involved in examination malpractice, as he [the son] was not a dull student; hence he wanted his case to be thoroughly investigated. Just like the committee, which was constituted by the school without

informing him, nor inviting him, he said the church leadership also constituted a

committee without officially inviting him to respond.

> *The crux of the matter is that the committee that the [church leadership] apart from the committee the school set, the [church leadership] set another committee without informing me, even some allegations that were added to what I already know, some other allegations that were added was not made known to me. One day, around 3'oclock I was invited that the education director is calling me, I thought it was… he wanted to see me for an … I went and discovered it was a committee a panel of investigators coming to investigate me, a committee set by the [the church leadership], no letter, no phone call, no information, even from the school or from this thing. I just came and they started asking, hey, this… how do you know about this thing that was written here, ehm… your phone, your age, what is your… the attack was so much by the members of the so … so called committee, I was, you know, kind of embarrassed.*

He saw himself as having neither a sense of belonging in the school, nor in the rank of

church leadership, perhaps, because he is not from the clan that dictates who leads. In

his concluding remark on workplace bullying experiences in organization B, he said:

> *This experience now I am telling you is just one out of the numerous experiences. Apart from hurting me economically, because my salary dropped almost from, let us say, if it is 100%, it dropped to about 40%-35%, because of this. And not only that, but I was also kicked from my residence where I was living, it cost me disaster, in fact, if not that I have faith in this church, I could have backslidden, out of this church, I am just telling you. And when you look at it, you begin to imagine, where are the leaders that should protect the integrity of the church and protect their members. Where are they! This is not just this matter alone, there are other issues and other people are still doing the same. Bullying, economic bullying is going on here, even with the treasury. Where you need to… unless you fight, and fight, and fight your rights, I mean your rights, not privileges, your rights will not be made available to you. In fact, most times, you prefer to forgo those rights as against going to fight for it, because of this bullying.*

Interviewee 4 OB's overwhelming faith in his church was consistently referred to as the

only reason to remain in the workforce. He could forgo his rights, not just privileges for

the sake of faith in the church. This shows the level religion is taken in Nigeria, even

under excruciating circumstances. Detailed comments on this are in the discussion

chapter.

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Another example of a victim of conspiracy experience was the story of Interviewee 2 OG, in organization G. He had been an early child teacher to young children for thirteen years in organization G. At the point of this interview, he was handling primary six pupils. One of the stories he shared on his bullying experiences was his decision to assess a student who missed out on the internal examination of the school:

> *There was a time my salary was cut. And what happened that time was during exam, some of the pupils were sent [home], were driven out of school for non-payment of their school fees. And when they paid the school fees, the children came back, one of them came back to write the exam. I actually made a mistake.... So, when she came back, I said 'ah…ah', how can I take the same question I have given to others, marked, and given back to them. The questions have been exposed! How can I give you the same question paper to write? Then in the second part of it, how can I give you questions different from others to answer?*

One of the major functions of a teacher in the classroom is decision making and taking responsibility for whatever comes with each decision. In the circumstances he found himself, he decided to consult with his colleagues, whom he thought were genuinely interested in his success:

> *But all these, I did not let the administrator to know, neither the HM to know. I only believed my friends, my colleagues, two of them: one female, one male. I went to them and asked them, look at situation on ground, 'I don't know what to do'! None of them told me 'See this or go and do this' and I take decision on my own. And what was the decision I took? I said, let me assess this child intuitively, I am her class teacher, I have marked some of her scripts. Let me judge her based on her performances in the scripts I have marked. That is what I told those my two friends, none of them told do not do, okay or it is okay do it. The moment one of them saw I did that, she ran to the management and reported me.*

One might consider such report as not necessary, as it had to do with peripheral matters, but the management took action that eventually tarnished his image.

> *The management who heard this did not ask me, the HM. The HM took it up to [the bishop] who now took decision. She only called me, in fact, it was a general meeting, staff meeting, it was announced that one of you is busy giving unnecessary marks to children who did not write exam, who is that? The way it was presented, I did not know. It was narrowed and narrowed and narrowed and traced that this thing happened in this class—primary six and I recoiled,*

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and that time I was handling the children on co-curricular activity because we were preparing for inter- school sport competition then. So, I was even in the field preparing the children, a message was sent for me, so I went. And when I went, that was what I heard. Ehm…that it was the mother of the child came and reported to them that my daughter did not write exam, how come she was given such marks? I was annoyed!

He was charged with academic misconduct, but there was no thorough investigation to

situate the circumstances that lead to his decision.

What annoyed me, that is why I told you, that HM [Head Mistress] is actually indirectly bullying me. May be to discharge her duty, but that my colleague who took the report to her, even though I sought help from her, was actually directly bullying me! She was the one that took the report! They coined it that the parents came. Now, where I took it offensive on myself is: just like I said, 'did you find out what actually happened, did you go deeper to know, if the child paid me to buy the result; if I am having illicit affair?' But you have just summarized that mark was awarded.

This led to his suspension and his salary was halved. He felt there was a plot to

sack him, and the HM was using his colleagues to achieve this goal. Also, he did not

believe any report came from the parents of the pupil in question. Besides the

suspension and apparent disgrace his mistake brought him, another experience that

suggests a conspiracy was ongoing to kick him out, was on extra classes allowances

another colleague of his shared with him.

I was suspended! And there was this [colleague], that time we were having extra classes for those in primary five and in primary six, and at the whole thing, ehm… stipend… stipends were meant to be given the teachers who participated... Because at the end of it all, when that suspension was given to me, another male colleague took over my class and his own class… you understand? So, when the stipend was given, that my male colleague shared the stipend into two, he took half, I took half, equally, and he was also summoned by the management, by my HM particularly, "why did you divide the money into two, since this man was walked out of school? He did not do the work ... And he answered, the money belongs to us, we know how to do our money!

The overriding interest of the HM was no longer hidden as the extract above revealed

that her intentions was to sack interviewee 2 OG with any opportunity available. Also,

one may assume that a reason behind the plot to sack Interviewee 2 OG was his rising

profile among parents and the children under his care. In one of the extracts, he shared:

Before the HM became the HM, we use to have 'logger head' clash—this clash is out of stupidity—anyway because, what were we actually trying to tell?

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Nothing! It is just to notice me in a working environment at times, something like that, of course! Especially a seed of discord had been sown and you are likely to inherit such.

This discord eventually spread s, turning the workplace into a battlefield for supremacy and bullying.

9.4 Concluding thoughts for discussion

The broader context of the stories captured in this chapter focused on social justice in organizations, equity, and fairness. Intimidation through the show of power and procedures for discipline suggest that those with leadership responsibility seem not to demonstrate equity. It calls attention to a power paradox and how a little kindness at workplaces could change the atmosphere in FBOs, especially CFBOs. But where these act of kindness towards the good and wellbeing of workers is lacking, it is construed as bullying. The content of this chapter is similar to the points raised in the preceding chapter; hence it is relevant to the sub-research question (b) and (c). I will discuss them in Chapter 11 under miscarriage of justice and leadership. It will be interpreted through the lenses of Ubuntu moral and Equity theory respectively.

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CHAPTER 10

IMPACT OF WORKPLACE BULLYING AND APPROACHES TO REDUCE WORKPLACE BULLYING AMONG FBO WORKERS IN SOUTH-EASTERN NIGERIA

10.1 Introduction

In Chapters 7-9, the results of research question (1) and sub-question 1(a), which centred on the lived experiences of church workers in SEN and what they consider as workplace bullying, were presented with themes and sub-themes, respectively. This chapter will focus on the findings on sub-research question (1b) and (1c) respectively. The sub-research question (1b) is: "In what specific ways does bullying experience impact on the job performance and quality of services of church workers in church-based organizations?"; while sub-research question 1(c) is: "What do church workers consider as the most effective approaches to reduce workplace bullying in church-based organizations?"

The analytical report on sub-research question 1(b), is coalesced into four themes, while 1(c) has two major themes and sub-themes. Each theme is linked to part of the narratives previously presented in Chapters 6-8, but focuses on the aspect of the stories that connect to the questions in context. First, I present the themes on sub-research question 1(b), then 1(c) respectively. Afterwards I conclude the chapter with emerging thoughts and discussion questions.

Williams and Anderson (1991) in their study on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, associated job performance and quality services with 'in-role behaviour'. This term consists of activities or duties an employee is expected to accomplish each day he/she comes to work, as contained in the employment contract. Usually, job performance and quality of services are measured by employers of labour,

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based on certain pre-requisite skills and competencies. However, in this study, data from FBOs on the records of job performance, and quality services of interviewees, were not collated because of the sensitive nature of this topic. Therefore, this study focused on self-reported in-role behaviours, and activities at the workplace vis-a-vis the impact of bullying experiences. Whereas skill competency would be the first criteria used to measure job performance, and probably quality of service, in this presentation, Table 3 (see Methodology chapter), which has demographic data of interviewees, provides insight on their characteristics. Self- reported characteristics like age, years of experience, and educational qualification, are relevant individual data that serve as a snapshot of skill competency for tasks undertaken.

In the absence of performance evaluation from the various organizations from which participants were drawn, age of participants, years of experiences, gender, level of education, and of course socio-cultural realities can inform the actions taken in the event of bullying at the workplace. Therefore, these are considered in the interpretation of data generated in this study. The evidence from data analysis in this section, suggests that some (11 out of the 30 interviewed) FBOs workers in SEN were impacted negatively with the bullying experiences, especially in the performance of their jobs, and, in providing quality services. Interestingly, 12 out of 30 interviewees, who experienced bullying, indicated that their job performance, and quality of services were not impacted negatively. On the other hand, 7 out of 30 did not give a clear indication on the impact of bullying in their work.

Focusing now on the themes that emerged from the data analysis of this section, the following ideas pervade the subject—the impact of the bullying experience on job performance, and quality of services: (1) lack of commitment and low productivity; (2) thoughts of humiliation, withdrawing, rather than being a joyful exuberant worker; (3)

uninhibited passion for service of a lifetime occupation; (4) stepping up and intensity in prayer.

10.2 Lack of commitment and low productivity

In organization A, Interviewee 2OA, indicated that his commitment to work was negatively impacted as a consequence of the bullying experience in his organization. He emphasized that denial of information, especially information that will aid in security services, compounded his lack of commitment, and provision of quality services:

> *It makes me work anyhow, because when they tell you this... call... this people are coming, look at ...where they gave them...look at their mission, at least as a security, we know how to follow them. But since they do not tell us such a thing, you just keep silent... I do not work comfortably* (Interviewee 2OA, Organization A, 30th October 2019).

Working "anyhow" or "[un]comfortably" when placed in a broader context, based on my observations during the interview session with him, sheds light on a multi-layered feeling of anger, social exclusion, and job status discrimination. He presented himself as one who lacks a sense of belonging in the organization, especially as he works at night. In an educational institution, there should be notice boards for the purpose of disseminating information. Hence, I asked: "do *you have a place like notice board where you can read information about what is happening in the school*?" His response was "*No! you [we] don't have such a thing*?" Either the school has not taken this into consideration, and does not communicate adequately, or some workers do not have interest in reading notice boards. Nevertheless, his perspective was that this is bullying. He seems to be the only interviewee who emphasized lack of information as part of bullying experiences in their organization.

Just as he mentioned, security guards should have basic information, at least the mission of their guests and when they would leave, so that they "know how to follow them" unobtrusively. Therefore, in the absence of this information, he wanders

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aimlessly at the security post and works with a nonchalant attitude at night. He continued:

> *You go over this side you see somebody, you do not know who is who? You do not know when bad person enters...There is no how you will work or be working around [and be comfortable] .... What if something happens, you do not know how to defend yourself...in fact, you do not know anything, you do not know how to cover yourself.*

He complained they had no way to defend themselves because there was no security guard equipment and accessories. For instance, in case there was a need to alert each other of any danger, they had no two-way radio for communication. Also, many times he is not aware of events in the organization. I asked him if he was the head of security services of the organization, he said no, and confirmed that the head does not know either. Furthermore, the impression given was that there are times students go on vacation, and security guards do not have information if people are housed in the school premises or hostel:

> *Sometimes, I feel neglected! Because when somebody .... call you work and call you human being, at least, there is some certain things you complain to him or her, then the person will listen to you. And give you accurate answer. This one, at times, even...they do not tell you even as this school is now, they will have something like midterm break you will not... you can never know, until when you see people going.*

Taken together his experiences, regardless of whether information is provided by the school or not, seem to present a picture of not being valued. Perhaps that is the reason for working "anyhow". Therefore, when workers have a sense of belonging and are valued, they put in their best. But when they feel neglected and not carried along, they perceive it as bullying, and it affects job performance and quality of service in FBOs.

Similarly, interviewee 3OI, who identified as a teacher considered his bullying experiences as a militating factor against providing quality services in his organization. Some of these bullying experiences are mentioned below:

Spying on me yes... [while teaching in the class] I would see somebody shouting at me, even in front of the kids. You know, sometimes in front of the little kids they shout and then try to humiliate the person.... Well, all these effects, yes, but then as a human being ... I look for alternatives to cover those lapses [i.e., time taken in reminiscing over verbal attack that affects class schedule]. There are some other things I do, extra classes with them, even if they are not paid for and they are not even scheduled in the school timetable, I look for extra time, extra classes, you know, go out of my way to go to their classes when they are free to ask questions, to discuss and interact with them and put them through in their drawings. It is just because of the passion and the willingness to see these children do well, you know, do well; it is just out of the love for the children and making good results (Interviewee 3OI, Organization I, 7th November 2019).*

While he went through humiliation, was shouted at, even before the children he was teaching, his passion and love for the children to succeed made him put extra time to teach. But all these changed when the school management failed to uphold its promise of wage improvement.

In fact, the most excruciating one was the last meeting we had, PTSA meeting, where the proprietor stood in front of the parents telling them the wonderful work he has done as a new proprietor, you know, and talked so much we have rebranding, renovating, and revamping the school. And stood in front of the whole congregation; parents, teachers, everybody, students, told them that something has been done already to the take home of teachers... but it was so annoying, when the money dropped and it was just still the same thing—hopes were dashed, you know, plans that was made, you know, and all that. It was so emotional; it was so annoying. In fact, productivity dropped, and it is still affecting, I am yet to pick up fully from that, I am still trying to pick up fully from that.

From the above narrative, it is important to note that Interviewee 3OI seems to be enduring the bullying experiences, while putting in extra time to help the students succeed. But when his anticipated "take home of teachers", which is their pay package, was not improved, his job performance and quality of service dropped abruptly.

10.3 Thoughts of humiliation, withdrawing, rather than being a joyful exuberant worker

The majority of those who indicated that their job performance and quality of services were impacted negatively as a result of their bullying experiences, suffered emotional trauma, and became withdrawn and moody. For instance, Interviewee 1OI,

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expressed her disillusionment with the bullying experiences in her organization, and affirmed that it impacted her job performance and quality of service:

> *Sometimes you feel angry, you express it, they hear! Sometimes you come to class, and when you over… you are stressed up, you can express and say… after all, how much are they paying me; you carry your book and go to the staff room.*

The impression she gave from the above extract is that when she is stressed out with the work of teaching, and remembers her poor remuneration, she expresses her anger to the students. Also, at such moments of heightened emotional trauma, she leaves the classroom without fulfilling her obligation of providing quality teaching.

In another scenario, Interviewee 2OC who had put in two and a half years in her organization and was demoted to be a cleaner as mentioned in Chapter 7, added that her experience impacted negatively on her job performance. Although she struggled with words to identify the specific ways her experience impacted on her job performance, she tactfully expressed her displeasure thus: *"[in a low but tearful voice] it affects! It does, because waking up in the morning, thinking of what you will do, and doing what is not your passion, it is like doing what does not, I do not know, I do not know how to put it. But it's not good"*. The new role she considers as demotion—from an accountant to a cleaner—is very unpleasant to her, hence she emphasized *"I don't find joy, as in doing what I read [i.e., studied as a career]"* (p.20).

Interviewee 3OC, also expressed similar emotion of facing a joyless service as a result of his experiences. when I asked: does it have any impact on the way you carry out your job going forward? He responded:

> *It did! It did, I am this ehm… I have been this open person to everyone, smiles, crack jokes, while working; it has just been my nature.... But now I tend not to do just that, and so many people… I have had feedbacks; people could not confront me. I heard side feedback, some people say, aha… this person is no longer the person he used to be ehm… so, I have decided to watch what I say; pin my smiles and laughter and make sure I do not offend people... and that nobody offends me. I have been trying to re-package my communications with people.*

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To him, the most specific way his bullying experience impacts his job performance is that it drains his energy—the exuberant nature he brings to work is gone. He had to decide to tightly control his humorous speech for people not to pick on him, sensing that his smiles and laughter may have contributed to his bullying experiences.

Other participants (Interviewee 2OK, 3OK, and 2OG) who served as support health workers, and schoolteachers, respectively affirmed through their stories that bullying impacts their job performances and quality of services negatively. For example, in the hospitals, the impact on work is evident, sometimes in the way workers relate to patients. Interviewee 2OK reports:

> *It affects workers most times. But most times, patients might talk to you, you remember you have not even received your salary, you have the morale to talk back; sometimes people might be, patient might even be insulted, because you are not really working with joy, you are not working with happiness, the once you have worked you have not been paid. So, why am I still working on with my heart? So, most times, you see even people coming to work late; most people do not even have the money to transport themselves to work, and you still want them to be coming, ah… check it out naa [meaning, please], it is not done*!

In specific terms, the impact is mostly noticed in relationship with clients or customers who are receiving the services. Smiles and happiness are an emotional façade required as part of the handy professional tools in some workplaces and jobs. For example, nursing, sales, customer care, pastoral function and other emotional labours require that people who take up these professions be cheerful, especially when carrying out their duties. But it is evident from the extract that most of the workers in FBOs cannot conceal their emotions continuously as expected with the ethics of their services. They talk to patients rudely and come to work late when bullying is reinforced directly or indirectly in their workplaces. The emphasis on not having the transport fare to travel to work, is part of the experiences of bullying that affect job performance. Hence the popular adage "a hungry man is an angry man" may have contributed to the rude

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manner of communication exhibited by the workers, since most times they are owed many months of their salaries.

10.4 Uninhibited passion for service of a lifetime occupation

Contrary to the views of 11 out of 30 of the participants of this study, it is interesting to note that a significant number 12 out of 30 indicated they remained positive, committed to their jobs, and maintained quality services, despite the bullying experiences they had. What made the difference was the uninhibited passion they had for their jobs. In organization A, Interviewee 1OA, responded to the question I asked on the impact of his bullying experiences thus:

> *Well…well ehm… ehmm, I like my job. So, I do it with every passion in me... so [the bullying experiences] it does not follow me to class…the fact that I am not getting what I should get out of it [his remuneration and threats from the principal] … ehm, makes me feel bad…But in the class, I am free, and I am happy to do what I am doing... uhm....*

His emphasis on liking his job with 'every passion in [him]', signifies that priority is given to teaching above other things that may happen in the organization, because it is what he loves doing. I probed further if there is any other reason his experiences of bullying do not impact his job performance, he insisted: *"My passion, my passion for the job. E-hey and...! I know I can do it…I have done it before…so…I am doing it…e-hey! And I am…succeeding in it. E-hey! So, for the passion"*. This reveals an aspect in bullying experiences that needs further exploration. Does it mean that those who are not committed in their jobs, or their passion fades away, and productivity drops, like Interviewee 3OI mentioned above, do not love what they do? This will be discussed further in Chapter 11. Other participants of this study with similar expressions of commitment and passion in their jobs, despite their bullying experiences are Interviewee 1OJ, 2OJ, 1OB,1OC, and 2OI, respectively. In the case of Interviewee 1OJ, she said:

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> *It does not affect me because there is a saying that nursing is a vocation and a call, ehe… I will say that nursing is my vocation because I feel fulfilled while attending to patients, especially when I do the things that I am supposed to do in the right way. I feel fulfilled. The only effect it has is based on my family because I will not have time for my family, for my children. Because after experiencing the work overload, immediately we reach home we just look for your bed and lie down.*

It is important to reiterate the point raised in the above extract concerning the impact of the bullying experience at the family front, but not in the job performance and quality of service at the workplace. It suggests that family front challenges, at times may be transferred to the workplace to trigger bullying and toxic atmosphere. Conversely, it could be that bullying experiences at workplace may bring horrible situations and impact on family relationships as well. Therefore, this will be explored further in the discussion chapter. Nevertheless, her insistence that she attends to her job and has fulfilment is consistent with the views of many participants, like Interviewee 2OJ:

> *Because I am not… the work I am doing or the service I am rendering is not for the doctor or to the doctor, but to my patient. And they are my utmost… as in, they are my priority and not the doctor, you understand. Assuming the doctor is the one I am rendering the service to; it would have affected whatever I do.*

They both identified uninhibited passion for their profession as reason for quality services, despite the bullying experiences at the workplace. In organization B, Interviewee 1OB further stated:

> *I would not say that the [se] experiences affect me, but I try to put[in] my best. I work to the best of my ability. Ehey… I will still work, because probably there are people that have this teaching as a passion. If you …, have it as a passion, like me, you would work, you will teach them. Irrespective, no matter, despite all odds, you would teach*!!!

He also emphasized passion for teaching as the ultimate reason for his commitment in his work, despite all odds. Interviewee 1OC elaborated on the joy of service:

> *Uhm… well, I will say no, my experiences of bullying here, it does not affect my job performance. Why I said no is that me, I have joy in this work. And seriously the joy that I have in this work is not from the payment, no, I know am under paid here. Yes! From what my colleagues are receiving from other places.*

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I asked if his joy was because of faith he said:

> *I am doing it out of joy. Not because of my faith. We attend both to Christian, Muslim, other denominations in Christians, not because of my… yeah, I am just doing it personally from my own side.*

To buttress where the joy is coming from, he added:

> *Since it is my profession… is not profession that was decided for me by anyone. I am the one that decided for the profession, so I enjoy working in the profession. I enjoy attending to the patient, I enjoy ehm… helping the patient to be well, the betterment of patient. Ehm… what gives me joy mostly, yes, and in fact, whenever I had it is what you call HSG, HSG is Hysterosalpingography. It is a diagnosis done for women that are looking for a fruit of womb.*

He provided an overview of his joy in the job from the perspective of loving his profession as a radiographer, and seeing women who were once childless, getting pregnant, and coming back to show their babies:

> *So, most of the time, after doing the HSG, some people will come after one year or so, they will come with their babies, so it gives so [much] joy…That is the most joyous, the most important joy that I used to have in this work.*

Another perspective on why bullying experiences does not affect the job performance and quality of service of some workers in FBOs, is the issue of conscience. This was pointed out by Interviewee 2OI:

> *Teaching is a conscious job! teaching is a job of the conscience!! When you see future leaders, future destinies, you have no option than to teach them what they need to know. It is a job of the conscience, no, in fact if you are looking for reward in teaching [sighed] chm… teachers should be the most… the wealthiest people on earth. This job is a job of… I am still here waiting for them, and I will deliver, I teach them what I have prepared.*

He acknowledged teaching as a conscious job, irrespective of what happens, the passion is high to give the best to the future leaders. Therefore, he claims that his job performance and quality of service is not affected by his bullying experiences. Finally, the crux of the argument presented for uninhibited passion for job performance and quality of service borders on the convictions that joy derived in the job, fulfilment, and following one's conscience were great motivations, irrespective of the challenging experiences of bullying.

The next factor identified as one of the reasons for job performance and quality service, even in the midst of workplace bullying is intensity in prayer.

10.5 Step up and intensity in prayer

It is common for people in Nigeria to resort to prayer, when they are facing difficulties, because of the high regard given to religion in all human spheres. The data in this study attest to this fact. Some of the participants in this study, mentioned prayer as the enabling tool for their successes in performing their jobs accurately, despite their bullying experiences. This was captured in the story presented by Interviewee 4OI who saw his bullying experiences as a step towards growth:

> *I prayed about it that God should just take over the matter. And I performed my duties with all strength in me. [concerning the impact of the experience] No, no! I see it as a steppingstone. I see it as a steppingstone, because I have learnt that the road is not always smooth. The road to the top is never smooth.*

In other words, he was not affected by the bullying experience in the quality of services he rendered to his organization. He added: "*So, you know, the Bible said that 'as much as it lies in you, live peaceably with all men…' as much, that is, as long as you have that grace, do what you can do, so far, it's godly*". This was indeed his claim and survival principle while he went through the challenges of bullying, to maintain peaceful cooperation with all. It is in the same eyes of faith that another participant saw bullying as training, rather than challenges. This was captured in the statement of interviewee 1OF, when I asked: *"Will you consider your experience as bullying?"* and the response was *"I will consider it as a training"*. This was explained thus:

> *Because, I do not see them, I see myself growing higher, and I need people to train me and tell me things I need to know, and things that I do not even need to know—so that I can know where to focus myself, when I get to that height I am aspiring to. That is why I do not see it as bullying. At first, I was looking at it that way, but chm… [sighs], you know as a Christian I am, as a child of God, I talk to my God. He is the only joy that I have. He said that my joy does not come from any man or job, or anywhere, it just comes from the Lord. And he has a better end for me. So, whatever that is happening is just for a while. So, that is how I want to get it and I saw it as something that I can overcome. Remember,*

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> *God said that he cannot allow something that surpass us to come to us. So, whatever that comes to me, I believe I can overcome it. And I am above that.*

Similarly, in Organization B, one of those who believed prayer helped him go through his bullying experiences said:

> *Well, God was in control. I trust in God, and I believed that if … if you want to undo me when my hand is clean, eeh? God will carry me and bless me there. Because it was done to Joseph… in the Bible. I prayed and God saw me through. It did not affect the way I performed my duties* (Interviewee 3 OB).

Suffice it to say that challenges of bullying were real to these workers as figured in the extracts from all the stories. However, the choice to perform the duties and maintain a positive spirit, handing their challenges to God, seem to have worked for some of the participants in this study. This will be discussed further in Chapter 11. While prayer and trust in God seem to have helped, does it mean that people should resort to prayer alone in solving bullying challenges in the workplaces, especially in FBOs?

Considering the sub-research question (1c) which focused on "What do church workers consider as the most effective approaches to reduce workplace bullying in church-based organizations?"; the following themes with other sub-themes emerged. (1) Developing policies and channels of complaint on workplace bullying. (2) Leadership competencies.

10.6 Developing policies and channels of complaint on workplace bullying

Lack of policies on workplace bullying is one of the critical points raised in scholarly literature on workplace bullying in Nigeria (see chapter 2). This was also reiterated in the overall response to the question on availability of policies on workplace bullying among participants of this study. In the 11 organizations from which participants for this study were drawn, the majority suggest that such a policy document on bullying either does not exist or has not been implemented. It was difficult to access policy documents from all the organizations involved in this study, because of the

sensitive nature of this topic. However, I could only get two pamphlets that had relevant information on policies concerning bullying through participants from two organizations. In one of the pamphlets, the statement on bullying came under the heading "negative reinforcement" (Nwaokoro, 2010-2016, p. 41), which specifically listed corporal punishments first, then, bullying. It stated that bullying either physically or as a verbal threat against junior students, as well as fighting, are seriously prohibited in the school. There is no formal definition of what constitutes this bullying, except maltreatment of junior students and fighting. That is why one of the participants, interviewee 1OA responded to the question on the availability of policy on workplace bullying thus:

> *That one is for students, because here now, fighting is highly prohibited. A-hey! And a senior student is not, is not expected in any way to bully any younger student. So, the school frowns at that. E-hey! So, fighting everywhere, even a staff cannot fight, e-hey! You cannot even quarrel to an extent, because if you...if you get to a particular extent, then two of you might be given query. So, bullying is not tolerated in this school.*

Similarly, in organization B, interviewee 4OB maintains that bullying policy is for students:

> *In the memorandum of understanding that students sign, yeah, in theory we put it down, that students do not bully other students... we do not have a manual for students, but we have it in a sheet of paper, where they sign a memorandum of undertaking as they are admitted. They sign that memorandum, a list of things that they should agree to. One of them is bullying.... But the workers...there is no document! In fact [bullying] is given wings!*

Reflecting on the example from the pamphlet on bullying statement as a policy, it seems the workers are excluded, and that confirms what interviewee 1OA and 4OB said respectively concerning bullying policy as primarily for students. Although interviewee 1OA mentioned that staff members cannot quarrel nor fight, even though the bullying statement targeted the students. This suggests that in small organizations, the code of

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conduct for students presumably includes the faculty staff and ordinary workers in the school.

Nevertheless, the majority of the participants in this study who worked in educational and healthcare institutions, held the view that explicit policy on workplace bullying, focusing on workers, would be an effective approach towards reducing bullying in the workplace. For example, in organization C and E, all the participants interviewed agreed they do not have a policy on workplace bullying, nor any appropriate channel for complaints. Interviewee 1OE, a volunteer worker, asserted that the appropriate way to reduce bullying is:

> *In my opinion, I wish Faith-based Organizations would have a structure … a well laid structure that would permit workers to be able to air their views, or probably complain about the discomfort they are having as regard their workspace or their jobs. And probably they face bullying, there should be a structure or a formal ehm… how do I put it, a framework that is set up to enable workers lay complaints.*

While Interviewee 3OC, whose lived experiences included excessive workload even beyond the stipulated time of work and abrupt dismissal from work, added:

> *First of all, there should be policy between the workers themselves, an effective union, not just union that will carry out strikes. e-hey! But an effective union where there are structures on ground, structures I mean, policies on ground working effectively, that cases of bullying, ill treatment, are taken seriously and investigated with utmost good faith. And then, in turn, if I use the word, I do not know, meted out punishments should be stated too, not because this person is a friend to the person in the management. The management staff, then his cases are treated with fair or given a fair treatment; and then this person is nobody, and then this person, no we do not think, we should just let him, let him go and suffer whatever he has committed.*

These views mainly surfaced in relation to the lived experiences they conceptualized as workplace bullying, under various themes as presented in Chapters 7-9. The overall indication is that policy development and appropriate channels for reporting bullying experiences will help strengthen the ethos and values of the organization against bullying behaviour—and indeed there is a desire for a policy document that defines what constitutes workplace bullying. This is because most of the participants, as

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previously presented, affirm that bullying experiences affect their job performance in FBOs.

Another participant, interviewee 1OD, who also complained about work overload and poor remuneration, emphasized the need for a regulatory policy when asked: "w*hat do you think is the best way to harness and reduce this experience you called bullying in the system. What is the best way to handle this experience you have identified as bullying*?"

> *To me it should not only be in this mission schools, but it should also go around to all private schools, especially in this state. There should be a policy that every private teacher should be paid so… so…so amount. As it is in minimum wage of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, there is a minimum wage. It should also be written down or a policy be made that in private schools, for the fact they take graduates or O'level, there should be a particular amount of money or salary paid to them. Because I also believe in the minimum wage, they are being paid according to their levels, according to your qualification, according to the work done. So, it should also be made the same way in the private sectors.*

The emphasis on policy for the minimum wage to be paid in mission schools is primarily predicated on fairness, which is captured in Ubuntu moral theory. But where such policy is lacking, they understand it as part of workplace bullying experiences in FBOs.

10.7 Leadership competencies

Lack of leadership competencies emerged as another reason workplace bullying is prevalent in most of the FBOs in SEN. This is because leaders are expected to have great influence on the organizational culture. They set the tone for others to follow. If an organization has core values, it is the leadership that promotes them through their actions and inactions. Interviewee 3OB added some insightful thought for leaders who desire to work towards reducing bullying at the workplace thus:

> *If a leader comes and heard what happened to somebody, you learn from, you correct yourself, you know, from that experience, the ugly experience—this*

> *happened to such a person for so, so time. Ehee… then you have to adjust yourself to treat the people under you, I think so.*

Reflecting on the above extract, the question that stands out is: what kind of reaction is expected from leaders who are competent? Especially what they hear (information)? What had happened (events and history)? How they learn (educational experiences)? And how they treat others (relationships)? These will form part of the discussions in Chapter 11.

In this section, the following three sub-themes summarize the views of the participants of this study concerning effective reduction of workplace bullying in FBOs in SEN.

10.7.1 Dialogue and listening ear

The ability of leaders to dialogue and listen to the views of their workers, in some cases before taking decisions, gives the impression that such leaders are competent and valuable to the organization. In contrast, in the case of interviewees 1OA and 1OC, they presented their leaders as part of the reasons for bullying in their workplaces, because of the actions they took against them. As previously narrated, work overload, threats, abrupt suspension without hearing their views as stakeholders and part of their church families, constitute bullying in their understanding. Therefore, to reduce the incidence of workplace bullying interviewee 1OA said:

> *Dialogue goes a long way solving any issue. Em…since it is clear to everybody that the person handling that subject has left and you want another person to... another person that is in the system to continue with it. Outside the person's normal subject. The right thing to be done is... I am going to… please help me with this, then since you know that it is additional job. Additional... lesson note, time, extra time. So extra time should come with extra money. No matter how small. Then, it will be on my path to say okay, let me do this to help you and also help the school.*

The above view is predicated on the fact that extra workload that will be permanent would require preparation, resources, and adjustment to personal commitments outside the school. Some teachers may be engaged with extra-mural classes or part-time jobs to

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support their families, outside of the school job. Hence a dialogue with the management

and mutual recognition of each other's need was deemed necessary in the views of

interviewee 1OA.

Similarly, interviewee 1OC drew attention to the act of listening to others as part

of the steps to reduce workplace bullying:

> *The only advice I give to people because it depends on how I was trained from my family, my dad use to give us listening ear, even if I find myself as a head of any institution today, no matter what; any upliftment that I get from God, I will not use it to… I will first of all, before I punish anybody, it is not that I will not punish people, but I must give the person a chance to express himself or herself, explain the reason why such kind of thing happened. You understand, ehm… yes, there is one adage in igbo that says, "onye anegbuegbu I gebuzo che ka okwu" [literal translation: he who is about to be killed must be given chance to say a word] fair hearing.*

There is discernible evidence from the Igbo social culture and Ubuntu theory as will be

discussed in Chapter 11 that people should not be shut down or punished without fair

hearing in their communities. When handling troublesome situations at the workplaces,

whether conflict management or workplace bullying, it is necessary to give people the

opportunity to speak up. Interviewee 1OF's critically reflected on this further:

> *First of all, to the institute, they should know that every individual, be you small or big, you have a right. And you have a name! No matter how low your qualification is, you have a right to speak. Because in a situation whereby there is something that happens, no one want to hear your point of view, it is a very bad thing. To an organization, they should try to get the leaders to know that everyone has a right to speak. And there should be a way and manner of approach, to the way they should approach people, talk to them, see that they will not feel bad about anything happening to them.*

Having the right to speak also means knowing the manner of approach in any given

issue. The organization would either make or mar workplace relationships, depending

on the culture of communication the leadership encouraged.

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10.7.2 Attention to values, prayer, and promises

Organizational values stand out as the golden rules that permeate every section of FBOs. They are the non-negotiables that both leaders and everybody working with and for the organization must remember. Traditionally, FBOs are known as value-based organizations, but it was surprising to note from the data of this study that many workers do not know their core values. Some participants of this study who attempted to respond on the questions about the values of their organization presented different values from what other colleagues identified as core values, while others claimed they did not know. For example, I asked interviewee 1OC what are the core values of their organization, including the vision and mission and the response was:

> *Well, that one I cannot just really tell, because I am not the … director and I am not the medical director, okay, because we have director, hospital director; and we also have ehm… medical director. But in my own department, my vision is to make sure that any patient that comes to x-ray department or whatever department, as in, scan department, as the person gets work. And my mission is also to make the place… ehm…that department ehm… world standard, one of the world standards.*

While it was difficult to identify the core values of their organization, it was easy to create one for their department, which seems to be a personal value, vision, and mission. For those who claimed to know, there were discernible differences. For instance, in organization F, interviewee 2OF said:

> *As ehm…educational sector, and also being a mission school: one of the aim or their target is to build up Christian integrity in the end, two, to …they believe that, when it is a seminar, when the student graduate, from there you can get ministers—well trained ministers. Also, academically, that they perform very well and that is why, even till today, it does not support 'expo' [examination malpractice]. We teach you; you read and write on your own. So, that is one of their targets—to make sure that leads to impact into the system. And…from the time, which is 21 years I have stayed here, I have not seen any of our students that have gone out here that commit crime. Even though they cannot be 100% Christians, but at least that moral life, I have seen in them when they leave this school* (p.2).

While in the same organization, interviewee 3OF said:

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> *The value is that when you put your child in missionary school like this, you as a parent will be confidence of what you are doing, and you be feel relaxed that you have already put your child in a spiritual way. Fearing, as in, the kind of place they are teaching the word of God, the child may be fearing God, will not join the cultist or either…another… thing that he does not like in…. Uhm…as is… as a child of God. And they are even coping up for the studies because they are teaching them well, they organize them well—they make them to put things in order, so that future…they will know the value of education.*

The above examples show that there is no grasp of what constitutes the core value of the organization among some workers. When I asked further if they believe in these values, they said yes. In other words, they have no conflict with the organization's values. However, interviewee 2OF, argued that "*because some[leaders] may have not known the value*" of the organization they probably live contrary to the organization's culture. This was explained further with an example from their state government:

> *May be let me take example of this state. When the federal government created this state, people that went for it, the people who lobbied for it, may not be alive again, and the purpose of asking for state, the new people who are coming in as administration may not know the reason why…and when they come, they start to do whatever they feel that are supposed to do. And may be going…going contrary what to the people who started it or the people who asked for the state had in mind. It is possible.*

Leaders who are at variance with the organization's values cause problems, this was expressed in the views of interviewee 4OB:

> *Here, the correct leadership, experienced leadership in an institution like this, should be put in place. Do not appoint leaders because of your personal relationship with them or because of some other ulterior motives, those who will be loyal to you and pay you homage, or whatsoever... let us not appoint people who do not believe and have faith in Jesus Christ, who are not good Christians... when it comes to... pro-active issues, you see them falling flat. Let true Christians come to, and there has to be constant training and instructions to leaders and other staff members on how to administer institutions like this. You do not just lift up somebody from someone's kitchen, who has not had or dealt with money, or does not know principles of administration.*

10.7.2.1: Prayer

Concerning prayers, it had been identified previously as one of the reasons some workers give for being able to cope with the challenges of workplace bullying and still perform their jobs well. Also, some participants in this study added prayer as one of the

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strategies to help reduce bullying in the workplace. In the views of interviewee 3OB:

"the best way, [to handle workplace bullying] I think is to continue to pray for the organization, continue to pray for the leadership of the church whether institutions, conferences, unions, back to president". This opinion was also shared by interviewee 1OI: *"We pray because it is a Christian organization, you can't do otherwise. E-hey...That is the only thing the teachers do. If you are not satisfied with the system, you look for a better place"*. In another perspective, the understanding of prayer in the views of interviewee 2OF, focuses on spiritualizing the act of workplace bullying:

> *Then another is, as a Christian organization, we pray—because sometimes, one can look at the person is somehow … and can be POSSESSED! [i.e., satanic oppression on a person] and use to scatter all that has been built, so we cannot relent in prayer. E-hey! Pray for the person, pray for the institution. And also, giving caution, teaching them with the word of God- that is the only I think we can.*

The belief here is that bullies are not conscious of their decisions to hurt, threaten, humiliate, and make others go through pain in the course of their work. Rather, it is a manifestation of demonic possession. Therefore, part of the strategies to reduce bullying is that prayer should permeate the workplace and the leadership of FBOs should value prayer.

10.7.2.2: Promises

Keeping promises is another key competence in leadership that emerged as one way to reduce workplace bullying. This was identified in interviewee 3OI extract:

"If you have made some promises, you have not showed commitment in reaching them I believe you should call them[workers] and tell them look at my reasons; this, this… because human beings we have concluded". Similarly, interviewee 2OI commented on the reneged-on promise thus:

The Christian school should be better, they should live by example, but the reverse is the case, reverse is the case! The same promise they make today, they will still make it in the next 5 years in the name of God. They have been making promises! So, our plight we put it in the hands of God too. We keep asking God for something better!

When leaders renege on promises constantly as captured in the above extract, it affects trust and confidence in the organization. More importantly, it has a critical impact on the values and image of the organization to the workers and the public at large.

10.8 Concluding thoughts and discussion prompts

In this chapter, the views of participants on what are the specific impacts of workplace bullying in their job performances and quality of services have been presented. Those who considered their job performance and quality of services good, shared reasons for their actions. Also, those who felt the challenges of bullying affected their job performances and quality of services gave reasons for this. On the way to reduce bullying at the workplaces, various opinions were shared. Therefore, in developing policy frameworks, these ideas will be synthesized and captured in the policy. The bedrock of all the ideas shared is the principle of leadership that gives credence to human dignity. Also, the place of prayer in the corporate culture of FBOs. However, the question from this chapter that needs further discussion is on prayer as it affects coping with workplace bullying and the view of some participants that bullies need deliverance through prayers for the workplace to maintain safety. Although there is discernible evidence on how science and faith collaborate to enhance healing (Andrade & Radhakrishnan, 2009), could it be possible in handling the case of bullying too?

It is evident from this study that most people do not know the core values of their organizations, nor their vision and mission statement. As one participant observed, leaders who do not align with the values of the organization cause troubles and reinforce

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bullying culture. Will it make any difference prospective workers are thoroughly examined on their personal values to see if it aligns with the organization's value before, they are employed? All these are critically discussed in Chapter 11

CHAPTER 11

UNTANGLING THE MEANING AND IMPACT OF WORKPLACE BULLYING AMONG CFBOS IN SEN

11.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences and understanding of workers of workplace bullying in CFBOs and help to develop an evidence-based policy framework that contributes to creating safe workplaces for Faith-based employees in SEN. In the introduction to the results Chapters 7-10, I described the major themes emerging from my interviews, and their sub-themes. The focus was on the stories that give voice to the lived experiences of workplace bullying.

In this chapter, I evaluate and interpret the significant findings emerging from the themes in the results chapters in the light of extant literature, using Ubuntu and Equity theories as interpretative lenses. Also, I argue that bullying behaviour in SEN CFBOs is perpetuated by the historical colonial tradition, contemporary Nigerian labour laws and secular management practices that contradicts Christian teachings and values. These phenomena are inappropriate for administering Nigerian CFBOs. In my theoretical framework, I discussed Ubuntu as an Afrocentric philosophy that is fundamentally concerned with care and day-to-day social lives in a community, precisely an African community. It is important to restate that I am using Ubuntu as a moral and social theory because of the philosophical ideas embedded in it. They are useful in understanding the concept of workplace bullying from an African worldview. In fact, Ubuntu is a moral agency, which some FBOs seem to have neglected in relation to fairness, love, and justice as value-based organizations.

Also, Adams' Equity theory as explained in Chapter 3 is concisely summarized as a theory of motivation based on fairness and the underlying goal is to achieve equity

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where inequity abounds (Miner, 2005; Adams, 1963,1965). Its supposition is that people give something in exchange for something that is of benefit to them. For example, time, skills put in work is an employment exchange (input) for something beneficial (outcome), i.e., salary, fringe benefits, promotion etc. When workers or employees exchange their time, skills, and influence, depending on the contract agreement with the hope of getting appropriate rewards in return, but are denied, it demoralizes them and affects productivity. This is clearly evident in discussing the sub research question 1(b) on the impact of workplace bullying, especially as some of my participants shared that their productivity dropped because of workplace bullying experiences. Therefore, Ubuntu and Equity theories are woven into various aspects of the discussion in relation to social justice, fairness, culture, and ethics.

In discussing these significant findings of Chapters 7-10, relevant evidentiary facts from the participants views are used to address the research questions, which are re-stated here:

What are the church workers' lived experience and understanding of workplace bullying in Southeast Nigeria?

Research sub-questions:

a) What does the concept of bullying mean to church workers, both paid and volunteers?

b) In what specific ways does bullying experience impact on the job performance and quality of services of a church worker in a church-based organization?

c) What do church workers consider as the most effective approaches to reduce workplace bullying in church-based organizations?

I have grouped this discussion chapter into three sections, with the aim of presenting contributions of this study to literature and answers to the research questions in the

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sequential order of the findings. In the first section, I present poor remuneration, work overload and miscarriage of justice as three key conceptual understandings of workplace bullying by church-based workers in CFBOs in SEN. I also discuss what informed their understanding and how these are supported in literature. Then I offer significant insight into the meaning, theoretical contributions, and the wider implications for FBOs.

The second section focuses on two significant findings in relation to sub-question (b) and significant factors drawn from the data analysis to facilitate understanding of participants' motivation for quality services. All these are relevant in evaluating the impact of workplace bullying in answering sub-research question (b). The values shared by workers as a buffer against bullying are recommended to FBOs. It will encourage in-role behaviours that facilitate good relationships and productivity.

In the third section, I discuss leadership competence as the major effective approach suggested by participants to reduce workplace bullying. The second finding is organizational values and culture. I draw from my Christian religious and African values to discuss prayer as one of the strategies adopted by some of the research participants as coping mechanism in this section.

11.2 Untangling the meaning of workplace bullying.

From the descriptive data in Chapter 7, there are three key conceptual understandings of workplace bullying from the perspective of church-based workers in SEN. The first idea is that labour exploitations through poor remuneration constitutes workplace bullying. The second idea, which is directly linked to poor remuneration is work overload. Then, the third idea focuses on miscarriage of justice through suspensions, dismissal, and intimidation. One may be wondering how disciplinary measures in workplaces are considered to be an act of bullying. Take for instance, the

case cited in Chapter 8 under lack of fair hearing involving interviewee 2OB—suspension for a year on the case of examination malpractice. This is one of the areas that leads to all kinds of paradoxes in relation to workplace bullying as a complex phenomenon, especially when there is no policy describing what constitutes bullying and how to address it. However, this study agrees with the findings of Liefooghe and Mac Davey (2001), which showed that workers with experiences of procedural unfairness in disciplinary measures attribute that as a form of workplace bullying. I will discuss this later in 11.3 and 11.4 respectively.

Still on the conceptual understanding of workplace bullying, I begin by acknowledging that my participants' description of the distinctive nature of bullying in their experiences reflects the conceptual premise that bullying is culturally and socially constructed (Salin et al., 2019). This means that what a society or group of people accepts as a meaningful understanding of a concept, ultimately affects the way they handle it, and that the process of constructing meanings for any phenomenon is through language (Arora, 1996; Dove, 2014), or perhaps symbols. In this case the focus is SEN, and what the local language describes as bullying, as I now discuss.

11.3 Understanding workplace bullying from a linguistic context

The common and central language of communication in SEN prior to the British colonization was Igbo language. Through interaction with English language, a hybrid has emerged called 'Engligbo' (Ugochukwu, 2017). However, the people of the region all speak Igbo, or Engligbo, at different levels of their interaction. At workplaces English is officially used for correspondences and documentation. For instance, all the 30 participants of this study, except one person, speak and understand basic Igbo and English language. The only person, among them, who may not speak Igbo language, is married to an Igbo woman. From the participants' cultural perspective, bullying has no

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literal translation in the Igbo language. As previosly stated in Chapter 3, to make sense of its meaning, a connotative phrase used for bullying in the Igbo language is "iji ike emegbu mmadu" (Igbo.English-Dictionary.Help, n.d), loosely translated in English as "forceful maltreatment or injustice against a person". Consequently, it is not surprising that the major themes that embodied their lived experiences focused on exploitation, procedural unfairness, and intimidation, which centre on power imbalance and forceful maltreatment; thus, affirming what the Igbo language posits as bullying.

Having established the literal meaning of bullying in Igbo language from a linguistic context, the next task is to bring to light the perceived meaning of poor remuneration, work overload and miscarriages of justice as expressed in the narratives of this study. To uncover this aspect with proper understanding, I consider the subtle nuances and broader circumstances within the historical context these experiences occurred. They serve as important highlights in this discussion.

11.4. Workplace bullying as poor remuneration

Remuneration is a critical moral responsibility of the management of a given organization towards its employees. It falls under the reward system of the organization, guided by procedures and policies (O'Neill, 1995; Whittlesey & Maurer, 1993). Some scholars (e.g., Nasurdin, Khan, and Tan, 2018), have argued that poor remuneration is part of the work conditions that facilitate low retention of workers, while others like Ariza-Montes, Muniz R, Leal-Rodríguez, & Leal-Millán, (2014); Lloyd (2020), have opined that it leads to workplace bullying. Also, a number of researchers (Kelly, 2007; Krishna & Soumyaja, 2020; Lee, 2002; Lloyd, 2020) inferred that poor remuneration or low pay is gendered; it is a clear indication of women's vulnerability to workplace bullying. One of the major findings this current study has shown is that poor remuneration as a concept of workplace bullying in SEN is not gender specific, because

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both genders (male and female workers) identified it as bullying. However, this study

did not focus on the number of men and women who identified the issue of poor

remuneration to determine which gender is mostly impacted. This is because the

participant recruitment process was non-linear, and the number of willing participants

across gender was limited. Therefore, the fact that both genders are poorly paid may

imply that this is a widespread socio-economic problem in that region, which needs

further study. However, given that this is qualitative research focused only on CFBOs in

SEN, I cannot extrapolate this finding to the general population.

Another key finding from this study is that the current perception of my

research participants of poor remuneration as workplace bullying, particularly in

relation to a minimum wage, corroborates Noronha's (2021) submission on workplace

bullying. Describing the work situation of Dalits, (a group of workers categorized as

lower in status because of the caste system) in India, Noronha declared the inability of

Dalits to bargain for a minimum wage as bullying:

> Employers expect that the labourers accept their working conditions and
> remuneration including long hours and delayed payment and denying them the
> right to bargain for minimum wages and decent working conditions....
> Consequently, they remain ensnared in a life of degradation and humiliation,
> marked by bullying and harassment (pp.499).

Similarly, my participants feel exploited in the way Dalits are described. Although they

are not under a caste system, in which people are not expected to rise above the social

stigma, their human dignity, fairness and justice seem to be neglected as those working

for God, and as human beings. Their employers think they are doing them a favour by

employing them; hence they are not expected to ask for a minimum wage. For instance,

Interviewee 2 OD said:

> *[Y]ou see in most of these private schools [these are schools not owned by the*
> *government, it also includes church owned], they will want to use the worker*
> *and overuse the worker, thereby paying lesser of what they supposed to pay,*
> *using the person to get what they want. That is what is in most private schools*

here... they like bullying their workers. Paying a token and over labouring the worker (Interviewee 2, Organization D, 5th November 2019).

The impression given in the above extract, especially the phrase, "overuse the worker by paying lesser..." and "using the person to get what they want" conveys an imagery of slavery, also identified in the Dalits' condition of work.

Discussing further the issue of noncompliance of employers in paying a minimum wage, Manokha (2004) identifies it as modern slavery, a situation that arises because of high rates of unemployment and poverty. In ILO (2001, p.9 as cited in Manokha 2004) "labour may be forced not only owing to physical force ...but also owing to hunger and poverty which compels him [a worker] to accept employment for remuneration which is less than the statutory minimum wage" (p.219). Rather than staying at home and doing nothing, interviewee 2OD and many others who participated in this study affirmed that they could not afford to change employment.

To reiterate more on labour matters and poor remuneration, a theoretical reflection on Ubuntu as a moral agency reveals that poor remuneration is an abnormality, which is a characteristic of slave labour in colonial Africa/Nigeria and SEN in particular. Although remuneration frameworks in monetary terms are under reported in pre-colonial African/Nigerian literature, I draw insight from extensive range of discussions (e.g., Asechemie 1997, Olusegun 1997, Abudu 1986 & Oya 2010) to shed light on this abnormality. The exchange of labour in pre-colonial Africa/ Nigeria was cooperative and reciprocal among individuals who were considered relatively equal partners in production. In fact, Asechemie (1997) and Olusegun (1997) averred that payment was in kind as the monetary system was not well developed. Individual needs were met through cooperation and reciprocity—a situation in which there is mutual benefit. The most cherished value was working harmoniously and supporting each other to succeed in their respective farming seasons and other agricultural pursuits. This was

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in tandem with Ubuntu as their moral agency, in a period Gade (2011) described as golden age. It was only slave labour which was perpetuated by the colonial authorities characterized exploitation and poor remuneration. In fact, Amadi (1991) inferred that it was an abomination to enslave members of the same clan/community in Igbo culture, while Olusegun (1997) demonstrated that slave labour opened the door to moral infractions, which significantly destabilised social order, customs and brought political bondage through militarization.

Therefore, to think of poor remuneration below the minimum wage even among members of the church family, has parallels with pre-colonial Nigeria/ SEN slave labour among members of the same community, which was a moral infraction. My research participants perceived it as workplace bullying, because, from the Igbo understanding of bullying, it is forceful maltreatment. The ILO (2001), cited in Manokha (2004), rightly observed that workplace bullying is modern slavery. Although the tactics are different from the brute force of the colonial era, yet the wider implication is that wherever it occurs, it leads to a breakdown of social cohesion and unsafe work environment if not discontinued. It lies in the understanding of power relations that exist in capitalist and slave labour economies of pre-colonial, and subsequently colonial eras in Africa.

Given that Ubuntu as moral theory holds hands with the Igbo socio-cultural maxim "Egbe bere Ugo Ebere"-"let the Kite an d the Eagle perch", the argument presented in this section is that poor remuneration below the minimum wage can be described as a moral aberration in Igbo society. Similarly, Orozco (2016) identified denial of the minimum wage to workers/employees as legal bullying. In view of the stories shared by participants of this study power relations is central to the experiences of denial of the minimum wage, which is one of the features of bullying.

11.5 Workplace bullying as work overload

In Chapter 8, I presented varied experiences of my research participants of work overload. One of the significant and consistent points from the data analysis is that many of the participants' concerns about work overload are linked to poor remuneration. This offers a valuable insight into how poor remuneration affects the morale of most of the CFBOs workers towards carrying out extra duties in SEN. What that suggests is, if the minimum wage legislation is followed, and wages are commensurate to the workload, perhaps, a majority of those who felt bullied and lost a sense of belonging may have had a different story. There are examples of work overload experiences reported in the results chapters, which are not convenient to bring altogether in this section. However, I present again one piece of evidence from the story of interviewee 2OI who was told:

> *[B]e in school before 7:30 am, school dismisses by 2:30 [pm] when ... interviewed by the then Bishop, the proprietor. But when I started, I notice, you can see now it is to 4:00 [pm], I am still in school waiting to teach evening lesson paid for, but I am not being paid. The service I am about to render 1hour 30minutes class I will render now; I will not be paid for it, but these students paid for it... yet I d[o] it with all their compulsion, that you must do this, you must do that... That alone to me is bullying!*

What interviewee 2OI reported as bullying is a combination of extra duties assigned outside formal agreement, no payment justifying the assigned duty and threats. Interviewee 2OK reported similar experiences and argued that senior colleagues intentionally gave extra duties outside his official employment, which drained him emotionally and physically. Nurses in some other CFBOs shared the same story of work overload and poor remuneration. Therefore, the finding of this study is that CFBOs workers in SEN consider repeated additional responsibilities or work overload beyond the contractual agreement, without corresponding economic incentives and emotional support, as workplace bullying.

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The fact that interviewee 2OI was compelled to teach evening lessons beyond the agreed time without extra wages is seen by them as an indirect way of reinforcing bullying. This lack of incentives and recognizing the feelings of workers while carrying extensive responsibilities, is part of unreflective institutional or leadership judgement on moral responsibilities. Evaluating the above situation in the light of Ubuntu moral theory, an action that essentially holds workers to ransom through work overload, poor remuneration and threat is characteristically abnormal, unfair, and morally wrong. Some of the core values of Ubuntu lacking in the above scenario are trust and solidarity.

Trust as a core value of Ubuntu philosophy is often linked to the level of interconnectedness and confidence reposed on others as valuable members of the community. It is demonstrated in the ways decisions and agreements are made without taking advantage of others in whatever form. For instance, in the story of 2 OI, there seems to be a breach of trust based on the initial agreement "[*B*]*e in school before 7:30 am, school dismisses by 2:30 [pm]. But when I started, I notice, you can see now it is to 4:00 [pm], I am still in school waiting to teach*". Issues concerning time to close for work in many FBOs, especially in Nigeria and other developing nations in Africa, may not be followed strictly because they do not pay hourly rated labour. It is a common experience for workers to go beyond the routine hours in their labour in as much as it is voluntarily given without any compulsion. Nevertheless, the case presented above is more of taking advantage of people without acknowledging their time and human rights. The unfortunate part of these experiences is the high rate of unemployment in Nigeria. Hence, workers are at the mercy of employers of labour.

In the case of interviewee 2OI, if he should leave at 2:30 pm according to the agreement during the said interview with the Bishop, the possible repercussion is to lose his job. It is important to recall that, most times, job interview conversations do not

reflect on the contract agreement of workers when they are hired. When this omission occurs, workers consider that as a betrayal of trust. This could happen, if the interviewing party is not part of the employment Board—perhaps, the interviewer was hired by a contracted employment agent asked to find best candidates for a job. Once they submit their verdict on who is best for the job their service ends. Therefore, it behoves the employing organization to advise the potential employee the terms of employment at the point of entry. In that case a contractual agreement is given to the potential employee to read, evaluate and sign. The moment the contract is signed, it is binding. It is possible that interviewee 2OI did not read through the details of the contractual agreement in comparison with the verbal discussions during the interview session before accepting the job. Nevertheless, his statement shows his loss of trust and confidence on his employer.

Unfortunately, there is nothing he could do about that. The literature review in Chapter 6 demonstrates that most of the policies in Nigerian Labour Act do not cover employees in contract and manual labour within private organizations. For example, casualization of the workforce, dismissal of workers without compensation and refusal to pay a minimum wage are turbulent issues within labour and employment policies in Nigeria that workers in private organizations suffer (Adewunmi & Ogunnubi, 2019; Aderemi, 2017; Ajonnadi, 2015). This is why I emphasized the need for a review of Nigerian labour law and policies, to give workers in private sectors a sense of belonging.

Another situation that may have led to interview 2OI's loss of trust and confidence in his employer could be because of a change of management or leadership. Oftentimes, this may affect the implementation of a contractual agreement. In the above scenario, interview 2OI acknowledged that there was a change of leadership. Baillien and De Witte (2009) revealed that organizational change is a factor for most bullying

experiences. Sometimes, in organizational changes, autocratic leaders are appointed who may not like to implement core values of the organization. Hence, they indirectly increase workload and subject workers to sufferings through their policies. In Nigeria, where there is a high rate of unemployment, interviewee 2OI and others in similar circumstances had to endure and work under duress.

As mentioned earlier, solidarity is another Ubuntu core principle that seems to be lacking in the stories of interviewee 2OI, and some other church workers who participated in this study. Solidarity in the workplace helps in facilitating friendship and progress towards achieving the mission of an organization. Highlighting solidarity, Metz (2011, p. 538) said:

> To exhibit solidarity is for people to engage in mutual aid, to act in ways that are reasonably expected to benefit each other. Solidarity is also a matter of people's attitudes such as emotions and motives being positively oriented toward others, say, by sympathising with them and helping them for their sake. For people to fail to exhibit solidarity would be for them either to be uninterested in each other's flourishing or, worse, to exhibit ill-will in the form of hostility and cruelty.

Organization O expects 2OI to support the growth of their schools by offering extra time to teach the students. Obviously, such action will benefit both parties if Ubuntu as the moral agency underpins the philosophy of service in that organization. 2OI also expects his organization to be positively oriented towards him by paying for the extra services among other things and abiding with the initial agreement at the point of entry into their service. Unfortunately, 2OI presents a case of betrayal of trust and forceful demand for unpaid services. Hence, he concludes in the last line of the extract "*with all their compulsion, that you must do this, you must do that... That alone to me is bullying*". Therefore, to infer that workplace bullying is taking place in organization O with the above story is in tandem with findings in current literature.

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One of the current studies in literature that supports the conceptual understanding of workplace bullying as work overload is the study undertaken by Sweet (2005); Peterson, Fernet, Austin, and Desrumaux (2021). According to their study, workers' perception of workload as bullying in the workplace occurs only when there is low social support and recognition. In their explanation, this social support includes funds, reward systems, and genuine encouragement as an emotional resource available to workers in their difficult duties and long work hours. Situating the above finding to Igbo social maxim on justice and fairness, vis-à-vis Ubuntu moral theory, social support is about being responsive to communal needs, solidarity and respect. Where this is lacking in a work environment, such a community is said to be bereft of Ubuntu (Berghs, 2017; Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019). In other words, to lose Ubuntu is to lose social values. An organization suffers the loss of Ubuntu, which is their moral agency when it denies workers their rights, compels them to work like slaves or dispossesses them of their properties, professional statuses, and treats them with disrespect.

While there is a consensus on work overload as a form of workplace bullying in previous studies (e.g., Caputo, 2018; Noronha, 2021; Oruh and Dibia, 2020; Salin et al., 2019; Sweet, 2005); the idea of work overload in this study is similar to the conscripted labours of the slavery era in Nigeria. Abudu (1986) presents conscript labours during the slave era in Nigeria as labours in which veiled force is applied towards achieving the desires of employers. In the case of interviewee 2OI and others who were not just given extra duties but were compelled to do them in CFBOs within SEN, it is a form of conscript labour in disguise.

Just as an organization is said to have lost Ubuntu, workers who are denied decent pay, promotions and are compelled to carry extra duties, are said to have lost Ubuntu, because their humaness and dignity is ridiculed. They lose their sense of power

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and are subjected in the same way as slaves without voices. Therefore, this study is an avenue to make their voices heard and conscientize legislative bodies in Nigeria, and the general public on the need to develop policies against workplace bullying and save our workforce from emotional pain and social stress.

11.6 Miscarriage of justice and constant threats

Suspension of workers and other disciplinary measures in an organization do not suggest anything strange, especially in CFBOs where much is expected from them because of what they represent. As value-based organizations, they represent doctrines of love, justice, fairness, and other moral qualities for character building. I raised a thought-provoking question in Chapters 8 and 9 on discipline and bullying, and why workers would consider suspensions and other disciplinary measures as workplace bullying. My finding suggests that CFBOs workers pathologize bullying as an institutionalized culture masked with a spiritual cloak. The spiritual cloak is the sense that whatever is decided by the leadership is from God. As Nuñez and Gonzalez (2009) pointed out, as noted in the literature review section, workers may be forced to comply with whatever leaders pronounce as right in their sight since leaders are representatives of God. Therefore, one possible reason for considering disciplinary measures as workplace bullying is the inequity tensions resulting from procedural injustices coming from supposed spiritual leaders and other management designees. Sometimes, their actions lead to moral disengagement in FBOs. This idea is a supposition embedded in Equity theory.

In seeking to evaluate and interpret this finding from an Equity theory perspective, firstly, I stated in section 11.1 that the findings of Liefooghe and MacDavey (2001) agree with the present study. Workers who do not get justice feel that their organizations, through their leadership, marginalize them and protect the interest of those they value. Other authors, like Shrivastava, Jones, & Djurkovic, (2020) agree

with this finding, which shows that the concept of bullying in FBOs is not significantly different from non-religious organizations' understanding.

Examples of inequity tension resulting from procedural injustice and moral disengagement in the stories participants presented are found in the cases of Interviewees 2OB, 2OC, 3OC, 1OC and 3OB, respectively. In analysing interviewee 2OB's story (see Chapter 8) whose bullying experience emanates from the perspective of biased judgement. I noted that the case pertains to tension between discipline and bullying, and equity sensitivity linked to the feelings of entitlement. Konovsky (2000) described such feelings as a subjective procedural justice perception from the cognitive and affective domain. This is a situation in which one compares the outcome of decisions in relation to how he/she is treated against his/her expectations vis-à-vis how others are treated. Interviewee 2OB expected that his suspension would be averted since he has risen to high position and has contributed towards the growth of the organization, even though his alleged action seems to bring the organization's image into disrepute. More importantly, he felt he was innocent of the charges levelled against him. But he was disappointed with the procedures followed in suspending him, which captures the tension between discipline and bullying. One of the consequences of such feeling is that it stimulates negative emotions which focus on the organizational power imbalances while neglecting individual contributions (Shrivastava et al., 2020). The actions of the Board of Governance in Organization B were termed procedural injustice in the perspective of 2OB because people who were highly connected to leadership were pardoned and called back to work, while he spent a year in suspension without pay. This is why organizational core values must be clearly stated and respected to avoid being misjudged and accused of procedural injustice.

Concerning moral disengagement in the stories, interviewee 1OC presented a situation in which the Managing Director was focused on getting their X-ray machine

repaired while disengaging himself from the expected norm. This was in refusing to pay a tradesman who had repaired their X-ray machine for one year. When it broke down again a separate person was invited, but when the new person could not repair it, the previous tradesman was then invited. On this account, the Managing Director had already communicated that unfairness and exploitation is tolerated—a value that may affect the ethical culture of the organization. Therefore, when (1OC) was suspended suddenly without any known cause nor query, it was easy for (1OC) to conceptualize it as workplace bullying. Greenberg and Cropanzano (2002) theorized that workers make conclusions about organizational justice procedures based on how others are treated. In other words, they can only anticipate fairness, if the leaders and system demonstrate the fairness rule in the affairs of others. If the manager had shown moral responsibility in making sure the tradesman's wage was paid when reported, it would have protected the image of the organization. Perhaps, disciplinary actions when declared will be understood and accepted as an organizational principle. As Deutsch (1975 cited in Peterson 1987, p. 543) succinctly acknowledged, an "equity norm [when accepted and applied] enhance[s] harmony, solidarity, and mutual respect" in any organization. The case of 2OB, though slightly similar to 2OC, 3OC, 1OC and 3OB as cited in chapter 8, is linked to inequity tension resulting from the organization's inability to foster social justice.

Therefore, the evidence gathered from the data analysis is that some workers in FBOs conceptualize bullying as institutionalized culture when there are miscarriages of justice and inequity.

11.7. The impact of workplace bullying

The first significant finding to research question (b), which summarized most of the ideas in the thematic analysis presented in Chapter 10, is that workplace bullying affects the quality of services and social relations. This is naturally expected! This

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finding is very important first to the CFBOs involved in this study because it relates to one of their key objectives for existence as service providers namely, care and spiritual nurture (Biebricher, 2011). When the service of care in CFBOs is "interpreted as symptoms of a combination of Capitalism and Christianity" (Biebricher, 2011, p. 401), then it is difficult to exonerate them from the charge of institutionalized culture of bullying. I have no intention to delve into capitalism in this discussion, even though it is linked to the bullying phenomenon in FBOs (Araujo, 2020; Tynan, 2021). However, the idea I wish to postulate is that the doctrines of the church have positioned FBOs as social change agents, both for economic prosperity and moral uprightness (Voye, 1999), not to exploit and bully those they are supposed to nurture spiritually.

Another implication of this finding is that it would assist policy makers and funding agencies in making decisions. This is because some governmental and foreign agencies tend to partner with FBOs based on their comparative advantage over others on morality and ethics (Lipsky, 2011). Recent studies (Ali & Zia-ur-Rehman, 2021; Catherine Scheeler, Markelz, Taylor, Deshpande, & Wolfe, 2021) particularly in health and educational industries, confirm that workplace bullying affects the quality of services provided by workers in these industries. This was also identified in the studies reviewed in Chapters 2 and 5. However, the point expressed by interviewee 3OC and 1OC drew my attention to an aspect of the impact of bullying that is worth mentioning. There is a correlation between quality of service and quality of living—this is where social relations come into play. One of the points in the operational definition of bullying in this study, is that bullying may cause social stress. Some of the workers in CFBOs in this study, expressed their stressful experiences in their social environment because they could no longer work joyfully.

Interview 3OC and 1OC lost their joyful exuberant nature through the bullying experiences in their respective workplaces and that affected their quality of services. A

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study conducted by Dagger and Sweeney (2006) posited that quality of service rendered with satisfaction has a capacity to improve quality of life and attracts economic and social benefit. These social and economic benefits are for the good of customers, workers and the organizations involved. For instance, the case in organization J (Chapter 9), revealed one of the benefits in providing quality services to clients/customers as a worker. 3OJ was recognized as a hardworking staff member who had compassion for sick patients and their relatives. Within the context of quality services and good relationship at the workplace, 3OJ had a good rapport and that earned her public admiration for her work. But it was a joy draining moment when she was suspended late in the night because of violating policy. At this point, the patients with their relatives demonstrated their anger over her sudden suspension through a hunger strike. In fact, they threatened to seek healthcare services elsewhere if she was not recalled from suspension. By their action, they demonstrated satisfaction with the quality of services received from her, which in turn served as a morale boost, and improved her social standing in her workplace. As a result, organization J had to recall her from suspension and appealed to her to beg their customers/clients to continue to attend this healthcare facility.

Again, this calls attention to the tension between discipline and bullying in CFBOs, as highlighted earlier. While I am not in any way supporting policy violation, the dynamics of discipline in an organization can affect one's productivity and mar the reputation of an organization. This happens when a punitive approach is used in workplace discipline. For instance, the case of 3OJ's suspension was on a humanitarian matter—bringing a child to work because nobody was at home to take care of the child. It was possible to expose her only child to danger while she was busy attending to patients in the hospital, which could be one of the reasons (good intentions) the management had in making that policy. Where the problem lay was the implementation

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procedure—suspending her late in the night. This seems to have aggravated the anger of the patients and their relatives, especially as the suspension seemed to have been taken in anger and was a display of power over the powerless. The Ubuntu principle of punishment is restorative in nature (Nagel, 2013). Hence, the action of the patients and their relatives was a show of communal solidarity with 3OJ whom they saw as a victim of institutional bullying. Because Africans take their socialness, joyful exuberance, and solidarity everywhere (Abudu, 1986; Ahiauzu, 1986; Asechemie, 1997), even the sick were in solidarity with 3OJ in her predicament.

Taken together, the points elaborated above and in Chapter 9 are linked to Ubuntu moral theory. Two principles that stand out are: Africans are communal in nature. They do not shy away from providing solidarity and moral support "insofar as it promotes shared identity among people grounded on good-will [*and truth*]" (Metz, 2007b, p. 338). The second principle is that Africans generally take their socialness and joyful exuberance to work. Anything that stifles the joy of service also drains their emotional energy. Therefore, understanding how and when to apply sanctions is important in managing workers in FBOs, especially SEN. Also, the impact of workplace bullying on the performance of duties as identified in the stories where joyful exuberance turned to pain is also linked to the loss of personal identity/Ubuntu, which affects productivity in the workplace.

11.7.1 Prayer as spiritual strength over bullying experiences

Prayer as spiritual strength over bullying experiences is another significant finding of this study. Those who reported that their bullying experiences could not stop them from giving their best to their organizations linked it to two major factors namely, uninhibited passion for their jobs and spiritual strength drawn from prayer. Prayer, from a Christian perspective, is part of a daily spiritual discipline which involves sharing one's intimate thoughts with God as to a friend (Benner, 2021; White, 2014). As

previously mentioned in Chapter 5, Africans in general recognize the importance of spiritual beings and the benefit of divine guidance. Hence, prayer is part of the daily rituals they practised before the missionaries came with the Christian gospel. From the lenses of Igbo/African culture and Ubuntu moral theory, prayer is acknowledged and understood as an effective tool in conflict resolution (Abu-Nimer, 2001; Asogwa & Okeke, 2021; Debelo & Jirata, 2018), even though workplace bullying is more than mere conflict. Prayer is a form of ritual practice involving an individual (petitioner) communicating to the supreme deity or ancestors (Thomas, 2015). I am not advocating for an Ubuntu prayer theology in CFBOs but drawing out its importance in African culture where Christian churches, hospitals and schools have been established.

Most studies on workplace bullying and related concepts within FBOs, did not mention the centrality of prayer as a resource and coping strategy in handling workplace bullying. Trutwin (2020) who indicated the resource of prayer as one of the tools leaders of FBOs use when handling complaints of bullying, did not mention if victims of workplace bullying relied on prayer as a personal coping strategy. But in this present study, prayer is rather a resource some participants reported as their coping strategy when bullied. Some of my research participants believed that prayer helped them cope with workplace bullying, and also give their best in their jobs.

On an individual level, interviewee 2OF indicated that victims of bullying should "*Pray for the person [bully], pray for the institution. And also, giv[e] caution, teaching them with the word of God*". The implication is that people who relied on prayer should also caution bullies or challenge the treatment. Ubuntu as an agency for social change in transforming social institution like CFBOs involves challenging bad behaviours. Therefore, those who choose prayer, challenge the organization and bullies with the word of God and put in their best for the service of the organization exhibit Ubuntu as an agency for social change. Prayer, challenging the bullies with the word of

God in this context is "right just insofar as it promotes shared identity among people grounded on good-will *[and truth]*" (Metz, 2007b, p. 338).

My participants' prayer life simply demonstrated the importance of spirituality at work by promoting one of the values of their faith, traditional culture and nation. It is commonly said that Nigerians have three loves namely, religion, football games (soccer), and politics. In all of these, prayer seems to have a central place. At the football pitch, Nigerians will pray, irrespective of their religious inclination. During political campaigns and national deliberations, prayer is involved. From this perspective, therefore, accepting prayer as a source of strength to whittle down the effects of bullying is making a wise choice. As explained in 10.4, the mention of prayer as a resource is people's way of seeking relief from troubles, particularly for Nigerians, because they are a deeply religious people (Gathogo, 2007). This is why it is natural for a Nigerian and workers in SEN to allude to prayer as a resource. For surviving, they are advocating the efficacy of prayer among other strategies to whittle down the impact of bullying. Since prayer helped them cope and overcome the challenges of bullying in their workplaces as other studies (Berry et al., 2016; D'Cruz & Noronha, 2014; Kendrick, 2017; Vasconcelos, 2010) outside of CFBOs have confirmed, then it is an in-role behaviour to be encouraged in FBOs.

While the idea of prayer as a resource in handling and coping with workplace bullying has been discussed on an individual level, it is also important to recognize its importance at the management level in FBOs. Prayer is a spiritual value FBOs can draw much power from to enhance intuitive, logical decision-making and deal with difficult tasks (Ferreira Vasconcelos, 2009; Sillito & Bolinger, 2012). It is not a costly practice, but easy, beneficial approach to help Christian leaders maintain stable interpersonal relationships for the growth of their organization. Research suggests that "Prayer

provides the means to achieve the goals of the organization. Though the practice is not a sufficient condition for organizational success, it is necessary" (Schwarz, 2018, p. 50).

Therefore, integrating and recognizing the importance of prayer in addressing workplace bullying in CFBOs is for divine mercy and wisdom to handle bullying. A management that just prays and nothing more is done to alleviate the suffering of the bullied or to see that justice is done, may be accused of using "religion as the opiate of the masses''. Hence, it is important to anticipate the argument that the consolation of religion can be used to perpetrate unjust structures. Effort must be made to reflect deeply on how to use prayer strategy responsibly in FBOs. Drawing from (Péter, 2010), the Apostles in the early church did not stop at praying when dealing with tension and injustice against the Hellenist widows at the distribution of food rations. Beyond prayer, they listened to the complaints of the people, consulted widely, selected committed and honest people to serve in the capacity of welfare officers and the strategy worked. I advocate the Apostle's model in dealing with workplace bullying at the management level in CFBOs.

This study offers evidence in support of prayer as one of the effective strategies in coping with workplace bullying on an individual level. On the managerial level, the Apostles' strategy with prayer is advocated because it worked well in establishing peaceful co-existence and harmony while fulfilling the goals and mission of the early church and its organizations. I therefore include it in the emerging workplace bullying policy guide of this study.

11.7.2 Uninhibited passion for job buffers against impact of workplace bullying

While most studies on the impact of workplace bullying indicated that workers affected cope by journaling or expressing their emotions (Jung & Yoon, 2018; Pheko, 2018; Van Den Brande et al., 2017), this study reveals the importance of uninhibited passion or love for their lifetime occupation as a coping strategy. Ho et al. (2011)

suggest that job passion leads to improved work performance, especially when the job passion is linked to harmonious passion (see below for explanation). This is supported by Pollack et al. (2020, p. 313) who noted that there are three dominant views in literature on work-related passions. These are: "general passion, dualistic passion (i.e., harmonious passion and obsessive passion), and role-based passion (i.e., passion for developing, passion for founding, and passion for inventing)". I drew insight from the study by Pollack et al (2020) to argue the relevance of the concept of work-related passion in coping with workplace bullying.

The first view, which Pollack et al (2020) identified as general passion is demonstrated through perseverance and maintaining positive attitude in the job because of the joy it gives the individual worker. "I love my job" is a good indicator of this kind of passion. It is similar to the expressions of my participants on the passion they have for their jobs when they say, "I do [my work] with every passion in me...so [the bullying experiences] does not follow me to class..." (1OA).

The second category of work- related passion identified as dualistic passion is associated with harmonious passion and obsessive passion. Pollack et al (2020) described harmonious passion as a kind of passion in people's work that is linked to general wellbeing and the balance it gives to them while engaged in their career or job. It is expressed in the following statements: "My work reflects the qualities I like about myself"; "My work is in harmony with the other activities in my life" (Pollack et al., 2020, p.313). It is possible that some people might say they are passionate about teaching because it gives them opportunity to stimulate interest, curiosity and inspire learners with new values and lifestyle. Moreover, they have time for holidays and flexible time management. Therefore, the flexibility of a teaching job and the joy that lives are transformed through the skills is one aspect of the harmonious passion. On the contrary, obsessive passion in work connotes a strong impulse that drives people to do a

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particular job to the extent they cannot resist the urge. It is like being internally controlled by the job—as in workaholic.

The third category is role-based passion. It is summarized as the kind of passion that is linked to self-confidence and satisfaction derived from being an inventor, as in scientific discovery, or the development of new ideas in solving social problems. Pollack et al (2020), also argued that these work-related passions have theoretical underpinnings. For instance, general passion is rooted in motivational theories, while dualistic and role-based passions are linked to self-determination and self -regulatory theories respectively.

It can be argued that what some of my participants associated with uninhibited passion or love for their jobs falls under general passion and a component of good-will in Ubuntu moral theory. This is because it is demonstrated through perseverance and maintaining positive attitude in the job because of the joy it gives the individual worker. It is not clear from the study of Pollack et al (2020) if general passion could also make workers endure workplace bullying and give quality services. Nevertheless, De Clercq et al. (2022) in their recent study argue that people who express their passion for work demonstrate positive energy even in the face of adverse work conditions. Situating the expression of my participants "I do [my work] with every passion in me...so [the bullying experiences] does not follow me to class..." (1OA), in the context of Ubuntu suggests two things. The first is that love for their job, gives them fulfilment as people contributing to their community. That they do not carry their bullying experiences to class does not mean they are not hurt. There are situations when the incident of bullying occurs while they are in the class. This is evident in the case of interviewee 3OI who said:

> *[while teaching in the class] I would see somebody shouting at me, even in front of the kids. You know, sometimes in front of the little kids they shout and then try to humiliate the person.... Well, all these affects, yes, but then as a human*

being ... I look for alternatives to cover those lapses [i.e., time taken in reminiscing over verbal attack that affects class schedule]. There are some other things I do, extra classes with them, even if they are not paid for and they are not even scheduled in the school timetable, I look for extra time, extra classes, you know, go out of my way to go to their classes when they are free to ask questions, to discuss and interact with them and put them through in their drawings. It is just because of the passion and the willingness to see these children do well, you know, do well; it is just out of the love for the children and making good results (Interviewee 3OI, Organization I, 7th November 2019).

In the narrative of 3OI, the idea of good-will in Ubuntu moral theory is well represented. An action that is based on good-will is for the benefit of the community. It is therefore a worthwhile venture in Africa. Such action or service does not only benefit the community, but also brings a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction to the individual (workers) who engage in it. It sums up the essence of Ubuntu— "I am, because we are". In other words, those workers who are committed in their services, because they love their jobs, despite being bullied, also seem to be saying through their actions "we are Ubuntu". This is because Ubuntu calls attention to solidarity, love, compassion, belongingness, fairness, placing value on the individual members of the community and working for the collective benefit of the people. This moral conviction is what can motivate teachers, health workers and other professionals to build a strong and harmonious community.

What my participants are saying through their stories is that what propels them to action despite the bullying experiences is goodwill. Their goodwill and the joy of service as a life calling is not diminished by bullying. Therefore, this study theorizes that uninhibited passion or love for the professional practices of participants in CFBOs is grounded on Ubuntu moral theory. It is important to encourage workers to go for jobs they love and would enjoy doing in FBOs.

11.7.3 Leadership competence as effective approach to reduce workplace bullying

Studies have shown that the success and failures of an organization begin with leadership (bin Abdullah, 2021). This was further confirmed in a recent study on FBOs

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in Nigeria, where many of them failed to achieve their spiritual mandates through membership growth as well as the socio-economic goals because of leadership incompetence (Dada et al., 2020). Leadership competence as a concept means different things to different scholars. But in management literature, for instance, Collin (1989) identified competence as synonymous with performance of the task, expected skills, attributes or characteristics ascribed to a person. Le Deist and Winterton (2005) on the other hand argued that competence is not a one-dimensional framework of skills, but a combination of various skills deployed towards the achievement of organizational goals. In a general sense, leadership competence is the ability to perform the expected task. Some of the components of leadership competence are effective communication, empathy, positive influence, and the ability to implement the goals of an organizations (Andriukaitienė et al., 2017).

In this study, participants regarded leadership competence as one of the most effective ways to reduce workplace bullying in FBOs. Similarly, recent studies on workplace bullying (Ahmad et al., 2020; Hodgins, Maccurtain, et al., 2020) found that organizations lacking in competent leadership end up reinforcing bullying. While there are many components of leadership competence in the leadership literature for reducing bullying in the workplace, the present study found the exercise of ethical principles as the topmost component of leadership competence, according to the participants. Some of the reflections I raised on leadership competence as I analysed the findings in this study were:

(1) How do leaders manage information and their ability to learn from the history of the organization they lead?

(2) Focusing on relationships, how do they treat others?

(3) How do they demonstrate integrity and understanding of the core values of the organizations they lead, bearing in mind the vision and mission of the foundation members of such organization?

All of these correlated with my research participants' stories and responses on how the incompetence of leaders reinforced workplace bullying in some of the CFBOs. The stories told by 3OB about his boss who declared how they planned to change his work from office secretary to a morgue attendant was a good example that demonstrated irresponsibility in leadership. 2OC, who was redeployed from auditor to a cleaner after working hard to save their organization from continuous fraud, is another case that appears to be a poorly directed action. This is because 2OC was still paid a full salary of an account auditor while serving as a cleaner. 4OB also reported cases of gossip against him that were acted on by management without proper investigation as part of indiscretion in leadership that perpetrates workplace bullying. Studies (Falina, 2021; Sharma & Kulshreshtha, 2021) identify these as the other side of ethical issues many organizations struggle with. Indeed, such actions incite anger, and sow seeds of discord and resentment within workplaces.

Reflecting further on leadership competence problems in FBOs, interviewee 4OB, who rose to be one top leader that suffered bullying experiences in his organization gave a clue to what they lack in leadership. This was in response to question 1c. Below is one of the extracts:

> *Here, the correct leadership, experienced leadership in an institution like this, should be put in place. Do not appoint leaders because of your personal relationship with them or because of some other ulterior motives, those who will be loyal to you and pay you homage, or whatsoever... let us not appoint people who do not believe and have faith in Jesus Christ, who are not good Christians... when it comes to... pro-active issues, you see them falling flat. Let true Christians come to, and there has to be constant training and instructions to leaders and other staff members on how to administer institutions like this. You do not just lift up somebody from someone's kitchen, who has not had or dealt with money, or does not know principles of administration....*

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A review of the issues raised above, without going into details of the bullying experience of 4OB and others as presented in Chapters 8 and 9, are essential components of leadership competencies for discussion. Starting with 4OB's extract, the first striking point is his perceived conflict of interest— *"Do not appoint leaders because of your personal relationship with them or because of some other ulterior motives."* This indicates that some of the leadership appointments in some CFBOs are based on personal relationships or ulterior motives. This was also inferred in literature (Mallory, 2016; Shumba, 2009). Selecting leaders in CFBOs based on personal relationship, not competence, falls under poor ethical/moral principles. The scenario presented by 4OB fits the description offered by Shumba (2009, p.75) who speaks of "friction between tribal and political parties, favouritism, nepotism, promotion within the church based on tribal affiliation, quotas for positions, and glass ceilings for certain minority ethnic groups." A further statement that illustrates this lack of ethical principles in decision making is found in 4OB's phrase "*when it comes to... pro-active issues, you see them falling flat.*" It raises concern in the minds of church workers if decisions on matters of interest to them are dismissed with a wave of the hand. This response is even more critical when such matters of interest are core organizational values. For example, fairness in dispensing justice, was partly advocated by 4OB, which is core in their organizational values. Further information on this was disclosed in the interview extracts in Chapter 9, indicating that leaders lack the ability to inspire confidence by not demonstrating moral excellence and ethical principles in decision making.

The second component is evidence of a spiritual relationship and commitment to the church's doctrinal belief— *"let us not appoint people who do not believe and have faith in Jesus Christ, who are not good Christians."* Shared identity in faith, doctrine and personal values that are in tandem with the mission and vision of the organization is

a requirement for leadership in CFBOs (Yip et al., 2010). As previously indicated in the case with the strategy of the early Church in handling the conflict arising from food distribution, honest, unbiased, and courageous men were chosen as leaders.

The third component Is like the first point, which is integrity in dealing with money— *"You do not just lift up somebody from someone's kitchen, who has not had or dealt with money, or does not know principles of administration"*. The point here is integrity in financial management. The stories told by 2OC demonstrated the depth of financial mismanagement going on in the church institutions, as well as the dangers one may run into while serving in the capacity of faithful audit staff.

All the points discussed above focused on ethical principles and are in line with the findings of Ahmad et al. (2020) who said that the major competence that is required in leadership that enhances workers' wellbeing and reduces workplace bullying is following ethical principles. According to them, ethical leaders have a positive influence in their workforce because they "were found helpful, trustworthy, empathetic and fair decision-makers" (Ahmad et al., 2020, p. 164).

Drawing further insight from Ubuntu moral philosophy on good leadership, Metz (2018) summarised that African ethics in leadership is servant leadership. It is a concept that follows and values communal relationship, identity, and solidarity, respecting people and involving them in decision making. This is part of what 4OB meant when he said, *"let us not appoint people who do not believe and have faith in Jesus Christ, who are not good Christians."* Good Christian leaders who identify with the faith of their Christian community would demonstrate servant leadership as Christ did.

Metz (2018) added that servant leadership is not uniquely African as other cultures also believe in it. Christian doctrine emphasizes clearly that servant leadership is the principle to follow in church organizations (Filippone, 2016). The African servant

leadership is demonstrated by helping to meet other people's needs—both stakeholders

who are workers and customers respectively—without taking advantage of them

economically, nor reneging on promises, which eventually affect relationships and trust.

Metz (2018) posed a question: "What would a firm or other large organization look like

if it were guided by the Afro-communal conception of good leadership?" (p.43). Some

of the answers postulated were:

> [A] firm lead by Afro-communal values would exhibit solidarity with consumers,
> meaning that it would do what is expected to enable them to live objectively
> better lives, particularly socio-moral one. If an Afro-communal leader took over
> a firm that sold cigarettes or food with trans fats, she would make a concerted
> effort to shift production towards something that, for all we can tell, would not
> cause addiction, inflict serious bodily harm and, as a consequence of these,
> disrupt familial and friendly relationships (p.43).

The above supposition focuses on Ubuntu as an agency of leadership. Similarly, what

would CFBOs look like if they were guided by ethical principles of the Bible which are

consistent with Ubuntu moral theory? If leadership in CFBOs in Africa, and in the case

of SEN, which is the case study in this research, follows culturally relevant Ubuntu

moral theory, bullying would not prevail. What makes bullying prevail is that

incompetent people are in leadership. Chamorro-Premuzic, (2019, p. 6) described such

people as bad leaders:

> In business, a bad leader significantly affects subordinates by reducing their
> engagement—their enthusiasm for their jobs and the meaning and purpose
> people find at work. Global surveys report that a staggering 70 percent of
> employees are not engaged at work and that only 4 percent of these employees
> have anything nice to say about their bosses. Quite clearly, good leadership is
> not the norm, but the exception.

All the negative experiences Chamorro-Premuzic (2019) described above are similar to

what my participants considered as bullying. Therefore, I can conclude by stating that

bad leadership produces a hostile work environment, which leads to stress and the

reinforcement of bullying. When that happens, Vveinhardt et al. (2020) affirmed

through their recent study that it affects moral decision making. It is possible to

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postulate that moral decision making of victims of stress and workplace bullying will be affected increasingly if nothing is done to reduce this social menace in CFBOs. As supposedly value-based champions in African communities, it seems some CFBOs have forgotten their values. That is why this study challenges and reminds them to evaluate their values and principles as they work in African mission fields. It is not enough to establish churches, schools, and hospitals and yet not have competent leaders to bring positive social change in the community.

Furthermore, talking about leaders in the FBOs becoming social change agents implies that the socio-political context in which they lead needs to change too. Otherwise, any effort made towards ethical leadership will just be "swimming against the tide of systemic issues". One of those fundamental challenges is corruption at different levels of the Nigerian society. For example, just as some of the ruling class in Nigeria are scrambling for oil money, looting state money, legislating for themselves allowances and salaries in billions of naira (Demarest, 2020; Umaru, 2017), so also some ordinary Nigerian youths have resolved to engage in incessant killing, kidnapping terrorism and "Yahoo-Yahoo" (cybercrime) as a means of making their own money. This is evident in the case of Ramon Abbas, known as "Hushpuppi," who is guilty of money laundering and cybercrimes in the US (Clifton & Abumere, 2021) .

The second fundamental challenge is the legacy of colonisation in terms of a divide and rule or indirect rule system (with creation of unequal geopolitical states) and capitalism. It seems to have strengthened the exploitation of resources to the advantage of the ruling class (Ibelema, 2000; Nolutshungu, 1990; Orji, 2011). While the doctrines of the church positioned them as social change agents both for economic prosperity and moral uprightness (Voye, 1999), some have bought into the capitalist mindset, ethnic identity and politics to reinforce bullying as leaders. Therefore, beyond bad leadership, there is a need for general value reorientation, which is what Ubuntu calls attention to.

CHAPTER 12

POLICY FRAMEWORK ON WORKPLACE BULLYING: THE CASE OF CFBOS IN SEN

12.1 Introduction

This study has focused on workplace bullying and the experiences of workers of Christian Faith-based Organizations in the southeastern part of Nigeria. In the previous chapter, findings drawn from Chapters 7-10 were discussed, using Ubuntu moral theory and Equity theory as the interpretative lens. In this final chapter, the focus is to develop a policy framework for Christian FBOs. Ideas and theories from individual participants' experience are integrated with key principles and values underpinning CFBOs, Ubuntu, and Equity theory to develop a policy framework on workplace bullying.

The first section of this chapter is a concise explanation of the key terms like policy/public policy and policy framework, thus linking back to Chapter 4 where the concept of public policy was discussed. Thereafter, key principles, and values for addressing workplace bullying in CFBOs will be outlined. In the second section, I will demonstrate how incorporating Ubuntu moral theory and Equity theory helps CFBOs to achieve safe workplaces and reduce workplace bullying. Also, the policy framework developed from this study can serve as an evidence-based document to further contribute to discussions of workplace bullying in other regions in other FBOs. Then the chapter closes with the limitations of this study, conclusion/reflections, and a sample copy of a suggested workplace bullying policy in CFBOs.

12.2 What is policy?

Just like bullying, people use the term "policy" to mean different things at different times and in different contexts. Cunnigham (1963) argued that policy is not easily defined, but like an elephant, when seen it can be recognized. He then described it

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as an action plan of what we intend to do and the broad ways to achieve our set objectives. Burlingame, Coombs, and Thurston (1999) defined policy as "any authoritative communication about how individuals in certain positions should behave under specified conditions" (p.230). Generally, policy is described as a rule, course of action, or a number of principles, adopted, and enforced to control the behaviours of people to achieve a specific goal either in the family, workplace, city, state, or country.

12.2.1 What is public policy?

Cochran, Mayer, Carr, Cayer, and McKenzie (2015) define public policy as the actions of the government and the intentions that determine those actions. What this definition suggests is that government has the authoritative power to direct, legislate and control the affairs of a society in a country, state, or city. For instance, one of the cases in view, which demonstrates a government's action as public policy is the Covid-19 pandemic mask wearing policy. Many countries rolled out policies on mask wearing. The intention of such a policy was to reduce the spread of the disease. In other words, public policies are made to solve problems and preserve stability in societies. Furthermore, Peters and Pierre (2006) added that public policy is the sum of a government's activities, whether acting directly or through agents, as it has an influence on the life of the citizens. This is why in the case of mask wearing, both private and public organizations require it as they enter into their business premises. By so doing, they are acting as government agents to implement the policy on mask wearing.

12.2.3 What is a policy framework/public policy framework?

Having defined policy and public policy as concepts, it is necessary to clarify exactly what is meant by the term public policy framework before developing one. I will begin with the term framework. Britannica Dictionary (n.d.) defines framework as "the basic structure of something, a set of ideas or facts that provide support for something". In essence, it is an outline of the overall structure of ideas or concepts

involved in the development and completion of a task, in this instance policy or public policy. Therefore, public policy framework is a representation of coherent steps for developing a policy. It provides the fundamental elements that are critical in developing, reviewing, implementing, and approving of a policy.

12.3 Key values and principles underpinning my proposed workplace bullying policy framework for CFBOs

As highlighted in Chapter 6, developing policies that will be of benefit to a society without integrating their core values and principles will be a total failure. This is because the value system of a society helps in clarifying the fundamental principles and acceptable behaviours of its citizens. For instance, in the Nordic nations like, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, trust is an important principle in their human relationships. Robinson (2020) emphasized that research shows that the majority of the citizens of these countries trust others and they have built it into their national value and socio-economic engagements. Likewise, organizations that have core values and principles in their business operations will inspire members of staff and their clients to adopt behavioural norms acceptable in their business.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the following core values, (servant-leadership, accountability, respect, and team-spirit) will underpin my policy framework on workplace bullying for CFBOs in SEN. SART is the acronym of the core values:

S=Servant-leadership

A=Accountability

R=Respect

T=Team-spirit

Table 5. *Core values underpinning my proposed policy framework*

Values	Explanation
(A) Servant-leadership	This value is core to Christian faith and many African societies. It is about leadership that is focused on serving selflessly towards meeting the needs of others. In my findings, participants complained about autocratic leaders who manifested a selfish spirit and through their actions reinforced bullying in their workplaces.
(B) Accountability	Accountability as a value is linked to the principle of transparency and equity. I. It calls attention to resource management and decision-making processes. II. People are willing to trust organizations and leaders who are accountable. In Chapter 8, a case of accountability and transparency was raised as part of the problem that resulted in bullying. The auditor who discovered cases of fraud was maligned and removed unjustly because she was a threat to those involved. More importantly where accountability is encouraged, trust and confidence grow.
(C) Respect	This value is important in human relationship, especially at the workplace where people of different personalities, status, or ethnic groups are found. I. It is one of the valued social responsibilities in Nigeria, especially in relation to elders, whether it is in economic, political, academic, or spiritual engagements. Some of my research participants argued that their leaders, whom they respect because they are leaders took advantage of that and bullied them. II. It is about treating people with courtesy and showing politeness when addressing people. III. It is directly linked to the principle of Love. The Judaeo-Christian scripture counsels believers to show respect to all. IV. It is one of the golden rules, treat others as you would want them to treat you (Matt. 7:12; Rom 13:1-7).
(D) Team-spirit	This value requires being conscious of other people's needs and, skills and demonstrating collaboration. This can be achieved by: I. Supporting them towards reaching the set goals of the organization. II. Empowering and affirming their creativity. III. Encouraging and supporting them to care for one another's needs. IV. Team-spirit as a value is linked to the principle of

Solidarity. One of the findings of this study shines light on the challenge of ethnic division and conspiracy.

As with values, principles are important ideas that guide in the development of policy framework. They are used as reference points to evaluate the decisions of organization's operations internally and externally with clients in the community. Although differences of opinion exist on what are values and principles, I consider them as two sides of a coin. Principles are universally consistent rules upon which values are derived. For instance, "an object will not change its motion unless a force acts on it" is a popular principle attributed to Isaac Newton's scientific legacy. From principles, values like diligence could develop. If you do not work hard towards a goal, you may not realize that goal. While people's values may change, principles are consistent in many situations. Therefore, in developing a policy framework on workplace bullying for CFBOs, the following principles are considered useful and relevant based on my findings in this study: Transparency, Solidarity, Equity, Justice, and Love.

Fig. 6 Workplace *bullying policy principles for CFBOs*

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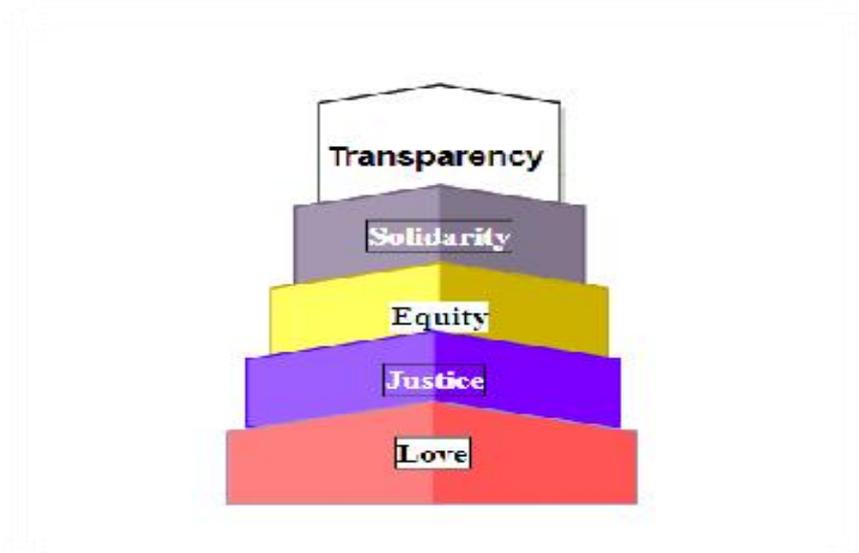
Note. I chose a pyramid to illustrate the policy principles in this thesis on the account that it has layers and a base. Each layer (in this case principle) is sequentially built upon the base before it.

12.3.1 Brief explanation of the principles

1) **Transparency**: This is one of the principles that enhances genuine relationships and boosts credibility (Davidson, 2008), especially leaders' credibility. When leaders compromise the standard in whatever form, loyalty is endangered, bullying arises and productivity drops. There were many cases of transparency issues in the stories of my participants. A case in view is in chapter 8 of this study where a leader refused to pay a technician for repairing a machine, which eventually dented the image of the organization. However, as a damage control mechanism, the technician was called back and paid at a critical time when his services became indispensable. Apart from the fact that the organization's reputation was marred outside, it was difficult for the leader to encourage accountability and transparency within the organization.

2) **Solidarity**: The principle of solidarity is anchored in mutual support and common interest. African Ubuntu is very strong on the principle of solidarity because it is the essence of relationship and community. Workers who are denied opportunities when they are qualified, and the resources are available believed they did not belong to such community.

3) **Equity**: is one of the principles identified in the Equity theory of Adam Stacey. It is also found in Ubuntu as well as Christianity. It is anchored on fairness and being impartial in decision making. When an organization operates on the principle of equity and fairness, tension and

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disharmony reduce in the workplace. This is very clear in the stories of my participants across the chapters, especially in relation to wages below the minimum wage.

4) **Justice**: This principle requires that organizations doing business in the name of religion should not legitimize injustice in any form. Justice is a cardinal principle that builds society. It is linked to equity and fairness. When it is obvious to workers that they cannot get justice or perceive unfair treatment in the course of their work, it unsettles their confidence in the organizations and its leadership. A breach of fairness and justice was mentioned in many stories of my research participants, thus indicating it as one of the issues that reinforces workplace bullying.

5) **Love**: At the base of the pyramid in Fig. 5 above is love. This is because it is the foundational principle of all human relationships whether it is in the family, workplace, church, or society at large. Ubuntu teaches that love is an important ingredient in communal relationships, "I am because we are". In Christian faith, love is the greatest gift and principle for any meaningful life. It is love that motivates people to obey the commandments of God. Jesus Christ demonstrated this love through his sacrificial death at the cross of Calvary. In Adam's Equity theory, justice and fairness would not be achieved exclusively without love in the workplace. Therefore, if love abounds in the workplace, bullying will diminish.

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12.4 The emerging workplace bullying policy framework

Having provided the core values and principles underpinning this framework, a more rigorous philosophical conceptualizing of policy development on workplace bullying in CFBOs begins with the Board of Governance. A clear sense of what constitute core values of the organization, mission statement and vision statement is the first step. Fig.7 and Table 6 below are the processes involved in developing workplace bullying policy for CFBOs.

Fig. 7 *Policy development, communication, implementation, and review process.*
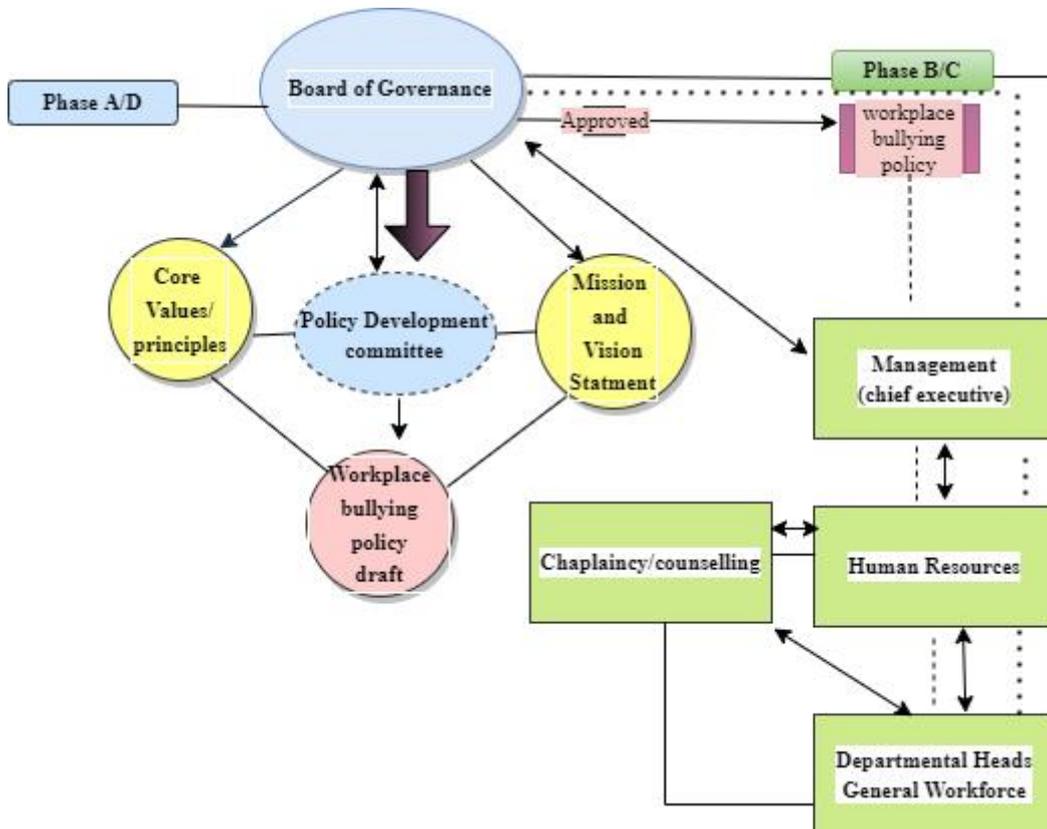
Note. Fig 7 is a simple diagram representing the concept of the proposed policy framework. Solid line with arrow represents the task each entity performs. For instance, the mission statement and core values are specific task of the Governance Board. The bold line with arrow represents the appointment of the sub-committee by the

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Governance Board. The solid line without arrow represents the connections of the components towards achieving the intended goals. The dotted circle represents the sub-committee for development and review of the policy. The actors in the policy development committee/review may be part of the management, Governance Board members or consultants. The light dotted line connects each entity in the implementation of the policy, the thick dotted line is the formal communication of the policy to each entity, while the solid line with two arrows at both ends is the feedback loop/flow of conversations on bullying experiences.

Table 6. *Process descriptions*

Phase	Description	Actors	Authorization	Final approval
(A) Development	A policy development committee drafts the policy in accordance with the core values, mission, and vision statement.	Sub-committee of the Board of Governance. This might include the Human Resources head of department.	The Governance Board authorize the draft and development of workplace bullying policy	Governance Board gives final approval.
(B) Communication	Policy is communicated to the workforce through the management. A copy is made available for every employee/stakeholder in the workplace.	This will involve all staff and volunteers to listen to the presentation and sign consent as they receive copies.	The management authorize the printing and distribution of policy copies, after the Governance Board's approval.	
(C)	Unit heads are responsible to see that the	Chaplaincy/ counselling unit should	The management approves recommendations from	The Board of Governance has the final

Implementation	policy is implemented in their units.	jointly work with Human Resource department on bullying. Prayerfully investigate cases and finally report to human resources.	investigated cases through the human resource and gives sanction as required. Then reports back to Board of Governance.	say on every policy matter.
(E) Review	The policy development committee also serves as review committee.	The sub-committee of the Board of governance.	The Board of Governance authorizes the review as stipulated in the timeframe.	Governance Board gives approval of changes in the policy.

12.4.1 Policy development committee

From the above table, there are four phases in workplace bullying policy development. It starts with the first phase—selecting committee members for the drafting of the policy. The Board of Governance appoints the sub-committee on policy development. Usually, some organizations allow the Human Resources department to handle workplace bullying policy matters (Fox & Cowan, 2015; Salin, 2008). However, in principle, the development of policy is part of the fiduciary duties of the Board of Governance or Trustees. The Board members must be informed and understand what constitutes workplace bullying in order to develop effective and efficient policy. This may involve engaging members in seminars facilitated by consultants on workplace bullying. I strongly advocate that the head of the Human Resource department/unit of the organization be co-opted as part of the sub-committee, representing the management. It may be necessary that the head of the Human Resources department be the secretary of the sub-committee. This is because one of their responsibilities is managing employees in the organization. Hence, they will have some insight on what goes on

daily in the workplace. There is also a need to have a legal counsel expert as part of the sub-committee.

12.4.2 The policy statement and rationale are important considerations and should reflect Ubuntu ethics

From Figure 6 above, items outlined in phase one are: core values and principles, definition of bullying, vision, and mission statement of the organization. It is important to provide a rationale for the policy with a statement that captures what the organization wants to achieve through the policy. Policy development that seeks to impact the organization positively must begin with evidence-based knowledge (Head, 2008), in this case the knowledge of workplace bullying. While the findings of this study on workplace bullying may not be generalized in all FBOs, it is relevant because it is sensitive to the socio-cultural context of the participants in CFBOs.

As indicated earlier, Ubuntu and Equity theory are chosen as the ethical orientation guiding the policy development framework. This is in relation to the cardinal ethical principles in CFBOs. A policy statement framed with Ubuntu as a principle will value belongingness, solidarity, compassion, identity, love, fairness, and justice. The operational definition of workplace bullying in this study underpins these principles. It identifies what is bullying and what is not bullying (see Chapter 2: 2.3). Studies (Karsten & Illa, 2005; van der Colff, 2003) have shown that within the African context integrating the Ubuntu concept into management and business practices is of great benefit in developing inclusive culture and leadership competencies that facilitate growth. Clearer thought needs to go into the policy statement and the overall design of the policy.

12.4.3 Core organizational values, mission and vision statements of the organizations are important components of this policy framework.

The analysis of the findings in this study revealed that many workers who participated in the interviews did not know the core values of their organization. In order to develop a policy on workplace bullying, organizational core values should be prominent and practically demonstrated in the culture of the organization. In the words, of Kusy and Holloway (2009, p. 99):

> If an organization allows individuals who hold key positions of power and authority to abuse the very standards that they are charged with upholding, the values have no meaning. Leaders must embody the behavioural values of their organization as much as they must meet deadlines, improve products and services, and manage people.

Also, it is expedient that values are emphasised at the point of employment. While this study does not advocate for discrimination in employment policies, it is important that those who engage in the services of CFBOs are aware of the values of the organization. More importantly, they are required to accept such values as long as they are in the employment of the organization.

12.4.4 Communicating the policy

The second phase begins when the drafted policy is finally approved by the Board of Governance who authorizes the internal management of the organization to print and distribute the workplace bullying policy. It is possible to hand the policy to departments to distribute to members of the unit, but I suggest a general forum for communicating the policy. This can be seminars or workshops organized with experts in the field of workplace bullying as facilitators. Orientation, workshops, and seminars are socially acceptable avenues to educate employees on the values of an organization. At the end of such workshop or seminar, questions are asked, and feedback is given. Then, members of staff will sign a copy of the policy which is now binding on all.

12.4.5 Procedures involved in handling bullying should be included in the policy framework of this study

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The next phase is responding and implementing the policy. One of the complaints from participants of this study was that their organizations do not have channels for reporting their experiences on workplace bullying. Even in organizations with policies on bullying, it is still a challenge. For instance, in countries like South Korea with anti-bullying legislation, a recent study reveals that people find it difficult to access reporting channels when they experience bullying (Park, 2021). A policy that is fraught with problems of implementation is mere tokenism. Care must be taken to produce policies that are implementable. Therefore, in this framework, teams, and channels should be constituted with people who are trustworthy, to prayerfully handle cases of bullying. Because prayer was prominent in the findings of this study, it is part of the values incorporated in policy development. What that means is that it should have a place in both the selection and handling of bullying cases in CFBOs.

While in Figure 6 above, head of units are responsible for implementing the policy in their units, there are situations where the head or leaders are the ones bullying their staff. In such case, the policy seems unimplementable. As Lockhart and Bhanugopan (2020) rightly explained, workplace bullying becomes tokenism if it cannot be implemented when it involves management staff. A study in 2007, reveals that upward bullying situations do occur in organizations where the staff bully their leader (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2007). When such happens, it becomes challenging to implement the policy, either because the staff has a connection to higher powers or there are foreseeable changes in leadership. Nevertheless, in the framework above, the chaplaincy/counselling unit should work with the departments and Human Resources on bullying cases. This is where providing spiritual care and counselling to those involved in bullying is very important. More importantly, being able to speak the truth to power is part of the ministry of the Chaplain. Sometimes, the Chaplain would need to

investigate cases, report, and give an independent finding to the Human Resources department who will consult with the management for appropriate action.

12.4.6 Review of policy

Just like the development phase, the committee used for the development of the policy draft could be used to review the policy. The rationale for the review of workplace bullying policy is to re-examine issues that may not be in line with the law of the land. For instance, if there are changes in government legislation that may affect the implementation of the policy, then review is essential. Also, if there are areas of tension or poor interpretation of concepts, then review of the policy is necessary. In fact, policies need to have a timeframe when they must be reviewed. This is usually authorized by the Board of Governance. The Chief Executive who is responsible for the internal management may consult with the Governance Board whenever it is deemed necessary for review. Just as the process of developing a policy requires a literature search for updated information, in the review phase, a literature search, surveys and feedback is required for legitimacy purposes (see the Appendix F for a sample of workplace bullying policy).

12.5 Limitations of this study

I acknowledge as a qualitative researcher that one basic weakness of a Hermeneutic Phenomenological approach is that the findings are always contextual and may not be able to be necessarily generalized. This study, just like every other qualitative study focuses on a specific setting. Therefore, the findings of this study are a synopsis of church workers' understanding and experiences of workplace bullying within SEN.

Secondly, the stories of the participants of this study were not verified from the perspective of management in these organizations who were the accused on many

occasions. This was intentional because of the sensitive nature of this topic. Besides, this study was not designed to make judgement between employers and employees, but to bring out stories of workers with painful experiences of workplace bullying in CFBOs, whose voices have not been heard. Three management staff of the eleven CFBOs in this study participated because they had experienced bullying in the course of their service. While that alone does not suggest all stories shared were verified, however, it gives credence to the stories that bullying is real in FBOs.

12. 6 Conclusion and reflections

This study began with a general overview of bullying and the conceptual understanding through psychological, neuroscientific and the sociological lenses. Given that bullying is inherently a learnt behaviour in the sociological perspective and that societal structures help to reinforce it, I followed a sociological perspective. My aim was to elicit information on what constitutes bullying from the perspective of church workers in SEN, an African mission field that was receptive to Christian missionaries, and their respective affiliate organizations known as CFBOs. This thesis attempts to address some gaps in literature on workplace bullying in Nigeria, and in doing so makes significant contributions.

First, existing research on workplace bullying primarily focused on the experiences of workers in non-religious organizations with little knowledge on the nature and impact of workplace bullying in FBOs. This study is one of the earliest studies on the bullying experiences of church workers and its impact in South Eastern Nigeria (SEN). The stories of workplace bullying experiences from 30 participants of this research provide a significant contribution to the existing knowledge of what constitutes bullying in CFBOs.

The primary research question was "What is the church workers' lived experience and understanding of workplace bullying in Southeast Nigeria?"

From the findings, workers in the church institutions that render social services on health and education, conceptualized bullying as such actions directly or indirectly carried out by employers that subject them to remuneration below minimum wages. This was when compared to what others in similar institutions and organizations are paid, especially in organizations where there seems to be no clear indication of lack of resources to meet minimum wage. More importantly, there is evidence in recent studies that poor remuneration below the national minimum wage constitutes legal bullying and a modern form of slavery.

The second significant finding is that work overload also is considered bullying in CFBOs. This is predicated on the fact that workers who were not even earning the minimum wage were often loaded with duties beyond what they can carry out, yet they are threatened when they do not do them. Furthermore, the high rate of unemployment in the country makes it difficult to resign from such jobs as many of those workers have families depending on them to feed, cover basic costs, bills, and out other essential life projects. What is more painful in their experiences is that they were not regarded as valued contributors in the mission projects of their churches. They were treated like mere slaves who do not belong nor have a voice.

The third significant finding on what constitutes bullying in the understanding of CFBOs in SEN is the miscarriage of justice, threats and suspensions issued to workers at one point or another. Some of the cases clearly exemplified the problem of power imbalance, while others were caused by disciplinary actions hastily taken without discussion, which reflected poorly on the image of the organization. Nevertheless, the

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interpretations provided to shine light on these findings were based on the socio-cultural lens of Ubuntu moral theory and the Equity theory.

Ubuntu as an African philosophy captures the essence of community in African worldview— "I am because we are". Its moral theoretical framework was used for the understanding of workplace bullying in this study. A key theorist of Ubuntu moral theory, Metz (2007b) describes the theory thus: "an action is right just insofar as it promotes shared identity among people grounded on good-will [*and truth*]; an action is wrong to the extent that it fails to do so and tends to encourage the opposites of division and ill-will" (p.338, emphasis mine). The implication is that workplace bullying is a potential harmful act as established in the stories and experiences of 30 participants in this study. There is no good will whatsoever in bullying others.

Linking Ubuntu moral theory to the Igbo socio-cultural maxim of "Egbe bere Ugo Ebere nke si ibe ya ebena nku akwapu ya [meaning] let the kite perch, let the Eagle perch, whichever says the other should not perch, let its wing break off," a symmetric understanding of workplace bullying from the African and Igbo socio-cultural context emerged. That understanding is that workplace bullying is a moral infraction from the Igbo socio-cultural worldview and Ubuntu moral theory. Therefore, this study would add to the theoretical development of the concept of bullying from the African and Igbo socio-cultural context. Also, this study has brought insight to the practical utility of Ubuntu moral theory as an agency for reducing workplace bullying within African community and by extension to other cultures that share its moral principles and values.

Equity theory as a theory of motivation is based on fairness and the underlying goal is to achieve equity where inequity abounds. Adam (1963, 1965), the original theorist of Equity theory demonstrated through a series of research studies that people give their time and skills in employment as an exchange for something beneficial.

However, when their expectations (wages, salary, or other tangible benefits) are not commensurate with or lower than what others who put as much time and skills as they put, they feel cheated. From the perspective of Equity theory, workplace bullying passes as social inequity in the work environment.

Considering the operating definition developed before setting out for the data collection as presented in Chapter 2, one can say that some of the experiences of my research participants constitute bullying according to this definition. Let me review those experiences in the context of this definition.

Workplace bullying is any systematic attempt by an employer or a fellow worker to humiliate, threaten, or inflict pain or suffering on a 'vulnerable worker' (see Rogers, Anderson & Clark, 2009) or subordinate repeatedly over a period in his/her work, which may result in social stress and health problems. This includes continuous: (1) spying into a worker's privacy for the purpose of causing him/her to lose reputation, when it is not part of the job agreement; (2) intentionally frustrating a worker's morale in his/her job, either by not providing adequate tools for the job as required, or by additional workload outside of work agreement. But it is not limited to such sufferings that result from denial of promotion, allowances and other opportunities when qualified, and when the resources are available. It is not bullying, when a worker is corrected for contravening the policies of operation in an organization. Also, it is not bullying when a worker fails to do his/her work as expected and he/she is reprimanded, provided in such situation there is fairness and respect of individual rights.

My conclusion regarding the main research question on what constitutes bullying is that the stories presented in this study clearly demonstrate there is evidence of workplace bullying in CFBOs within SEN. This is collaborated with evidence from extant literature as demonstrated by researchers (Caputo, 2018; Noronha, 2021; Orozco, 2016; Oruh Emeka & Dibia, 2020; Salin et al., 2019; Sweet, 2005; Trépanier et al.,

2021) which shows that poor remuneration, especially below minimum wage, work overload, and miscarriage of justice constitute forms of bullying in workplaces. To regard these experiences as poor conceptualization of workplace bullying is to deny the complexity of bullying. Rather than arguing for poor conceptualization of bullying based on one perspective, as some Nigeria scholars like Akintayo (2014) posited in their studies, this study has evaluated the socio-cultural concept of bullying, bearing in mind the essential features in the bullying literature. The repetitive nature of such experiences, whether it is poor remuneration, work overload or miscarriage of justice, is one essential feature of bullying.

The idea of weakness on the side of the victim has been debated in literature as one feature to be considered. However, I argued that victims of bullying may not necessarily be weak in terms of strength or intelligence, but their values—religious values, personal values—may cause them to endure such hurtful experiences frequently, that the bullies capitalize on their perceived vulnerability to inflict pain.

The next research question focused on the impact of workplace bullying on the quality of services and job performance of workers in CFBOs. Although bullying experiences drain workers emotionally and physically, thus impacting on the quality of their services, some participants of this study emphasized that prayer and uninhibited passion for their job made a huge difference. Therefore, this study theorizes that uninhibited passion or love for the job in CFBOs and prayer should be encouraged as significant in-role behaviours in FBOs. These are especially important as literature (Berry, Gillespie, Fisher, Gormley, & Haynes, 201'; D'Cruz & Noronha, 2014; Kendrick, 2017; Vasconcelos, 2010) confirms the importance of prayer in the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of people under challenging circumstances. However, prayer does not replace the practical steps required in addressing bullying.

In the final question on how to reduce workplace bullying in CFBOs, leadership competence and policy were considered more relevant. However, the crux of the matter in this study is developing a policy framework to guide CFBOs in SEN to deal with workplace bullying and maintain a safe work environment. This was greatly emphasized in workplace bullying literature from Nigerian scholars (Akintayo, 2014; Ayodeji, 2010; Fayankinnu, 2010; Nwaneri, Onoka, & Onoka, 2016; Olajide, Asuzu, & Obembe, 2015) in their previous studies as mentioned in the literature review. Also, participants of this study as indicated in Chapter 10, earnestly wished there was a policy on bullying in their workplaces. Therefore, I have provided guidelines for an evidence-based policy framework and a sample of a workplace bullying policy to help prevent or reduce workplace bullying in FBOs in SEN (see Appendix F).

Issues concerning policy on workplace bullying, especially remuneration of workers according to the stipulated national minimum wage policy are tied to the Nigerian labour regulatory policies as stated in Chapter 6. The literature review section of this study is very thorough and quite dense with the prevailing political and social inequity in the colonial and post-colonial history of Nigeria. Although the focus of this study is CFBOs in SEN, the literature on employment and labour practices provides some insight into what has happened in Nigeria on labour before the 1914 amalgamation. First, it was established from the literature that labour was cooperative in the indigenous communities of the people of Nigeria. They were mainly agrarian society that supported each other to earn a living but not based on waged economy. Secondly, people were compensated adequately for services rendered through exchange of goods. Although, these systems of labour and services on rare occasion were abused, thus leading to conflict, and withdrawal of support, it was generally a harmonious relationship. Thirdly, labour was not commodified. It had a highly dignified social value,

except slave labour. In post-agrarian society, it is even more important for governments and organizations to develop clear policy frameworks to address workplace bullying.

Much of the social inequity that gradually became a problem in labour came with the colonial administration in Nigeria. Most of the policies of labour during the colonial era were exploitative in nature and have remained so in the post-colonial Nigeria. All these were highlighted in Chapter 6. Because of poor regulatory policies on labour when it comes to private enterprises as alluded to in the literature (Adewunmi & Ogunnubi, 2019; Aderemi, 2017; Ajonnadi, 2015), this study is also a wakeup call for the National Assembly of the Nigerian Government to reform their labour policies. This will involve introducing the concept of workplace bullying clearly into government labour policy. More importantly, labour should be transferred from the Exclusive list to the Concurrent list where states will have opportunity to address labour issues in their states as the 1960 constitution stipulated.

12. 6.1 Reflection on emotions and lessons learnt

Prior to my field trip for data collection, I declared my religious/academic background and my understanding of what is bullying. This was part of my professional responsibility while engaging in qualitative research. It gave me an opportunity to set out into an academic inquiry of a sensitive social problem within religious organizations prepared. Although I prepared as expected, confident with the cultural knowledge and nuances of the people of SEN, I was wary of the dangers that may emerge. As Milner (2007, p. 388) noted: "it may be necessary for researchers to consider dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen in conducting research". One of the unforeseen dangers was how the study might impact my emotions. For example, when I listened to stories on the bullying experiences of family men and women who had to suffer humiliation, threats, and perpetual emotional trauma in their work, and interject faith as the reason to endure;

I remembered my mother's pain as a caregiver and her experiences. At such points, sadness filled my mind as if I was listening to the stories of my mother and some of the staff, when I was a Chaplain. However, I knew most of the stories were coming from the employee's perspective. In addition, I had no way to engage the management to hear their stories, except for a few occasions when I had management staff involved in the interview. One strategy I used as a pastoral person to maintain focus and objectivity in sieving the stories was to facilitate a conversation on what good experiences they had in their jobs. Some people who appeared powerless and feeling worthless as a result of their bullying experiences shared stories that brightened their faces and empowered them to be stronger. They became reflective on at least one good thing they saw in their organizations, despite the negative stories. An illustration was the case of interviewee 2OD, who remembered that her organization allowed nursing mothers to come to work with their children, in contrast to some other organizations whose policies never allow nursing mothers and childcare on duty.

I consider that strategy as the use of pastoral power in the interview process. Pastoral power when used in an interview conversation is open, relational, seeking to co-create knowledge without repressing ideas or increasing emotional trauma through sensitive questions. In essence, refocusing my participants' thoughts on something positive about their organization was beneficial for our emotions. This is because some participants were shedding tears as they recounted their stories. This sadness did not in any way cloud my thinking or analysis of the stories in this study, as each person's story is uniquely different. Often, I felt moved to offer prayer with the permission of participants whose stories were full of the metaphor of slavery, and who had already indicated the power of prayers in pulling through their bullying experiences. In fact, one of them after signing off the $13.00NZD, equivalent of ₦3000.00 financial reward for their time, expressed thanks for having someone to share burdens that they had carried

for too long. This was because there was no known channel to let out the bitter experiences in their workplace. Some had been threatened with letters of dismissal if found speaking unguardedly about senior management staff.

The lesson learnt is that when we internalize stories of bullying for too long without finding someone to share it, it affects our self-esteem and wellbeing. It is in sharing our stories with people who care and listen without judging us that we gain the strength to manage our hurts. I was glad that some people affirmed that my coming around to hear their story was a great emotional relief for their mental health.

12.6.2 Reflection on data collection, interpretations and lessons learnt

During my data transcriptions and analysis, I listened to the stories again with fresh awakening as someone who had worked in CFBOs in Nigeria and its communities. I had cause to interrogate my personal values as a church leader, campus/ hospital chaplain, teacher, and researcher on this sensitive subject of bullying. As I acknowledged in Chapter 6, the purpose for this study is to shine a light on the phenomenon of workplace bullying in church organizations and to provide new perspectives on what church workers conceptualize as bullying in their lived experiences. In interpreting their stories, my concern has been to maintain an honest evaluation of facts as I see them, without being judgemental. Also, I made a conscious effort to co-construct credible insights, devoid of discriminatory statements. This is because in the words of (Finlay, 2002):

> Reflexivity can be defined as thoughtful, conscious self-awareness. Reflexive analysis in research encompasses continual evaluation of subjective responses, intersubjective dynamics, and the research process itself. It involves a shift in our understanding of data collection from something objective that is accomplished through detached scrutiny of "what I know and how I know it" to recognizing how we actively construct our knowledge (p.532).

Because I have served as a chaplain in CFBO, being neutral and silent on the case of injustice is dangerous. Being judgemental without having the entire pieces of

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information from the management side is also dangerous. Therefore, in the data analysis and interpretation these points were important to me. I took the position of a learner who, though aware of the burdens of leadership in CFBOs, focused on shining a light on the stories presented in the light of the overarching research question: "What is the church workers' lived experience and understanding of workplace bullying in South East Nigeria?" In the course of listening to the stories, I found myself in the midst of workers with complaints of bullying and all I did was offer the consistency of my presence to listen and pray for some of them who shared deeply disturbing stories. I could not stop their misery or disturbing bullying experiences, but their voices were heard. And it is anticipated that this study is read widely by those who are involved in policy decision making and it will help to highlight the issue of workplace bullying and the need for policy intervention.

Rather than imposing myself on the participants' stories, I am challenged by their stories to think of how we as church leaders have failed to provoke each other to love by using the cultural agency of the Igbo people: "Egbe bere Ugbo ebere"—"Let the kite and the Eagle perch in harmony". This is a concept fully embedded in Ubuntu, "I am because we are". The practical utility of this study is to act against workplace bullying in FBOs! The fact that the church and its institutions in SEN have failed in providing a minimum wage to their workers, increased their workload excessively and been involved in miscarriages of justice, does not mean the situation is permanent. This study has revealed a problem which may not have been considered seriously in the past, which participants conceptualized as workplace bullying. Therefore, it is an opportunity to consider their painful experiences and provide a comprehensive policy on workplace bullying for social change. It is an opportunity to see workplace bullying as a silent epidemic that must stop.

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12.7 Final thought

The Church and its institutional bodies have a challenge as mission-centred organizations, to model good leadership and maintain safe work environments in their constituencies. Participants of this study are of the view that the Church has institutionalized the culture of bullying and masked this culture with a spiritual cloak. Before the missionaries came to Igbo land, the people had a religion—African Traditional Religions. The Igbos accepted Christianity for many reasons. One of the reasons that is very important is that they had similar practices to the Jews, like the eight-day male child circumcision. Also, the rapid educational, economic development and the salvific power of the Gospel they witnessed helped them embrace Christian faith. Currently, Christianity has strong influence in the economic and educational life of the people of South Eastern Nigeria. Just like in the early church era when the Hellenist widows complained of their experiences in the hands of the Hebrews in charge of welfare in Acts of the Apostle 6, the Apostles acted compassionately. Thirty research participants of this study are saying, we have suffered from bullying in the Church institutions in SEN. It is time for the Church in Nigeria, especially South Eastern Nigeria to act against workplace bullying in Church establishments. If the Church should turn its back to the moral principles of justice, love, fairness, and equity, and continue to reinforce bullying then there is no hope for society.

12.8 Contributions of this study

My intention in undertaking this study is not to shame or criticise church leadership, but to contribute to knowledge and address significant literature gaps on the subject of workplace bullying. I have discussed and justified the method and methodology of this study in Chapter 4. Also, I have discussed the theories used in my

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interpretations of data, and my positionality as a qualitative researcher within the interpretative paradigm. I will now briefly restate the contributions of this study.

1) This study has extended the knowledge and understanding of the concept of workplace bullying through the 30 unique stories and experiences of workplace bullying in 11 CFBOs within SEN.

2) It creates awareness of the issues of workplace bullying as part of the process of conscientization within CFBOs.

3) Also, it addresses the significant literature gap on workplace bullying in FBOs through the development of an evidence-based policy framework guide for the safety of participants in this study and employees in other FBOs.

4) It has also brought insight to the practical utility of Ubuntu moral theory as agency for reducing workplace bullying in FBOs within African communities and by extension to other cultures, to share the moral principles and values.

5) Prayer has been identified as a personal resource and a buffer against the negative impact of workplace bullying in CFBOs and FBOs in Nigeria and beyond. However, it does not replace the practical steps required in addressing bullying and implementing policies. FBOs can use prayer as a resource for leadership insight in developing strategies to handle bullying in the workplaces and not as mere tokenism. Nor should they neglect prayer in selecting team leaders for the investigation of bullying cases, bearing in mind that the most important agenda is the harmonious relationship of the employees—and safety in the workplace.

6) Personal values are critical at the entrance point of employment. This is because the organizational core values should be made known to potential employees and stakeholders. Such values should not be lowered at any point if the goals and mission of the organization are to be reached. Checking individual employees' core values against the organizational core values, especially those in leadership positions, is as important as providing quality services or products of the organization to communities and the general public. If core values of prospective leaders, and the Board of Governance members are excused, it will be difficult to deal with toxic leaders who may constitute a safety risk to their organizational goals and mission.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Date Information Sheet Produced: 20 June 2019

Project Title: Workplace Bullying in Faith-based Organizations: Developing Policy Framework for Churches in Southeast Nigeria.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Godspower A. Chiabuotu, a PhD candidate from the department of Social Sciences and Public Policy, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. I gladly invite you to participate in PhD research interviews. I am seeking to listen to your lived experiences on the phenomenon of workplace bullying. Below is important information for you to read and indicate your interest. If you decide not to participate, there will be no disadvantage. Thank you for reading and willingness to participate in this project.

What is the purpose of this research?

Over the years studies on bullying focused on students in schools. Recently there are substantial body of literature on bullying in the workplaces, but very little is known on the nature and prevalence of workplace bullying in faith-based organizations, especially in Nigeria. Faith-based organizations in Nigeria are significant employers through a wide range of sectors, including educational and health institutions, as well as other

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businesses that engage different cadre of professionals and skilled workers. Their roles, especially in the socio- economic development of the nation has made them important partners with governments at both state and national levels. Therefore, in this research, I want to know your experiences on bullying as a church-based organization worker. The findings of this research may be used for your safety and policy development in our workplaces, especially in faith-based organizations. It may also be used for academic publications and presentations. I am doing this research for my PhD degree in Public Policy.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have received this information sheet because you responded to the poster advertisement seeking for people who had experienced or currently experiencing workplace bullying in faith-based organizations where they work as volunteers or paid workers.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

What you will do to participate is to sign a consent form.

What will happen in this research?

You will be interviewed on your work experiences in faith-based organization where you have worked at least one year. The discussion will be about circumstances you consider yourself humiliated, threatened, or denied your legitimate right in the course of your work.

There is no list of questions, but each experience shared determines the questions that will follow.

As much as possible you are encouraged to share your experiences to help me understand what you have gone through. If there is any question you consider irrelevant or you feel uncomfortable to answer, you can ignore it. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate

will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You can withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible. The interview will be conducted at the most convenient and safe place between you and me. You are free to bring along someone as your support person, but such a person will not be involved in the interview, except where he/she is part of the recruited participant in this study. However, each interview will be personal, digitally recorded and it will take about two hours maximum.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There is no risk involved in this research, except for the discomfort that your experiences may bring as you reflect on them and share the stories.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

In the case of re-traumatization during the interview at any time, I will stop. This is to enable you get relieved of the negative emotions. More so, I will remind you not to answer any question that makes you feel uncomfortable. You are free to withdraw from the study, should there be any perceived or real discomfort. Currently, there are no publicly funded counselling services in Nigeria, except for HIV/AIDS and victims of human trafficking. Available counselling services are usually provided by pastoral staff within church organizations for their members. Therefore, I will refer you to available pastors you can trust in your church to share your concerns, as part of safety plans.

What are the benefits?

    A. Participants: will have the opportunity to share their lived experiences/stories.

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B. Researcher: Gain qualification, and practical experience with methodology and data analysis.

C. Wider community: knowledge towards the safety of our environment in southeast Nigeria, especially at the workplace.

How will my privacy be protected?

You will be treated with respect and dignity during and after the interviews. The information and knowledge provided by you will be acknowledged with a fictitious name in data analysis in order to protect your privacy.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The major cost will be your time and sharing your personal experiences for us to co-create knowledge on the topic of this research.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Because I will have to travel round the five states in southeast Nigeria to recruit participants, within the limited time available to me, I will like you to respond to this invitation within three days of getting this information. Send a text message to my mobile number. After a week, I will contact you through your mobile number to schedule for interview.

Before we start the interview, a consent form will be given to you to sign, as a way of authenticating your willingness to participate in the research.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes. When you have been kind enough to provide me with information for this research, I will be willing to email to you the summary of the findings of this research. All you will need to do is to give me your current email address.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

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Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance

to the Project Supervisor: Love Chile, love.chile@aut.ac.nz. +64 9 9219999 ext 8312.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive

Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future

reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

RESEARCHER CONTACT DETAILS*:*

Godspower A. Chiabuotu, Phone: 07089261408.

Email Address*: godspee123@yahoo.com, szg9071@autuni.ac.nz*

Project Supervisor Contact Details*:*

Associate Professor Love M. Chile,

E-mail*:* love.chile@aut.ac.nz*.*

Phone: +64 9 9219999 ext 8312

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on the 13th of September 2019.

AUTEC Reference number 19/305

APPENDIX B

Consent Form

Project title*: Workplace Bullying in Faith-based Organizations: Developing Policy Framework for Churches in Southeast Nigeria*

Project Supervisor*:   Professor Love M. Chile*

Researcher*:   Godspower A. Chiabuotu*

¡   I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 20th June 2019.

¡   I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

¡   I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.

¡   I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

¡   I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

¡   I agree to take part in this research.

¡   I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes¡

     No¡

Participant's Signature : ....…………………………

Participant's Name ....……………………………………………………

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate) :

………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………..

Date : ………………………………………….

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on the 13th of September 2019.

AUTEC Reference number 19/305

APPENDIX C

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

13 September 2019

Love Chile

Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Love

Re Ethics Application:
:
19/305 Workplace bullying in faith-based organizations Developing policy framework for churches in Southeast Nigeria

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 13 September 2022.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the Auckland University of

   Technology Code of Conduct for Research and as approved by AUTEC in this

   application.

2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using

   the EA2 form.

3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.

4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.

5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organizations is of a high standard.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organization at which your research is being conducted. When the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all ethical, legal, and locality obligations or requirements for those jurisdictions.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: godspee123@yahoo.com

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APPENDIX D

INDICATIVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research question(s)

1. **What are the church workers' lived experience and understanding of workplace bullying in southeast Nigeria?**

    ✓ Good afternoon, Sir/ Ma. For the purpose of this interview, you are free to choose a name that is not your original name.

    ✓ Let us begin by having you share with me your work in this organization. Are you a volunteer worker or paid regularly?

    ✓ How long have you worked in this organization?

    ✓ How easy did you find your work when you first started working in this organization? (This question is aimed at drawing attention to his/her experience with the job, organizational culture as a new worker).

    ✓ Tell me more about your experiences with your job here.

    ✓ Which of these experiences are exciting for you?

    ✓ Which of the experiences do you consider/ feel humiliating, hurting or threatening to you, your work, and your relationship with fellow workers and the organization?

    ✓ Tell me more about this feeling you had in relation to your fellow worker/ supervisor/manager….

    ✓ How does it affect your work and productivity?

    ✓ When did this happen? I mean how long ago.

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- ✓ How often do you experience this humiliation, hurt, or threat in your work in this organization?

- ✓ Did you make any attempt to express your displeasure before this person or boss/ manager who treats you the way you do not deserve? Are their others who are treated the same way you are treated in this organization? What do you think is the reason for this kind of treatment towards you?

- ✓ Do you have a channel of complaint on such experience in your organization?

- ✓ Tell me more about your organizational culture, values, vision, and mission.

- ✓ Do you believe in these values…?

2. **What policies would help reduce workplace bullying in your organization?**
   - ✓ What do consider as the most effective approach to curb or reduce this kind of treatment or experience you are having in your organization?

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APPENDIX E

Qualitative Questionnaires

Dear Sir/ma,

My name is Godspower A. Chiabuotu. I am a PhD candidate in the School of Social Sciences and Public Policy, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. I gladly invite you to participate in PhD research interviews. I am seeking to listen to your lived experiences on the phenomenon of workplace bullying. Below are qualitative questionnaires designed to elicit in-depth response from you on workplace bullying experiences. The information is for you to read and indicate your interest. If you decide not to participate, there will be no disadvantage. Thank you for reading and willingness to participate in this project.

Please kindly choose a name you are comfortable to use in this questionnaire.

A. Name: …………………………………………………………………

B. Gender………………………. Level of Education……………………….

C. Job…………………………………………………………………………

D. Years of service in this organization……………………………………

E. Age……………………………………………………………………………

F. Religious Denomination…………………………………………………

G. Contact number………………………………………………………….

1. What do you consider as workplace bullying?..
…………………………………………………………………………….

2. Do you have any bullying experience in your work in the past 12 months?...........
…………………………………………………………………………….

3. If yes, will you like to share your experience with me?..
…………………………………………………………………………….

4. Kindly indicate the time that will be convenient for me to interview you and day.
……………………………………………

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APPENDIX F

XYZ MISSION HEALTH SERVICES WORKPLACE BULLYING POLICY

Voted and approved by management Board: 12th May 2022

Rationale

The management board of XYZ mission health services have resolved to develop a workplace bullying policy with the aim of keeping a safe and maintaining a friendly work environment.

Policy statement

In line with our corporate spiritual goals and health and wellness principles, we are committed to fostering, ensuring, and developing a friendly work environment where all members of our community—business partners, clients, management board members, volunteers, and paid employees, know what workplace bullying is, understand their responsibilities in keeping a healthy and friendly work environment while they engage in any business with XZY mission health services incorporated. We have **zero tolerance for workplace bullying.**

This commitment is consistent with our:

Core Values

I.   Servant Leadership

II.   Prayerfulness

III.   Accountability

IV.   Respectfulness

V.   Team-spirit

Core Principles:

I.   Equity

II.   Transparency

III.   Justice

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IV.   Solidarity

V.   Love

Our vision statement:

To be the champion of healthy living organization in Africa through our health services.

Our Mission Statement:

To develop healthy relationships that connect people to the love of Christ through health programs, healthy eating families and happy community.

Definition of workplace bullying

According to (Chiabuotu, 2022) definition of workplace bullying, XZY agrees that workplace bullying is any systematic attempt by an employer or a fellow worker to humiliate, threaten, and inflict pain or suffering on a 'vulnerable worker' (see Rogers, Anderson & Clark, 2009) or subordinate that worker repeatedly over a period in his/her work, which may result in social stress and health problems. This includes, for example, continuous: (1) spying into a worker's privacy for the purpose of causing him/her to lose reputation, when it not part of the job agreement; (2) intentionally frustrating a worker's morale in his/her job, either by not providing adequate tools for the job as required or by additional workload outside of work agreement; (3) denial of promotion, allowances and other opportunities when qualified, and the resources are available. It is not bullying when a worker is corrected for contravening the policies of operation in an organization. Also, it is not bullying when a worker fails to do his/her work as expected and he/she is reprimanded, provided in such situation there is fairness and respect of individual rights.

Workplace bullying prevention strategy

While we are committed to ensure that relationships in XZY Mission health services are cordial, people will make choices each day either to follow our code of conduct or create toxic environment through their behaviours. Through digital technology we will install cameras in every office, open spaces

where social events occur, and any other place deemed necessary to monitor activities in our facility and environment.

We shall continue to use seminars, workshops, and positive behaviour record performance to reward consistent compliance to our core values and healthy living vision and mission statement.

Responses to workplace bullying when it occurs

Every employee and member of our community is responsible for keeping our code of conduct on workplace bullying policy. Our clients and business partners will sign a consent form to comply with our code of conduct on workplace bullying policy. Having done all that is required to keep a safe work environment, should bullying occur, channels of complain are open for all to report such incidents in writing. It will be submitted to your head of department and a copy to the chaplaincy/counselling unit. Each case will be investigated, and disciplinary actions will be taken in line with the regulations of XZY ACT 2013 (see P.390).

Review of this policy

This XZY mission health services workplace bullying policy shall be reviewed on or before third quarter of every 4th year, beginning from 12th May 2022.

Signed: Prof KKK

Chairperson,

XZY Mission Health Hospital Management Board.

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Have you been bullied at work? This is an opportunity to participate in research that will contribute towards finding solutions to workplace bullying in faith-based organizations!

Interviews for willing participants in this important research will hold between

OCTOBER -DECEMEBER, 2019,

In Southeastern states of Nigeria.

———

Please, if you are interested, do not hesitate to contact: Godspower A. Chiabuotu,

PhD candidate, School of Social Sciences and Public Policy, Auckland

University of Technology, New Zealand.

Contact: *07089261408*