

THE IMPACT AND INABILITY OF LEADERS TO ADDRESS EMPLOYEE
GRIEVANCES

by

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Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
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Abstract

Grievances are common within the workplace representing the major challenges that employees face making it difficult for them to work. Employee grievances are harmful to organizations because they reduce productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction undermining performance. The purpose of this flexible qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and expand the understanding of the impact and the inability of leaders to provide solutions to employee grievances in the healthcare industry in the northeastern part of the United States resulting in the reduction of organizational performance. The study involved conducting semi-structured interviews with 20 research participants consisting of 10 organizational leaders and 10 junior employees. Thematic analysis was conducted resulting in the identification of nine main themes: employee grievances in the healthcare environment; causes of employee grievances; the impact of employee grievances; addressing employee grievances; leaders' role in addressing employee grievances; leaders' actions/behaviors that cause their inability to address employee grievances; leaders' action/behaviors that enhance their ability to address employee grievances; and changes needed to improve leaders' ability in addressing employee grievances. Accordingly, several key conclusions were made based on the findings of this research study. One of the conclusions reached was there are several grievances faced by healthcare workers (HCWs) that include, heavy workload, poor response to the effects of COVID-19, burnout, long workhours and minimum work-life balance, and inadequate compensation and pay. Further, the conclusions of this study include organizational leaders are integral towards addressing employee grievances through their actions and behavior. Accordingly, leaders must recognize ways of enhancing their ability to address employee grievances and the impact this has on the employees. Based on the findings of this study, the following are the recommendations for

further research, additional research regarding the training of leaders on employee grievance management, conducting quantitative research entailing a larger sample size, and more research on the collaboration between leaders and employees towards addressing grievances.

Keywords: employee grievances, HCWs, leaders, inability, impact.

Approval Page

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Approvals

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Dedication

I thank God for giving me the inspiration and strength to persevere through all circumstances during this extremely challenging yet rewarding journey.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Most organizations consider their human resources to be the most essential asset. This is according to Silva and Malalage (2021) who elucidate, that human resources tend to account for a large part of the cost structure of organizations and are a significant source of competitive advantage. This is because of the role of human resources in the conversion of other resources into output. The human resources, in this case, are the employees which within a healthcare setting, these are HCWs. According to Devika et al. (2017), grievances are any real or imagined feelings that the employees will feel entailing personal injustice and undermining the employment relationship. Despite the possibility that the grievance may be imaginary, management needs to address the situation. Garima (2017) explains, that employees will only feel satisfied after their issues are addressed. Organizational leaders such as managers, supervisors, heads of departments, and even chief executive officers (CEOs) play an integral role in addressing employees' grievances. However, there are many challenges that these leaders face that impact the way that they address employee grievances including undermining their ability to undertake this process.

Background of the Problem

Within the workplace, grievances are a common problem. According to Jules et al. (2021) employees are always facing challenges and issues that make the work environment uncomfortable, toxic, and unbearable. Devika et al. (2017), explicate it is integral to properly address employee grievances to maintain a harmonious workplace. Further, Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) assert, that the maintenance of a harmonious relationship within the workplace is vital in improving employee morale which in turn enhances effectiveness and productivity. Aktar and Alam (2021) explain aggrieved employees tend to suffer from mental agony which then impacts directly productivity.

Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) opine grievance management encompasses the identification of the challenges that the employees are facing as they do their work. In most instances, this is a formal process, but at other times it may be informal. Grievance management in this regard entails addressing the problems that employees face in the workplace. Organizational leaders play an integral role when it comes to addressing employee grievances. Devika et al. (2017) explicate grievance management as a task encompassing leaders taking up steps to change the cultural norms of an organization toward the well-being of the employees. Accordingly, employee grievance management is a vital practice (Aktar & Alam, 2021). This is even more so within the healthcare environment where harmony is essential in fostering patients' well-being. Addressing grievances will enhance the ability of HCWs to deliver quality care to patients.

Problem Statement

The general problem addressed in this study was the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances resulting in reduced organizational performance. The failure of leaders to successfully address employee grievances results in several detrimental effects. Monish and Dhanabhakym (2022) assert that failure to effectively address employee grievances can undermine organizational performance. According to Jules et al. (2021), failing to address employee grievances is an issue that will reduce employee productivity. Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) explicate, that the adoption of inadequate leadership in employee grievance management can result in job dissatisfaction among employees. In further illustrating the extent of the problematic nature of failing to address employee grievances, this can also undermine the ability of organizations to retain the best talent. Garima (2017) shows that disregarding employee grievances will increase the cost of recruitment for organizations. Therefore, the specific problem that was explored in this study was the possible impact and inability of leaders in the healthcare

industry from the northeastern United States to address employee grievances resulting in reduced organizational performance, undermined productivity, job dissatisfaction, and low retention of talent, and increased cost of recruitment.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this flexible qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and expand the understanding of the impact and the inability of leaders to provide solutions to employee grievances in the healthcare industry in the northeastern part of the United States resulting in the reduction of organizational performance. The study sought to understand and identify the driving factors and the impact of how leaders in this industry approach the issues and challenges faced by employees, therefore, adding knowledge. This includes the factors limiting leaders' ability to address these issues and challenges. Thus, the exploration of the larger problem of employee grievances in the healthcare industry will take place in an in-depth study. This exploration of employee grievances and their effects on productivity, job satisfaction, employee turnover, cost of recruitment, and overall performance in hospitals in the northeastern United States.

Research Questions

While this research sought to expand the literature on the factors that undermine the ability of organizational leaders towards addressing employee grievances, the following were the key research questions that were addressed as shown below. Each of these questions directly assesses an element of the research problem and taken together they completely address the research problem under study.

RQ1: What is the role of organizational leadership in examining employee grievances within the healthcare industry?

The particular element of the research problem that this question assesses is the vital role played by leaders in addressing employee grievances. This research question

allowed the exploration of how organizational leadership assesses employee grievances in the healthcare industry. The leadership of an organization such as supervisors, managers, heads of departments, and CEOs play an integral role in investigating employee grievances. According to Devika et al. (2017), organizational leaders investigate the key issues raised by employees when they file grievances. It is integral to explore this role of organizational leaders because of its impact on addressing employee grievances.

RQ2: To what extent do leaders fail to address employee grievances in the healthcare industry?

The element of the research problem that this question explored is the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. The significance of this question was to explore the challenges undermining the role of leadership in addressing employee grievances. Devika et al. (2017) point out that managers as organizational leaders find it difficult to address employee grievances. Thus, this demonstrates challenges which are the main causes of the inability of leaders to find solutions to the challenges and problems that employees in the healthcare industry face.

RQ2a: What leadership actions/behaviors contribute to the inability of leaders to address employee grievances?

The given element of the research problem that this question was addressing the specific driving factors based on the actions or behaviors of leaders that result in their inability to address employee grievances. Silva and Malalage (2021) indicate some of these driving factors that cause the inability of leaders to address employee grievances are overloaded work, miscommunication, training gaps, and the adoption of aggressive supervisory habits. Addressing this research question revealed the leadership characteristics that serve as the contributing factors to the failure of finding solutions to employee grievances.

RQ2b: What leadership actions/behaviors contribute to the success of leaders addressing employee grievances?

For this question, the specific element of the research problem that this question sought to address are the driving factors to overcoming the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. This question was essential in revealing how the actions and behaviors of organizational leaders' impact how they address employee grievances. Silva and Malalage (2021) affirm some positive acts and behaviors of the leadership will foster the adoption of a positive approach toward dealing with employee grievances. For instance, Townsend and Hutchinson (2017) assert that when leaders positively approach a research problem, then this will yield solutions faster. The actions and behaviors of organizational leaders include the main practices and management approaches adopted concerning employee grievances.

RQ3: What is the impact of leadership styles used in the process of employee grievances management in the healthcare industry?

Concerning this question, the element of the research problem that was under assessment is the impact of leaders in addressing employee grievances. The significance of this research question was to gain an understanding of the specific leadership styles that allow for the successful address of employee grievances in a healthcare environment. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) postulate that the attitude and approach of leadership applied in an organization will determine the grievance management process used including its success.

RQ4: What changes within leadership will enable a successful process of addressing employee grievances within the healthcare industry?

The element of the research problem that was assessed by addressing this research question is the impact of leaders in addressing employee grievances following key leadership changes. This further demonstrates that leaders are essential for the process of addressing employee grievances. The answer to this research question expanded the literature on the main alterations necessary to leaders' behavior for better success in addressing employee grievances in healthcare.

Nature of the Study

Discussion of Design

Research designs are essential when developing a research study. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), a research design is the framework of methods selected for use in a research study. Researchers can select among three main research design categories that include fixed, flexible, and mixed (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). The following are potential research designs that could have guided the exploration of the research problem of this study.

Beginning with the fixed research design it entails the researcher determining in advance the research design to use. Creswell and Creswell (2017) explain a fixed research design is very restrictive. The fixed research is very theory-oriented. The significance of this trait is it makes it difficult to determine in advance the given variables to control or measure. This makes such variables quantitative. Some of the most common fixed research designs are longitudinal, cross-sectional, experimental, non-experimental, and quasi-experimental quantitative designs (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). However, the rigid nature of the fixed methods research design eliminates it for use in this research study.

Mixed methods research design (MMR) encompasses the application of both qualitative and quantitative methods in investigating a research problem. Using MMR then means the researcher applies numeric scores and open-ended questions to study a

phenomenon (Dawadi et al., 2021). Additionally, using this research approach then can entail the collection of data concurrently or sequentially. By using the MMR then the researcher can expand an understanding from one method to another to confirm findings (Denzin, 2018) (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Using MMR there are several designs to use including sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, and convergent (Dawadi et al., 2021). The complex nature of MMR made it inappropriate for use in this study.

Selected Research Design

While the fixed and MMR research designs are useful in conducting research, this study utilized a flexible research design. There are several points of justification that made the flexible research design appropriate for the study when compared to the other two methods. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), the justification for using a flexible research design is it reduces the limitations linked to the interview data collection. Accordingly, this will enable the researcher to have flexibility when interviewing the research participants. This research design made it possible to seek clarification from the research participants on the questions asked. By using the flexible research design the resultant impact is the collection of non-numerical data (Stapenhurst, 2020). The flexible research design is less restrictive in its application and ensures that there are no limitations to data collection (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Stapenhurst (2020) notes that this is a research design that considers circumstances during the process of data collection including culture. Consequently, this makes it easier for the research to make necessary changes that align with the situation. The significance of this is to allow the research participants to share as much information as possible concerning the research issue under study. This is the type of data that was useful in gaining considerable details into grievance management in organizations and the role of leaders.

Research Paradigm

Khatri (2020) postulates, that the research paradigm is essential in providing the patterns of beliefs from which the practices and theories of a study are applied. The paradigm is a philosophical framework from which research was built. Several research paradigms exist including positivism, interpretivism, constructivism, and pragmatism (Kamal, 2019).

The positivism research paradigm asserts that only knowledge confirmed by the senses becomes affirmed as knowledge. According to Park et al. (2020), the research paradigm follows the objective route in research. Further, the positivism research paradigm asserts that it is possible to measure and gain an understanding of only one reality (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). For this reason, the positivism paradigm is mainly applied to quantitative research and thus will not be used for this study.

The constructivism research paradigm is one whose premise is reality is a product of human interaction with the real world. Consequently, knowledge is better generated socially (Dawadi & Shrestha, 2021). This research paradigm affirms that there is no single methodology applied to knowledge generation. Instead, the approach to knowledge needs to be from multiple perspectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study did not plan to explore the research problem from multiple perspectives and for this reason, it did not utilize this research paradigm.

A pragmatic research paradigm encompasses the belief that the interpretation of reality occurs in alignment with unpredictable situations. The use of the pragmatism research approach involves bringing together the positivism and constructivism principles (Dawadi & Shrestha, 2021). This entails the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The pragmatism research paradigm is essential in bringing to an end the paradigm war by recommending the most essential question of whether the research

conducted has assisted the researcher to explore the problem understanding (Kamal, 2019). The current study was qualitative and thus did not accommodate quantitative elements. Consequently, this research paradigm was not used for this study.

Selected Research Paradigm

This study adopted an interpretive research paradigm. Dawadi and Shrestha (2021) explain that the interpretive research design encompasses the belief that there are several realities and not a single reality. When using this research design entails the researcher devoting to understanding a given action. Applying the interpretative research design entailed focusing on addressing the question of why. Kamal (2019) further explains that the interpretive research design is mainly utilized by social scientists to assess the subjective meaning of social action.

Several reasons rationalized the use of the interpretative research paradigm for this study. One of these reasons is, that the interpretative research paradigm allows for conducting an in-depth assessment of the main issues and elements of a research problem (Denzin, 2018). Therefore, this research paradigm was essential in facilitating an in-depth analysis of the reasons behind organizational leaders' inability to address employee grievances and their impact. In further rationalizing the use of the interpretative research paradigm for the study, this was selected because it influences the direction that the research will take in the view of Kivunja and Kuyini (2017). This is because this paradigm can foster a means of explaining the way that the research problem becomes explored.

Research Method

Several qualitative methods can be used for this study such as ethnographic study, phenomenology, case study, and grounded theory. The ethnographic qualitative method is about conducting a comprehensive description of a culture outside of the region of origin of the researcher (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The researcher uses observation and

interviews to study people within their environment. If ethnography was to be used for this study, then this would entail the researcher having to become fully immersed in the lives of the research participants. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that using ethnography as a research method can take a long time and entails considerable trust with the participants. Thus, ethnography was not used for this research study.

The case study qualitative method is the most common qualitative research method used in social sciences. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), a case study is a research method that focuses on a given phenomenon referred to as a case in real life. By using the case study, it is possible to investigate multiple perspectives concerning a single phenomenon. This is beneficial in research because it often leads to a detailed description of a phenomenon under study (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). While the case study method can be used for this research study, it is not the most appropriate because it tends to require the use of a small sample size. In instances, where there are different demographics and different needs to assess then it becomes a challenge to use this method.

The grounded theory is a common research method within social science. This is a method used to assess aspects such as social relationships and behavior of people in what is referred to as social processes. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the grounded theory qualitative research method is most valuable before the development of a theory in a given area of study or in instances where the existing theories are incomplete. Thus, by using this qualitative method it is possible to bring light across several disciplines and areas of interest (Tomaszewski et al., 2020). However, this qualitative method was not used because it is only best used when a theory is yet to be developed in a given area of study.

Selected Research Method

The phenomenology qualitative method was selected for use in this research study. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that the phenomenological qualitative method focuses mainly on similar components among a group of participants in the process of sharing a lived experience of a phenomenon. A phenomenon entails the provision of a picture as experienced by persons that have gone through it. Through the use of this qualitative method, the researcher can gain a deeper meaning of the way that people think therefore expanding the researchers' knowledge concerning a phenomenon. One of the reasons justifying using phenomenology for this study is it is highly descriptive. Through this, it becomes possible to describe as much as possible the structure of a phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This was essential for the study in which the researcher can use the phenomenological qualitative method to describe in detail the structure of the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances in the healthcare industry. Further, the fact that the phenomenological qualitative method requires the researcher to set aside prejudices and prior assumptions to justify its use for this study. This enhanced the objectivity of the researcher while conducting the study.

Triangulation

Triangulation in research refers to the use of multiple methods datasets and theories to investigate a research problem and address a research question. According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), triangulation is a strategy that facilitates the validity and credibility of the research findings. The process of triangulation is commonly used in qualitative research, but it can also be applied in quantitative research. The following is a discussion of qualitative and quantitative methods used for triangulation in research.

Qualitative Methods for Triangulation

One of the qualitative methods for triangulation is conducting in-depth interviews using several groups of stakeholders. Cypress (2017) explains that in-depth interviews are a triangulation method involving the use of different methods to approach the same research question. Hence the method is also referred to as methodological pluralism.

Another qualitative method for triangulation is data triangulation. This method refers to using different sources of data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). This method is the most common and easiest method of triangulation to implement.

Investigator triangulation is also an example of a qualitative triangulation method. This type of triangulation encompasses the use of different investigators in assessing a research project (Cypress, 2017). To conduct the triangulation involves each evaluator studying the research program using the same qualitative method and conducting a comparison of the results for each evaluator.

Theory triangulation is another example of a qualitative method of triangulation. This method of triangulation will involve the use of professionals outside of the given figure of study (Cypress, 2017; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). One of the ways of achieving this is bringing together persons from different disciplines holding different positions providing the opportunity to bring in different perspectives.

There is also environmental triangulation as a qualitative triangulation method. The type triangulation method involves using different location settings and other essential factors relating to the environment in which the study took place (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The significance of this triangulation process is to identify the environmental factor impacting the information collected from the study (Cypress, 2017). This factor is changed to determine if there was the attainment of the same findings. If the findings remain the same within the varying environmental factors, then there is an establishment of validity.

Quantitative Methods for Triangulation

Data triangulation is an example of a quantitative method of triangulation. This method involves the use of multiple data sources to address the research question (Cypress, 2017). Using data triangulation involves the variation of data collected across time or different persons followed by compilation and analysis (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Therefore, this use of multiple data sources is essential in resulting in the development of a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon under research.

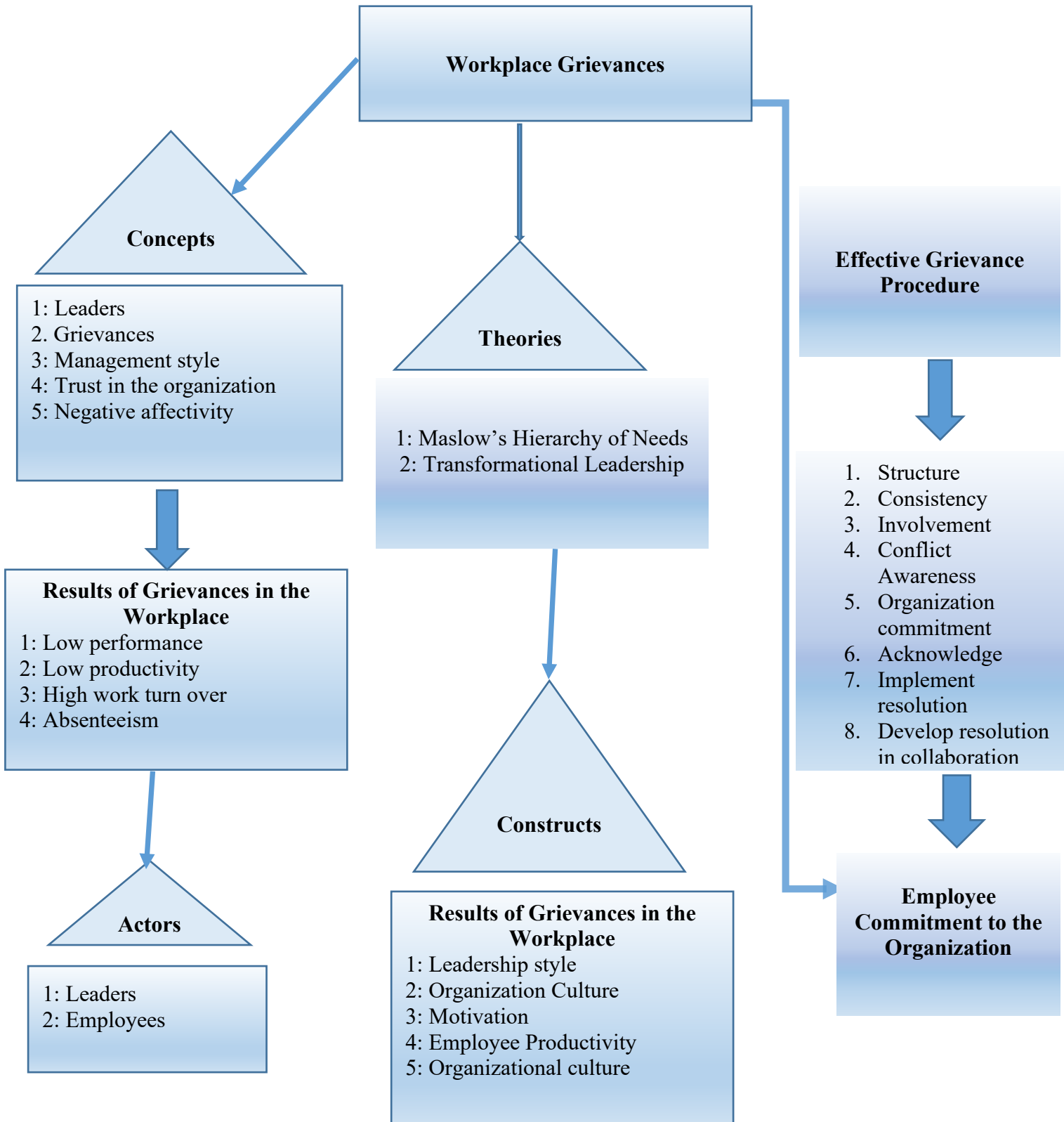
Selected Methods for Triangulation

For this study, the qualitative methods for triangulation were applicable. The specific qualitative method for triangulation used in the study was data triangulation. According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), this method of triangulation involves holding interviews with different stakeholders. The next step was to conduct triangulation by assessing outcomes that are agreed upon by all the stakeholders.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between the main concepts and constructs of the research problem as derived from the literature. These concepts and constructs are then arranged logically and sequentially in a diagram resulting in the creation of a framework. The significance of the conceptual framework is to demonstrate how the research took place by offering the context for the interpretation of the research findings.

Figure 1: The research framework



Concepts

Several research concepts in this study are related to the defined research problem and connected to the established research objectives. The significance of identifying these concepts is they generate the keywords needed to search the literature reviewed in this section. Therefore, the research concepts served to provide this dissertation with focus and argument. The identified research concepts and their explanations are shown below:

Leaders

These are the persons tasked with overseeing the well-being of employees and, subsequently, that of the organization. Amoako-Asiedu and Obuobisa-Darko (2017) define leaders to be the people that influence others towards attaining the set standards. Leaders should consider the practical issues faced by the employees (Devika et al., 2017). This includes finding ways of dealing with the employees' grievances to cultivate a good relationship. According to Rehman and Alharthi (2016), leaders are the persons entrusted with the organization's most significant asset, the employees. Makwana and Pandey (2022) perceived leaders to be the legitimate operators for dealing with issues in the workplace including grievances. That is, leaders are essential for the establishment of a balance between employees and the organizations that they work for. Jules et al. (2021) opine that leaders are the cornerstone for grievance management. The reason for this lies in the fact that leaders fulfil the role of the creation of dynamics that perform well and will lead to good outcomes. Line managers are an example of leaders that address employee grievances. This is according to Dunford et al. (2020) who point out that line managers are essential in the management of the needs of the employees.

Grievances

These are the issues employees face in the workplace (Jules et al., 2021). Silva and Malalage (2021) state that a grievance is a term involving worker discontent characterized

as real based on actual injustice or imagined and thus based on assumed injustice. Further, a grievance can be expressed formally or informally. In most instances, grievances emerge from issues relating to employment, work, and organization (Andalib & Darun, 2018; Garima, 2017). Failure to address grievances undermines employees' well-being causing them to feel dissatisfied and discouraged, leading to high turnover and reduced productivity (Jules et al., 2021; Silva & Malalage, 2021). Lahida et al. (2017) define employee turnover as the proportion of employees that leave an organization over a given period expressed as a percentage of the total workforce numbers. In most instances, employees will leave an organization when their needs are not met according to their expectations. This includes the failure of organizations to address their grievances. This means that employee grievances when not addressed can have devastating consequences.

Management style

This refers to the method of management utilized in an organization. The methods used to control functions and employees in an organization. Garima (2017) elucidates, that the management style used within an organization impacts the extent of success in addressing employee grievances. Therefore, the management style adopted in an organization must entail listening to employees and showing a willingness to meet their needs. Devika et al. (2017) in their study assert that the management style adopted in an organization will impact the employee grievance management procedures utilized. This includes determining elements such as quick action, grievance acknowledgement, the gathering of facts, decision-making, and execution and review (Devika et al., 2017). The management style practiced in an organization needs to always strive to foster organizational success. Silva and Malalage (2021) indicate that organizational success highly relies on the employees. For this reason, the management style adopted by leaders

in an organization must encompass meeting the needs of the employees who will in turn contribute towards organizational performance.

Trust in the organization

Trust in the organization is the belief in reliability that employees feel. Further, this is the confidence that employees have regarding the action of an organization. Aktar and Alam (2021) explain that employees will only trust an organization that was willing to hear their problems. That is, the confidence that the employees have towards an organization regarding the management of their grievances will impact their willingness to stay, productivity, job satisfaction, and reduce cases of absenteeism (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022). Additionally, trust in supervisors and management is essential in fostering increased employee commitment. Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) in their study indicate that employees were trustful of organizations that care about them. This means organizations that are willing to do what they can to address their grievances.

Negative affectivity

This refers to a personality trait among people showing how likely they experience negative feelings. Leaders' negative affectivity hinders them from listening to the grievances of their employees and taking up measures to address them. For instance, such leaders cannot practice grievance management strategies like an open door as per Garima (2017). These leaders are unable to demonstrate empathy regarding their employees. This is an issue that is further explored by understanding the attitude adopted by leaders. Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) explain that the attitude adopted by managers is essential in determining how well they can address employee grievances. Thus, when the attitude encompasses the manager developing negative feelings in their role in grievance management, then this will result in continued dissatisfaction among the employees. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) indicate that it is essential for managers to adopt the right

thinking towards meeting the needs of their employees. This can include transforming their attitude towards developing positive feelings regarding their job. Therefore, negative affectivity among leaders in the organization undermines their ability to manage the challenges faced by their employees.

Theories

There were two main theories in this investigation. These theories served as the framework for this study's investigation of the issue of the influence and limitations of organizational leaders in resolving employee complaints. Maslow's hierarchy of needs and transformational leadership were the two ideologies, respectively.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivation theory. Garima (2017) explicates, that this theory provides insight into the needs of employees that organizations fail to meet resulting in grievances. According to this theory of motivation, there are five key categories of needs existing in the hierarchy of physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Wong & Low, 2018). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory asserts a person will act with the intent of meeting their higher needs the moment that their lower needs are met. One thing to note about the hierarchy of needs proposed by Maslow is one need must be met first before moving on to the next level of needs.

To begin with, physiological needs are also referred to as biological or basic needs. According to Garima (2017), these are needs that begin from basic physiological needs moving to the social and psychological needs considered as being at a higher level. Further, these needs entail the elements essential for survival. This is shown in the aspect of the needs necessary for the continuation of biological structures like drinking, sleeping, resting, eating, and breathing. Accordingly, employees need to feel that they can meet these needs based on the remuneration they receive from the organizations they are

working for. Wong and Low (2018) show that one of the ways of meeting the physiological needs of the employees is by providing tea or coffee and snacks in the office.

Safety needs are those related to protection from danger, the development of feelings of confidence, and the absence of fear as per Uysal and Aydemir (2017). Some of the safety needs that employees experience include economic protection and job security. Employees need to attain these needs to maintain their sense of motivation in the workplace.

Love and belonging are also needed in Maslow's hierarchy of needs referred to as social needs. Garima (2017) opines these are needs affiliated with the desire for love and acceptance. Garima (2017) affirms that meeting these needs within organizations can involve encouraging employees to participate in social events. Some of these events include team-building exercises, picnics, or organizational sporting events.

Esteem needs are those entailing an individual wanting to feel appreciated and respected by others based on several elements such as status or reputation. Wong and Low (2018) indicate, the recognition and appreciation of individual desire. Esteem needs also include self-appreciation and self-esteem and comprise elements such as autonomy, self-confidence, and success.

One of the key ways that employers can meet the esteem needs of employees is to provide them with recognition based on their achievements and contribution to the workplace. For instance, a manager can acknowledge the achievements of an employee in front of colleagues which enhances their sense of self-worth and thus esteem as per Garima (2017).

Self-actualization needs are at the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Despite meeting all the needs at the low levels of the hierarchy people still tend to feel uneasy and

dissatisfied. Lahida et al. (2017) postulate self-actualization refers to the need to emerge as capable and attain one's fullest potential. Employees who attain self-actualization are more likely to have fewer grievances and feel that their needs are adequately met by an organization.

Motivation is a major factor influencing employee industrial action such as presenting their grievances (Uysal & Aydemir, 2017). Maslow's hierarchy provides insight into this role of motivation. Employees will maintain motivation in the workplace after their grievances are successfully addressed.

Theory of Transformational Leadership

The theory of transformational leadership defines leaders as those seeking to create ideas and introduce new perspectives to facilitate the creation of a new path of growth and prosperity in an organization. Devika et al. (2017) define transformational leadership as the style of leadership resulting in the transformation of followers rising above self-interest and becoming challenged to move beyond their current assumptions. Al-Amin (2017) explicates, that transformational leaders can foster the development of commitment, passion, and loyalty among employees. At the same time, they can mobilize the employees towards making key changes resulting in gaining the necessary capabilities for moving in a new direction. A transformational leader constantly assesses potential motives among followers. These types of leaders aim to influence the attention of followers towards better needs. According to Putra (2020), among the key traits of transformation leaders is they tend to be deeply inspired by personal values such as fairness, honesty, and honor. There are three main assumptions of transformational leadership (Zaki & Ali, 2022). The first assumption is that subordinates always band together around a person who inspires them. The second assumption is leaders with a vision and passion tend to better accomplish things. The third assumption is making

accomplishments is about interjecting vehemence and encouragement. Therefore, relating this theory to this study, a transformational leader demonstrates a better capability to address employee grievances. It was interesting for this study to explore the use of the features of a transformational leader to overcome the challenges hindering leaders from addressing employees' grievances.

Constructs

Constructs refer to the broad topics of a research study. These constructs can be conceptualized in theoretical terms. Considering the research problem of this study on the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances, the following were the identified constructs as shown below:

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to the way of doing things or the status quo of an organization. Rehman and Alharthi (2016) define organizational culture as the shared values, attitudes, beliefs, and standards characterizing members of an organization and defining its nature. This type of culture is mainly rooted in an organization's goals, structure, strategies, and approaches to stakeholders. For this reason, organizational culture is vital to the success or failure of an organization. Devika et al. (2017) note that adopting the wrong culture in organizations creates grievances among employees. When this organizational culture encompasses the disregard for the needs of employees, then leaders do not address their grievances. Thus, this disregard for employees' needs is a situation that results in considerable employee dissatisfaction (Garima, 2017). Consequently, changing organizational culture to become more accommodating to employees' needs is an essential aspect of addressing employees' grievances.

Motivation

Motivation demonstrates the push needed for the employees to feel encouraged to do their work. Garima (2017) defines motivation as something that will move people towards action and continue them in the course of action. Within an organization setting, motivation is the enthusiasm that the employees demonstrate in their work towards the achievement of organizational objectives. However, attaining employee motivation is not an easy task. Uysal and Aydemir (2017) show that employees become motivated the moment their needs are met. Similar sentiments are held by Garima (2017) who asserts employees will only become motivated after they feel that their needs matter. Employee grievances have a significant impact on the motivation levels of employees. Thus, successfully addressing employee grievances will motivate them. Increased employee motivation will result in better performance contributing to the success of organizations (Ibrahim et al., 2017). This is because motivated employees are more willing to move to action and they will continue their course of action. Thus, motivated employees were more willing to utilize their abilities to attain organizational objectives.

Employee-productivity

Employee productivity is the efficiency level that employees attain while doing their work. Jules et al. (2021) indicate employees will show productivity only when their grievances are addressed. For this reason, organizations must be willing to address employee grievances if they are to maintain their productivity. According to Rehman and Alharthi (2016), grievances can affect the productivity of employees. Low levels of productivity among employees result in poor performance. This is according to Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) who postulate that organizations that fail to address employee grievances are at risk of poor performance. Employees with a low level of productivity will not do their work efficiently. Instead, employers can expect an exhibition of considerably shabby work behavior among the employees.

Leadership style

Leadership style is the approach that a leader selects to oversee those they lead. Jules et al. (2021) explicate that the best leadership style is the one in which the needs of the employees become met. Such an approach begins with addressing their grievances. Abbas and Cross (2019) demonstrate that the leadership style adopted in an organization will determine the extent of conflict resolution. This is because the leadership style impacts the ability of leaders to be objective, and perceptive, foster human relations, and practice effective decision-making. Devika et al. (2017) also determine that the leadership style adopted in an organization will influence the organizational culture towards grievance management. This is because the leadership style has an impact on the decision-making process that the leader adopts (Amoako-Asiedu & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017). This includes when making decisions concerning grievance handling procedures.

Leaders' actions

The leaders represent the construct that controls the wellbeing of the employees. Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) emphasize leaders must be willing to carry out an action that will ensure that the needs of employees are met. However, not all leaders' actions address the needs of employees indicating failure to address employees' needs. According to Rehman and Alharthi (2016), leaders such as managers control organizations' most essential resources, human resources. They utilize these resources to produce the best results possible for organizations. Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) add that leaders' action encompasses taking up the responsibility to respond to the issues concerning employees. Accordingly, leaders' action needs to include ensuring the wellbeing of the employees. Some of the key actions that leaders can take in this regard include holding meetings with the staff and allowing them to air their grievances (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022). This should also encompass adopting a participative

approach whereby the leaders allow the employees to contribute towards attaining solutions to their problems. Albashiti et al. (2021) indicate that leaders' action needs to include establishing good relations with employees. Thus, cultivating this type of relationship can encompass meeting the needs of the employees by addressing their grievances.

Employee grievances

Employee grievances are the complaints and concerns that the staff members have regarding the conditions of work and their wellbeing. Garima (2017) points out that employee grievance is a dissatisfaction factor that employees feel when working in a given organization. Conversely, Silva and Malalage (2021) explicate that employee grievances are feelings of dissatisfaction or disconnect by workers emanating from actions or decisions made by top management or supervisors. These definitions are further reiterated by Devika et al. (2017) who assert that grievances emerge from the feeling of dissatisfaction among employees. Rehman and Alharthi (2016) define dissatisfaction as the state or feeling of dissatisfaction orally made known by an employee. There are many sources of grievances among the employees in an organization. Devika et al. (2017) identify some of these grievances to be related to working conditions, supervision, colleagues, and remuneration.

Actors

In addition to the concepts and constructs, another key element of the conceptual framework of the study is the actors. The actors refer to the main stakeholders in the given research issue under study. The actors in this case are leaders and employees.

Leaders

Leaders are the persons that are tasked with the responsibility of addressing the grievances of the employees (Townsend & Hutchinson, 2017). These are the persons with

the power of overseeing the running of organizations including the needs of the staff that they lead. Leaders need to practice the leadership skills that will ensure that they recognize and address the issues that their staff face.

Employees

The employees are the persons who experience grievances in the work (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022). These are the people within the organization that are hired to do tasks that work towards the accomplishment of organizational goals. However, they can only facilitate the attainment of these goals if their needs are met and thus grievances addressed.

Relationship between the Concepts, Theories, Constructs, and Actors

After highlighting the key components of the conceptual framework of this study, it is essential to demonstrate how they link to each other by explaining their relationship. Grievances illustrate the key issues that employees face in the workplace. Garima (2017) postulates that grievances are the complaints raised by employees negatively affecting the workplace environment.

Normally, the employees will present the issues they face at work with their immediate leaders whether supervisors or line managers. These leaders represent the actors that have the responsibility of responding to the issues raised by the employees. Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) assert that the actions of leaders should be focused on ensuring the well-being of employees. Some of these actions can include arranging meetings with the employees and working with them to find solutions to their grievances.

Most employees place trust in their organizations to improve their working conditions by addressing their grievances. Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) explain employees will only trust an organization that shows a willingness to hear about their problems and offer solutions. When employees have confidence that their employers will

address their needs this will make them more loyal, and productive, and increase their levels of job satisfaction (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022).

However, leaders with negative affectivity are likely to violate this trust, therefore, failing to undertake a successful grievance management process. This is an issue that brings to the fore the inability of leaders to find solutions to the challenges and issues that employees face in the workplace. At the same time, the leadership style adopted matters when it comes to grievance management in the view of Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022). Accordingly, leaders must be willing to adopt leadership that will promote the well-being of employees.

Nonetheless, the inability of leaders to address employee grievances can be overcome by following an effective grievance management procedure. Devika et al. (2017) observe that the key components of such a procedure include structure, consistency, considerable involvement, and a lot of conflict awareness. Further, this procedure encompasses strong organizational commitment, acknowledgement, and implementation of the resolution as reiterated by Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019). The establishment of the resolution should take place in collaboration with the employees. Thus, it is by following effective grievance management that organizations will realize improved employee commitment.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory illustrating that grievances are a normal occurrence among employees since they have several categories of needs (Garima, 2017). Accordingly, employees' grievances illustrate the needs they have while in the workplace. The best approach that organizational leaders can use in addressing these needs can include categorizing the grievances from low-level needs to high-level ones. The theory of transformational leadership is instrumental in illustrating the key traits that leaders need to connect with employees and provide solutions to their grievances (Al-Amin, 2017). The

two theories illustrate the identification of the key issues comprising employee grievances and the leadership characteristics that will enhance the ability of leaders to address them.

Definition of Terms

The following represents the definitions of key terms associated with the research issue of this study. Below are the identified terms and their explanation. The definition of these terms is based on how they were used in this study.

Employee grievances

The challenges and issues that the employees of an organization face in the workplace illustrate their grievances (Jules et al., 2021). These employee grievances bring about job dissatisfaction. In most instances, the employee grievances are expressed formally through writing or to an immediate supervisor.

Employees

These are the people whose services or skills are contracted by an organization and who in turn receive remuneration such as wages, salaries, or other benefits (Onyebuchi & Uchechi, 2019). The employees are the parties with grievances. Organizations need to address their grievances to continue benefiting from their services and skills.

Grievance management

Grievance management is the process of finding solutions to the challenges and issues that employees experience in an organization (Garima, 2017). This process causes organizations to take note of the challenges faced by the employees and establish policies to deal with these challenges. Through grievance management, employees can present their issues to management for positive change.

Leader

The people who oversee others and supervise them towards attaining organizational goals (Onyebuchi & Uchechi, 2019). Leaders are the persons in

organizations with the power to deal with the issues and challenges faced by employees. These leaders should possess the necessary skills for undertaking the management of employee grievances.

Management

This is the process of planning and controlling the resources of an organization towards the attainment of given goals including bringing together the employees for this purpose (Monish & Dhanabhakym, 2022). Employees are human resources. Thus, addressing their grievances is a form of management towards attaining organizational goals.

Motivation

Motivation is the desire and morale that the employees' experience impacting their willingness to carry out their duties towards the attainment of organizational objectives (Garima, 2017). Employee motivation needs to be high for better organizational performance. Addressing employee grievances is a means of increasing the rate of motivation.

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

Assumptions

Research assumptions are the implications of a study not easily proven but affect the approaches used to conduct research (Terrel, 2022). Leedy and Ormrod (2019) explain that it is essential to state assumptions that might have a material bearing on the research problem openly. The research assumptions enable the researcher to determine and define the viewpoint of a study. Accordingly, the key assumptions considered for this study are discussed below.

A major assumption of this research study was the organizations of interest were willing to take part in the study and thus grant permission for its employees to be

interviewed. According to Terrell (2022), it is common for researchers to assume that they were permitted to conduct research in their institution or organization of interest. Another assumption made was that the findings of the research study will bring benefits to the employees and organization ensuring the promotion of justice and a comfortable working environment. An additional assumption of this study was the selected employees who were interviewed would answer the questions honestly. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019), researchers assume that each participant was truthful in depicting his or her personal opinions and not those of another regarding the provided situations. Therefore, to provide a safe environment for participants to express their true opinions specific parameters need to be taken to ensure that anonymity and confidentiality are preserved for each participant (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). At the same time, it was assumed that the employees were willing to take part in the study in the first place. It was further assumed that the interview questions used for the study were adequately relevant to the research questions.

Limitations

Several research limitations came about while conducting this study. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018) define research limitations as the possible weaknesses associated with the research process which the researcher has no control over. The significance of highlighting these research limitations in a study includes enhancing research transparency and preventing future researchers from expanding on the research problem to experience such weaknesses (Miles & Scott, 2017). Accordingly, below is a discussion of the research limitations experienced while conducting this study.

A research limitation experienced while conducting this research study was the difficulty in recruiting research participants. This research limitation occurs mostly when the organization of interest may not accept to participate in the research study (Akanle et

al., 2020). Another research limitation experienced was research participants declining to take part in the study. For instance, some employees who were initially reached out to did not want to participate in this study given the sensitive nature of grievances that might cause them to become victimized. Addressing this issue entailed the researcher presenting the key benefits of the study to the participants and the organization as a way of convincing potential participants to take part in the study. Thus, this was instrumental in making the participants more willing to take part in the study.

The qualitative nature of this study and the use of the interview data collection method resulted in 20 persons participating in this study. The use of a small sample size can be considered a limitation. According to Vasileiou et al. (2018), the use of a small sample size is not a major issue because a qualitative study does not require a large sample size. This is because, with a small sample size of 20, the researcher can collect in-depth details concerning the research problem through semi-structured interviews.

The role of the researcher became largely diminished in data collection. There is the possibility of becoming denied access to some elements of data because of matters of confidentiality and privacy during the research (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). This might undermine the extent of the collection of data needed for addressing the research gap. However, addressing this issue for this study involved the researcher eliminating their bias during data collection.

Delimitations

Research delimitations are the boundaries established in which a research study becomes conducted (Akanle et al., 2020). Miles and Scott (2017) indicate that in most instances, research delimitations are under the control of the researcher. Thus, for this study, the following were the delimitations. Firstly, the study focused on the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances and the factors that undermine this role. This

means that the study did not explore the strategies for addressing employee grievances. Instead, the research focused only on exploring how leaders undertake employee grievance management. Secondly, the research data was collected from organizational leaders and employees that have formally filed grievances. Anyone who has not been involved in the formal process of employee grievance management did not take part in the study.

Significance of the Study

Reduction of Gaps in the Literature

Kamal (2019) postulates that research gaps in the literature demonstrate the missing pieces of information regarding a given research issue. Therefore, this shows specific areas with scope for additional research. The reason for this is the research gaps represent the areas that are yet to be explored (Denzin, 2018). Conducting research thus serves to reduce the research gaps.

The significance of this study was to reduce the gaps in the literature concerning the role of organizational leadership in addressing employee grievances. There is a considerable amount of literature conducted on employee grievances including determining the nature of employee grievances (Devika et al., 2017; Garima, 2017; Silva & Malalage, 2021). Further, there has been a considerable amount of literature that assesses the impact of employee grievances including the impact of employee grievances on productivity, motivation, performance, retention, and loyalty (Onyebuchi & Uchechi, 2019; Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022). At the same time, there is research conducted on grievance management (Garima, 2017; Monish & Dhanabhakym, 2022). While there has been much focus on research on employee grievances, there has been minimal attention to the role played by leaders in finding solutions (Devika et al., 2017). This is even more so, with little coverage of the inability of leaders to successfully address these employee

grievances. Accordingly, this is a major research gap that this study strove to narrow. Therefore, the significance of this study was to expand the literature on the factors that determine the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances.

Implications for Biblical Integration

Employee grievances and their management have several implications for biblical integration. This means that the nature of grievances and addressing them can entail taking up a biblical viewpoint. The process of grievance management can integrate various teachings from the Bible. Some of these teachings include approaches toward conflict management and addressing complaints. A good example of this is found in Mathew 18:15 which states,

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.”

The verse above calls for dialogue as a means of addressing conflict. This passage of the Bible asserts that in instances where a brother has sinned against another, it is vital that they are informed about the wrong that they have done. Integrating this into dealing with employee grievances entails leaders being comfortable hearing about the complaints that employees have and the organization has failed to prevent the issues they are facing. Thus, this study demonstrated the different ways that organizational leaders and employees can utilize Bible lessons to tackle employee grievances.

Benefit to Business Practice and Relationships to Cognate

This study proved to be highly beneficial to business practices in the healthcare industry. The findings of this study illustrated the best approaches that leaders of healthcare organizations can utilize to respond to the challenges that employees face. This includes the different practices of addressing employee grievances and thus improving the work environment. Further, healthcare organizations gain insight into the business

practices that leaders can adopt to overcome the issues faced by employees, therefore, enhancing productivity, job satisfaction, reducing absenteeism, enhancing loyalty, and performance (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022; Onyebuchi & Uchechi, 2019). Overall, the findings of this study will likely enhance business practices in the healthcare industry.

Additionally, the findings of the study relate to the cognate of healthcare management in several ways. Addressing employee grievances is a major component of the functions of management. This also includes the management functions within the healthcare industry. At the same time, the well-being of HCWs is an instrumental aspect of healthcare management. This is because this well-being determines the extent to which employees perform and the quality of care they provide to patients.

Summary of the Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are instrumental in illustrating the significant role of organizational leaders in finding solutions to the key challenges, problems, and issues that HCWs face. These findings serve as supporting materials for leaders to effectively address employee grievances. Further, this study provides an opportunity for understanding problem-solving from a biblical perspective. At the same time, the study demonstrates the key benefits that the healthcare sector stands to benefit from empowering leaders to take up enhanced methods of addressing employee grievances.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

Introduction

According to Singhal et al. (2017), a grievance is a term whose origin can be traced to approximately 1250-1300 B.C. when it was derived from the word grievance. Grieve refers to a term of Middle East and old French origin that signifies grief or sorrow or something that causes distress as a source of resentment or complaint (Singhal et al., 2017). According to Opatha (2019), a grievance is a popular term in the management of

people within organizations. Grievances happen when employees have a cause to feel unhappy, aggrieved, and uncomfortable by several managerial decisions or practices. Dhanabhakym and Monish (2020) elucidate that grievances are a common occurrence in the everyday workplace. Jules et al. (2021) affirm that it is common for employees to have complaints, issues, and concerns that often arise impacting their well-being and ability to do their job. Thus, even in an organization where the best human resource management practices are practiced, there is always the possibility of a few employees becoming a subject of discomfort or suffering because of a grievance or grievances.

Extant literature illustrates that the failure to take time and address grievances in the workplace can make them quickly turn into conflicts (Aktar & Alam, 2021; Silva & Malalage, 2021). The healthcare sector witnesses a considerable number of grievances among healthcare workers. Aktar and Alam (2021) and Silva and Malalage (2021) opine that any lack of interest in the management of grievances can result in mental effects on the employees subsequently impacting the organization through its negative impact on productivity and performance. Tharuka and Sajeevanie (2020) opine organizational leaders have a major role to play when it comes to grievance management.

The following is an exhaustive review of the literature on employee grievances within the healthcare sector. This review of literature begins with assessing that which is known regarding employee grievances. Accordingly, this entails a review of the key definitions of employee grievances as captured in the literature and its components. This review then delves deeper into the nature of employee grievances by reviewing the most common causes and employee grievances in the healthcare sector. The impact of employee grievances further provides insight into its nature. This literature review assesses this impact from three main perspectives, the employees, organizations, and the healthcare sector. The next aspect of this literature review is an assessment of the

procedures, processes, mechanisms, techniques, and strategies applied to employee grievance handling or management. This exploration included the role of the organizational leaders in meeting the needs of subordinates by addressing the grievances that they raise. The discussion also includes reviewing the challenges associated with employee grievance management and the impact that this has on the ability of leaders to address these grievances. This review includes the identification of key research gaps identified from assessing the literature on employee grievances in healthcare and the impact and inability of leaders.

Employee Grievances, Definition and Components

The review of existing literature reveals that there are various definitions of employee grievances. For instance, employee grievances are a sign of employees' discontent with their job (Aktar & Alam., 2021; Dhanabhakym & Monish., 2020). Makwana and Pandey (2022) define employee grievances as problems or objections that employees raise within an organization. Further, employee grievances are also manifestations of their dissatisfaction with their working conditions, managerial decisions, and any other work-related issues (Maheshwari & Kavyashree, 2021). These definitions of employee grievances indicate that these grievances demonstrate discontent and dissatisfaction among the employees concerning their status within organizations and the work environment.

The continued assessment of the literature reveals additional definitions of employee grievances as the injustices or disputes that employees experience in their work (Maheshwari & Kavyashree, 2021). Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) define grievances as the feelings of discontent that employees feel emanating from the actions or decisions taken by organizational leaders resulting in a sense of personal injustice. Tharuka and Sajeevanie (2020) define grievances as employees' needs as they strive to attain a sense of

job satisfaction. The exploration of literature further demonstrates that employee grievances can be imagined or perceived, but despite this, organizations must be willing to take up measures to address them (Silva & Malalage, 2021; Tharuka & Sajeevanie, 2020). Devika et al. (2017) in their study defined employee grievances as the problems relating to issues of contracts, policies and procedures, work rules or regulations, health and safety, individual victimization, wages and remuneration, and the changing cultural norms. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) explain grievances can emanate from employees feeling violated by colleagues or management.

So far, the above definitions of employee grievances assert that this is an indication of dissatisfaction among the employees. Eromafuru et al. (2020) confirm this notion in their definition of employee grievances as the dissatisfaction among employees on issues relating to work procedures and working facilities. This includes the levels of ambiguity related to company policies and the provision of terms and conditions of employment. Additionally, the definitions point toward grievances existing as a common occurrence in organizations. According to Jules et al. (2021), employee grievances are an inevitable occurrence in the workplace. Consequently, organizations need to always anticipate the possibility of employees raising a grievance of one kind or another. At the same time, the definitions of employee grievances as captured in the literature show that this is a situation that requires organizational management to establish the appropriate grievance management strategies. This is reiterated by Jules et al. (2021) who postulate that employee grievances are inevitable, but when they occur, they must be addressed effectively. This affirms the need for organizational management to establish in place proper grievance management mechanisms.

Causes of Employee Grievances

According to Eromafuru et al. (2020), grievances are a major part of organizational challenges. Grievances can be classified into four main categories, discrimination, violation of rules, general complaints, and discipline (Singhal et al., 2017). These categories provide insight into the causes of grievances in the workplace. Grievances relating to discrimination encompass poor treatment of employees based on sex, gender, religion, race, national origin, age, or disability (Singhal et al., 2017). The grievances corresponding to the violation of rules occur when there is an improper interpretation of policies and procedures that govern employee policies leading to unhealthy working conditions. Employees can have grievances regarding various aspects of their work life. The following review of literature will capture these categories of the causes of grievances among employees.

Prior research indicates that there are various reasons for employee grievances (Devika et al., 2017; Garima, 2017; Onyebuchi & Uchechi, 2019). In most instances, grievances take place because of the existing differences between the employees' expectations and management practices. Further, grievances occur when employees' expectations are not met. This is reiterated by Devika et al. (2017) who explain, that when employees' expectations failed to be met by management then this results in feelings of dissatisfaction which in turn become grievances. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) in their study make the finding that grievances usually originate from feelings of violation among the employees by colleagues or management. According to the study conducted by Garima (2017), the source of employee grievances includes issues relating to their work such as disciplinary sanctions, professional performance evaluation, security issues, and poor relationships with the managers. The study by Monish and Dhanabhakym (2022) indicates that grievances tend to emerge from employment and not because of family or personal problems. Some of the main reasons for the development of grievances include

unsatisfactory work environment, organizational change, employee relations, wage adjustment, or attitude of management (Monish & Dhanabhakya., 2022). According to the findings of the study conducted by Silva and Malalage (2021), the grievances of employees can also be related to work rules, policies and procedures, contracts, individual victimization, wage and bonuses, and health and safety regulations. Hence, these causes of grievances paint a picture of employee grievances occurring because of certain insufficiencies in the work experience of employees.

An additional review of the literature reveals that grievances are caused by discrimination, inequality, unfair reward systems, and resource constraints (Jules et al., 2021). Nayak et al. (2017) add employee grievances can also include complaints such as unfair treatment, employer communications, broken employment agreements, and defamation. To a large extent, these causes of grievances illustrate considerable exploitation of the employees' rights. These findings align with those of Andalib and Darun (2018) who in their study map out employee rights protocols and grievance management systems. The findings of this study indicate that failure to address employee grievances amounts to the failure to fulfill their rights.

When the working conditions in an organization are toxic and inadequate, they are likely to raise several grievances. Singhal et al. (2017) opine that working conditions refer to the interaction taking place between employees and the organizational climate that may include both psychological and physical working conditions. The dissatisfaction that employees feel with the working environment includes aspects such as employment terms and conditions relating to their employment. Some of the aspects of working conditions that result in grievances include poor ventilation, lighting, high temperatures, and high noise levels.

The review of the literature also reveals that leadership can become a cause for employee grievances (Albashiti et al., 2021). Destructive leaders tend to play a major role in the creation of poor working conditions. Albashiti et al. (2021) explain that this type of leadership behavior can be characterized by considerable mistreatment of employees. This mistreatment is more likely to occur in instances involving hierarchical and centralized structures. Accordingly, these types of organizational structures lead to abusive and despotic leadership which is harmful to the employees thus becoming a source of grievances.

The study by Desai (2018) identifies employee grievances to include work-life balance issues, workplace bullying, discrimination, and ethical issues. Work-life balance is a major grievance faced by employees who need to strike a balance between their personal and work lives. For instance, Al Omar et al. (2019) assert that workplace bullying behavior is quite common, especially in work environments that are highly demanding. There are also grievances associated with discrimination including race, gender, religion, and even sexual orientation. Singhal et al. (2017) note that discrimination is an issue that prevents equality within the workplace. Several ethical issues further illustrate the nature of workplace grievances. Some of the aspects that result in ethical issues include recruitment and selection, transfer policy, and privacy issues.

Maduwanthi and Fahim (2020) in their study identified several categories of employee grievances to include job-related grievances; working conditions-related grievances; management decisions-related grievances; inappropriate personal behaviors; alleged violations-related grievances. Beginning with job-related grievances emanated from aspects such as heavy workload, poor knowledge and skills, and lack of proper training (Maduwanthi & Fahim, 2020). The heavy workload takes place when employees are assigned too many duties that they cannot handle undermining their performance. Job-

related grievances become an issue at the moment when the job requirements fail to match their knowledge and skills. Poor training can become a source of employee grievances as it reduces their job performance.

This review of the literature further identifies an interesting set of grievances, non-work-related grievances. Opatha (2019) indicates that non-work-related grievances should not be regarded by organizations since they are out of their control (Opatha, 2019). There is an emphasis on focusing on the discontent that arises from issues connected to the organization. However, non-related grievances such as illness, domestic violence, and dual career couples impact organizations. This is because these grievances affect employee motivation, commitment, productivity, and performance, and then organizations face the dilemma of contributing to their management. Therefore, non-work-related grievances transform into personal pains which can become work pain that further transforms into organizational pain in what is referred to as a domino effect.

Employee Grievances in the Healthcare Environment

Most organizations claim that their employees are the most significant assets. Organizations in the healthcare sector make similar claims. According to Silva and Malalage (2021), organizations perceive human resources as one of the most valuable and significant factors. Further, HR usually accounts for a large part of an organization's cost structure and they are a major source of competitive advantage. Ibrahim et al. (2017) state that competitive advantage is an aim for every organization, and this is best attained via their human resources. Organizations in the healthcare sector make a similar claim. Lertvittayakumjorn et al. (2021) indicate that HCWs such as nurses and midwives play a vital role in the healthcare system. The reason is, that these professionals provide highly skilled and most often complex care in the provision of care. Despite the significant role played by HCWs in the provision of healthcare, the healthcare environment is generally

stressful and highly demanding to these employees. At the same time, the reality of the situation is that healthcare organizations do not treat their employees as the most vital assets. Nayak et al. (2017) confirms this by explaining, while healthcare employees are essential for the healthcare system, the system tends to perceive them as a burden as opposed to a significant asset for future investments. Consequently, HCWs present several common employee grievances to their management team.

Burnout is an example of a common grievance raised by HCWs. Among the key issues that HCWs such as physicians and nurses complain about is the result of burnout, including the demanding workload and several aspects of the work environment (Shah et al., 2021). These aspects of the work environment are such as inadequate staffing and lack of communication. Further, a lack of effective organizational leadership within the work environment also contributes to the issue of burnout among HCWs. Burnout is a grievance among HCWs that takes place when they experience excessive workload, lack of fair reward, lack of adequate control over resources needed for work, and the existence of conflict in organizational values (Dall'Ora et al., 2020). Additional grievances that HCWs have is the inconvenient hours of work that can include working for many hours (Shah et al., 2021). This is also a situation that can result in burnout and thus add to employee grievances among HCWs.

Wages and remuneration are also a common point of concern for HCWs. According to El-Fatah et al. (2018), salaries are one of the most significant factors that results in employee grievances. For instance, it is common for nursing personnel to demand for an increase of wages because of the rise in the cost of living. Subsequently, these HCWs present these grievances as a means of improving their economic and non-economic conditions.

Some health care workers complain about the physical demands of work (Namikawa et al., 2021). An example of these physical demands of work is musculoskeletal problems. Elsherbeny et al. (2018) explore this grievance using the case of nurses. The characteristic of the work performed by nurses is a major factor that results in musculoskeletal problems among many of them. These characteristics of work performed by nurses include prolonged standing and lifting of heavy objects which causes excessive tension in the muscles. Further, nurses will also experience musculoskeletal issues because of damage to their posture in instances involving bending, hand twisting, or generally dealing with patients (Lertvittayakumjorn et al., 2021). All these demonstrate that musculoskeletal issues are a common grievance among nurses.

Workplace violence is also another grievance raised by HCWs. According to Havaei and MacPhee (2019), nurses are at a high risk of workplace violence with patients and their families the most common perpetrators of this violence. Heavy workload impacts the capacity of nurses to deliver care effectively which leads to frustrated and anxious patients and families leading to workplace violence (Havaei and MacPhee, 2019).

The recent COVID-19 brought about additional grievances by HCWs. The pandemic brought many challenges for these professionals. Among the challenges that they faced were the increased number of working hours, lack of personal protective equipment (PPE), and increased mental health problems (Razu et al., 2021). All these were considerable grievances raised by HCWs during the pandemic and continue to be an issue in healthcare. Infections are an additional grievance raised by HCWs during COVID-19. Llop-Gironés et al. (2021) assert that millions of nurses were infected with COVID-19. At the same time, there was a high number of fatalities of HCWs because of covid-19. The lack of enough personal protective equipment (PPE) is one of the main grievances that HCWs had during this period. Llop-Gironés et al. (2021) explain that nurses from different

countries reported a lack of PPE. This resulted in most nurses resorting to purchasing their PPE, reusing old PPE, or collaborating to develop new tools for protection.

Some HCWs have complained about bullying behavior, breach of working hours which includes working long hours than scheduled, and a lack of recognition for their work (Llop-Gironés et al., 2021). Balducci et al. (2022) assert that HCWs and especially juniors tend to experience considerable bullying from their leaders such as nurse managers, immediate supervisors, and heads of departments. Bullying is an issue that can greatly demoralize employees.

Impact of Employee Grievances

Literature explores the impact of employee grievances and illustrates that the issues faced by employees can have detrimental outcomes especially when they are not well addressed (Aktar & Alam, 2021; Monish & Dhanabhakym, 2022). According to Aktar and Alam (2021), employee grievances seriously disturb the ability of employees to carry out their work. Monish and Dhanabhakym (2022) hold a similar opinion by stating that the failure to identify and manage grievances impacts workers, managers, and organizations. For this reason, it is essential to gain insight into the impact of employee grievances on both the employees and the organizations they work for.

Impact on employees

Grievances in the workplace considerably impact the well-being of the employees. Some employees experience stress because of the grievances they face in the workplace. Silva and Malalage (2021) observe that work overload is a serious issue that produces stress and work-life conflict. This is an issue that further decreases the morale of employees. Desai (2018) illustrates that grievances have several adverse effects on employees. These adverse effects include depression and deteriorating mental and physical health.

Grievances and the challenges that the employees face in the workplace can result in psychological distress among the employees. Albashiti et al. (2021) indicate the distress employees feel in the workplace can cause several physiological issues such as strokes, heart attacks, ulcers, fatigue, indigestion, and headaches. This will ultimately lead to devastating consequences for the employees (Albashiti et al., 2021). These consequences can include a reduction in creativity, effectiveness, and a considerable rise in healthcare costs.

Further, the failure to address grievances will cause a considerable amount of frustration among the employees. Andalib and Darun (2018) in their study demonstrate that grievances and difficult working conditions can create considerable frustration among employees. For this reason, organizations need to identify employees that are experiencing these frustrations and try to guide them through them. This can include discussing the problem openly instead of the employees remaining silently frustrated.

Impact on organizations

The impact of grievances on employees subsequently impacts organizations. According to Van Gramberg et al. (2019), workplaces are particularly vulnerable to the damage caused by the adverse behavior and reactions of aggrieved persons. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) indicate that employee grievances have an impact on the survival of organizations and their effectiveness. Because employee grievances impact the well-being of organizations, most of them have restructured their operating procedures to accommodate the opinions and feelings of their employees.

Additionally, Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) illustrate organizations that fail to effectively address employee grievances tend to make themselves vulnerable to poor performance. Similar opinions are held by Eromafuru et al. (2020) who explain that grievances and the failure to address them can lead to poor customer service and

considerable shabby work behavior. Thus, employee grievances are a situation that will undermine the success of organizations and particularly those which fail to take up action and find effective solutions. A poor employee grievance management approach has an impact on productivity and the performance of the organization (Aktar & Alam, 2021). Hence, an inadequate grievance management approach undermines employee productivity and performance because of dissatisfaction. Jules et al. (2021) reiterate that addressing employee grievances is essential because of their impact on performance in the workplace. Eromafuru et al. (2020) define performance in this context as the degree to which employees help organizations to attain their goals. Employee performance is essential in organizations, especially within a dynamic and competitive business environment (Udin, 2021). Thus, effective employee performance is essential in helping organizations to attain rapid growth and competitive advantage. This significance of employee performance illustrates the need to address any issues that might undermine it including implementing effective grievance management practices.

Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) show that grievances can impact the organizational effectiveness and the mental well-being of the employees. Further, failure to address employee grievances can result in suppressed grievances. Similar findings are made by Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) who observe that employee grievances can impact morale, productivity, and organizational effectiveness. This means that when employees have grievances, they will experience a reduced sense of morale and will have a limited level of commitment to the organization. In the same way, Monish and Dhanabhakym (2022) in their study showed that employee grievances are a challenge that increased job satisfaction and this will undermine their performance.

Employee grievances can lead to high labor turnover which subsequently undermines the employees' performance. Organizations require smooth functioning of

their operations and for this reason, high turnover can cause dysfunction (Silva & Malalage, 2021). Additionally, Silva and Malalage (2021) find that grievances impact employee performance. This impact takes place because disregard of the employee grievances impacts performance as it leads to an increase in accidents, low morale, reduced employee commitment, industrial sabotage, strike actions, and absenteeism (Silva & Malalage, 2021).

Andalib and Darun (2018) note that grievances among employees can result in increased cases of absenteeism. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) reiterate this by explaining that suppressed grievances are very problematic because they can lead to informal strikes, sabotages, go-slows, and many cases of absenteeism. The frustrations that employees feel as a consequence of grievances can lead to being absent for days. This can also include employees taking frequent leaves or time offs or arriving late to work and leaving early. This situation demonstrates that the employees have no regard for the targets of the organization. This will harm the organization because it becomes deprived of its talent.

Therefore, the failure to address employee grievances or the suppression of these grievances can result in accidents in the workplace. This situation can also lead to various forms of industrial sabotage, increased cases of absenteeism, low morale, and reduced employee commitment (Silva & Malalage, 2021). According to Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) employee commitment is essential for the success of an organization. This is because committed employees are more likely to perform better than their uncommitted counterparts. Further, these are the employees who will place more effort into meeting the job requirements. Therefore, committed employees will play a significant role in the promotion of a conducive workplace.

Impact on the healthcare sector

The literature so far illustrates that employee grievances impact the employees first and then organizations. This impact spreads further to sectors. For instance, the grievances by HCWs have an impact on the healthcare sector and thus the quality-of-care patients receive. Dhanushya et al. (2018) conducted a study in a tertiary care hospital in Cochin whose findings demonstrate the impact of grievances on healthcare. The findings of the study revealed that an ineffective grievance management system is a factor that will undermine the satisfaction of employees in the hospital.

Hence, employee grievances have an impact on the healthcare system. For instance, the failure to address employee grievances can result in increased job dissatisfaction. This increased job dissatisfaction in turn can cause a rise in turnover which becomes costly to organizations. The reason for this a rise in turnover creates a shortage of staff. According to Senek et al. (2020), within the healthcare sector, the shortage of human resources places a considerable burden on the healthcare system. Therefore, these outcomes demonstrate the significance of addressing employee grievances and the need for leaders to develop the ability to undertake this task.

Addressing Employee Grievances

HCWs such as nurses or any category of employees play an essential role in the well-being of organizations. Within healthcare organizations, these employees facilitate the provision of quality care and ensure the optimization of health services resources. However, HCWs can only provide quality services in their work environment allows them by having adequate conditions to support their capacity to work (Llop-Gironés et al., 2021). Such conditions are provided for when their grievances as employees are addressed. Therefore, amid the unhealthy work environment characterized by a plethora of employee grievances, it is evident that effective machinery to forestall crisis escalation is vital. For most organizations, this mechanism is known as the employee grievance

management procedure. Rao (2018) defines this procedure as the formal process that is preliminary to arbitration resolving issues relating to labor and management. Eromafuru et al. (2020) opine that the establishment of a grievance management procedure aligns with the spirit of due process that guarantees the use of procedural justice and ethical decision-making in organizations. In the United States, grievance procedures are mainly documented in the history of the unionized context. Van Gramberg et al. (2019) explain grievance procedures were designed to reduce workplace litigation by keeping the process of dispute resolution in-house.

Tirno et al. (2020) point out that the process of conducting grievance management can be complex. Despite this, it remains integral for organizations to conduct this process. Addressing employee grievances takes place through grievance management mechanisms. Jules et al. (2021) affirm that the survival of organizations today relies on their ability to establish strong measures and strategies for grievance management. Failure to have these measures and strategies in place is experiencing increased threats and spending more resources on resolving them as opposed to increasing production. Monish and Dhanabhakym (2021) describe grievance management as a tool for talent management and employee retention as well as workplace justice.

Other studies explore grievance management in terms of grievance procedures (Silva & Malalage, 2021). According to Silva and Malalage (2021), management should always have in place procedures to follow to ensure that it addresses conflict and grievance. This takes place through the process of grievance procedures. Grievance procedures refer to the strategies, coherent, and integrated approaches to employment and establishing the well-being of persons working in organizations thus positively impacting their commitment (Aktar & Alam, 2021). Further, grievance procedures are also laid down mechanisms for dealing with employees' grievances ensuring that they are adequately

resolved. The grievance procedures used in an organization vary from one organization to the next. This variation is because of aspects such as differences in management structures and resource availability.

Grievance management can also take place through a grievance-handling system. According to Monish and Dhanabhakym (2022), a grievance-handling system acts as an outlet for employees to express their discontent and frustrations. When the grievance handling system works effectively, then it reduces the need for taking arbitrary action by supervisors. This is significant in ensuring that employees can air their grievances to top management. Singhal et al. (2017) in their study explore the management of grievances through a grievance-handling procedure. In most instances, organizations are advised to follow a procedure that complies with their respective code of practice or conduct. In fostering effective grievance management. Singhal et al. (2017) develop the acronym WECURO meaning, the procedure must be well-timed, effective, consistent, up-to-date, regular, and open-minded.

The literature emphasizes the adoption of an effective and fast approach to addressing employee grievances in organizations (Aktar & Alam, 2021). This is because a lack of interest in addressing employee grievances can prove fatal to the overall well-being of an organization. According to Makwana and Pandey (2022), grievance procedure management means the identification of the practices, procedures, and administrative policies causing employee complaints and the related consideration for addressing them. There is a positive association between effective grievance management procedures and dispute settlements. Further, there is a positive correlation between adopting an effective grievance management procedure and the establishment of a favorable labor-management relationship between executive levels of employees and the rest of the employees (Aktar & Alam, 2021). An effective grievance procedure is essential in

calculating good employee relations. Subsequently, this will result in the smooth running of the organization (Makwana & Pandey, 2022).

Eromafuru et al. (2020) highlight some essential steps to take in the process of grievance management. The significance of these steps is that they assist management to articulate and provide a resolution to the grievance issue. The initial step entails defining and describing the nature of the grievance. This should happen as clearly as possible. Collecting all the facts is the next step to take in a grievance management procedure. The significance of this step is to explain how, when, where, and why to the aggrieved thus ensuring all the facts are known. The next step to take is establishing a tentative solution to the grievance. Checking the validity of a tentative solution is the step that follows. Applying the solution is the next step that follows. Conducting a follow-up step is the final step to take in handling grievances. This is vital for management to undertake to determine whether the employees' issue has favorably changed. One way of doing this is to hold a casual conversation with an employee.

Extant research demonstrates that most organizations have adopted the grievance handling system formally or informally (Eromafuru et al., 2020; Opatha, 2019). Eromafuru et al. (2020) postulate that grievances can be presented by employees either formally or informally concerning issues that may have a direct impact on their job-related attitude. When addressing employee grievances takes place through a formal mechanism this is known as a grievance procedure. It is essential for organizations whether with unions or none to have in place grievance methods of processing grievances (Opatha, 2019). Opatha (2019) further explains that the formal presentation of grievances tends to be rare. The reason for this is few employees are willing to question the judgment of their superiors. Other employees are willing to risk stigmatization for initiating formal grievances. At the same time, there are those employees who believe that nothing will

change and thus do not file grievances. Nonetheless, this mainly happens in organizations whose climate does not encourage the free expression of issues and largely entails leaders who utilize the authoritative leadership style.

However, it seems that grievance-handling systems do not always work for organizations as expected. At the same time, Aktar and Alam (2021) note that the adoption of the grievance handling system can take place merely as an eyewash or as part of compliance by some organizations. According to Makwana and Pandey (2022), most organizations adopt a grievance-handling procedure that is suitable to their needs. The effective management of employee grievances is essential for creating a harmonious workplace. This is something that is the responsibility of employers and trade unions. There are various proper mechanisms for the management of grievances based on legal rules and regulations which can improve success. Most of these rules and regulations are incorporated within several agreements and industrial dispute acts (Maheshwari & Kavyashree, 2021). Managers have the responsibility of overseeing these rules and regulations including working together with the employees or their responsibility to develop agreements.

Generally, the literature demonstrates that grievance management can take place via systems such as open-door policy, peer review, stop review, ombudsman, and hearing (Wich, 2020). In the study conducted by Eromafuru et al. (2020), some additional systems for grievance management are step ladder, grievant-supervisor, grievant-department head, and grievant top management. These methods can be used singularly or in combination based on the situation at hand.

In further reviewing the element of grievance management another element that emanates from the literature is the employees' voice. According to Van Gramberg et al. (2019), the employee voice is the articulation of individual dissatisfaction, expression of

collective organization, management decision-making, and illustration of mutuality and cooperative relations. The employees' voice has become even more significant following the decline of unionization in many parts of the world including the US. By using their voice, employees can articulate their dissatisfaction to their line managers and take up an active role in the resolution of their issues. Tirno et al. (2020) note that the employees' voice serves as a mechanism for establishing some kind of upward communication channels between management and the working conditions. Elbaz et al. (2022) also explore employee voice and its impact on handling grievances. The study asserts that employee voice serves as a background factor for alternative grievance management styles which have a significant impact on job satisfaction. Additionally, this has an impact on reducing the decision of employees' leave intention.

Impact of Addressing Employee Grievances

The literature demonstrates that there is a primary value for addressing employee grievances and having in place grievance management mechanisms and procedures (Opatha, 2019). Eromafuru et al. (2020) indicate that dealing with grievances is essential for the overall interest of the organization. For instance, addressing employee grievances is an essential aspect of providing a conducive work environment. Additionally, the satisfaction of the employees will only develop after their grievances are addressed during grievance management (Eromafuru et al., 2020). Further, addressing employee grievances is vital because it reduces discontent and levels of dissatisfaction that might have adverse effects on the employees and subsequently the organization. Opatha (2019) explains that hidden dissatisfaction tends to grow and becomes an emotional state that will undermine the smooth running of an organization.

Silva and Malalage (2021) explain that the settlement of grievances is essential for employing an effective grievance settlement procedure (GSP). GSP will facilitate a means

of addressing the grievances raised by the employees to promote justice and prevent disputes. Therefore, applying GSP in an organization offers some peaceful means of dealing with conflicts while promoting effective labor-management relations. Addressing employee grievances also has a positive impact on improving the relationship between employees and organizations. This is according to Tirno et al. (2020) who explicate that addressing employee grievances will enhance the trust that employees have in an organization regarding meeting their needs.

Nayak et al. (2017) in their study demonstrates the impact of addressing employee grievances to include the provision of workplace justice, uniformity of outcome, and consistency. This takes place when there is use of strategies such as effective listening, evaluation of problem definition, and reframing. Further, successfully addressing employee grievances will lead to the establishment of a healthy work environment and the enhancement of the quality of life of the employees.

Addressing employee grievances is essential in enhancing their motivation. Motivation demonstrates the push needed for the employees to feel encouraged to do their work. Garima (2017) asserts employees will only become motivated after they feel that their needs matter. Thus, successfully addressing employee grievances will motivate them. Increased employee motivation will result in better performance contributing to the success of organizations (Ibrahim et al., 2017). This is because motivated employees are more willing to move to action and they will continue their course of action. Thus, motivated employees were more willing to utilize their abilities to attain organizational objectives.

In further reviewing the impact of addressing employees, this is shown by its role in meeting the needs of all stakeholders. Tirno et al. (2020) explicate that the management of grievances is essential in serving both employers and employees as it ensures that all

their needs are met. This means that addressing employee grievances is beneficial for not just the employees, but organizations as well.

Role and impact of Leaders in Addressing Employee Grievances

Legitimate operators for addressing grievances in the workplace are extremely vital for the attainment of agreeable modern relations between employees and the organizations they work for (Makwana & Pandey, 2022). These operators are organizational leaders who play an instrumental in establishing a balance between the needs of organizations and employees. Thus, undertaking grievance management is a responsibility of the organizational leadership and particularly the management team or solely the task carried out by the human resource managers in some organizations. According to Tharuka and Sajeevanie (2020), the human resource departments in organizations have the responsibility of improving the well-being of the employees by ensuring that they are problem free and that they willingly contribute to the well-being of the organization.

Based on the above explanation, organizational leadership plays an integral role when it comes to the management of employee grievances. Among the definitions of leadership include a dynamic process of influencing people to meet established standards (Amoako-Asiedu & Obuobisa-Darko, 2017). Applying this to this dissertation, leadership is a means of influencing employees to improve their work environment by addressing their grievances. For instance, Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) explicate, that the attitude adopted by management when it comes to understanding employee problems and offering solutions amicably will result in better results. This is reiterated by Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) who add, that right-thinking managers will make addressing employee grievances a top priority. Silva and Malalage (2021) affirm when employees experience

issues whether real or imaginary management must pay attention to every grievance and seek solutions.

Many aspects of work are highly susceptible to influence by leaders who actively amend the work environment. This includes leaders influencing the employees on how they view the work environment. According to Mulugeta and Pandian (2020), the way that leaders influence the perception of employees regarding the work environment relies on their leadership style. The aspect of addressing employee grievances is one of the ways leaders impact the nature of the work environment. Generally, the employees will raise the issues they experience at work with their immediate leaders whether supervisors or line managers. These leaders represent the actors that have the responsibility of responding to the issues raised by the employees. Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) assert that the actions of leaders should be focused on ensuring the well-being of employees. Some of these actions can include arranging meetings with the employees and working with them to find solutions to their grievances. Most employees place trust in their organizations to improve their working conditions by addressing their grievances. Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) explain that employees will only trust an organization that shows a willingness to hear about their problems and offer solutions. Trust in the organization is the belief in reliability that employees feel. Further, this is the confidence that employees have regarding the action of an organization. Aktar and Alam (2021) assert employees will only trust an organization that was willing to hear their problems. That is, the confidence that the employees have towards an organization regarding the management of their grievances will impact their willingness to stay, productivity, job satisfaction, and reduce cases of absenteeism (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022). Trust in supervisors and management is essential in fostering increased employee commitment. Therefore, when employees have confidence that their employers will address their needs this will make them more loyal,

and productive, and increase their levels of job satisfaction (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022). According to Albashiti et al. (2021) job satisfaction is about employees' positive attitude toward their job. This attitude is quite significant because it plays an integral role in building the brand image.

Jules et al. (2021) elucidate that organizational leadership is the most essential element and cornerstone for the management of grievances. This is because leaders carry out the role of creating dynamics that will perform well and foster good results. Additionally, leaders conduct the diagnoses of issues that might undermine employees' performance and adopt the best measures for management. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) observe that for many right-thinking managers and management, employee grievances are a top priority. Leaders have realized that they need to maintain a harmonious relationship between themselves and their employees if they are to get the best from them. Devika et al. (2017) indicate that constructive grievance handling is a process largely dependent on the ability of managers and supervisors to recognize and resolve grievances before they become serious disputes. Further, supervisors in organizations need to treat grievances with utmost seriousness and show a willingness to work with the representatives of the employees such as unions. Devika et al. (2017) explain the immediate manager or supervisor has the responsibility of taking up action after an employee files their dissatisfaction through the grievance procedure. Monish and Dhanabhakym (2022) expound, that managers tend to reduce grievances and related challenges by using some laid down procedure.

The grievance procedure is effective if it results in the creation of an amicable work environment. Devika et al. (2017) elucidate that this is because such a procedure leads to redress of the grievances in a way that results in both the employees and management becoming satisfied. Thus, management and immediate supervisors play a

serious role in fostering effective management of the employees' grievances. Silva and Malalage (2021) state that solving grievances is a function that should be performed by the management of an organization to make employees happy or prevent job dissatisfaction.

In fulfilling their role in addressing employee grievances, leaders need to have a good relationship with their employees. For instance, the study conducted by Albashiti et al. (2021) emphasizes that attaining loyalty and satisfaction and the provision of good service delivery in an organization highly relies on the quality relationship between employees and supervisors. Thus, positive leadership styles such as transformational, authentic, servant, and empowering leadership enhance the strength of the relationship between employees and leaders. Management should ensure that grievances are handled in an unbiased way ensuring that there is a considerable amount of fairness in the process. This is vital since effective management of employee grievances creates harmonious management-worker relations (Silva & Malalage, 2021). Additionally, this process improves workers' commitment to improving their productivity because they put more effort into their work.

Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) further illustrate the role of leadership in addressing employee grievances by indicating that many right-thinking managers and management teams within the contemporary business world seek to get the best out of every employee. This process includes the establishment of a harmonious management-labor relationship. Aktar and Alam (2021) indicate managers are advised to utilize grievance management as a tool for employee motivation.

The study by Dunford et al. (2020) reiterates that the management of employee grievances is the responsibility of line managers. This was a study that explored employee grievance management conducted using lower levels of formal grievances to reduce turnover rates. The findings of the study asserted that it is essential for line managers to

work together with the employees to address grievances. Such an approach was essential in proactively guiding the resolution of conflict and follow-up of agreements that will improve the relationship between management and employees.

Practicing an effective leadership style is essential in illustrating the role of leaders in grievance management. According to Mulugeta and Pandian (2020), leadership style is a vital factor that impacts the attitude of employees and behaviors. Based on this, the leadership style that a leader will adopt in dealing with the grievances of employees will impact their attitude and behavior. For instance, leaders who practice the transformational leadership style are more likely to have a positive impact on the employees. A transformational leader will motivate subordinates and guide them towards accomplishing tasks. Garima (2017) elucidates, that the management style used within an organization impacts the extent of success in addressing employee grievances. Therefore, the management style adopted in an organization must entail listening to employees and showing a willingness to meet their needs.

Jules et al. (2021) elucidate that effective leadership refers to the approach of planning, directing, people motivation, and procedure implementation to the attainment of established goals. For this reason, leadership is a vital pillar in managing grievances in organizations. Further, leaders are vital in fostering grievance management because they possess the ability to diagnose the challenges undermining employee performance. This ability includes taking up the proper measures to handle these challenges.

Devika et al. (2017) provide a more comprehensive approach to how leaders address employee grievances. According to the finding of the study, employees with grievances can first approach supervisors or managers and convey their complaints verbally. The grievance may be settled at this stage. However, this is only possible if the leader possesses the requisite people management and problem-solving skills. If the

employee is not satisfied then the leader may forward the given grievance to a much higher level of leadership.

Some studies assess the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances by exploring the responsibilities of the HR department (Opatha, 2019; Singhal et al., 2017). Opatha (2019) calls for employees to show initiative in approaching their leadership and sharing their grievances with them. Approaching the HR department is one of the ways of demonstrating this courage. Thus, employees need to be encouraged to express and present their grievances to their superiors or the HR department. This implies the need for a climate that encourages the grievant to express their dissatisfaction. Therefore, the best practice of grievance management entails the grievant presenting their grievance to their immediate superior which can take place informally. The aggrieved employee may then formally present the grievance in writing in case the immediate supervisor does not provide a reasonable settlement. Singhal et al. (2017) in their study assert that managers must lead in addressing grievances raised by employees. This is through the use of human resource units whose role is to advise and guide managers regarding the grievance resolution process. At the same time, organizations can consider establishing a grievance contact officer who can offer policy and process information to the employees.

Singhal et al. (2017) in their study identify several characteristics that leaders as grievance handlers can possess for effective grievance management. These characteristics illustrate the basic skills that enhance their ability to address employee grievances. Accordingly, these skills are summarized using the acronym, PRACLIP.

The P in PRACLIP stands for a problem. This term refers to the problem-solving attitude that the grievance handler needs to possess. The grievance handler needs to be highly open-minded and shows a willingness to work with the employees to address the grievance. The R stands for responsible. The grievance handler should keep all matters

discussed during a grievance meeting confidential (Singhal et al., 2017). The grievance handler needs to be meticulous in conducting follow-ups. Regarding the A this stands for active listening. The grievance handler needs to practice active listening by seeking to better understand, interpret, and evaluate what was said (Singhal et al., 2017). This should also include considerable empathy. As for the C, this stands for careful. This means that the grievance handler must be careful in note-taking during grievance management meetings to foster accuracy. L in PRACLIP is for light-hearted. The grievance handler can be light-hearted. This is because humor serves to reduce tension. The letter I stands for inclusive language. The grievance handler should consider the use of inclusive language such as “we work together” or “our problem” (Singhal et al., 2017). Finally, P in PRACLIP means Placid. It is vital for the grievance handler to remain composed during the meeting (Singhal et al., 2017). This includes remaining professional and polite during the meeting even in instances where the aggrieved becomes agitated.

Eromafuru et al. (2020) further explore the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances by reviewing the grievance handling methods. For instance, the open-door policy entails the aggrieved employee having the freedom to meet any top executive to get their grievance addressed. The grievant supervisor method entails the employee orally presenting their grievance to their immediate supervisor who tries to settle the issue. In the grievant department head method, the employee approaches the department head to address their grievance who is a senior supervisor. Regarding the grievant-grievance committee whereby members can be drawn from management staff. These are persons who are well-experienced and therefore can handle grievance issues well.

The study conducted by Tirno et al. (2020) explores four main styles that leaders in organizations tend to utilize to address employee grievances. The four styles include collaborating style, accommodating, avoiding, and compromising style. Thus, leaders can

choose from any of these styles and integrate them into their grievance-handling mechanism. The collaborating style entails the managers working together with the employees to address their issues. Tirno et al. (2020) elucidate that the accommodating style of grievance management encompasses the organizational leaders fulfilling their duty in addressing the grievances of the employees by placing the needs of the employees ahead of those of the organization. Avoidance as a grievance management style is the least effective. This is a style that entails the management ignoring the needs of the employees with the hope that this will no longer be an issue, or the issues will resolve themselves (Tirno et al., 2020). Compromising refers to a grievance management style in which the management gives in to the grievances established by the employees.

Challenges Limiting the Role of Leaders in Addressing Employee Grievances

Despite the significant role played by leaders in grievance management, the literature illustrates that many of them struggle with finding solutions to the grievances raised by their employees (Tharuka & Sajeevanie, 2020; Opatha, 2019). The inability of leaders to handle employee grievances has devastating consequences. Jules et al. (2021) illustrate that the inability of leaders to address employee grievances leads to delays in meeting employees' needs, a lack of competent managers to deal with grievances, and the lack of proper measures to address grievances. Thus, there are several challenges faced by the organizational leadership in addressing employee grievances. These challenges are the reasons behind the inability of leaders effectively address employee grievances in many organizations including those in healthcare.

The lack of the necessary competence to undertake grievance management is a major challenge among leaders. Tharuka and Sajeevanie (2020) state that management does not always possess the required competency to handle disputes. This can be because management has more focus on following the law and due process than focusing on the

resolution of grievances (Tharuka & Sajeevanie, 2020). Hence, this demonstrates that the people tasked with the role of overseeing the grievance system tend to fail to do their work. These people within an organizational setup are leaders such as managers, supervisors, or even top leaders like executives. The failure to address employee grievances includes the improper approaches utilized by mid-level management in addressing employee grievances.

According to Opatha (2019), addressing grievances requires a high order of skill for the executive. Therefore, the lack of this skill illustrates the inability of managers to address employee grievances. Devika et al. (2017) explain this inability by leaders as management lacking the required competency of handling disputes. One of the reasons for this inadequacy is organizational leaders may focus more on following the law and due process as opposed to focusing their efforts on addressing a grievance. Additionally, the employers may be too concerned with attaining productivity and for this reason, was reluctant in reviewing the grievance handling practices established.

Silva and Malalage (2021) identify several reasons undermining the ability of leaders to address employee grievances. These reasons include miscommunication, overloaded work, aggressive supervisory behavior, and training gap. Therefore, when there is miscommunication between leaders and employees then it becomes difficult to address grievances. Further, some leaders tend to be burdened with work overload that they lack the time to deal with the challenges that employees are facing in the workplace. At the same time, some leaders tend to practice aggressive supervisory behavior. Because of this behavior these leaders fail to disregard the problems raised by their employees and instead exert their will on them. This study also identifies the lack of adequate training to be a major factor in the inability of leaders to address employee grievances.

The lack of minimal education on handling the issues faced by employees is a major factor undermining the ability of leaders to address employee grievances. Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) assert that there is a need to ensure that managers are well educated concerning the significance of the grievance process and the role they play in fostering good relations with employee unions. The inability of organizational supervisors to work with employees undermines the extent of success in the management of grievances according to Devika et al. (2017). This demonstrates the significant role of a harmonious relationship between the employees and organizational leadership.

A lack of human resource management skills among leaders will undermine their ability to address employee grievances. Devika et al. (2017) opine leaders can only carry out grievance management if they have the necessary people skills. These skills are what will allow them to demonstrate empathy towards the employees' needs. This includes enabling them to meet with the employees and find a way forward to deal with their grievances.

Bureaucratic procedures also contribute to the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. According to Townsend and Hutchinson (2017), these types of procedures will slow down the process of employee grievance management. The bureaucratic procedures tend to be characterized by a considerable amount of red tape. This element of red tape makes it difficult for leaders to immediately meet the needs of the employees and find solutions to their grievances.

Fear of demotion is further a factor that undermines the ability of leaders to conduct employee grievances. Andalib and Darun (2018) explicate that this is especially a major challenge in organizations that fail to acknowledge and address employee grievances. For this reason, leaders who operate in an organization with little

consideration for the needs of employees will utilize the threat of demotion for any leaders that might want to address employee grievances.

Jules et al. (2021) elucidate that because of a lack of an effective leadership style, most organizational leaders struggle with addressing employee grievances effectively, undermining employee productivity. Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) further demonstrate this leadership inadequacy by adding that organizational leadership's failure to address employee grievances is a serious issue causing job dissatisfaction. Similarly, Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) found that the failure of organizational leadership to address the employees' grievances results in high turnover.

Opatha (2019) notes that sometimes managers become unable to address employee grievances because they are busy. This is in tandem with Silva and Malalage (2021) who claim that work overload becomes a factor in the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. Managers are expected to be creative and innovative in dealing with several challenges within the contemporary business setting which makes them very busy. For this reason, they are not able to deal with grievances faced by their subordinates. This includes not having the ability to understand the needs and interests of the employees often. This is an issue that demonstrates there is a need for management to create a proper leadership climate. This means the creation of a climate that enables the employees to feel they can approach management in case they have a justifiable complaint.

Negative affectivity can also undermine the ability of leaders to address employee grievances. This is a personality trait among people showing how likely they experience negative feelings (Garima, 2017). Leaders' negative affectivity hinders them from listening to the grievances of their employees and taking up measures to address them. For instance, such leaders cannot practice grievance management strategies like an open door

as per Garima (2017). These leaders are unable to demonstrate empathy regarding their employees.

The failure to address employee grievances amounts to disregard of their rights. This is according to Andalib and Darun (2018) who reiterates the rights of workers as established in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR in Article 23 (3) asserts every worker deserves the right to receive just and favorable remuneration that will exist in human dignity and social protection. The International Labor Organization (ILO) further defines and recognizes protocols on the rights of employees. These are rights which recognize employees as more than working tools. This means that employees are not only to be controlled but should also be nurtured. This nurturing is possible when their needs are met through effective grievance management.

Solutions to factors undermining the Inability of Leaders to address Employee Grievances

While the above discussion has been essential in illustrating some of the factors that can undermine the ability of leaders to address employee grievances, the literature also illustrates that it is possible to address them. For instance, organizations can ensure better employee grievance management skills by leaders through the recruitment of professional human resources. That is, recruiting effective leaders in the first place. This will ensure that organizations have in place skilled leaders that can meet with the employees and address their needs in the most effective way possible.

Reducing bureaucratic procedures is essential in enhancing the ability of organizational leaders in managing employee grievances. The managers can easily follow through with the process of addressing the various issues that employees face in the workplace without delay. With simplified procedures for addressing employee grievances and reduced red tape, employees can have their needs met with minimal delay. This was

essential in enhancing the well-being of the employees and making them more loyal to the organization.

Additionally, the inability of leaders to address employee grievances can be overcome by following an effective grievance management procedure. Devika et al. (2017) observe that the key components of such a procedure include structure, consistency, considerable involvement, and a lot of conflict awareness. Further, this procedure encompasses strong organizational commitment, acknowledgement, and implementation of the resolution as reiterated by Teetzen et al. (2022). The establishment of the resolution should take place in collaboration with the employees. Thus, it is by following effective grievance management that organizations will realize improved employee commitment.

Training leaders in grievance management is an essential approach to enhancing their skills in this regard. Opatha (2019) recommends relevant managers need some training to identify employees' grievances including encouraging them to formally or informally present their grievances. The training needs to expose managers to provisions such as grievance management including company policy and collective agreement. When management fails to take grievances seriously, this greatly undermines the ability to address employee grievances. Among the key concerns regarding the management of grievances include management treating grievances as an ill motive, delaying grievances, and victimization (Tharuka & Sajeevanie, 2020). In further demonstrating the improvement of the ability of leaders in addressing employee grievances Mulugeta and Pandian (2020) affirms there is a need for training heads of departments and other organizational leaders on grievance management. This training will improve the competencies and skills of these leaders in managing employee grievances. This is through

imparting organizational leaders with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to adopt appropriate styles for employee grievance management.

Further, the relationship existing between managers and their employees needs to be close enough to allow for easy recognition of the employees' needs. At the same time, the employees must be willing to communicate to manage their needs. Aktar and Alam (2021) explain that the reason for this willingness to communicate lies in the fact that people are always able to read minds and decipher any potential needs without any form of direct communication.

Major Research Gaps

This research was conducted with the intention of adding value to the existing literature on employee grievance management and the role of organizational leadership. Thus, the above review of literature has revealed several research gaps yet to be addressed illustrating the inability of leaders to address employee grievances effectively. According to Kamal (2019), research gaps in the literature demonstrate the missing pieces of information regarding a given research issue. Therefore, this shows specific areas with scope for additional research. The reason for this is the research gaps represent the areas that are yet to be explored (Denzin, 2018). Conducting research thus serves to reduce the research gaps. Consequently, the following are the main areas of research that the reviewed literature is yet to fully address regarding employee grievances and the impact and inability of leaders to address them.

Although there is an avalanche of academic research conducted on grievance management (Aktar & Alam, 2021; Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022), there is minimal research focusing on the healthcare sector. This illustrates a significant research gap that this study seeks to address and expand the literature. The arrays of research conducted in grievance management focus on this issue from a general perspective (Silva & Malalage,

2021; Tharuka & Sajeevanie, 2020). For those studies that focus on given industries, none of them are assessing grievance management in healthcare. This demonstrates that while grievances are integral issues among HCWs very few scholars and researchers have given attention to this issue. This study was among the few that will contribute to the expansion of the literature on grievance management in the healthcare sector.

Further, there is a considerable amount of literature conducted on employee grievances including determining the nature of employee grievances (Devika et al., 2017; Garima, 2017; Silva & Malalage, 2021). Additionally, there has been a considerable amount of literature that assesses the impact of employee grievances including the impact of employee grievances on productivity, motivation, performance, retention, and loyalty (Onyebuchi & Uchechi, 2019; Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2022). At the same time, there is research conducted on grievance management (Garima, 2017; Monish & Dhanabhakym, 2022). While there has been much focus on research on employee grievances, there has been minimal attention to the role played by leaders in finding solutions (Devika et al., 2017). This is even more so, with little coverage of the inability of leaders to successfully address these employee grievances. Accordingly, this is a major research gap that the present research study aimed to narrow down. Therefore, the significance of this study was to expand the literature on the factors that determine the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances. This research study provided more insight into the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances and even more so in the healthcare sector.

Theories

Two theories served as the foundation of this research study, Maslow's hierarchy of needs and transformational leadership. The two theories illustrate the impact of motivation on employee grievances and the role of leaders in providing solutions to these grievances.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivation theory. Garima (2017) explicates, that this theory provides insight into the needs of employees that organizations fail to meet resulting in grievances. According to this theory of motivation, there are five key categories of needs existing in the hierarchy of physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Lahida et al., 2017; Wong & Low, 2018). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory asserts a person acts with the intent of meeting their higher needs after meeting their lower needs. One thing to note about the hierarchy of needs proposed by Maslow is one need must be met first before moving on to the next level of needs.

Physiological needs

To begin with, physiological needs are also referred to as biological or basic needs. According to Lahida et al. (2017), these are needs that begin from basic physiological needs moving to the social and psychological needs considered as being at a higher level. Further, these needs entail the elements essential for survival. This is shown in the aspect of the needs necessary for the continuation of biological structures like drinking, sleeping, resting, eating, and breathing. Accordingly, employees need to feel that they can meet these needs based on the remuneration they receive from the organizations they are working for. Wong and Low (2018) show that one of the ways of meeting the physiological needs of the employees is by providing tea or coffee and snacks in the office.

Safety needs

Safety needs are those related to protection from danger, the development of feelings of confidence, and the absence of fear as per Uysal and Aydemir (2017). Some of the safety needs that employees experience include economic protection and job security.

Employees need to attain these needs to maintain their sense of motivation in the workplace.

Love and belonging

Love and belonging are also needed in Maslow's hierarchy of needs referred to as social needs. Lahida et al. (2017) opine that these are needs affiliated with the desire for love and acceptance. Garima (2017) affirms that meeting this need encourages employees to participate in social events. Some of these events include team-building exercises, picnics, or organizational sporting events.

Esteem needs

Esteem needs are those entailing an individual wanting to feel appreciated and respected by others based on several elements such as status or reputation. Wong and Low (2018) indicate, the recognition and appreciation of individual desire. Esteem needs also include self-appreciation and self-esteem and comprise elements such as autonomy, self-confidence, and success.

One of the keyways that employers can meet the esteem needs of employees is to provide them with recognition based on their achievements and contribution to the workplace. For instance, a manager can acknowledge the achievements of an employee in front of colleagues which enhances their sense of self-worth and thus esteem as per Garima (2017).

Self-actualization needs

Self-actualization needs are at the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Despite meeting all the needs at the low levels of the hierarchy people still tend to feel uneasy and dissatisfied. Lahida et al. (2017) postulate that self-actualization refers to the need to emerge as capable and attain one's fullest potential. Employees who attain self-

actualization are more likely to have fewer grievances and feel that their needs are adequately met by an organization.

Motivation is a major factor influencing employee industrial action such as presenting their grievances. Maslow's hierarchy provides insight into this role of motivation. Employees will maintain motivation in the workplace after their grievances are successfully addressed. According to Lahida et al. (2017), Maslow's hierarchy of needs shows that meeting the employees' needs contributes to their retention.

Theory of Transformational Leadership

The theory of transformational leadership defines leaders as those seeking to create ideas and introduce new perspectives to facilitate the creation of a new path of growth and prosperity in an organization. Al-Amin (2017) define transformational leadership as the style of leadership resulting in the transformation of followers rising above self-interest and becoming challenged to move beyond their current assumptions. According to Udin (2021), transformational leadership is the style of leadership that brings changes to the hopes, morals, and values of employees causing them to prioritize common interests over personal interests while motivating them to perform better. Similarly, Ibrahim et al. (2017) define transformational leadership as a leadership style that increases the followers' performance and serves as an effective leadership in enhancing organizational effectiveness.

Zaki and Ali (2022) explain that transformational leaders can foster the development of commitment, passion, and loyalty among employees. At the same time, they can mobilize the employees towards making key changes resulting in gaining the necessary capabilities for moving in a new direction.

A transformational leader constantly assesses potential motives among followers. These types of leaders aim to influence the attention of followers towards better needs. Al-

Amin (2017) explain that among the key traits of transformational leaders is they tend to be deeply inspired by personal values such as fairness, honesty, and honor.

Transformational leadership illustrates the way that leaders increase the interest of their employees by illuminating their understanding of the organizational mission and vision. According to Putra (2020), this is possible because transformational leaders tend to be charismatic and can inspire their followers while also meeting their emotional needs. This management of emotional needs is an essential element of employee grievance management.

The transformational leadership theory provides some insight into employee grievance management. For instance, transformational leadership has some mediating effects that foster employee well-being. Teetzen et al. (2022) explain that transformational leadership has increased levels of positive employee well-being and lower-levels of employee well-being.

Summary of the Literature Review

Therefore, this literature review section provided a foundation for this study. This is because the reviewed literature facilitated the identification of prior scholarship relating to the present research study. Therefore, this will enable the identification of the key areas for additional research. At the same time, the reviewed literature makes it possible to place the research for this study within the existing literature thus justifying the need for an additional study of the research problem. Thus, this literature review entailed the identification, appraisal, correlation, comparison, and contrast of the literature on employee grievances and the impact and inability of leaders to provide solutions that will mitigate them.

This literature review comprehensively assessed employee grievances in the healthcare sector and the role of leaders in its management. This review of literature began

by gaining the initial elements of the research problem. This included exploring the key components of employee grievances and thus their definition. Based on the reviewed literature, there are numerous definitions of employee grievances. Despite this fact, these definitions illustrate the notion of considerable dissatisfaction among the employees because of the challenges they face while doing their job.

This review of the literature demonstrates that there are several causes for employee grievances and more specifically those that affect HCWs. HCWs face grievances based on the demanding nature of their job. These grievances have a considerable impact on their ability to undertake their responsibilities and thus do their job. Further, employees will experience some psychological and physiological effects because of the grievances that they face. The impact of employee grievances extends to organizations and beyond. For instance, employee grievances harm the healthcare sector. The grievances that employees face undermine their effectiveness and thus their ability to contribute to the development of the healthcare sector.

The reviewed literature revealed that several challenges cause the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. These challenges can emanate from the leaders themselves or the organizational culture regarding the management of grievances. The challenges identified from this review of literature include lack of competence and skills; miscommunication; work overload; adopting an aggressive supervisory behavior, the lack of training; lack of education in grievance management; lack of human resource management skills; bureaucratic procedures; the fear of demotion; lack of an effective leadership style; and leaders being busy. Despite these challenges, there are some solutions that leaders can consider to use to improve their ability to address employee grievances. Some of the solutions identified by this literature review include recruitment of professional human resources; reducing bureaucratic procedures; following an effective

grievance management procedure; training leaders; and cultivating a close relationship between management and the employees.

Summary of Section I and Transition

This section highlighted the initial elements of conducting this research study. This included the provision of the introductory aspects of the study by highlighting the background of the study, defining the research problem, the purpose of the study, and the research questions. The significance of this was to demonstrate the extent of the scope of this study. Further, this section explored the nature of the study by discussing the research paradigm, design, and method. This section thus illustrated how this study was conducted. Additionally, the section also entailed highlighting the conceptual framework of the study. The key concepts and constructs determine the total approach to the entire study. The conceptual framework illustrates the relationship between the concepts and constructs. The discussion in this section also included highlighting the key assumptions, limitations, and delimitations considered for the study. This section also entailed highlighting the significance of the study which involved discussing the role of the study in reducing gaps in the literature, biblical integration, business practice and cognate benefits, and developing a summary. In addition, this section conducted an initial review of the professional and academic literature associated with the research topic. Section two details the research approach and design for the study. This entailed demonstrating how the methods selected for use in this study were utilized to acquire evidence and analyze its objectives and address the research questions. Further, the section also provided insight into the overall evaluation of the study including the research methodology, findings, and interpretation of the collected data.

Section 2: The Project

Introduction

This second section provides insight into the methodology of this research study, and the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances. The section began by restating the purpose statement of the study. The section restated the role of the researcher and describes the research methodology. The research participants and population and sampling were further described in this section. The section then highlighted the data collection and organization to be used for this study and data analysis. A considerable discussion of the reliability and validity of the study took place next and a summary of this section was created at the end.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this flexible qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and expand the understanding of the impact and the inability of leaders to provide solutions to employee grievances in the healthcare industry in the northeastern part of the United States resulting in the reduction of organizational performance. The study sought to understand and identify the driving factors and the impact of how leaders in this industry approach the issues and challenges faced by employees, therefore, adding knowledge. This includes the factors limiting leaders' ability to address these issues and challenges. Thus, the exploration of the larger problem of employee grievances in the healthcare industry took place in an in-depth study. This exploration included the assessment of this problem's effects on productivity, job satisfaction, employee turnover, cost of recruitment, and overall performance in hospitals in the northeastern United States.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in a qualitative research study is demonstrated by the action they take during the study. The first essential role of the researcher is acting as the

research data collection instrument. According to Geddis-Regan et al. (2021), the researcher becomes the data collection instrument because they facilitate the data collection process. This means that the process of data collection was instigated by the researcher. Further, the researcher has the role of monitoring and preventing bias. McNarry et al. (2019) explain the researcher takes up measures to prevent bias in the process of data collection. Therefore, the researcher undertook efforts of reducing their disposition for inaccurate data collection and interpretation.

Bracketing is one of the ways that the researcher prevented the issue of researcher's bias as the researcher served as the research instrument. According to Creswell (2009), bracketing is a way for the researcher to separate their experience from what was under investigation. The specific bracketing approach used by the researcher was writing memos during the entire process of data collection and analysis. The significance of these memos is to serve as a way of examining and reflecting on the researcher's engagement with the data (Neubauer et al., 2019). The researcher wrote memos by making methodological notes that illustrated the procedural components of the research and observational comments that facilitated the researcher's exploration of feelings concerning the research endeavor (McNarry et al., 2019). By memoing, the researcher acknowledges and foregrounds held preconceptions concerning the study.

Additionally, the researcher plays a significant role in the presentation of the research findings. In the view of to Geddis-Regan et al. (2021), when undertaking this role, the researcher needs to illustrate a high level of competence while presenting the findings. Consequently, the researcher should have adequate knowledge of creating research studies by seeking insight from several sources. This can take place by reading, receiving training, and asking for help from experts such as professors.

Research Methodology

The discussion of the research methodology included the research design and methods selected for use in this study. According to Hameed (2020), a research methodology refers to the precise methods used in research to identify, select, and analyze data collected to explore a research problem. For this study, the research methodology demonstrated how the research was conducted and how the research questions were addressed. Thus, the discussion included gaining insight into the triangulation method applied to the study. Each element of the discussion of the research methodology also included the rationale for the appropriateness of the selected method.

Appropriateness of the Flexible Design

The study utilized a flexible research design. According to Tomaszewski et al. (2020), a flexible research design offers the researcher considerable freedom in the process of data collection. In using the flexible research design, the researcher does not utilize any form of predetermined answer options. Instead, the researcher utilizes open-ended questions for data collection, therefore, allowing the research participants to explicate that this is a research design that provides the researcher with freedom in data collection. For instance, by using this research design the researcher does not provide any predetermined answer options. Instead, the respondents offer their responses without any influence from the researcher. Accordingly, this made this research design appropriate to study the research phenomenon of this study. The flexible research design results in the collection of narrative-based data (Pultz, 2018). This further made this research design appropriate for use in the study to be conducted. This is because narrative-based data contains considerable details that can explain the why and how of a phenomenon. For example, why are there grievances among healthcare workers and how are they addressed by the organizational leadership? In further demonstrating the appropriateness of using the

flexible research design it was utilized because of its alignment with data collection via interviews. Specifically, the flexible research design is in tandem with the use of semi-structured interviews. Sutton and Zubin (2015) observe that semi-structured interviews are those in which the interviewer provides the respondents with the opportunity to answer questions in their own words. Similarly, the flexible research design was appropriate for use in this study because the researcher becomes free to change their approach to data collection. Thus, this serves to enrich the collected data and provide an in-depth analysis of a research phenomenon.

Appropriateness of the Chosen Method

The phenomenology qualitative method was applied for this study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the phenomenological qualitative method largely concentrates on similar components existing among research participants during the process of sharing lived experiences regarding a phenomenon. A phenomenon refers to providing a picture of an event or situation as experienced by people that have gone through it. By using this qualitative method, it becomes possible to gain some deeper insight into the way that people think. Accordingly, this makes this research method considerably appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to expound on the experiences of others to develop knowledge of a phenomenon. An additional factor that made phenomenology appropriate for use in the study is it is highly descriptive. Through this research method, it becomes possible to describe as much as possible the structure of a phenomenon. The significance of this trait regarding phenomenology is the researcher can describe in detail the nature of the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances in the healthcare industry. Further, the fact that the phenomenological qualitative method requires the researcher to set aside prejudices and prior assumptions makes it appropriate

for use in the study. Thus, this aspect of phenomenology enhanced the objectivity of the researcher while conducting the study.

Appropriateness of the Chosen Method for Triangulation

For the present research study, the qualitative methods for triangulation were applicable. The specific qualitative method for triangulation used for the study was data triangulation. Noble and Heale (2019) explicate that triangulation is a method that involves holding interviews with different stakeholders. The next step is to conduct triangulation by assessing outcomes that are agreed upon by all the stakeholders. The method chosen for triangulation in this study demonstrated appropriateness because of several reasons. It was appropriate to utilize data triangulation because it enhances the accuracy level of the collected by allowing the application of data from varying levels and spaces. Further, using data triangulation for this study was essential in enabling the creation of a more in-depth picture of the research problem. This means the grievances that HCWs face and the inability of organizational leaders in offering solutions that will address them and enhance job satisfaction. Through the use of data triangulation, the researcher was successful in applying different ways of interpreting data regarding the research problem.

Participants

The research participants for this study were healthcare workers from hospitals in the northeastern United States. The study used two hospitals with pseudonyms, hospital one and hospital two. The significance of using pseudonyms in research is to facilitate confidentiality (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The participants selected from these hospitals included frontline workers and supervisors making it heterogeneous. Generally, the participants included frontline HCWs such as nurses. Frontline HCWs are those who are directly involved in patient care. The significance of including these HCWs was to obtain

an everyday lay perspective of employee grievances. Other HCWs included project managers, community health supervisors, and officer coordinators working in hospitals within this region. The inclusion of the supervisory HCWs was done because they are designated to oversee employee grievances. Thus, they are included because they possess the knowledge of the role of leaders in addressing these grievances including the factors that result in their inability to address the grievances. Further, these are the persons holding the designated position for the junior employees and thus fulfill human resources functions such as addressing employee grievances further justifying their inclusion.

Population and Sampling

Population

The research population consisted of healthcare workers (HCWs). The key characteristics that made one an eligible member of the population from which participants were selected encompassed: healthcare workers from the northeastern United States (US); HCWs working for more than a year in the organization; have had grievances or have addressed employee grievances; willing to be interviewed; and good informant that is articulate, and reflective. The significance of this sample criteria was to demonstrate the key traits that needed to be reflected in the sample population to address the research questions.

This population was appropriate for this research study because they represented the HCWs with the necessary experience to provide in-depth details on grievances and their management. Further, this was the population better positioned to offer insight into the role of organizational leaders in healthcare toward the management of employee grievances. This includes the impact of this role and the factors that undermine the ability of these leaders in addressing employee grievances.

The size of the eligible population was 20. The study utilized 10 senior staff and 10 junior staff from the selected organizations. 10 of the participants were selected from hospital one while the remaining 10 were from hospital two. This represented the size of the research participants that provided in-depth data regarding employee grievances in healthcare and the role of organizational leaders in addressing them.

Sampling

The sampling technique used for the study was purposive sampling. Taherdoost (2016) explicate that purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method entailing the researcher to rely on his/her judgment and knowledge to select the research participants. According to Shaheen et al. (2019), the basis of purposeful sampling is the selection of information-rich samples selected must offer an in-depth perception of a phenomenon. Thus, the researcher selected participants according to the objective and needs of the study. For this study, this selection depended on healthcare workers with broad and general knowledge concerning employee grievances and the impact and inability of leaders to address them. The homogenous sampling technique should be applied because it allows for the discovery of the members of the sample that share common characteristics (Taherdoost, 2016). This was essential in ensuring that only persons who fall within the established inclusion criteria were selected for this study. Taherdoost (2022) cautions while using purposeful sampling, it is essential to find ways of preventing selection bias. The reason is purposeful sampling is a technique of sample selection with higher chances of selection bias by the researcher since it relies on their judgment. Preventing this bias is significant in informing reliability and competency thus enhancing the data quality (Cypress, 2017). Further, this bias prevention is essential in enhancing the conclusions reached regarding the findings of the study.

Several reasons justified purposeful sampling as an appropriate method for use in this study. The qualitative nature of this study made purposeful sampling the most appropriate technique since randomization was not feasible. Shaheen et al. (2019) further note that the appropriateness of purposeful sampling lies in the fact that it allows for the customization of the research enhancing the attainment of the intended outcome.

Purposeful sampling was appropriate for use because it lowered the margin of error of the collected data. The reason for this is purposeful sampling utilizes data sources that are a close fit within the research context. Regarding this present study, this refers to the use of research participants that are a close fit to employee grievances and the role of organizational leaders in their management. According to Thomas (2022), purposeful sampling results in the establishment of broader inferences predicated on the sampling technique. Thus, this made it appropriate to utilize for this study. Thomas (2022) opines that purposeful research saves a lot of time during data collection. Accordingly, this contributed to the appropriateness of using this sampling technique for this study. In the same way, purposeful sampling is a cost-effective sampling technique. These two factors make the recruitment of the research participants much easier and faster.

According to Taherdoost (2016), a sample frame refers to the list or map identifying most units in a target population. The effectiveness and efficiency of the sampling frame in qualitative research entail considering its comprehensiveness. This means considering that all the target populations are included. At the same time, it is vital to consider over-coverage. Shaheen et al. (2019) indicate that over-coverage means the listing of sample members more than once or the list contains persons that are out of the scope of the study. In determining the sample frame for this research study, the factors to consider include: geographical clustering ensuring that the selected participants are minimally dispersed; ensuring the completion of the updated contact details of the

respondents; and determining whether the time and resources needed to justify the frame selected.

The basis of the sample frame used for this study was the constructed frame. The constructed frame entails the researcher creating a list of potential participants (Taherdoost, 2016). Based on this, the sampling frame is persons that meet the following conditions: HCWs in hospitals from the northeastern United States; HCWs from senior and junior positions; HCWs who have been working in their healthcare organization for more than a year; HCWs that have formally presented their grievances; HCWs who have been involved in the process of addressing grievances.

This sample frame is significant and appropriate to use for this study. One reason for its appropriateness is the constructed sample frame enables the recruitment of participants from different HCWs professional groups. Thus, the constructed sample frame is essential in enriching the collected data (Taherdoost, 2016). Another reason that makes the sample frame appropriate is it is easier to access. This is because the researcher is a person that works in the northeastern region and thus can easily access the selected hospitals from the region.

Discussion of Desired Sample and Sample Size

After data saturation, the desired sample for this investigation was obtained. According to Shaheen et al. (2019), data saturation occurs when no fresh themes can be gleaned from the experiences of the participants. According to Mocănașu (2020), data saturation refers to the point at which no new information can be gleaned from the collecting of data. Due to the qualitative character of this study, it was necessary to generate rich data by employing open-ended, leading, and probing questions to obtain data saturation (Shaheen et al., 2019). The estimation of the sample size in a qualitative study relies on several factors. Shaheen et al. (2019) identify these factors to include the scope

and nature of the study, the quality of the data received, rounds of interviews held per respondent, and the amount of useful information obtained from each respondent.

Mocănașu (2020) adds determinants of the sample size include: the research topic, questions the researcher needs to address, research complexity, applied methods, theoretical framework, resources and time available. Thus, in determining the sample size to utilize for this study, these are the elements that the researcher considered.

Twenty people made up the study's sample size. According to Shaheen et al. (2019), the sample size is typically modest when using the purposeful sampling strategy. This small sample size is significant because it enables logical and intentional scrutiny of the participants' utility and believability. Additionally, choosing a small sample size in a qualitative research study supports the depth of the material that was gathered. According to Vasileiou et al. (2018), a small sample size is sufficient to provide in-depth information on the specific research phenomenon under study through a thorough interview session in which the participants provide thorough answers to the questions.

Data Collection and Organization

This section provides an overview of data collection and organization. This begins with the development of the data collection plan illustrating how the data was gathered from the research participants. Other essential elements of the data collection plan highlighted are member checking and follow-up interviews. The next part discusses the research instruments and data organization plan. The basis of the discussion undertaken in this section is the interview data collection method used for this study.

Data Collection Plan

The significance of this section was to provide an overview of the data that was collected for this study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018) conducting a qualitative study entails developing a plan to use for this data collection and explaining its

appropriateness. The data collected for this study encompassed details of employee grievances experienced in the two hospitals selected to provide the sample population. Further, the data collected included the role of the organizational leadership of these hospitals in addressing employee grievances. The plan for data collection encompassed the following steps.

Step 1: The first step involved the identification of the questions that needed to be addressed. This is significant because the collected data must be relevant to these questions and thus the research study. This is how the collected data enabled the assessment of the research problem.

Step 2: The second step was determining the kind of data available. This means identifying the type of data that is available for collection. The data that exists can provide answers to the research questions. It is essential to make a list of all the data points that are necessary for addressing the research questions and to center the study.

Step 3: Deciding who collects data was the next step to take. This is essential in instances where the researcher needs to partner with others to collect data. Regarding this research study, the researcher was the one to collect the data and thus the interviewer.

Step 4: Another step in the data collection plan was deciding where the data was to be collected from. This means identifying the venue where the interviews with the participants were held. It was essential to select a venue which made the participants feel safe and comfortable.

Step 5: An additional step that was taken in the data collection plan was determining the format in which the data was to be displayed. For this study, the data was recorded using an audio device. The data were then transcribed onto paper for the researcher to review.

The following reasons demonstrated the appropriateness of this data collection plan. The plan demonstrated appropriateness because it illustrated the researcher's consideration for the wellbeing of the interviewee. This was demonstrated by the plan entailing the selection of an interview venue that made the interviewee feel comfortable. Further, the plan exhibited appropriateness because it explained to the interviewee the expectation of their role in data collection. This was essential in easing their minds because of awareness of their role.

Member Checking

Member checking is a technique in research entailing the validation of the participant to enhance the credibility of the results. Cypress (2017) opines that performing member checking, decreases the incidence of incorrect data collected. Consequently, the collected data becomes authentic and original leading to the correct interpretation for the development of research findings (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). For this study, the process of member checking involved conducting some follow-up interviews to validate the participants' responses for accuracy.

Thus, member checking took place during the interview process. Candela (2019) explains that member checking entailed the researcher restating or summarizing information and then questioning the interviewee to determine accuracy. Further, the researcher can seek clarification to the responses provided by the interviewee (Cypress, 2017). Member checking may also involve the researcher rephrasing the questions asked to provide the interviewee with an opportunity to interpret them differently and provide additional information.

Follow-up Interviews

The follow-up interviews encompassed any new interview questions raised from the responses to the initial interviews. Some of the new interview questions that arose

from the responses to the initial questions included: can you give me more details; Tell me more about that; Can you describe that; Please say more about that; How often does this happen; What else can you add; Was that difficult for you?

Instruments

Interview guides

An interview guide is a list of questions and topic areas that need to be covered in the interview (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The significance of interview guides is to increase focus and ensure a clear organization of the line of thought of the researcher in their role as the interviewer. The researcher does not have to strictly follow the guide exactly (Busetto et al., 2020). This is especially in instances where some line of questioning proves worthwhile in providing insightful data. For this research study, the interview guide encompassed the following elements.

Topic Area: Employee Grievances

List of related questions

- *Can you tell me about your experience working in this organization?*
- *Can you describe some of the key issues you face working in this organization?*
- *To what extent do these issues represent your grievances in this organization?*

Topic Area: Impact of grievances

List of related questions

- *Do you find that the issues you face in your organization affect your sense of productivity?*
Could you share some of the ways that this has happened?
- *What is the impact of the challenges you face working in this organization on your morale?*

- *Do you think that the grievances you have regarding your work have impacted your performance?*

If so, what are some of the ways that this has taken place?

Topic Area: Addressing grievances

List of related questions

- *What is the grievance management policy established in place in the organization that you work in?*

Do you find this grievance management policy to be effective in addressing your grievances?

If yes in what ways is the grievance management policy effective?

If not could you share the weaknesses of this grievance management policy?

- *Have you forwarded your grievances to the management team?*

Could you explain how you did this?

- *To what extent has the organization you work in addressed your grievances?*

Kindly, share some of the ways when your grievances were addressed.

- *What are some of the ways that your organization has failed to address your grievances?*

Can you give a specific example?

Topic Area: Leadership and grievance management

List of related questions

- *How approachable is your direct supervisor when it comes to addressing your grievances?*

- *What are some of the ways that you talk to your supervisor about the issues you face in the workplace?*

- *How does organizational leadership address employee grievances? To what extent is their approach sufficient in addressing employee grievances?*
- *What are the factors that undermine the ability of the leadership to address employee grievances?*
- *What are some of the ways that leaders in your organization can improve their approach towards employee grievance management?*

Data Organization Plan

Data organization in research is a key aspect of data management. The work of Creswell and Poth (2018), in their data analysis spiral, forms the basis of the discussion on the data organization plan for this study. Data organization is significant because it results in the consistent storage of data ensuring an easy location in the present and the future (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The basis of the data organization plan for this study was the creation of a consistent folder structure and standardized filenames. The folder structure was created in a way reflecting the researcher's thinking about the research project. For this study, the folder structure was organized chronologically by the events under study. Thus, the organization of the collected data included the video and audio copies of the interviews filed alphabetically in a standard folder labelled by the date of the interview. For any changes that happened in the folder structure, the researcher noted this down in an organization memo.

The structure used for file names was developed at the beginning of the research. The system applied for the file names was noted in the organization memo as well and applied consistently. In naming and organizing the file names the researcher used the format of the content of the file and the date of creation. The data organization plan also included the use of organization tools. This study used the document management tool for

document organization relating to the study. Allsop et al. (2022) add that the data analysis tool NVivo provides a means of organizing any data collected during research.

Several reasons make data organization appropriate for this study. One of these reasons is data organization saves time. When data is not organized then it becomes a challenge to easily locate elements that are needed for the study resulting in time wastage (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Further, data organization is appropriate because it prevents errors. Through data organization, it becomes possible to maintain logic and consistency thus making it easy to locate and use them.

Summary of Data Collection and Organization

Data collection for this study entailed the use of semi-structured interviews. These are interviews conducted entailing the use of open-ended questions based on a prepared interview guide. The process of data collection using these interviews involved formulation of a data collection plan and data organization. The data collection consisted of five key steps. There was also member checking and follow-up questions meant to ensure the accuracy of the collected data. The researcher also needed to create an interview guide in the process of data collection to ensure the maintenance of focus on the research problem under study. The data organization plan was formulated to bring about consistency in data storage after its collection. This data organization involved the use of files and folders meticulously named using descriptors of the content and date. The significance of this data organization was to prevent errors, make access easy, and save time.

Data Analysis

Introduction

This section entailed discussing the data analysis method and process applied for this study. The basis of the discussion done in this section was the data analysis spiral

advanced by Creswell and Poth (2018). In further conducting the data analysis for the qualitative study, this encompassed using the computer software NVivo. Allsop et al. (2022) opine that NVivo is software that enables the analysis of unstructured text. By using this software this made it possible to organize and code the data, assign attributes, conducting querying, and visualize the data. The discussion of data analysis began with emergent ideas. Emergent ideas were a part of the data discussion on data analysis for this study. This entailed discussing the process for reading and memoing emergent ideas. Further discussion of the data analysis included coding themes, interpretations, data representation, and analysis for triangulation.

Emergent Ideas

The process of reading and memoing the emergent ideas during data analysis entailed the following elements. Creswell and Poth (2018) elucidate that the process of reading the data entails the researcher becoming immersed in the details of the transcripts by going over them several times. The significance of this reading process is to try to get a sense of the interview as a whole. Thus, this can take on a read, reflect, and explore process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher can also scan the text which will help to establish a sense of the data in its entirety. Further, the researcher may conduct rapid reading (Allsop et al., 2022). This reading is essential in enabling an approach to the collected data in a new light.

After reading the transcripts, the process of reflection can include memoing an emerging idea. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), this can entail writing memos in the margins of the transcripts or any field notes prepared. Memos refer to the short phrases and ideas that occur to the reader. Through memos, the researcher is not just summarizing the data but is also attempting to synthesize it into more analytic meaning. The process of memoing the emergent ideas for this study comprised the following steps. The researcher

first read the transcripts to identify major emerging ideas. This was followed by the researcher looking over field notes from the interview transcriptions, and audio to determine what the interviews were communicating. The final step was reflecting on the larger thoughts presented in the data to form the initial categories.

Coding Ideas

The process of coding is very significant in a qualitative study and it entails trying to make sense of the collected data. Creswell and Poth (2018) observe, through the process of coding ideas, the researcher aggregates the text or audio data into small categories of information and then assigns a label to the code. The process of describing and classifying codes and changing them into themes consists of describing and classifying the data (Allsop et al., 2022). The description is about the researcher recounting what they can see from the data. The description takes place within the context of the setting of the study.

At the beginning of the process of coding ideas, the researcher develops some elaborate lists of codes after reviewing the data. This begins with a short list which can be expanded on as necessary. This process is known as lean coding. The final code list can contain an estimated 25 to 30 categories of information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These categories of codes were reduced and combined into five or six themes that were used in the end to write a narrative (Allsop et al., 2022). Thus, themes represent broad units of information consisting of several codes aggregated for the formation of a common idea.

Interpretations

This subsection describes the process of developing and conducting interpretations of the collected data. Interpretation entails trying to make sense of the collected data. Creswell and Poth (2018) assert that within qualitative research the process of interpretation entails abstracting out beyond the codes and themes to determine the larger meaning of the collected data. Interpretation begins with the development of the codes,

creation of themes from these codes, and organization of themes into larger units of abstraction meant to make sense of the data (Allsop et al., 2022). For this study, the interpretation involves the researcher establishing a link between the meanings of the data collected to the larger research literature developed by others.

Data Representation

The process for representing and visualizing the data involved the following components. Creswell and Poth (2018) opine that data representation is the packaging of the findings in text, tabular, or figure form. This study conducted the data representation using text. This was through creating a narrative research analysis and representation. Thus, the data representation involved creating textural description. This entailed demonstrating what happened, how the phenomenon was experienced, and developing the essence of the data (Allsop et al., 2022). The development of the essence of the data took place using a composite description.

Analysis for Triangulation

Korstjens and Moser (2018) explicate that triangulation is meant to improve the process of qualitative research through the use of multiple approaches. Conducting the analysis for the triangulation of the interview data involved cross checking the data and interpretations within and across each participant. According to Cypress (2017), this cross checking can be done using two qualitative researchers.

Summary of Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis. In conducting this analysis, there are several aspects of thematic analysis that were considered such as: emergent ideas, coding ideas, interpretations, data representation, and analysis for triangulation. The emergent ideas were attained after reading and memoing to help the researcher get a sense of the meaning of the collected data. The process of coding ideas

results in the aggregation of the data into small categories of information and labeling them and combining them into themes of the study. Interpretation is trying to establish meaning to the data. This was attained by abstracting the developed codes and themes into a larger meaning of the data. The process of data representation and visualizing was about packaging the findings following the interpretation of the data into a predetermined format such as text. Analyzing triangulation enhanced the accuracy of the collected data.

Reliability and Validity

Introduction

The validity and reliability of qualitative research refer to the aspects demonstrating quality. Cypress (2017) notes that when done meticulously, the reliability and validity of a research result in the differentiation between good and inadequate research. Reliability and validity are essential in a qualitative study which can entail considerable subjectivity by the researcher which will impact data interpretation (Forero et al., 2018; Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Thus, this section conducted a discussion of the reliability and validity of this study illustrating how the researcher facilitated its quality. In further ensuring the quality of the study, this discussion includes bracketing which was instrumental in enhancing the accuracy levels of the study by preventing the researcher's bias.

Reliability

In qualitative research, reliability is the stability of the collected data. Cypress (2017) describes reliability as the extent to which the results show consistency over time and the accurate representation of the total population under study. The reliability of a qualitative study takes place using the following four dimensions criteria (FDC) that include: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Forero et al., 2018).

Credibility is the confidence placed regarding the truth of the research findings. According to Stahl and King (2020), credibility can be attained using the triangulation of data with audio recordings, testing the emerging themes, and ensuring a detailed description of the shared experiences. The significance of this is to demonstrate that the findings of the study are drawn from the original data collected from the participants. Cypress (2017) indicates that credibility can entail the accurate and truthful depiction of the participants' lived experiences. This can take place through prolonged engagement and persistent observation of the context of the phenomenon. This results in the minimization of possible data distortion.

Cypress (2017) opines that transferability can be attained by the use of a purposeful sample and by providing a detailed description and robust data. Additionally, there should be a wide possible range of information via detailed and accurate descriptions of the research participants and their experiences (Stahl & King, 2020). Further, the research should strive to continuously return to the texts.

Dependability was achieved by first horizontalizing the data by the researcher. This was followed by the identification of themes before describing the research phenomenon. Cypress (2017) explains that dependability can be attained by having two expert qualitative researchers review the transcribed material. Denzin (2018) indicates that the use of reviewers is vital in validating the identified themes and descriptors. For this study, the researcher requested a colleague to undertake the validation of the themes.

Confirmability involves the use of the participants' quotes to support the description of the research phenomena. Cypress (2017) suggests undertaking conformability by maintaining a reflexive journal during the research process. Stahl and King (2020) postulate that a journal helps in keeping notes and documenting

introspections daily that can be used during the study. The researcher needs to maintain self-awareness during the process while they play the role of the research instrument.

Validity

Validity is the appropriateness of any research value, methods and tools, and processes applied in a qualitative study. Cypress (2017) elucidates that through validity it is possible to determine the extent of the soundness of the research methodology and the conclusions reached. Thus, validity in a qualitative study illustrates the trustworthiness of the research.

One of the ways of promoting validity for this study was by utilizing triangulation. Korstjens and Moser (2018) opine that triangulation involves conducting the research from multiple perspectives. For the study, the researcher can attain this by conducting data analysis from several angles.

Another way of promoting validity was utilizing a skilled moderator. The significance of using a moderator is to address the issue of personal bias. Korstjens and Moser (2018) assert that the researcher can consider seeking the services of a moderator who will help to ensure that the collected data is genuine and accurate having minimal influence by the researcher's desire.

Validity in a qualitative study can also involve conducting respondent validation. Cypress (2017) reiterates that respondent validation is a process that entails carrying out a test of the initial results with the participants. The significance of the test is to determine if the results will remain true.

Ensuring data saturation is also a technique for fostering validity. According to Shaheen et al. (2019), data saturation is the point where there are no new themes obtained from the experiences of the research participants. Reaching data saturation will entail utilizing open-ended, leading, and probing questions resulting in the generation of rich

data (Shaheen et al., 2019). This will enhance the research validity because it will enrich the collected data.

Bracketing

Bracketing was conducted to prevent the researcher's bias during data collection. McNarry et al. (2019) explicate that bracketing will entail the researcher in their role as the interviewer trying to set aside their existing knowledge of the research phenomenon. Neubauer et al. (2019) note that bracketing separates the researcher from their knowledge regarding the experiences of the research participants helping them remain neutral. For this study memoing during data collection and analysis was the bracketing method used to prevent bias. Creswell and Poth (2018) explain that memos are theoretical notes containing explicit cognitive processes for conducting research. This was useful in helping to demonstrate the extent of subjectivity that the researcher may be applying to the research process specifically in data collection and data analysis. Thus, writing memos is a reflexive strategy through which the researcher can capture his/her thoughts, comparisons, questions, and connections in a qualitative study. Using, memos, it becomes easy to create an audit trail.

Summary of Reliability and Validity

The reliability and validity of this qualitative study entailed fostering its accuracy and thus quality. The discussion above has illustrated that several approaches can be applied in this research study to ensure reliability and validity. Beginning with reliability, the researcher utilized FDC consisting of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The application of this FDC determined whether there is a consistency between the data collected data and the results attained over time. Regarding validity, this is about illustrating the soundness of the research methodology applied in a study. The

approaches that can be used in this study are: triangulation, employing a moderator, respondent validation, bracketing, and saturation.

Summary of Section 2

Section two further reaffirms the nature of the research methodology of this study. This study was qualitative research using a flexible research design and interpretative research paradigm to investigate the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances. The purpose statement revealed the key focus of the study was assessing employee grievances among HCWs and the role of leaders in addressing them. This section delved into the research population and their selection via a sampling technique. The participants were HCWs selected from two hospitals located in the northeastern region of the United States. These are the persons with considerable knowledge and experience regarding employee grievances in a healthcare setting including the grievance management approaches applied by leaders in healthcare facilities. Purposive sampling was used to select these participants because it ensured that the best fit from the population is selected. In the end, a sample of 20 participants consisting of five senior and five junior participants was selected. This section also highlighted the data collection plan and its organization. The significance of this discussion was to streamline the data collection process. The basis of the data analysis process is the data analysis spiral. This consisted of four steps that include: reading and memoing emerging ideas; describing and classifying codes into themes; developing and assessing interpretations; and representing and visualizing the data. The reliability and validity of the qualitative study are also essential. The techniques used to foster reliability are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. As for the validity, the approaches used to facilitate it included triangulation, employing a moderator, respondent validation, bracketing, and saturation.

Conclusion

This research proposal explains the significance of conducting the research, and the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances by demonstrating its feasibility. Accordingly, the proposal has defined the research problem of the study as the inability of leaders to address employee grievances negatively impacting organizational performance. Further, this research proposal has revealed the methodology that was used to conduct this research study and address the research questions. This study is a flexible qualitative phenomenological study that was conducted in the healthcare industry in the northeastern part of the US. Further, this proposal highlights the key research questions that were addressed. A conceptual framework was developed to illustrate the key concepts, constructs, actors, and theories that are relevant to the research problem under study. Thus, this conceptual framework reveals the different elements that integrate to facilitate the research and their relationship to each other. The significance of the research study is also defined in this research proposal. This entailed the development of the main research gaps that were addressed by this research study. Additionally, the significance of the study was illustrated by highlighting the implications of the study for biblical integration. It was also essential to illustrate the significance of this study by highlighting its main benefits to business practice and its relationship to cognate, healthcare management. This research also provided insight into the population of interest and the selected research participants interviewed for data collection. Accordingly, the research participants consisted of HCWs selected from the two participating healthcare organizations in the northeastern US. The data collection method encompassed the use of semi-structured interviews and follow-up interviews with the researcher acting as the research instrument. To prevent bias by the researcher, it was necessary to utilize

bracketing via memoing. The data analysis method used was thematic analysis which resulted in the generation of key themes addressing the research questions.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this flexible qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and expand the understanding of the impact and the inability of leaders to provide solutions to employee grievances in the healthcare industry in the northeastern part of the United States resulting in the reduction of organizational performance. Thus, this entailed addressing the following research questions: RQ1: What is the role of organizational leadership in examining employee grievances within the healthcare industry; RQ2: To what extent do leaders fail to address employee grievances in the healthcare industry; RQ2a: What leadership actions/behaviors contribute to the inability of leaders to address employee grievances; RQ2b: What leadership actions/behaviors contribute to the success of leaders addressing employee grievances; RQ3: What is the impact of leadership styles used in the process of employee grievances management in the healthcare industry; What changes within leadership will enable a successful process of addressing employee grievances within the healthcare industry? The data collected to explore the issue of leaders addressing employee grievances was in the form of qualitative interviews held with 20 research participants half of which were in leadership positions while the remaining half were junior employees of the two healthcare organizations selected for this study. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative interviews are useful in providing insight into the experiences of the research participants on an issue of interest. For the present research study, the qualitative interviews proved instrumental in highlighting the experiences of leaders towards addressing employee grievances. Following the interviews, the collected data was transcribed, assessed, and interpreted

resulting in several key themes (Braun & Clarke, 2022). These themes laid the foundation for the findings of this study regarding the impact and inability of organizational leaders to address employee grievances. Thus, the findings of this research study indicated that there are several grievances that healthcare workers (HCWs) faced in the course of their work. The findings further demonstrated the role of organizational leadership in addressing these grievances. Leaders in healthcare organizations have the responsibility of leading the process of employee grievance management based on their authority as change makers. Further, the findings of this study indicated that leaders sometimes fail to address employee grievances. This reflects the inability of leaders to meet the needs of their employees.

Presentation of the Findings

Introduction

This section of this research study highlights the findings based on the data collected. This presentation of the findings encompasses the responses gathered from the interviews held with 20 participants who consented to take part in this study. This research intended to interview participants that were both in leadership and lower-level employee positions. The significance of this was to adequately capture both perspectives of persons who address employee grievances (leaders) and those who are affected by these grievances (healthcare workers). The leaders consisted of nurse managers, heads of departments, and administrators while the low-level HCWs included nurses, technicians, and other support staff. Accordingly, this research study comprised 10 participants that were in the leadership position and 10 that were low-level employees. The participants were both male and female. Further, the participants were current employees working at the two selected healthcare organizations used for this study. Accordingly, these

participants are referenced in terms of their pseudonyms beginning from participant 1 to participant 20.

Participant	Job Title
Participant 1	Community health worker supervisor
Participant 2	Administrator
Participant 3	Director of strategic planning
Participant 4	Director of hospital operations
Participant 5	Practice manager
Participant 6	Director of Nursing
Participant 7	Systems manager
Participant 8	Office Manager
Participant 9	Director of Nursing
Participant 10	Operations Manager
Participant 11	ER nurse
Participant 12	Clinic manager
Participant 13	Assistant director
Participant 14	Nurse practitioner
Participant 15	Nurse practitioner
Participant 16	Office Coordinator
Participant 17	Pharmacist manager
Participant 18	Operation lead
Participant 19	Project manager
Participant 20	Appointments and promotions coordinator

Table 1. Participant description

The findings of this study reveal that several themes were emerging from the collected data following the process of thematic analysis (Busetto et al. 2020). The themes were analyzed in several ways that include how they relate to the research questions, anticipated themes, the literature review, and the research problem. According to Braun and Clarke (2022), the themes identified from qualitative data encompass supporting them through the use of responses by the research participants to the interview questions. Thus, the presentation of the findings of this study involved highlighting the discovered themes, their interpretation, representation and visualization of data, the emerging relationship of the findings, and a conclusion demonstrating a summary of the findings. Accordingly, the interview guide questions used for this research study are presented in the appendices.

Themes Discovered

The basis of the findings of this research study was the data collected from the selected research participants encompassing professionals from two healthcare organizations following their interviews. According to Braun and Clarke (2022), the findings of qualitative research tend to be presented in the format of key themes discovered from the data as done in a thematic analysis. The role of these themes is to provide broader information including a series of codes gathered to represent common ideas emerging from the data. Identifying the themes involves considering the lived experiences of the participants as an accurate representation of data for analysis (Khokhar, et al., 2020). Further, theme identification for this study was done following data transcription. The transcription took place verbatim to capture the participants' words for the data analysis. Accordingly, there were nine themes identified following the data analysis as shown and discussed below.

Theme 1 Employee grievances in the healthcare environment

Subtheme 1.1: Heavy workload

Subtheme 1.2: Poor response to the effects of COVID-19

Subtheme 1.3: Burnout

Subtheme 1.4: Long work hours and minimum work-life balance

Subtheme 1.5: Inadequate compensation and pay

Theme 2 Causes of employee grievances

Subtheme 2.1: Limited leadership support

Subtheme 2.2: Lack of resources

Subtheme 2.3: Poor compensation policies

Subtheme 2.4: General disregard for employee wellbeing

Theme 3 Impact of employee grievances

Subtheme 3.1: Reduced productivity

Subtheme 3.2: Reduced organizational performance

Subtheme 3.3: Increased job dissatisfaction

Subtheme 3.4: Poor talent retention and high cost of recruitment

Subtheme 3.5: Reduced motivation

Theme 4 Addressing employee grievances

Subtheme 4.1 Open door policy

Subtheme 4.2 Suggestion boxes

Subtheme 4.3: Opinion surveys

Subtheme 4.4: Implement an effective grievance management procedure

Theme 5 Leaders' role in addressing employee grievances

Theme 6 Leaders' actions/behaviors that cause their inability to address employee grievances

	Subtheme 6.1 Fear of demotion
	Subtheme 6.2 Negative affectivity
	Subtheme 6.3: Avoidance
	Subtheme 6.4: Aggressive supervisory behavior

Theme 7	Leaders' actions/behaviors that enhance their ability to address employee grievances
	Subtheme 7.1: Acknowledging the grievances
	Subtheme 7.2 Good leadership style
	Subtheme 7.3: Holding formal meetings

Theme 8	Changes needed to improve leaders' ability in addressing employee grievances
	Subtheme 8.1: Changes in organizational culture
	Subtheme 8.2: Improved employee grievance management policies
	Subtheme 8.3: Accommodating leadership style
	Subtheme 8.4: Training in grievance management

Table 2. Summary of the identified themes

Theme 1: Employee grievances in the healthcare environment

Employee grievances in the healthcare environment are one of the discovered themes in this research study. According to the research participants, there are many issues and challenges that they face as HCWs. These issues make it difficult for them to carry out their work because it creates an uncomfortable and hostile work environment. Based on the data collected from the research participants the most severe employee grievances faced by HCWs are heavy workload, poor response to the effects of COVID-19, burnout, long work hours and lack of work-life balance, and inadequate compensation and pay.

Subtheme 1.1: Heavy workload

Many of the research participants asserted that they experienced a heavy workload as HCWs. They assert that despite their essential role in the healthcare system, there is minimal consideration for their well-being since they are burdened with a lot of work. Heavy workload emanates from a shortage of HCWs according to participant 13 who explains that,

In my unit, we take up a lot of work because we are few. My colleagues and I have had to take up more responsibilities than usual, especially during the pandemic. We had a higher patient ratio than usual yet we were few providers. This was very challenging during COVID-19 when some people became too afraid of infection that they chose not to come to work or quit. At the same time, some of our colleagues were incapacitated because of contracting COVID. This left us with more workload.

The response by participant 12 further illustrates the issue of the heavy workload experienced by HCWs as a grievance as shown below,

As a healthcare professional, I am accustomed to undertaking an abnormally high amount of work. It is insane how we have normalized having overworked healthcare workers. We are constantly drowning in our work taking up the responsibility of two or more people which becomes dumped on one person.

Subtheme 1.2: Poor response to the effects of COVID-19

The responses of the research participants further reveal that the response adopted by healthcare organizations towards COVID-19 and its impact was a major point of grievance for the HCWs. Most of them felt that their employers disregarded their well-being, especially at the height of the pandemic. Participant 11 said,

While the pandemic was truly an unprecedented occurrence, I was disappointed in how it was managed. As a nurse, I became forced to work with infected patients at a time when we were not sure about treatment and the effects of the virus. This is even more so an issue because we did not have PPEs making us become at risk of infection as well as risking the health of our families.

Participant 14 further reiterates the issue of limited PPEs as a major poor response to the effects of COVID-19 by healthcare organizations as it relates to their employees.

The participant explicated,

The lack of PPEs was a major blow to us which showed the poor response by our employer towards the impact of COVID on healthcare employees. We did not have a regular supply of PPEs. This has forced us to acquire PPEs at our expense to ensure our safety at work. Not to mention that the PPEs that are provided by the hospital were largely low quality. There was also an issue of nurses being ignored for PPEs and doctors becoming prioritized instead.

The poor response to the effects of COVID-19 was further confirmed by participant 17 who explained,

Unfortunately, we had to continue working despite becoming infected by COVID. I was diagnosed as COVID-19 positive and despite the requirement that I get at least 21 days of recovery, I was forced to continue working because the hospital did not have enough personnel at the time. So I had to join work immediately after recovering from the virus instead of waiting for 21 days after as recommended.

Subtheme 1.3: Burnout

Burnout is also another grievance that many of the research participants identified. They asserted that the heavy workload coupled with the stressful nature of their work as

HCWs resulted in burnout. This is even more of an issue with the limited time off some of the HCWs received. According to participant 11,

I have experienced burnout multiple times because of working for long hours and also dealing with considerable work pressure. It is not easy working in healthcare because of the long hours and excessive stress associated with dealing with traumatic experiences such as wounded patients, dying patients, stressed family members, and the urgency of care that I am supposed to provide. When you deal with this continuously, it can cause burnout.

The development of burnout as a grievance is also asserted in the response given by participant 20 who explains,

Burnout is something that a healthcare worker should always expect. We work while enduring considerable physical pressure and high-stress levels. This is even more so a challenge when we cannot take a break from our work.

The issue of burnout was further demonstrated by a participant from a leadership position. For instance, participant 8 who serves as a clinical nurse supervisor explained,

Burnout is an issue that we see with those we supervise in terms of higher levels of absenteeism, callouts, and tardiness. We see all these to be symptoms of burnout.

When we see these issues, we try reaching out to the employee to find out what the challenge is and how we can assist them.

Subtheme 1.4: Long work hours and minimum work-life balance

Working long hours and having almost no work-life balance is yet another grievance raised by HCWs who were interviewed. Many of them complain of working extremely long shifts with very few breaks. For instance, participant 19 explains,

Throughout my career as a physician, I have been accustomed to working very long hours. I can work up to 18 hours a shift which can be very excruciating.

Worse of, I find that I can't afford to maintain a work-life balance because of working these long hours. My days off are very minimal and sometimes these days can be interrupted as I might have to urgently respond to an issue at the hospital.

This shows the need for hospitals to hire enough healthcare professionals.

Some of the research participants asserted that they continuously worked for long hours with no days off. For instance, participant 16 explains that,

When you have to work for long hours because of 16-17 hour shifts daily, this can be overwhelming. This is something that happens because we have few professionals working in the unit. In short, nursing shortage. Sometimes we work for hours that are supposed to be split between two professionals.

Subtheme 1.5: Inadequate compensation and pay

Another grievance that the research participants revealed was inadequate compensation and pay. The research participants asserted that they were not paid enough for the amount of work that they did. For instance, participant 2 said,

The truth of the matter is that people are mainly motivated by money. For this reason, it is a shame that the organization continues to practice inadequate compensation and payment to its employees. It is essential for change to take place and for the organization to begin to compensate employees with salaries reflecting their value.

The issue of inadequate compensation and pay is also explained by participant 11 who opined,

Working in healthcare is to an extent a thankless job. While we do understand that this is the life that we chose for ourselves, it would still be nice if we felt appreciated for the difficult and demanding work we do. I have worked in this organization for the last 5 years and during this time, I have not received a

considerable salary increment. This is despite the increase in my job responsibilities. At the same time, the nurse appreciation and recognition in this organization are demoralizing. For example, management buys us pizza and gives us pens during nurses' week. How is that good compensation?

Theme 2: Causes of employee grievances

The interviews held with the research participants also proved to be insightful in revealing the key causes of employee grievances in healthcare. The factors that denied HCWs the opportunity to work in a competitive environment where they can successfully do their work with minimal challenges. Thus, based on the collected data, the main causes of employee grievances in healthcare are limited leadership support, lack of resources, poor compensation policies, and the general disregard for the well-being of employees.

Subtheme 2.1: Limited leadership support

A lack of leadership support is a major cause of employee grievances according to the research participants. Some of the participants asserted that they did not receive support from their leaders whenever they faced issues at work. This is despite reaching out to these leaders, informing them of their challenges, and seeking support. For instance, participant 20 described,

There are times when I have sought leadership support whenever I have faced some problems at work. For example, there was a time a colleague was bullying me. Workplace bullying can be very difficult to go through. Unfortunately, on telling my supervisor about my situation he did not do anything. I felt defeated.

In further demonstrated limited leadership support as a cause of employee grievances participant 16 explained,

It is not easy to get leaders in this organization to help you when you are having an issue. This is even more so if the problem you are facing will have a negative

inclination on the organization. For this reason, I just don't always feel comfortable reaching out to my immediate supervisor when I have a problem. I wish that there was more leadership where I worked.

Subtheme 2.2: Lack of resources

According to the responses provided by the research participants, the lack of resources in their organization was a major cause for their grievances. The participants affirmed that while limited resources have always been a major point of concern, the situation worsened at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Participant 4 explained that,

Most times we find ourselves working with limited resources which makes our work hard. At the same time, this issue creates a lot of conflict among us. This is because we are left to compete for the few resources available to do our jobs which creates animosity and creates a toxic work environment.

In further demonstrating the lack of resources to be a major cause of employee grievances participant 3 said,

We don't usually have enough resources to do our work. This is a significant area of concern for us healthcare professionals. Moreover, the lack of resources is something that undermines our ability to provide quality care to our patients. For instance, we have had to condone taking turns in some areas of treatment because of minimal facilities. This is something that undermines a patient's well-being because it delays treatment. At the same time, this issue of lack of resources results in many other challenges for us in the workplace.

Subtheme 2.3: Poor compensation policies

The adoption of inadequate employee compensation policies is yet another cause of grievances among HCWs according to the collected data. The research participants

asserted that HCWs are paid less than the amount of effort that they put into their work.

For instance, participant 15 explains that,

The compensation policies adopted in my organization are very warranting. Unfortunately, there is no alignment between my work and the compensation offered by my employer. This is even more so an issue because of our limited benefits. For instance, despite working in healthcare our health insurance coverage is inadequate. This is something that had a negative impact on me during COVID-19. I could not receive treatment priority because I was not a physician.

According to research participant 15, the issue of poor payment and overall compensation was most prominent at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The participant responds that there was a lack of incentives by explaining,

There were no incentives provided to healthcare employees despite working long hours during the pandemic and being at a high risk of contracting the virus. Neither I nor my colleagues received any form of monetary support especially when we got infected with the virus because of our work. Further, there were no plans to increase our salaries despite working for long hours.

Subtheme 2.4: General disregard for employee wellbeing

The general disregard for the well-being of employees by their employing institutions is also another issue that accounts for the rise in employee grievances as per the collected data. This is according to the response provided by participant 2 who held that,

I would say that healthcare organizations have very minimal concern for the general well-being of their employees. Because this has been normalized, then it brings about a range of issues that the employees experience hindering their ability to adequately work. At the same time, I think this is a major reason for the

disconnect we see between employers in healthcare and their staff. Caring about the challenges that the employees face at work is essential in building a good relationship with them and reducing their grievances.

Theme 3: Impact of employee grievances

Another theme discovered from the interviews held with the research participants was the impact of employee grievances. The participants indicated that the grievances that they had against their workplace negatively impacted them and their ability to do their jobs well. This is because their grievances undermined their sense of productivity and motivation. Further, many of the participants admitted that they developed considerable job dissatisfaction with some employees considering leaving to find work elsewhere. Thus, employee grievances have undermined organizational performance. A summary of this impact on employee grievances is shown below.

Subtheme 3.1: Reduced productivity

Based on the responses from the research participants, the impact of employee grievances includes reduced productivity. Research participant 7 explained this as,

When employees are aggrieved, they are less likely to be productive. The challenges that they are facing resulting in the grievance will prevent them from actively taking part in their work. Some of the employees might not even carry out their tasks at all because of the reduced productivity.

Subtheme 3.2: Reduced organizational performance

According to the research participants, reduced organizational performance is an impact of employee grievances. For instance, participant 13 explained that,

Employee grievances are a challenge that leads to a negative effect on organizations by undermining their performance. When you have aggrieved employees, you also have employees that are not going to work, employees that

were absent, and employees that do not care for the attainment of organizational goals. In the end, failure to address these grievances will lead to a severe drop in organizational performance.

Subtheme 3.3: Increased job dissatisfaction

The rise in employee job dissatisfaction is also a major impact of employee grievances. When employees face issues in the workplace that are yet to be addressed, they were dissatisfied with their job. For instance, participant 11 explains that,

The grievances that I have regarding my workplace make me think that my employer does not care about me. This is especially when grievances are issues that we have raised for a long time. This causes me to lack interest in my work and thus exhibit considerable job dissatisfaction.

Employee grievances further have the impact of increased job dissatisfaction because of creating an unhealthy work environment. This is according to participant 19 who explained,

The fact that my issues are not considered and nothing is done has made the workplace unhealthy for me. I don't feel happy coming to work. Instead, I am stressed because I continue to face the issues. This has really caused me to develop job dissatisfaction. I don't always look forward to going to work honestly.

Subtheme 3.4: Poor talent retention and high cost of recruitment

The research participants asserted that poor talent retention and the related high cost of recruitment was yet another impact of employee grievances. Therefore, employee grievances result in poor talent retention and a rise in the cost of recruitment because of undermined loyalty according to participant 2 who said,

The challenges that employees face at work especially when they are not addressed in a timely manner undermine their loyalty to the organization. Employees will

always seek to work somewhere they feel valued. When their grievances are disregarded then they will take their loyalty somewhere by quitting resulting in inadequate talent retention for the organization. This in turn will increase the cost of recruitment for the organization.

Subtheme 3.5: Reduced motivation

According to the research participants, the impact of employee grievances includes a reduction in the levels of motivation. Most of the research participants were no longer motivated by their work because of the many challenges they faced. For instance, participant 14 opined that,

Employee grievances reduce motivation in the workplace. When you have grievances that are yet to be addressed by your boss, you do not have an interest to do your job. I try to push myself to work, but when I think about the issues that I am facing at work, I just lose the will to do my best.

Further, the research participants asserted that because of reduced motivation because of an employee grievance, undermines their will to work. For instance, participant 3 said,

When employees become demotivated because of grievances they will do their minimal best. The lack of motivation results in the employees placing minimal effort into their work. These are employees who in the end negatively affect the organization's performance. These unmotivated employees will not care for their work and show no willingness to improve their work.

Theme 4: Addressing employee grievances

Addressing employee grievances is yet another essential theme discovered from the collected data. The research participants in their responses asserted that they were concerned with getting their grievances addressed and thus suggested several ways that

they thought that this can take place. Therefore, some of the approaches to addressing employee grievances recommended by the research participants include using an open-door policy, suggestion boxes, and opinion surveys.

Subtheme 4.1 Open door policy

According to the collected qualitative data, adopting an open-door policy was a major approach towards addressing employee grievances. This type of approach towards addressing employee grievances brings positive results because it makes the employees comfortable enough to approach their leaders concerning their issues. Participant 2 explains this as follows,

As a leader, I always encourage those working under me to feel free to walk into my office and express their issues. This has been instrumental in revealing employee grievances and placing the employees at ease since they gain relief from merely sharing their issues. I always work with the employees during the walk-in meetings to develop solutions that was long-lasting and will improve their experiences at work.

Subtheme 4.2 Suggestion boxes

The research participants also felt that providing suggestion boxes was an approach towards addressing employee grievances. The participants asserted that these suggestion boxes can help managers identify employee grievances for those people who did feel comfortable going directly to their supervisors to air their grievances. For instance, participant 1 explained,

As management, we have placed suggestion boxes in our departments to enable the staff to communicate their grievances. We have done this to help the staff understand that they are safe and that they can forward any issue that they face.

The suggestion box idea allows them to do so anonymously and we can take steps to address their issue in the best way that we can.

Subtheme 4.3: Opinion surveys

Opinion surveys are also an approach towards healthcare organizations addressing employee grievances. This is according to the research participants who asserted that opinion surveys are beneficial in highlighting the opinions of employees regarding the workplace. For instance, research participant 5 explained that,

We find it useful to conduct period opinion surveys to elicit the opinions of employees regarding their work and the organization in general. Through these opinion surveys, we can identify any discontent among the employees that may become a grievance. Therefore, this helps us seek solutions before the grievance becomes damaging.

Subtheme 4.4: Implement an effective grievance management procedure

The research participants also revealed that addressing employee grievances also included the implementation of an effective grievance management procedure. Participant 6 explains this further by saying,

Ensuring the implementation of an effective grievance management procedure is vital in meeting the needs of the employees. Thus, we strive as an organization to improve our grievance management procedure. We do this by making the procedure fast and ensuring it bears positive results that address the issues raised by the employees.

Theme 5: Leaders' role in addressing employee grievances

Among the themes discovered from the collected qualitative data was the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances. All the research participants admitted that organizational leaders were instrumental towards fostering the process of meeting

employee needs and offering solutions to their problems. Some of the research participants indicated that the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances emanated from the fact that they had the authority to lead change in an organization. For instance, participant 5 explained,

Leaders in an organization are the ones to bring forth change. Um, I find that the grievances that we are facing are something that is because of the old ways of doing things where I work. And no one can change this except the leaders. So, we can't do nothing about our problems here at work unless our leaders advance some kind of action.

Further, the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances remains essential because they are the expected facilitators of organizational policies. Thus, addressing employee grievances is an essential element of implementing organizational policies. This is according to participant 9 who stated,

Addressing employee grievances is a component of organizational policies.

Leaders spearhead the implementation of organizational policies. Thus, as a leader in my own right, I have carried out my duty in addressing employee grievances as an aspect of organizational policies.

Theme 6: Leaders' actions/behaviors that cause their inability to address employee grievances

An additional theme that was discovered following the analysis of the qualitative data was leaders' actions and behaviors that resulted in their inability to address employee grievances. That is, there were some actions that leaders in the two organizations used for this study took that made it difficult for them to address the grievances of their employees. Thus, based on the collected data, these actions and behaviors included fear of demotion, negative affectivity, avoidance, and aggressive supervisory behavior.

Subtheme 6.1 Fear of demotion

According to the responses offered by the research participants one of the behaviors that cause the inability of leaders to address employee grievances is the fear of demotion. Some leaders felt that addressing the problems faced by employees in their organizations would mean admitting the inadequacies of the organization as well as their inadequacies. Thus, they feared that they would be demoted from their position. For instance, participant 18 explained that,

I think that our supervisors don't really listen to our problems nor do they show interest in finding solutions for them because they are afraid of losing their positions. I guess they are afraid that by forwarding our grievances they was deemed not to be doing their job and could be demoted.

Subtheme 6.2 Negative affectivity

The research participants also revealed that negative affectivity was a cause for the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. That is, some of the leaders in the organization had a poor perception of themselves and did not know how to deal with negative emotions. Therefore, they could not bring themselves to address employee grievances because of their impact on themselves. An example of this behavior is the explanation given by participant 10 below,

Some people in positions of power have their own personal issues that cause them to fear negative emotions. Unfortunately, dealing with employee grievances is something that will lead to the development of negative emotions. Thus, some leaders lack the ability to address employee grievances because they don't want to deal with the negative emotional baggage that comes with it.

Subtheme 6.3: Avoidance

The use of avoidance was yet a cause of the leaders' inability to address employee grievances according to the research participants. Some leaders perceive that ignoring the problem will make it go away. Therefore, they do not address employee grievances with the hope that this will make them disappear. For instance, research participant 17 explained,

Some of the leaders in our organization choose to do nothing as a solution to employee grievances. They avoid tackling the issues that the employees are facing at work and hope that this will prevent further complaints. However, this only weakens their ability to bring positive change by dealing with the grievances raised by the staff.

Subtheme 6.4: Aggressive supervisory behavior

Some of the research participants felt that the adoption of aggressive supervisory behavior was a cause of the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. For instance, participant 12 explained,

Some of our supervisors and directors are quite unapproachable because they practice aggressive supervisory behaviours. They care more about controlling what the employees are doing than addressing their issues. They will shut down any attempts for a discussion of the challenges faced by the employees. Thus, these leaders will only concentrate on forcing the employees to do their work and refuse to look at issues that will prevent them from controlling the staff.

Theme 7: Leaders' actions/behaviors that enhance their ability to address employee grievances

Leaders' actions/behaviors that enhanced their ability to address employee grievances was yet another theme discovered from the collected data. Accordingly, the research participants asserted that there were some actions taken by leaders as well as

behaviours exhibited that were instrumental in enhancing their ability to address employee grievances. Some of these actions and behaviours included acknowledging the grievances, practicing a good leadership style, and holding formal meetings.

Subtheme 7.1: Acknowledging the grievances

According to the responses provided by the research participants, leaders acknowledging employee grievances in the first place was an action that would enhance their ability to address them. For example, participant 3 explained that,

As a leader acknowledging the existence of employee grievances is an action that will enable us to address employee grievances. I believe that our ability to tend to the needs of the employees can better be effective when we are willing to listen to them. That is, when we open ourselves to hear about their grievances in the first place.

Subtheme 7.2 Good leadership style

The research participants also revealed that practicing good leadership by adopting an appropriately related leadership style was a way of gaining the ability to address employee grievances. That is, practicing a leadership style that is fair and shows concern for those who are led. This is according to participant 1 who noted that,

Adopting a good leadership style is a needed act if leaders are to adopt an equally good ability to address employee grievances.

Using a good leadership style is a further positive action that improves the ability of leaders to address employee grievances because it will enable an in-depth analysis of employees' needs since it makes the leader care. This was explained further by participant 11 who said,

When leaders use a leadership style that focuses on the well-being of those who are led, this allows them to show concern for issues ailing these followers. For this

reason, it is vital for leaders to review their leadership style the moment that they become unable to address employee grievances. It is from this review they can demonstrate a leadership style that recognizes the needs of the employees.

Subtheme 7.3: Holding formal meetings

Some of the research participants opined that the leaders who held formal meetings concerning employee grievances had a better ability to address these grievances. For instance, participant 15 explained,

I am lucky to work for a boss that is open to calling meetings for us to discuss our grievances. I find that this is something that has created a healthy work environment. Through these meetings, we have the opportunity to share our issues and brainstorm on ideas of how to address them.

Theme 8: Changes needed to improve leaders' ability in addressing employee grievances

Another theme that was discovered from the data collected in this research study was changes needed to improve leaders' ability to address employee grievances. Thus, the changes that the participants recommended based on their responses included, adopting a different organizational culture, improving employee grievance management policies, adopting a more accommodating leadership style, and undertaking considerable training in grievance management.

Subtheme 8.1: Changes in organizational culture

Making changes to the present organizational culture regarding employee grievances and solutions is the transition needed to improve leaders' ability to address grievances based on the responses of the research participants. This emanates from the fact that some of the employee grievances have been cultivated by an organizational culture that disregards their needs. Participant 15 explains this below,

Bringing positive change to the organizational culture is essential towards addressing employee grievances. I think that our leaders should lead the organization towards the elimination of a culture that breeds a toxic and frustrating work environment. This I believe will go a long way in addressing many of the issues that we face as employees.

Subtheme 8.2: Improved employee grievance management policies

The research participants also felt that improving the related management policies was the change that could enhance the ability of leaders to address employee grievances. Organizational policies play a major role in determining the direction of change in organizations. For instance, participant 3 stated,

Effectively addressing employee grievances needs to include the implementation of related policies. Therefore, as an organization, we should have a well-thought-out employee grievance management policy. This will offer the necessary guidance towards addressing employee grievances.

Subtheme 8.3: Accommodating leadership style

The research participants also revealed that adopting a more accommodating leadership style is instrumental in bringing positive change to the process of addressing employee grievances. Such a style makes the leader approachable to the employees. Participant 7 explains this below,

A leader who is accommodating is one who makes the employees feel at ease. This is a leader who the employees can trust with their problems. I think that this is a very important way of us leaders addressing the grievances of our staff. We must first be aware of these needs and adopting an accommodating leadership style is the best way of gaining this awareness.

Subtheme 8.4: Training in grievance management

Training leaders in undertaking grievance management was yet the change needed in a healthcare organization that will enhance the ability of leaders to address employee grievances based on the collected data. Thus, undertaking training is necessary to improve the knowledge, skills, and ultimately abilities of leaders towards employee grievance management. This is according to participant 12 who noted,

Some of our leaders fail to address our grievances as employees because they don't know how. They are completely clueless about how to go about it. For me I find that this is the reason why we continue to experience challenges at work. So, training leaders on employee grievance management will result in our grievances becoming addressed.

Interpretation of the Themes

The process of interpreting themes encompasses qualitative data interpretation. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), interpreting data when conducting qualitative research involves making sense of it and deriving lessons learned. It is essential to conduct this interpretation using both creative and critical faculties involving carefully considered judgements concerning what is meaningful concerning patterns, categories, and generated themes.

The interpretation of the themes entailed using thematic analysis. Kiger and Varpio (2020) explain that thematic interpretation represents a process of searching across a data group to identify and analyze the repeated patterns which form themes. This entailed conducting interviews with the 20 participants who had consented to take part in this study. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed in Microsoft Word leading to the creation of verbatim transcriptions. Therefore, this computer application provided a verbatim transcription of each of the interviews. The next step taken in the interpretation was the use of the generated interview transcriptions together with the field notes taken

during the interview process to create a summary to review (Braun & Clarke, 2022). This summary was compared with the data and notes collected during the interview process while performing member checking. The significance of this was to ensure that there was considerable accuracy to the data collected by restating questions as well as summarizing the responses to ensure there was accuracy in the responses provided by the participants.

Following the determination of the accuracy of the collected data, the interview transcripts were uploaded to NVIVO. The process of interpreting the themes involved reviewing these transcripts in NVIVO. According to Allsop et al. (2022), interpreting qualitative data should consist of inspecting, transforming, revising, and remodeling the data to reach conclusions. Further, this entailed reading through the transcripts several times and identifying the frequently utilized phrases (Khokhar et al., 2020).

Further interpreting the themes, involved reading carefully the collected data to corroborate it with secondary data on the research topic. After reading through the data, the process of coding began. Thus, this involved reading each transcript and coding based on the discovered common words and topics. Dollah et al. (2017) indicate that the use of NVIVO makes the coding process easier because it made it possible to have all the related materials in a single place. Therefore, the coding process enables the identification of trends, emerging patterns, and shared ideas (Busetto et al., 2020). Following the identification of all the words, the next step involved creating a node in NVIVO to contain the codes identified. Once all the transcripts had been coded then it becomes possible to identify the common patterns and subsequently themes emerging (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This involved paying attention to similar responses from the participants and making notes. Thus, the interpretation of the themes went beyond the codes and themes to establish the larger meaning of the data. Further, the interpretation of the themes involved considering the following questions, what surprising information did you not expect to

find? What information is conceptually interesting or unusual to participants and audiences? What are the dominant interpretations and what are the alternate notions?

These are questions recommended by Creswell and Poth (2018) in undertaking a thematic analysis of qualitative data.

Representation and Visualization of the Data

This section encompasses the representation and visualization of the collected data. The representation of the data entails packaging what was found in several forms that can include text, tables, or figures. Further, data representation and visualization can include highlighting the interview gathered data in terms of prominent themes and verbatim phrases derived from the interview transcripts up to the point of data saturation. This point of data saturation is the level at which the data is no longer communicating anything new concerning the research problem under study. Thus, the representation and visualization of the collected data entail the creation of a visual image of information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). For the present research, this representation and visualization of the data comprised the application of a hierarchical tree diagram that provided a visual of the data (see Figure 1). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), creating this hierarchical tree diagram involves demonstrating the different levels of abstraction with the boxes at the top of the tree representing the most abstract information while those at the bottom the least abstract themes. Thus, this demonstrated the alignment of the collected data with the relationship between organizational leaders and followers and the anticipated and discovered themes. Additionally, representing and visualizing data using the hierarchical tree diagram was essential in this study exhibiting the inductive approach to data analysis (Busetto et al., 2020). This means an analysis of data that begins from the raw data comprising multiple sources of information which broadens to several specified themes and on to the most general themes.

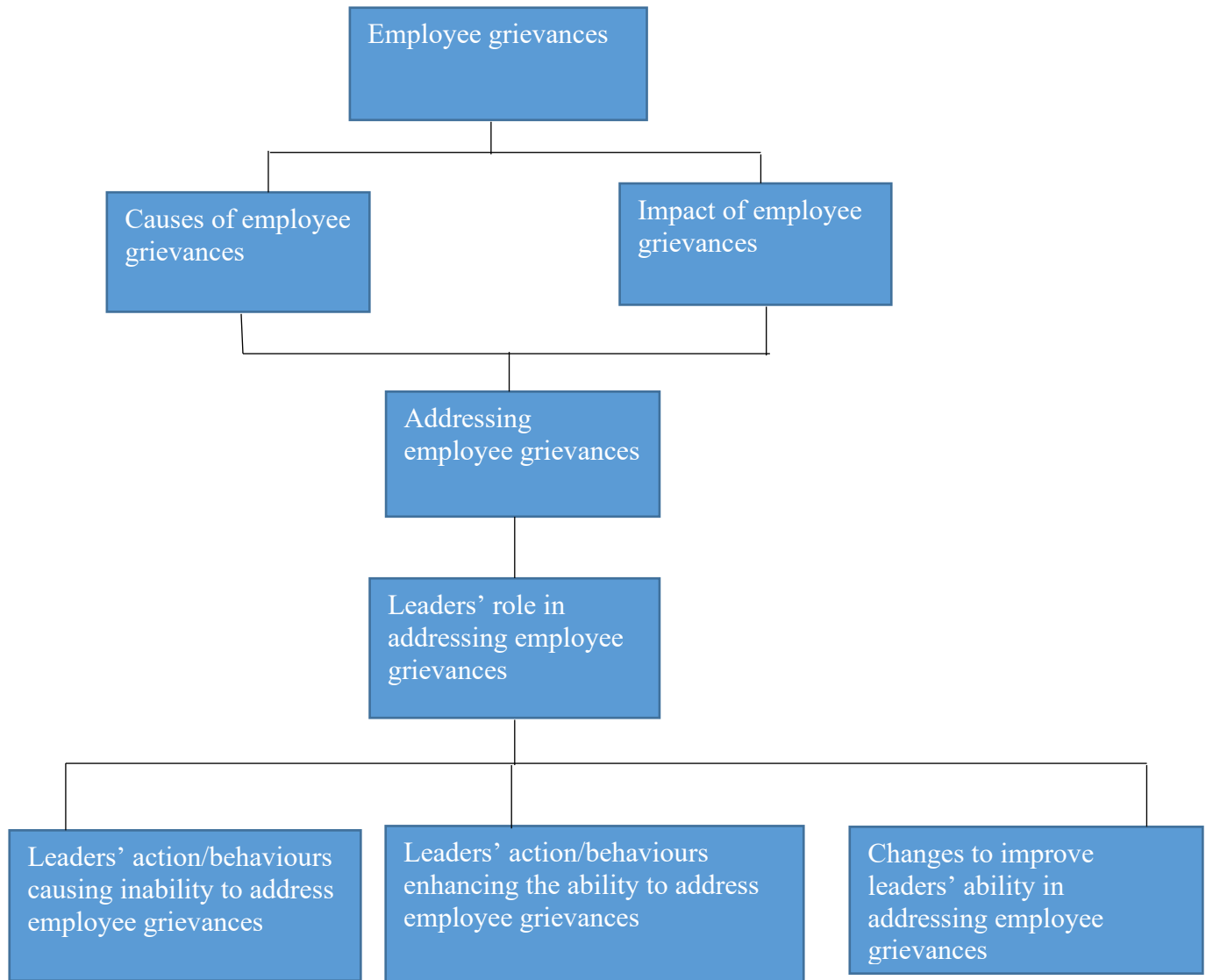


Figure 2. Hierarchical tree diagram of identified themes

Relationship of the Findings

The significance of this section is to provide a detailed discussion of how the findings of this study relate to several key areas from the research proposal. This section discusses how the findings relate to each of the elements of the research framework. That is, how the results of this study relate to the research questions, conceptual framework, anticipated themes, literature, and research problem. The research questions and the conceptual framework were instrumental in guiding the study systematically. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), the significance of research questions and the conceptual

framework are allowing for the development of explicit links that enabled the development of sound conclusions. The anticipated themes were developed based on the key findings from the literature focusing on the main components of the research problem. Analyzing all these relationships was useful in resulting to demonstrating the extent to which the data aligns with the key components of this research study.

Relationship of the Findings to the Research Questions

This section discusses how the findings addressed each of the research questions for this dissertation.

RQ1: What is the role of organizational leadership in examining employee grievances within the healthcare industry?

This research question attempted to explore the significant task that leaders in healthcare organizations had in providing solutions to the grievances raised by HCWs. The results of this study based on the discovered themes indicated that these leaders were at the forefront of addressing the grievances raised by their employees. This aligned with the explanation of the direction of this study that organizational leaders investigate the issues raised by employees' fields as grievances (Devika et al., 2017). The findings of this research study as indicated by the discovered themes showed that there was a strong relationship to this given research question. These findings have shown the role of organizational leadership towards assessing employee grievances in the healthcare industry. This means leaders have the power to spearhead investigations of employee grievances.

The organizational leaders must provide employees with the opportunities to undertake this presentation of their grievances (Jules et al., 2021). This includes ensuring that they are available to listen to the issues and complaints that the employees have regarding the work environment and their job. This was reiterated in the responses

provided by the research participants and particularly the employees. They asserted that their grievances can only be addressed if leaders take up their role towards attaining this. Leaders are the ones with the authority to bring about positive changes in an organization including responding to employee grievances (Silva & Malalage, 2021). The leaders also agreed that they were essential in addressing employee grievances. According to the findings of this study, the interviewed leaders confirmed that a key element of their job is to foster employee well-being. This includes listening to the employees regarding their problems and striving to find solutions to them.

RQ2: To what extent do leaders fail to address employee grievances in the healthcare industry?

The significance of this research question was to review the failure of leaders in healthcare organizations to address the grievances presented by HCWs. According to Townsend and Hutchinson (2017), HCWs continue to experience many challenges in the workplace that denies them a conducive environment to work. The fact that leaders are not addressing their grievances is a major factor that has worsened that has resulted in a poor work environment. The research participants especially the employees asserted that there were many ways that they felt that the leaders in their organizations did not address their grievances. This includes how these leaders responded to their issues (Devika et al., 2017). For instance, the poor response taken regarding the management of COVID-19 and its effect on HCWs is revealed by the findings. The findings also indicate that a poor attitude towards the grievances presented by employees is yet another way of demonstrating the extent to which leaders in healthcare organizations fail to address employee grievances. Some leaders deem employees who raise issues that they face at work as a nuisance. For this reason, they fail to take measures against addressing these issues.

RQ2a: What leadership actions/behaviors contribute to the inability of leaders to address employee grievances?

This question was developed with the intent of analyzing the actions taken by leaders in healthcare organizations towards addressing HCWs grievances and how these actions reduced their ability to do so. Devika et al. (2017) reveal that leaders take up action to deal with grievances faced by their employees. The findings of this research study relate to this research question as they demonstrate several leadership actions resulting in the inability of leaders to address employee grievances in the healthcare sector. These actions based on the findings include the fear of demotion, negative affectivity, avoidance, and practicing aggressive supervisory behavior.

RQ2b: What leadership actions/behaviors contribute to the success of leaders addressing employee grievances?

The significance of this research question was to explore the key actions taken by leaders in healthcare organizations resulting in them successfully addressing employee grievances. The actions that leaders take can also contribute to the successful addressing of employee grievances (Aktar & Alam, 2021). The findings of this study show a relationship to this research question by revealing the different ways that leaders' actions contribute to the success of leaders' addressing the grievances of HCWs. Accordingly, the findings identified acknowledging grievances, adopting good leadership, and regularly holding formal meetings with the employees as actions and behavior that enhanced the ability of leaders to address grievances.

RQ3: What is the impact of leadership styles used in the process of employee grievances management in the healthcare industry?

The leadership style that leaders practice plays an integral role towards how they carry out their role. In this same way, this leadership style will impact the process that they

undertake in undertaking employee management in the healthcare industry (Onyebuchi & Uchechi, 2019). The findings of this study also show a relationship to this research question by revealing the impact of leadership styles. The participants asserted that the leadership style that their leaders adopted influenced whether they addressed employee grievances presented to them. The results indicate that leaders must be willing to adopt an accommodating leadership style. Some of the participants asserted that those leaders who adopted an accommodative leadership were more likely to address their grievances. This includes leadership concerned with improving the employees such as transformational leadership. Therefore, pushing employees to be their best versions possible through transformational leadership includes addressing their concerns. The results indicated other leaders need to utilize participative leadership. These were leaders who the employees felt that they could easily approach and share the challenges they faced in the workplace.

RQ4: What changes within leadership will enable a successful process of addressing employee grievances within the healthcare industry?

The significance of this research question was to review the key changes necessary for leaders in healthcare organizations that will result in successfully addressing employee grievances. Therefore, this question sought to explore how leaders can change their behavior and decisions to better meet the needs of employees by addressing their grievances. The findings of this research study further show a considerable relationship to this research question. This is because these findings demonstrate some of the most impactful changes that leaders can make to better address employee grievances. These changes include overhauling the existing organizational culture that disregards employee grievances. Other key changes needed as per the findings of the study include improving the grievance management policies, adopting an accommodating leadership style, and training leaders toward grievance management.

Relationship of the Findings to the Conceptual Framework

The findings of this research study also show a relationship to its conceptual framework. The conceptual framework of this study illustrated the key concepts, theories, and constructs and the relationship between them. These elements all converge to demonstrate the environment in which HCWs' grievances occurred, the key actors towards this, the results of the employee grievances, and the impact of undertaking an effective grievance procedure.

The relationship between concepts, constructs, and actors in the issue of employee grievances demonstrates the conceptual framework of this research. This relationship revealed that grievances were serious issues that HCWs faced in their work and leaders were also actors in these issues. This relates to the research findings that indicated that there were several challenges faced by professionals working in the healthcare sector. Accordingly, this shows alignment with Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) who noted that leaders had the responsibility of fostering the well-being of their employees. The findings also showed that employee grievances had an impact on the employees which ultimately affected organizations. Accordingly, Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) reveal that employees were loyal, productive, and satisfied with their jobs when their grievances were addressed.

The foundation of this research was on two key theories, Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the theory of transformational leadership. These theories were an essential element of the conceptual framework. Thus, the findings of this research study are related to the two theories of this study. To begin with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the findings indicated that HCWs have needs. This is in tandem with the findings of Garima (2017) that assert, employees tend to have needs that become grievances. Accordingly, the findings of this study revealed that heavy workload, poor response to the effects of

COVID-19, burnout, long work hours, and lack of proper compensation and pay were employee grievances that occurred as needs that affected the HCWs. The findings further showed a relationship to Maslow's hierarchy of needs by revealing that employee grievances reduced the level of motivation among the HCWs. Additionally, the findings of this study show alignment with the theory of transformational leadership. Al-Amin (2017) in their study define transformational leadership in terms of leaders that promote the development, commitment, passion, and loyalty of their employees. Based on the findings of this study, these are leaders who address employee grievances. That is, it is after addressing employee grievances that leaders can develop their employees and inspire commitment, loyalty, and passion.

Relationship of the Findings to the Anticipated Themes

This discusses how the findings relate to the anticipated themes with a focus on the key differences. For this research study, the anticipated themes included: the concept of employee grievances; the impact of employee grievances; the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances; and factors causing the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. Thus, the findings of this research study confirmed the anticipated themes that were discovered throughout the literature.

Anticipated theme 1: Employee grievances

The findings of this study relate to the anticipated theme of the concept of employee grievances. The findings demonstrate that there are employee grievances in healthcare. This aligns with the discussion in this anticipated theme. For instance, Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) demonstrated that grievances in the workplace are a common occurrence. Sebuhero et al. (2021) reiterate the existence of employee grievances in organizations as a recurring challenge.

Anticipated theme 2: Impact of Employee grievances

Further, the findings of this research study relating to the anticipated theme of the impact of employee grievances. Thus, the findings of this study confirm that the impact of employee grievances is largely negative. This is because employee grievances result in poor organizational performance. This was in line with the findings of Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) who asserted that employee grievances hurt the overall performance of organizations. This study confirmed additional negative effects of employee grievances not highlighted in the anticipated themes including reduced productivity, increase in job dissatisfaction, reduced motivation, inadequate talent retention and increased cost of recruitment.

Anticipated theme 3: Role of leaders in addressing employee grievances

The findings of this study also relate to the anticipated theme, the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances. Accordingly, the findings indicated that leaders in an organization played a vital role in addressing employee grievances. This role relies on their actions and behaviors towards grievance management. These findings were in tandem with those of this anticipated theme. For instance, Devika et al. (2017) explain that organizational leaders such as managers and supervisors are tasked with taking up action towards addressing grievances presented to employees. Onyebuchi and Uchechi (2019) opine that right-thinking leaders tend to prioritize employee grievance management.

Anticipated theme 4: factors causing the inability of leaders to address employee grievances

Lastly, the findings of this research study relating to the anticipated theme, factors causing the inability of leaders to address employee grievances. These findings have demonstrated that there are factors that have caused the inability of leaders to address employee grievances in healthcare. Thus, these findings align with those captured in the anticipated theme. For instance, the findings of Aktar and Alam (2021) and Jules et al.

(2021) asserted that the lack of skills, education, and training resulted in an undermined ability of leaders to address employee grievances.

Based on the above discussion, the findings of this research are related to the anticipated themes. There was not much difference since the findings were in tandem with the assertions made in the anticipated themes regarding employee grievances in healthcare and the role of leaders in addressing them. There were some missing unanticipated themes as revealed by the findings. These themes included causes of employee grievances, factors improving the ability of leaders to address employee grievances, and changes to improve the ability of leaders to address employee grievances.

Relationship of the Findings to the Literature

This section discusses how the findings of this study relate to the literature with a focus on both the similarities and differences. Accordingly, the findings of this study contribute considerably to the expansion of the literature on the impact and inability of leaders in addressing employee grievances in healthcare. The findings of this research revealed the key grievances that HCWs had regarding their workplaces. The grievances included exposure to heavy workloads, burnout, working long hours and experiencing minimum work-life balance, poor compensation and pay, and inadequate response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of this research study show similarity to several components of the literature. For instance, the findings of this research study show that there are many grievances that HCWs experience in the healthcare institutions where they work. According to Kelly et al. (2020), burnout is a common employee grievance among HCWs. Dall'Ora et al. (2020) in their research reveal that a demanding workload is a grievance among HCWs leading to burnout. This demanding workload causes HCWs to work for long hours (Kelly et al., 2020). The similarity between the findings of this study

and the literature is also illustrated by El-Fatah et al. (2018) who note that salaries are a major issue resulting in employee grievances within healthcare organizations.

The findings of this research study also reveal that employee grievances have negative consequences for organizations. The impact identified by the research participants included reduced productivity, reduced organizational performance, increased job dissatisfaction, poor talent retention and high cost of recruitment, and reduced motivation. These findings align with those in literature illustrating the impact of employee grievances on organizations. For instance, the findings of Aktar and Alam (2021) show that grievances have the potential to disrupt the way that employees carry out their work. This includes impacting their productivity. The study by Silva and Malalage (2021) shows that heavy workloads conducted by employees will negatively affect their sense of morale and motivation. According to the study conducted by Albashiti et al. (2021), employee grievances result in reduced productivity because they undermine creativity and effectiveness in the employees.

Additionally, the findings of this research study explored the causes of employee grievances. Accordingly, the causes of employee grievances as per the findings of this study include limited leadership support, lack of resources, poor compensation policies, and the general disregard for employee wellbeing. These findings show similarity with those in the literature. For instance, Singhal et al. (2017) assert that some causes of employee grievances include the incorrect interpretation of organizational policies. According to Devika et al. (2017), employee grievances occur because of the differences between the expectations of the employees and management practices. Accordingly, the findings demonstrate this in terms of the disregard for employees' well-being by management. The findings of Silva and Malalage (2021) also indicate some similarity to the findings by asserting that some causes of employee grievances are low wages and

bonuses and differences in policies and practices. The findings of Jules et al. (2021) reiterate these by elucidating that the causes of grievances in organizations include resource constraints and an unfair reward system.

Further, the findings of this research study have revealed that leaders are essential in facilitating the process of employee grievance management. This is because these leaders have the power to make this process either successful or result in its failure through their actions and adopted leadership style. Some of the ways that leaders make employee grievance management successful is via their positive actions and behaviors. The identified positive actions and behavior include using a good leadership style, holding formal meetings, and acknowledging employee grievances. These findings show a difference from the literature which fails to investigate the factors enabling organizational leaders to address employee grievances. Thus, this was a major research gap that this study filled leading to the expansion of the literature on the role of leaders in addressing employee grievances. However, the negative actions taken by leaders towards employee grievances undermine the ability of organizational leaders to address employee grievances. These negative actions according to the research findings are being fearful of demotion, negative affectivity, avoiding grievances, and practicing aggressive supervisory behavior. The findings demonstrate similarity to the literature. Tharuka and Sajeevanie (2020), indicate that leaders through various departments in organizations address employee grievances. Further, the findings of Dhanabhakym and Monish (2022) show that leaders address employee grievances through action that promotes the well-being of the employees. This also aligns with the research conducted by Jules et al. (2021) who opine that leaders are needed to meet the needs of the employees. This process of meeting the needs of their employees encompasses addressing their grievances.

At the same time, the findings of this research study illustrate some differences concerning the literature. Accordingly, these differences are essential in demonstrating that this research study has contributed to the expansion of the literature on the inability and impact of organizational leadership towards addressing employee grievances. One of the key areas of the difference shown by the findings of the present study is the changes necessary for improving the ability of leaders to address employee grievances. This was also another area that is not strongly explored in the existing literature. Hence, the findings of this study have revealed that the changes necessary to enhance the ability of leaders to address employee grievances are changing the organizational culture, improved employee grievance management policies, an accommodating leadership style, and training in grievance management.

Relationship of the Findings to the Problem

The findings of this research study also relate to the problem being studied. The problem being studied was the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances leading to reduced organizational performance. Based on the findings of this research study, there is an impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances which can reduce organizational performance. The impact of leaders addressing employee grievances was both positive and negative according to the findings. When leaders successfully addressed employee grievances, this has the impact of improving employees' motivation and commitment to the organization. However, if leaders failed to address employee grievances, the impact was reduced productivity, motivation, performance, and increased job dissatisfaction. The inability of leaders to address employee grievances according to the findings was due to their actions and behaviors. The findings of this study revealed these actions and behaviors to include the feat of demotion, negative affectivity, avoidance, and aggressive supervisory behavior.

Summary of the Findings

The findings of this research study addressed the problem being studied, the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances resulting in reduced organizational performance. Thus, the results revealed that organizational leaders impacted the process of employee grievance management. They did this positively when they successfully addressed employee grievances or negatively when they failed to do so. This failure to address employee grievances was because of the inability of leaders caused by their actions and behavior. This study revealed this to be fear of demotion, negative affectivity, avoidance, and aggressive supervisory behavior.

Further, the findings of this research study addressed the purpose of the research. The purpose of this flexible qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and expand the understanding of the impact and inability of leaders to provide solutions to employee grievances in the healthcare industry in the northeastern part of the United States leading to reduced organizational performance. The findings of this study illustrated the impact of leaders meeting employees' needs by addressing their grievances. This included asserting that the inability of leaders to address employee grievances resulted in negative effects on the affected organization.

Additionally, the findings of this research study addressed the research questions. Each element of the research questions was addressed as discussed in the emerging relationships between the findings and the research questions. The findings addressed the first research question by revealing the significant role played by the organizational leadership towards assessing employee grievances. Leaders have the authority to spearhead the grievance management process in an organization. Further, the findings addressed the second research question by demonstrating the extent to which leaders failed to address employee grievances in the healthcare industry. This was due to factors in the

form of leaders' actions and behaviors that caused their inability to address employee grievances. The third research question was also addressed by the research findings which indicated that accommodating leadership was essential to promote effective management of employee grievances. Finally, the fourth research question was also addressed by the research findings which revealed the main changes necessary within leadership to allow for the successful process of addressing employee grievances in healthcare. These changes according to the findings include a better organizational culture towards grievances, improved employee grievance management policies, an accommodating leadership style, and training leaders towards employee grievance management.

Based on the discussion that has taken place in this section, there are some key conclusions drawn from the findings. The first conclusion is HCWs are exposed to numerous issues that result in grievances such as heavy workload, poor response to the effect of COVID-19, burnout, long work hours and a lack of work-life balance, and inadequate compensation and pay. These issues are mainly caused by the lack of leadership support, lack of resources, adoption of poor compensation policies, and the general disregard for the employees' well-being. The second conclusion of this research is employee grievances have a negative impact on organizations. The findings revealed that employee grievances reduced employees' productivity, organizational performance, and motivation, increased job satisfaction, and caused poor talent retention while increasing the cost of recruitment. This impact of employee grievances leads to the third conclusion of this research, organizations need to address employee grievances. Leaders play a central role in addressing employee grievances. The actions and behavior of these leaders will enhance or undermine their ability to address employee grievances. Positive actions and behavior such as acknowledging grievances, practicing a good leadership style, and holding formal meetings will enhance the ability of organizational leaders to address

employee grievances. However, negative actions and behaviors such as the fear of demotion, negative affectivity, avoidance, and aggressive supervisory behavior will undermine the ability of leaders to address employee grievances. Finally, this study concludes that there are changes that can be implemented to improve the ability of leaders to address employee grievances in healthcare organizations. These include changing the organizational culture, improving employee grievance management policies, adopting an accommodating leadership style, and training leaders on grievance management.

Application to Professional Practice

Introduction

The findings of this research study have potential applications to healthcare management. This is because these findings demonstrate the key ways of improving employee grievance management by enhancing the ability of leaders towards addressing the grievances raised by employees. This section highlights the relevant ways of improving business practice in healthcare and the extent of application to professional practice in healthcare. Thus, the discussion encompasses ways of improving general business practice and potential application strategies based on the findings of this dissertation.

Improving General Business Practice

The results of the conducted study are useful in improving the general business practice in the healthcare sector because of several reasons. One of these reasons is, these results indicate that improving the working conditions of healthcare workers is essential towards enhancing the general business practice in healthcare. Jules et al. (2021) explain that improving the working conditions of employees, goes a long way in enhancing their commitment to work. Thus, the results of this study improve the general business practice in healthcare by promoting the enhancement of the working conditions of HCWs which

enhances employees' commitment. Accordingly, working in good conditions is instrumental in leading to the employees providing quality services to clients (Gachui et al., 2020). In this case, providing good working conditions for HCWs ensures that they provide quality care to patients.

Further, the results of this study contribute towards the improvement of general business practice because they can enable ways of improving motivation among the employees by addressing their grievances. According to Aggarwal et al. (2014), providing employees with satisfactory solutions to the problems that they face in the workplace is instrumental towards improving general business practices. This is because with fewer challenges faced in the workplace; the employees will focus more on their work (Jules et al., 2021). At the same time, addressing employee grievances is useful in enhancing morale among employees. Garima (2017) explains that an increased level of morale leads to improved teamwork therefore positively impacting employees' performance. Thus, focused employees will pay attention to their work including improving the quality of care that they provide to patients and enhancing the general business practice in healthcare.

Additionally, the results of this study lead to the improvement of the general business practice in healthcare since they demonstrate the best ways that leaders in healthcare organizations can undertake their role towards addressing employee grievances. Garima (2017) elucidates that leaders need to work together with employees towards understanding the nature of their needs and implementing the necessary solutions. Therefore, when leaders address employee grievances this enhances the employees' trust in the organization. Aktar and Alam (2021) assert that it is this trust that enhances employees' loyalty to the organization. Most employees feel a sense of safety and care when they can approach leaders with their troubles. At the same time, these types of leaders exhibit a good leadership style. That is, an accommodating leadership style in

which the employees work with a leader who is reasonable and accepting of his/her shortcomings including their organization (Devika et al., 2017). Consequently, loyal employees result in better general business practices for organizations. This includes those employees in the healthcare sector.

Furthermore, the results of this study lead to the improvement of the general business practice because they provide some understanding towards the promotion of an organizational culture that meets the needs of employees. According to Garima (2017), that is an organizational culture in which employees' well-being becomes prioritized. This type of organizational culture will contribute to the enhancement of general business practice by enabling healthcare organizations to attract the best talent. Qualified HCWs with excellent skills will want to work in organizations in which they feel motivated because their needs are addressed. Thus, the results of this study offer some insight into the opportunities necessary for addressing employee grievances in healthcare thus resulting in the general business practice. Healthcare organizations can utilize these results to improve the ability of leaders to address HCWs' grievances and thus improve the general working conditions. Devika et al. (2017) affirm that this will cultivate an organizational culture in which leaders take a prominent role in ensuring the well-being of the employees which translates to a well-performing organization. Thus, a culture that places the needs of employees fosters business practices that are beneficial for the growth of an organization.

Potential Application Strategies

There are some potential application strategies that organizations in healthcare can use to leverage the findings of this study. This demonstrates that the findings of a research study are useful towards the development of strategies that can bring positive change to an organization. Accordingly, the situation in organizations in the healthcare sector as per this

study illustrates that embracing change is the approach necessary towards improving the working conditions of employees. This change should begin with the organizational leadership's approach towards addressing employee grievances (Tharuka & Sajeevanie, 2020). Accordingly, this encompasses modifying and re-designing the current employee grievance management strategies to implement new strategies that will lead to success towards improving the working environment (Singhal, et al., 2017). Hence, the following are the changes that should occur in healthcare organizations representing the potential application strategies leveraged from the findings of the current study.

The improvement of the overall grievance management policies is one of the potential application strategies that healthcare organizations can use to leverage the findings of the present study. The findings of this study have shown that leaders must be willing to advocate for the adoption of effective grievance management policies as a means of addressing employee grievances. Aktar and Alam (2021) explain that the use of effective employee grievance management policies encompasses the implementation of the right policies. Adopting the right policies in organizations refers to those policies that prioritize the needs of employees as well instead of those organizations alone (Garima, 2017). This was instrumental in ensuring that the employees align their goals with those organizations. The reason is, the right policies towards grievance management will enable the successful address of grievances.

Another potential application strategy healthcare organizations can utilize to leverage the findings of this study is the improvement of the ability of leaders to address employee grievances. That is, the finding of this study provides considerable insight towards ways of improving the ability of leaders towards handling employee grievances. For instance, the study recommends training leaders as a means of enhancing their ability to address employee grievances. Silva and Malalage (2021) note that training is

instrumental in enhancing knowledge, skills, and abilities. Thus, leaders who undergo training can demonstrate more effective approaches towards employee grievance management.

Another potential application strategy of the findings of this research study to healthcare organizations includes prompting leaders to practice favorable leadership styles. Devika et al. (2017) indicate that favorable leadership styles are integral in demonstrating to the employees the existence of approachable leaders. These are the types of leaders that can listen to the employees' problems as presented in their grievances. An example of such a leadership style is an accommodating leadership style. An accommodating leader is approachable and shows a willingness to listen to employees. Accordingly, this type of leadership style goes a long way in meeting the needs of employees. Further, transformational leadership is yet another leadership style that can serve as a potential application strategy based on the research findings of this study. Al-Amin (2017) assert that transformational leadership entails positively influencing employees. This positive influence is possible when the employees feel safe and comfortable in the workplace. Thus, being a transformational leader includes enhancing the well-being of the employees by addressing their grievances.

The promotion of a healthy workplace environment is yet another potential application strategy that healthcare organizations can make use of towards leveraging the findings of this study. The significance of this strategy is to enable positive employee well-being in the workplace. Attaining a healthy workplace encompasses addressing employee grievances. Jules et al. (2021), indicate that addressing grievances eliminates many of the challenges that employees face in the workplace. Hence, by addressing these challenges, the employees will work in an environment that is less stressful. This is an

element that will result in the improvement of organizational performance because of the increased productivity among the employees following an improved work environment.

Summary

The above section has proven useful in highlighting how the results of this study contribute towards the improvement of the general business practice in healthcare organizations. Based on the discussion this improvement of the general business practice takes place in the form of improvement of working conditions, improved motivation among the employees, increased leadership role in employee grievance management, and promotion of organizational culture considering employees' needs. Further, the section has demonstrated the potential application strategies that can be leveraged from the research findings. Accordingly, these application strategies include embracing change to improve the working conditions of employees, improving the overall grievance management policies, enhancing the ability of leaders to address employee grievances, and promoting a healthy workplace environment.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study has proven to be insightful regarding the impact and inability of organizational leaders towards addressing employee grievances. While this is the case, there remain many areas of concern not addressed by the findings of this research study. Accordingly, the following discussion highlights these areas and recommends them for further study.

The first recommendation for further study provided by this study regards the training of leaders towards addressing employee grievances. One of the key findings of this research study is there is a need for leaders to receive training towards employee grievance management. This was instrumental in bringing about positive change towards their actions and behaviors as it relates to addressing employee grievances. Thus, it is

essential to conduct further research into the best ways of training organizational leaders towards employee grievance management and the impact of this training in improving their abilities in this regard.

The second recommendation for further study encompasses the use of a larger sample size to investigate the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances. Accordingly, this should entail conducting a quantitative research study with a large sample size. Additionally, the use of a larger sample size was instrumental in fostering the generalization of the research findings to the healthcare system. Further, in expanding the sample size, consideration should be given towards

The final recommendation for further study is there should be additional research into how leaders can collaborate with employees towards addressing their grievances. More research needs to be conducted regarding the coordination of efforts by the employees and leaders in addressing grievances. The findings of this study largely demonstrate how leaders address employee grievances. However, this needs to be a coordinated process with employees for adequate results.

Reflections

Introduction

Carrying out this research study and its emergent findings has had an impact on me as a person and a professional. In this section, I undertake a reflection on conducting this research study. Accordingly, the focus of the reflection is mainly on the impact of conducting this study on both my personal and professional growth.

Personal and Professional Growth

The findings of this research study have contributed to an extent towards my personal growth. This study and its findings have improved my sensitivity towards the needs of others. The employee grievances demonstrate that people are exposed to various

issues and challenges that make it difficult for them to undertake their work. For this reason, addressing the grievances of employees is vital towards enabling their well-being. Thus, this is something that I want to strive to integrate into my life. That is, recognizing the problems of the people around me and attempting to alleviate them, therefore, contributing to the well-being of people. At the same time, the findings of this research study contribute towards my personal growth because they show that I need to utilize my position as a leader to improve those around me. This includes the position of leadership in my family. In this regard, I can use the findings of this study to cultivate my ability to transform the lives of my family members that look up to me as a leader.

Additionally, the findings of this research study contribute considerably to my professional growth. I chose to explore the issue of employee grievances and the role of leaders in addressing these grievances because of my involvement in leadership within the healthcare sector as well as the fact that I am an employee. Thus, employee grievances are an issue impacting me both as a leader and an employee. As an employee, I face various challenges in the workplace that undermine my ability to work. Consequently, the findings of this study enable me to realize that addressing these issues was instrumental towards the improvement of my performance. At the same time, being in a position where I am tasked with overseeing the well-being of others allows me to gain growth from the findings of this study. As a leader, I need to have a better ability to address the needs of those who work under me.

Biblical Perspective

The findings of this research study provide some biblical perspectives regarding leadership and the management of grievances. Therefore, the Bible provides a foundation for people to understand their life. This includes work life and the best approaches for leaders in organizations to ensure the well-being of everyone. The Bible demonstrates a lot

of instances of leadership and the best way that leaders can enhance their ability to serve others. For instance, the findings of this study demonstrate that leaders play a vital role in fostering employee well-being. In this regard, this entails the leader demonstrating considerable fairness. God, grants us this ability to be fair and show kindness to others. An example of this is given in Romans 8:28 which states,

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”

According to the verse above a Christian leader needs to demonstrate a true and faithful relationship with God. It is through working and living with God that it becomes possible to carry out his purpose for us. This relationship with God will exude to others. This includes those persons that we work with such as employees who we oversee. Addressing employees' grievances is a means of cultivating a good relationship with God. It is a means of leaders working for the good of those who love God.

In further demonstrating the biblical perspective of the findings of this research study, John 10:11 provides considerable insight. The verse says,

“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep”

The above verse resonates with the findings of this research study concerning the role of leaders in promoting the well-being of employees. That is, leaders must be willing to sacrifice themselves for the well-being of their employees. As in the verse, Jesus asserts the significance of being a good servant to include willingness to place others before him/herself. Therefore, organizational leaders in the healthcare sector must remember that they are there to work and serve their employees and look after them as a shepherd looks after the flock.

Further, the findings of this research study indicate the need for leaders to show compassion to their employees. That is, reacting positively to the grievances that the

employees bring forth. This demonstrates considerable fairness and commitment to patients as well as a willingness to deal with their issues. A reiteration of this is in Ezekiel 34:16 which says,

“I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.”

Based on the above Bible verse, searching for the lost and bringing back the strays can be interpreted as guiding employees that might have reduced commitment to the organization. This reduced commitment to the organization demonstrates employees that are straying away from the organization. According to Aktar and Alam (2021) addressing employee grievances is useful in enhancing their extent of commitment to the organization. For this reason, leaders must actively find ways of improving employees' commitment to their organizations, by responding to their needs and other concerns. At the same time, the verse also emphasizes the need to demonstrate justice. Responding to and addressing employee grievances is a means of fostering justice. One of the key reasons for this is, addressing the issues that the employees experience in the workplace illustrates a sense of accountability in an organization. It shows the organization's commitment towards policies that allow the safety and comfort of the employees.

Summary

In conducting this research study, I have gained a lot of lessons that have impacted me personally and professionally. On a personal level, I have learnt that I should demonstrate considerable sensitivity towards the needs of others. In the same way, I need to take up any position in leadership to address the challenges that those around me are facing. On a professional level, the lesson that I have learned is a leader should always be willing to meet the needs of employees. This includes listening to their grievances and

actively seeking solutions to them. At the same time, this study provides me with some considerable biblical perspective regarding the role of leadership and meeting the needs of those who we oversee. The Bible shows a lot of examples of leaders addressing the needs of those who they lead. Further, it also shows the need to show fairness in enabling the well-being of others. Accordingly, the findings of this research study intersect with the teachings of the Bible.

Summary of Section 3

This third section of this dissertation encompassed highlighting the application of the research findings to professional practice. The section begins with the presentation of the research findings based on the qualitative data collected from 20 research participants comprised of 10 leaders and 10 junior members of staff from the two selected healthcare organizations. Thus, the findings of this research study comprise nine identified themes: employee grievances in the healthcare environment; causes of employee grievances; the impact of employee grievances; addressing employee grievances; leaders' role in addressing employee grievances; leaders' actions/behaviours that cause their inability to address employee grievances; leaders' actions/behaviours that enhance their ability to address employee grievances; and changes needed to improve leaders' ability in addressing employee grievances. These themes were discussed in this section and linked back to the research study by demonstrating their relationship to the research questions, conceptual framework, anticipated themes, and literature. Accordingly, there was a strong relationship between the themes and these elements. Further, this section encompassed demonstrating the application of the research findings to professional practice. Thus, the findings of this study demonstrate relevance to professional practice because they assert the need to enhance the well-being of HCWs as a method of improving the healthcare environment by addressing their grievances. Addressing employee grievances through

positive action and behaviors by organizational leaders serves to improve their commitment, loyalty, productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction contributing positively to organizational performance.

Summary and Study Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to investigate the impact and inability of organizational leaders on addressing employee grievances. The study was divided into three main sections. Section one of the study was the foundation of the study. The significance of this section was to provide a detailed discussion of the nature of the study, conceptual framework, the definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, and conduct a review of the professional and academic literature. The research questions developed focused on the problem of leaders' inability to address employee grievances, therefore, guiding the direction of the study. The conceptual framework was instrumental in providing the necessary visual representation of the research problems and their relationship to the concepts, theories, actors, and constructs. A review of the professional and academic literature was conducted in this section to highlight what was known so far regarding the research problem and the key gaps that this study addressed as demonstrated by the research findings.

Section two of the study was the research project. This section reviewed the role of the researcher, the research methodology applied, and the selection of the participants, data collection and organization, and data analysis. Regarding the role of the researcher in this study was to act as the research instrument. In discussing the research methodology, this involved highlighting the appropriateness of the flexible design, chosen method, and method applied for triangulation. The research participants were healthcare workers selected from hospitals in northeastern United States. The participants were selected from a population of healthcare workers from northeastern United States (US) with the

following traits: HCWs working for more than a year in the organization; have had grievances or have addressed employee grievances; willing to be interviewed; and good informant that is articulate, and reflective. Using purposive sampling. The data collection plan involved five main steps consisting of: identification of the research questions; determining the available data; deciding who collects the data; deciding where data was to be collected from; and determining the data format. This section also involved the development of the research gap to help the researcher remain focused on the aim of the study. Data analysis took place using thematic analysis resulting in the identification of several themes. Further, the section discussed the approaches applied to facilitate the reliability and validity of the research study. Reliability was enabled using the following criteria; credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability while validity was confirmed via these criteria; triangulation, using a skilled moderator, and ensuring that there is data saturation. Thus, the section was instrumental in illustrating how this research study was conducted.

Section three of the study demonstrated the application of the research findings to professional practice. The discovery of the research findings took place following the process of thematic analysis resulting in the identification of eight themes: employee grievances in the healthcare environment; causes of employee grievances; the impact of employee grievances; addressing employee grievances; leaders' role in addressing employee grievances; and leaders' actions/behaviors that cause their inability to address employee grievances. The themes were interpreted in a discussion that provided meaning to them. Consequently, several relationships were established between the findings of the research. This included the relationship of the findings to the research questions, conceptual framework, anticipated themes, literature, and research problem. Several things were discovered from the qualitative interviews held with 20 research participants

resulting in the following study conclusions. Employee grievances are a common problem within the healthcare sector. These grievances undermine the ability of HCWs to carry out their work. Further, this study concludes that leaders are instrumental in addressing employee grievances. For this reason, leaders ‘must have the ability to undertake grievance management through the improvement of their actions and behaviors.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Factors causing the inability of leaders to address employee grievances

	Miscommunication	Overloaded work	Supervisory behavior	Training gap	Employee performance
Miscommunication	1				
Overloaded work	-0.847**	1			
Aggressive supervisory behavior	-0.854**	-0.851**	1		
Training gap	-0.843**	-0.840**	-0.832**	1	
Employee performance	-0.836**	-0.833**	-0.847**	-0.801**	1

Source: (Silva & Malalage, 2021)

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Section 1: Employee Grievances

1. How has it been working in this organization? Please elaborate on your answer.
2. What are some of the common issues that you face working in this organization?
3. Are these issues faced by all employees or just you?
4. Do these grievances affect your ability to work? In what ways does this take place?
5. What is the general impact of management's approach to addressing your grievances?
6. Do you think that management has done a great job addressing your grievances? if not what are some of the ways that they have failed?

Section 2: Leaders in addressing employee grievances

7. Has management established a grievance management policy in your organization?
 - a. If you answer yes could you share its key elements?
 - b. If you answer no what are the reasons for the lack of such a policy?
8. Does management in your organization address your grievances? If not, why do you think so?

9. Do you think that your manager/head of department has the ability to address your grievances?
10. From the following what style does your management use to handle employee grievances?
 - a. Integrating approach
 - b. Dominating approach
11. Has the grievance management style that your management used resulted in the successful address of your grievances? If yes or no, can you elaborate on your answer?
12. What are the factors making it hard for your manager/supervisor to address your grievances?
13. Do you think that the lack of human resources management skills makes it difficult for management to address your grievances?
14. What has been the impact of bureaucratic procedures on the ability of managers and supervisors in addressing employee grievances?
15. Does the unequal relationship between supervisors and subordinates impact the way that they approach grievance management?
16. What are some of the ways you think that leadership can improve grievance management in your organization?
17. Do you as a leader feel that you do enough to address your employees' grievances?
Explain your answer.

Section 3: Impact of leaders addressing employee grievances

18. What are some of the ways that the leadership in your organization has successfully addressed your grievances?

19. Do you feel satisfied with your job when your issues are addressed by management?
20. Does it make you confident to remain with the organization when your issues are addressed by management? Please explain.
21. When management addresses your issues does this make you more productive? Could you elaborate?
22. Overall, what is the impact of the organizational leadership addressing your grievances?

Socio-demographic characteristics

At the end of the interview, kindly fill in the following template:

Age	
Gender	
Job role/position	
Hospital/facility	
Number of years working in the hospital/facility	

Appendix 3: Recruitment Letter

Dear Potential Participants,

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Business Administration degree. The purpose of my research is to explore the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances, and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older, be healthcare workers from the Northeastern United States, have been working more than a year in their organization, and have had an employee grievance presented or addressed an employee grievance. Participants, if willing, was asked to participate in an audio-recorded interview and do a transcript review. The interview will take approximately 30 – 45 minutes to complete. The transcript review will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Names and other identifying information was requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

To participate, please contact me at _____ or _____ for more information and to schedule an interview.

A consent document is attached to this recruitment email. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,
Esther Osayi

Appendix 4: Consent

Title of the Project: The Impact and Inability of Leaders to Address Employee Grievances

Principal Investigator: Esther Osayi, Doctoral Candidate, School of Business, Liberty University

Invitation to be part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study regarding the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievances. To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older, be a healthcare worker from a hospital in the Northeastern United States, have been working for more than a year in your healthcare organization, and have had employee grievances or have addressed employee grievances. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to explore the grievances that healthcare workers face in their work environment and the role of organizational leaders in providing solutions. Thus, the study will investigate the impact of leaders addressing these grievances. It will also investigate the factors that result in the inability of leaders to provide solutions to the grievances faced by employees. This will involve, identifying the reasons leaders fail to address employee grievances including the key actions and behaviors associated with their efforts.

The impact of employee grievances on healthcare workers, organizations, and healthcare systems necessitates undertaking this research study. Thus, the significance of this study is to improve the work environment of healthcare workers. This is through enhancing the role of leaders as essential sources of solutions for the challenges that healthcare workers face.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in an audio-recorded virtual interview for an estimated 30 to 45 minutes. As a participant, you was recorded during the interview using an audio device.
2. Review the interview transcripts for the accuracy of your answers for 20 minutes.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include:

1. Improved patient safety as a result of satisfied healthcare workers

2. Provision of quality healthcare following the improvement of the work environment of healthcare workers.
3. Reduced cost of providing healthcare as healthcare organizations retain their employees.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study was kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records was stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Participant responses was kept confidential through the use of pseudonyms and interviews was conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data was stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records was deleted.
- Interviews was audio-recorded and transcribed. Recordings was stored on a password-locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or Memorial Slone Kettering Cancer Center and New York Health and Hospital. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you was destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Esther Osayi. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at _____ or email: _____. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, _____, at _____.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research was conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You was given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy of the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

Printed Subject Name

Signature & Date

Appendix 5: Permission Letter

12/18/2022

Dear Organization

As a graduate student in the School of Business at Liberty University, Select the appropriate sentence: I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Business Administration degree. The title of my research project is the impact and inability of leaders to address employee grievance and the purpose of my research is to expand the literature on the role of organizational leadership in addressing employee grievances the healthcare sector.

I am writing to request your permission to contact members of your organization to invite them to participate in my research study.

Participants was asked to contact me to schedule an interview.

Participants was presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, respond by email to _____

A permission letter document is attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Esther Osayi

