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Organizational Culture and Individuals' Experience of Workplace Bullying

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Luan Zeka

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Organizational Culture and Individuals' Experience of Workplace Bullying

by

Luan Zeka, MCJ

MA, Columbia College, 2012

BS, Columbia College, 2010

Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management: Human Resources Specialization

Walden University

February 11, 2018

Abstract

Workplace bullying is an epidemic in the United States. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to increase understanding of employees' lived experiences of bullying in an organizational culture. Schein's organizational cultural model provided the conceptual framework for the study. The research question addressed how individuals who were bullied or witnessed bullying in the New York State area perceived their experiences within the organizational culture. Data collection included a researcher's journal and in-depth interviews with 25 participants. Data were analyzed using Moustakas's modified van Kaam method of phenomenological analysis. From the data analysis process, three categories of bullying emerged and revealed nine themes that exposed the participants' experiences and perceptions of bullying and the organizational culture in the workplace. Findings indicated that witnesses and victims feel emotional, physical, and psychological effects from exposure to workplace bullying. Results also provided leaders with information that organizational culture, leadership, and management are related to workplace bullying. Organizational leaders and managers may use these findings to support positive social change by disclosing the effects that workplace bullying has on all members of the organization. Results may be used to develop interventions and anti-bullying policies to help employees address workplace bullying in their organizations, thereby ensuring a more positive work environment. Conducting additional research related to each of the themes may lead to a deeper understanding of how to address the many factors that facilitate bullying in the workplace.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family and friends, who have willingly supported me from Day 1. They have kept me motivated and on target to complete this most rewarding journey and achievement. I would like to express my sincere thanks to my mother, Shehide Zeka, and two brothers, Fidan, Arian, and my sister, Fjolla. I would also like to dedicate this achievement to my wife, Lumnije, and my four children, Lorinda, Denika, Deon, and Elta. I sincerely hope someday I can serve as your inspiration to achieve doctoral degrees. No matter what I ventured to do, my family has been there without questioning my motives, but offering support. All of you have inspired me to keep going and think I have something to contribute.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Workplace bullying and its effects on employees and organizations was one of the foremost issues of the 21st century (Ryan, 2016). Workplace bullying as a complex business and management problem continues to rise, and has received increased attention domestically and internationally for the past two decades (Ryan, 2016). Leaders in organizations over the years have turned to psychologists and other management experts to address distinct types of workplace abuse (Figueiredo-Ferraz, Gil-Monte, & Olivares-Faúndez, 2015). Workplace abuse can take the form of inappropriate aggression toward workers including workplace violence, age discrimination, racial discrimination, and bullying (Figueiredo-Ferraz et al., 2015).

The Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI, 2014) conducted a survey exploring the phenomenon of bullying in the United States. Of those surveyed, 37% or 36.8 million U.S. employees have been directly impacted by bullying, while 65.6 million workers said they were affected by bullying in the workplace, either directly, indirectly, or vicariously (WBI, 2014). This attitude of workplace bullying caused an increase from 21 to 28.7 million workers over the past two decades, but until recently the topic was rarely discussed or researched (Namie, 2014). The increase in workplace bullying causes significant concerns for employees and organizations, mostly victims and individuals who witness bullying (Carden & Boyd, 2013; Pilch & Turska, 2015).

Bullying is an act, physical or verbal, which can hurt or psychologically isolate an individual in the workplace (Laharnar, Perrin, Hanson, Anger, & Glass, 2015). Namie (2014) defined *workplace bullying* as repeated abusive and physical mistreatment with or

without violence. Workplace bullying has the potential to affect employees across departments adversely and the entire corporation (Hurley, Hutchinson, Bradbury, & Browne, 2016). The perceived effects of workplace bullying of employees occur within the organization, and present organizational issues (Cleary, Walter, Andrew, & Jackson, 2013; Pilch & Turska, 2015). Changes in corporate culture need to empower leaders and other individuals to reduce workplace bullying (An & Kang, 2015; Pilch & Turska, 2015). This qualitative phenomenological study offered viable solutions and contributions to the literature. At the time of the study, little was known of the lived and individual experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying and its impact on organizational culture (Attell, Brown, & Treiber, 2017; Burris, 2012; Jones, Mitchell, & Turner, 2015; Pilch & Turska, 2015). As a result, gaps in the literature continue to exist on the effects of workplace bullying (Burris, 2012; Carroll & Lauzier, 2014; Cleary et al., 2013). Desrumaux, Machado, Vallery, and Michel (2016), and Jones et al. (2015) found insufficient research on witnesses and victims of workplace bullying and organizational culture. These researchers explored the perceived effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture through the lived and personal experiences of employees. The existing gap in the literature related to workplace bullying and corporate culture, provided an opportunity to further the study and explore this topic.

Organizational leaders may be able to use the results of this research to change their organization's culture to mitigate bullying. Organizations may save billions of dollars in lost revenues by identifying causes and amending the organizational culture allowing bullying (Carden & Boyd, 2013; Koh, 2016). These changes are needed to

ensure positive work environments, reduce bullying practices, and bring more attention to workplace bullying. Results of this study may support positive social change by addressing the effects that workplace bullying has on all organizational members. Organizational leaders and managers can use these findings to carry out interventions preparing future victims and witnesses on how to address workplace bullying in their organization.

Chapter 1 includes the background of the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and how the current study advanced the scientific knowledge in the management field. Chapter 1 addresses the significance of the study, the rationale for the methodology, the nature of the research design, and terms in the study. Assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and the chapter summary complete the remainder of this chapter.

Background of the Study

Most organizations have a mission, organizational structure, and operational rules and regulations. Many organizations have a human resource (HR) department where employees discuss or report a concern if they believe they or other employees are being mistreated or bullied. Woodrow and Guest (2014) found the organizations, mainly the HR department in many organizations, struggled to address and deter workplace bullying. Woodrow and Guest raised an important question on how well the organizational culture and the workplace bullying phenomenon could be managed and how HR and those in leadership positions could influence the organizational culture to minimize the workplace bullying. This question raises the need to complete more studies to better address

workplace bullying in organizational culture. Understanding what contributes to workplace bullying is imperative (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Most definitions of bullying shared three elements: (a) negative incidents involving the same people are repeated (usually weekly or more often), (b) these incidents occur over a prolonged period (usually at least a six-month period), and (c) there is an inequality of physical or psychological power with a more authoritative individual burdening a less influential person or a victim in a lesser position finding it difficult to defend himself or herself (Rockett, Fan, Dwyer, & Foy, 2017).

Workplace bullying evolved from many years of inappropriate individual mistreatment on the job and void of resources to address or resolve the issue (Bame, 2013; Berry, Gillespie, Fisher, & Gormley, 2016). According to Yamada (2013), in the United States the seminal research on workplace bullying began in 1980. The groundbreaking work of Brodsky and Leymann eventually led others to analyze current data on workplace bullying in the United States in the 1990s to the present time (Murphy, 2013; Namie & Namie, 2014). Some studies give many definitions for workplace bullying. The most useful definition of workplace bullying is a destructive act against an individual (Namie & Namie, 2014). Bullies are typically aggressive, hostile, extroverted, or independent (Berry et al., 2016).

Victims of long-term workplace bullying are at a higher risk for physical and psychological distress, decreased work commitment, and reduced work productivity (Salin, 2015). According to Hansen, Høgh, Garde, and Persson (2014), other individuals such as nonvictims should be taken into consideration because of the common effects of

witnessing workplace bullying. Valentine, Fleischman, and Godkin (2015) examined organizations' ethical responsibilities of organizations related to workplace bullying and organizational culture; Wang and Hsieh, (2016), Salin (2015), and O'Donnell and MacIntosh (2016) examined the occurrence of workplace bullying and the population affected. These researchers determined that the type of work and the person's work-related role or position could play a role in workplace bullying. The individuals who perpetrate bullying of employees, according to Paludi (2015), are the supervisors and managers (72%) and coworkers (28%).

Workplace bullying is a worldwide problem (Rockett et al., 2017); however, the criteria for determining what constitutes bullying differ from organization to organization (Maiuro, 2015). Fox and Cowan (2015) found the HR departments in many organizations struggled to address and deter workplace bullying. Fox and Cowan articulated a concern of how well HR departments can manage organizational culture and how those in leadership and management positions can influence the organizational culture. More studies could address better policies identifying and reducing workplace bullying (Namie, 2014). It is essential to understand what factors contribute or affect workplace bullying and organizational culture (Samnani & Singh, 2014).

The culture of an organization may be a factor affecting workplace bullying. In some cultures, bullying and aggression are an effective way of achieving goals (Kelloway, Nielsen, & Dimoff, 2017). Organizational culture may support aggressive behaviors as a practical method of motivating employees; incivility and rude behavior may emerge if disrespectful behaviors from those harming others persist (Valentine et al.,

2016). The inappropriate organizational policies or agendas make it difficult for workers to report workplace bullying. According to Pastorek et al. (2015), employees fear being ridiculed, being perceived as weak by other employees, or being terminated. Báez-León, Moreno-Jiménez, Aguirre-Camacho, and Olmos (2016) and Francioli et al. (2016) asserted that the exploration of the perspectives of victims and witness on workplace bullying has been minimal. Rather than experiencing workplace bullying firsthand, witnesses are observers of the organizational culture and workplace bullying (Báez-León et al., 2016). This definition created the standard to describe a witness throughout this study. Witnesses have had perceptions of workplace bullying which may be different from the primary victims directly affected by the phenomenon (Báez-León et al., 2016). Cardoso, Fornés-Vives, and Gili (2016) contended witnesses are the second most affected in the organization by workplace bullying, following the victim.

Long-term exposure to workplace bullying affects the witnesses as well as victims severely enough to alter their mental and physical functionality in the workplace (Bame, Lowrey, Gordon, & Melton, 2013; Eisenberg, McMorris, Gower, & Chatterjee, 2016; Newport & Shain 2014). Many organizations, for example, encourage teams or group work to increase productivity and performance (Desrumaux et al., 2016). Cardoso et al. (2016) found witnesses immersed in conflict through group work because of their exposure to those experiencing bullying. Adverse influences on witnesses and victims may include experiences of workplace disruption, concern, and serious physical and psychological harm (Eisenberg et al., 2016).

There was a gap in the literature related to the lived experiences of individuals, including the effect of bullying on victims and witnesses and organizational culture (Brunetto, Xerri, Shacklock, Farr-Wharton, & Farr-Wharton, 2016; Burris, 2012; Celep & Konakli, 2013; Eisenberg et al., 2016; Newport & Shain, 2014). Burris (2012) stated workplace bullying is prevalent in organizations and more research is needed to address the effects of workplace bullying from bullied and witness perspectives. The bullying scenario ultimately creates a toxic environment for employees and liability for organizations. Research was warranted on the experiences of employees, particularly victims and witnesses of workplace bullying (Carroll & Lauzier, 2014; Cleary et al., 2013; Brunetto et al., 2016). Workplace bullying seldom has a single cause, and the effect bullying has on victims and witnesses varies from person to person. These experiences involve the organizational culture, management, leadership, and perceptions of unsafe work environments (Desrumaux et al., 2016). Guillaume and Austin (2016) described organizational culture as a pattern of basic assumptions considered valid and taught to new members to perceive, think, and feel in the organization. Guillaume and Austin suggested strong organizational cultures could support and acknowledge positive behaviors, as well as negative behaviors causing barriers to progress. Organizational culture could support workplace bullying as negative and inappropriate behavior (Alvesson, 2015; Altman, 2010; Devonish & Devonish, 2017). Alvesson (2015) and Altman (2010) stated organization managers and executives need to manage their workplace's culture, as culture is an internal operation.

I explored the effects of workplace bullying and its effects on organizational culture materialized because it was unknown how those individuals perceived their personal, lived experiences of the phenomenon in the upstate New York area. Exploring the lived experiences of those employees helped to fill the gaps in the literature (Burris, 2012; Murphy, 2013; LaSala, Wilson, & Sprunk, 2016). The result of this phenomenological research helped to extend the body knowledge related to the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying of individuals in the upstate New York area. Previous researchers established the issue of workplace bullying as an organizational issue, focusing on bullies and targets (Burris, 2012; Murphy, 2013; Georgakopoulos, Wilkin, & Kent, 2011). Researchers suggested a gap remained regarding the lived experiences of other organizational employees (Burris, 2012; Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010). By expanding the established studies and addressing the gap in knowledge, this phenomenological research study addressed the unknown areas regarding the victims' and witnesses' perceptions and descriptions of workplace bullying and organizational culture. Scholars, leaders, management, and employees can use the findings of this research to understand victims' and witnesses' experiences of workplace bullying.

Problem Statement

Management deficiencies in organizational culture with the lack of zero-tolerance bullying policies, make it difficult for managers and leaders to organize and conduct business and address bullying incidents (Hurley et al., 2016; Pilch & Turska, 2015). The general problem was workplace bullying is a significant problem in today's businesses

and corporations, affecting victims and witnesses, as well as overall organizational performance (Alberts & Brooks, 2016; Desrumaux et al., 2016; Eriksen, Hogh, & Hansen, 2016). According to a report conducted by Zogby International Survey, 37% of U.S. workers reported bullying or abuse at work, another 21% had witnessed the behavior, and 72% were aware of workplace bullying occurred in their organizations (Membere et al., 2015; Namie, 2014). About 65.8 million U.S. workers are directly or indirectly affected by workplace bullying (Membere et. al., 2015; Namie, 2014). Workplace bullying is more than just unpleasant mistreatment of an employee; there are destructive consequences for affected personnel and the organization (Namie, 2014). Even witnesses feel adversely affected by bullying (Allison & Bussey, 2016).

The workplace bullying phenomenon and the lack of adequate information related to preventive measures are problematic in the United States and abroad, creating barriers to employee well-being in the workplace (Einarsen, Skogstad, Rørvik, Lande, & Nielson, 2016). The specific problem was workplace bullying is linked to the physical and psychological distress and decreased work commitment of individuals who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process, and reduced organizational work productivity (Eisenberg et al., 2016; Namie, 2014; Valentine et al., 2016). Forty-eight percent of Americans are the target of bullies at work and suffer serious physical and psychological harm and decreased work productivity (Akella, 2016; Allison & Bussey, 2016; Chen & Park, 2015). The direct and indirect cost associated with this phenomenon to organizations is enormous (Cleary et al., 2013). The financial estimate of replacement hiring and training of a new employee averages over 150% of the lost employee's salary

(Rockett et al., 2017). These costs include training, benefits, and the initial wait time for the employee to achieve an acceptable level of productivity (Rockett et al., 2017). As cases of bullying litigation flow through equal employment protection laws in the United States, Cleary et al. (2013) and Crumpton (2014) estimated litigating bullying related claims costs could exceed thousands of dollars per case.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of victims and witnesses in the upstate New York area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture. A qualitative phenomenological design was the most suitable method to explore how the organizational culture and workplace bullying influence one another from the perspectives of the victims and witnesses of the bullying phenomenon (see Willis, Sullivan-Bolyai, Knafl, & Cohen, 2016). The findings from this study permit scholars, organizational leaders, and managers to address current and future organizational culture and workplace bullying as a fundamental problem in the United States.

During the study, the data came from business/management and behavioral research, interviews with participants, and my journal which documented observations without using statistical facts. By conducting interviews with a phenomenological design, I was able to ask follow-up questions, which is not possible in a quantitative study (see Willis et al., 2016). The qualitative phenomenological design helped to explore how workplace bullying impacts organizational culture. The study sample included 25 employees from an organization in the New York State area. In qualitative research,

sample sizes must be small to manage and justify the rich, diverse information from responses obtained (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). The participant responses were coded with NVivo10 data analysis software, and the data were analyzed using the Moustakas van Kam method to identify shared themes and their relations. This study may contribute to the knowledge of the organizational culture breeding bullies and how to reduce further developing these cultures (see Erbe & Singh, 2017; King, 2017). Without results from the current study, scholars and practitioners may struggle to identify the effect workplace bullying and organizational culture has on the bullied employees or individuals who witnessed the phenomenon. This research was relevant and timely, and results may provide a much clearer understanding of the extent of the issues.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study focused on the personal lived experiences of workplace bullying as experienced by organizational employees and its perceived effects on organizational culture. The research questions related to the problem statement, since it was unknown how individuals perceived their personal lived experiences of workplace bullying and how it affected organizational culture in the upstate New York State area. Murphy (2013) indicated a gap in the body of knowledge for this topic and a need for a more detailed understanding of the perceived effects of bullying on organizational culture as experienced by organizational employees. The overarching research question for this study was: How do employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture? The following subquestions (SQs) provided guidance for this qualitative study:

SQ1: What are the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly?

SQ2: What types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within the organization?

SQ3: According to victims' and witnesses' experiences and perceptions, what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders to create an organizational culture that may mitigate bullying?

The research problem involved the adverse effects of workplace bullying on the victims and witnesses. These research questions related directly to the problem mentioned. Participants shared their lived experiences relating to workplace bullying and the nature of the active organizational culture while workplace bullying occurred. Finding an answer to the research questions led to a better understanding of the research problem overall. A phenomenological research design was used to answer the research questions allowing in-depth research of lived experiences to find the insight, essence, and implications concerning organizational culture and workplace bullying (see Willis et al., 2016).

The Subquestion 1 addressed lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture. The participants shared their feelings, beliefs, and thoughts on the experience of being a victim or witness of workplace bullying. This type of individual information could not be acquired using quantitative methodology. Subquestion 2 addressed the actions or behavior of bullying in the

organizations. This research question focused on participants' perspectives of bullying in the workplace to present personal accounts of information based on interviews and observations which might not exist in the literature. Regarding Subquestion 3, participants provided their opinions and suggestions concerning what leadership and management actions are required to reduce workplace bullying. This situation presented an opportunity to hear the perspectives and experiences of the victims and witnesses from their perspective, as well as their recommendations on organizational culture and workplace bullying; their responses could be used to construct a strategy to combat workplace bullying. The research questions created a framework for the interview questions. The open-ended interview questions addressed how the incidence of workplace bullying within an organization's culture affected employees, and how to develop a strategy to mitigate bullying in the workplace.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

The objective of the study was to explore organizational culture relating to workplace bullying. Many quantitative studies and peer-reviewed journal articles have addressed the history of bullying, the nature and patterns of workplace bullying, and challenges associated with workplace bullying. The qualitative phenomenological approach is the most suitable method to describe a phenomenon, or the appearance of things, as lived experience (Lewis, 2015). Lewis (2015) defined *phenomenology* as a method of direct examination and description of phenomena as consciously experienced. In the current study, I used the phenomenological method to address the problem of workplace bullying in the corporate culture by focusing on the perceptions of each person

who either experienced bullying or witnessed the process (see Willis et al., 2016). The approach helped to explain why the workplace bullying and organizational culture were important and relevant.

An and Kang (2015) described organizational culture as a set of assumptions about the organization and its goals and practices which members of the organization share. An and Kang suggested strong organizational cultures can support and acknowledge positive behaviors, as well as negative behaviors causing barriers to progress. Workplace bullying is viewed as negative and inappropriate behavior supported by organizational culture. An and Kang noted organizations' managers and executives need to manage the type of culture because culture is an internal operation. An and Kang stated organizations have directives in place addressing appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, such as a reward and recognition program. The organization's visions and values could play an important part as well, and should be reviewed and adapted to encourage appropriate behavior in the workplace. An and Kang saw the endeavor to discourage inappropriate behaviors as being from the top-down levels of the organization.

To advance the knowledge on workplace bullying and the organizational culture, Schein's organizational culture model (OCM) was used to guide this qualitative phenomenological study. The components of Schein's OCM related to the problem of workplace bullying and the organizational culture (Schein, 1983). Schein (1983) indicated workplace culture develops over time as individuals change, grow, adapt to the environment, and solve problems. Schein noted three aspects of culture: artifacts, values, and assumed values. Schein said many leadership studies lack the basic understanding of

what leadership really is, and culture begins with leaders who impose their values and assumptions on a group. Schein also stated leadership creates and changes cultures, while management and administration act within a culture. The patterns of culture, like patterns of bullying, pass throughout the organization toward new and old employees, which could keep the inappropriate behavior of bullying alive and viewed as acceptable behavior in the work culture (Schein, 2004). The present study aligned with Schein's model, as the study addressed the artifacts and values of organizational culture and how workplace bullying impacts the values of corporate culture. Bullying values instituted by leaders and emulated by employees become the normally assumed values of an organization's culture (Schein, 1983). Figure 1 shows the foundation of the conceptual framework guiding the study.



Figure 1. Foundation of the conceptual framework guiding the study (Schein, 1983).

Figure 1 shows the constructs in this study and how each links to the other affecting victims and witnesses. Beginning with workplace bullying as the main issue, this study addressed the organizational culture, leadership, and management from a perspective of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying. The research on victims and witnesses of workplace bullying was minimal (Naimi, 2014). Naimi (2014) suggested

victims and witnesses were of interest in workplace bullying studies and that the individual perspective may provide further insight into the phenomenon. This phenomenological research had a specific focus on interviewing victims and witnesses to provide further insight on the perspectives of organizational culture, leadership, and workplace bullying. The connection of all constructs was researched throughout the phenomenological study. Better understanding the constructs allowed me to answer the research questions (see Adhariani, Sciulli, & Clift, 2017).

Nature of the Study

Qualitative research methods increase understanding by allowing people to voice their opinions about a phenomenon; this approach is used to investigate social or individual problems (Sackett & Lawson, 2016). According to Hurley et al. (2016), for comprehensive description and understanding of participant experiences, a qualitative phenomenological study is suitable. The qualitative phenomenological approach was the proper method for scrutinizing a key phenomenon within a real-life context, such as examining lived experiences and perspectives of organizational culture, leadership, and management in the context of workplace bullying. By using a phenomenological design, the researcher can understand an individual's experiences and the meanings of those experiences, thereby producing rich and insightful interpretations for the current topic (Smith, 2015). By interviewing 25 employees of an organization in the upstate New York State area, I provided insight into the perspectives of organizational culture, leadership, and management relating to workplace bullying, and identified its effects on the victims and the witnesses of the phenomenon through the experiences and employees voices.

Using the qualitative phenomenological approach is ideal when trying to get a holistic picture of a social or human problem from participants in their natural setting (Lewis, 2015). Using this approach in the current study resulted in collecting of in-depth data on the phenomenon of workplace bullying (see Hurley et al., 2016; Smith, 2015). The phenomenological design allowed exploring specific lived knowledge of participants to understand the core, heartfelt meaning of the experience on workplace bullying and organizational culture. Exploring the specific experience of workplace bullying allowed me to collect rich, detailed, and specific information (see Hesse-Biber & Griffin, 2013; Samnani, 2013). The phenomenological design was suitable to answer the research questions regarding the lived experiences of workplace bullying and the organizational culture.

Three other major qualitative designs considered were case study, ethnography, and grounded theory. These qualitative designs were not suitable for the current study for several reasons. The purpose of the case study design is to focus on one occurrence of a problem, such as in a single organization, or to compare a set of cases and factors in a multiple case study (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker 2013). A qualitative case study approach was not suitable to achieving the goal of this study because the phenomenon explored in this study was the experiences of employees relating to workplace bullying, which required using interviews through an exploratory framework. Because an exploration was needed in this study, a case study was not suitable.

The ethnographic design is ideal when the purpose of the study is to understand and describe a culture or group of people. The ethnographic design was not suitable for

this study because the purpose was not to explore a specific cultural group with data collection over a prolonged period. The grounded theory design is suitable when the goal is to generate a theory based on the data collected (Lewis, 2015). The grounded theory design was not feasible for this study because the goal of this study was to explore the firsthand experiences of bullied employees, not to develop a theory or model.

Other researchers have used different approaches, quantitative or otherwise, to address the history of workplace bullying. The useful data in these studies, however, was of limited value when trying to gain an in-depth understanding of the subjective perspectives of individuals affected by workplace bullying (Lampard & Pole, 2015; Smith, 2015). The quantitative method is suitable for statistical data analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The quantitative method was not acceptable in the current study because qualitative data were needed to understand employee perspectives and experiences regarding workplace bullying.

The phenomenological design was the best design to address the problem statement and research questions. The phenomenological design allowed me to answer the research questions on the perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees' experiences. The phenomenology design was the most suitable design to gain an understanding of the lived knowledge of the individuals and their experience (see Murphy, 2013). A phenomenological approach was the only approach allowing for the actual recall of a literal experience, further contributing to the body of knowledge (see Greenfield & Jensen, 2016).

Possible Types and Sources of Data

In this qualitative phenomenological study, the raw data for the study were the lived experience of individuals who experienced bullying, directly or indirectly, to get descriptions of organizational culture related to workplace bullying. I used two tools as data sources to reach the goals of the study. These tools were in-depth, semistructured interviews and the notes in my research journal. The general population of this qualitative phenomenological study included employees from the organization of choice in the upstate New York area. The sample included employees with diverse cultural backgrounds from a private nonprofit organization in Syracuse, New York, who had experienced or witnessed bullying in their workplace and who could recount these experiences.

A semistructured interview guide consisted of 13 open-ended questions developed to capture the participants' experiences. The goal of the interview protocol (Appendix A) was to capture a reflective picture of the lived experiences. Through the semistructured interview format, individuals freely expressed themselves on the issues concerning workplace bullying, organizational culture, and leadership or management matters related to bullying (see Bryman & Bell, 2015; Job & Antony, 2016). A combination of purposive and snowball sampling techniques was used to recruit 25 participants (nonsupervisory employees and subordinates). This number of participants was optimal for a phenomenological study (see Moustakas, 1994). For the second primary data source, I used a journal to record the rich, firsthand experiences, thoughts, expressions, and observations of participants throughout the process (see Lewis, 2015). Makaiiau, Leng,

and Fukui (2015) found an author's journal is commonly used to record the rich, firsthand experiences of participants, which was the goal of this study. I used the journal during and after all interviews to record the experiences, thoughts, expressions, themes, and observations identified throughout the interview experience.

Definition of Terms

Definitions of the terms used in this study appear below to clarify their meanings and contexts and to assist the reader in understanding the study. The following terms were specific to the topic of workplace bullying and organizational culture:

Bullying: Acts and verbal comments which can hurt or psychologically isolate an individual in the workplace (Laharnar et al., 2015).

Phenomenology: An approach in which the researcher strives to understand the cognitive subjective perspective of the person experiencing a phenomenon and the subsequent affect the perspective has on the person's lived experience (Englander, 2012).

Psychological and physical health: Potential problems resulting from bullying ranging from sleep disturbances, confidence decline, depression, anxiety disorders, to physical health decline (Salin, 2015).

Subordinate: The employee who reports to a supervisor in a supervisor-employee working relationship (Tisak, Tisak, Baker, & Graupensperger, 2016).

Workplace bullying: Repeated abusive mistreatment without physical violence (Namie, 2014).

Witness: Observer of workplace bullying who has not been victimized directly by the phenomenon (Tisak et al., 2016).

Assumptions of the Study

This qualitative phenomenological study had the following assumptions: (a) participants have been victims or witnesses of workplace bullying; (b) participants would be truthful and honest in their responses and descriptions of workplace bullying; and (c) data saturation would occur, helping to identify themes and patterns. I also assumed the interview questions were clear and specific, and participants would respond. In addition, the study focused on a one specific organization. The main criterion for taking part in the study was participants must be working or employed as an organizational employee in Syracuse, New York area who can recount lived experiences of workplace bullying within the organization.

The setting for this study was a quiet office within St. Joseph's Hospital where the research took place. Confidentially measures were in place to protect participants' names and organizations. To protect participants' names and the accumulated data, I stored the research material in a secure location only accessible to me. Data collection was through in-depth interviews and researcher's journaling. Upon completion of the study, all collected data will be destroyed after 5 years, including participants' information. The final assumption was 25 purposively selected participants represented a normal population. This assumption was based on Ritchie et al.'s (2013) findings which suggested qualitative study samples must be small. The purposeful snowball sampling method was the proper sampling technique. Snowball sampling is a common method used when it is difficult to identify members of the desired population (Griffith, Morris,

& Thakar, 2016). To mitigate the assumptions, participants were encouraged to reflect on the research questions and elaborate on their answers (Appendix A).

Scope of the Study

The study included interviews with 25 individuals (nonsupervisory employees and subordinates) who have been victims or have witnessed bullying in the workplace. I prescreened possible participants until 25 employees were selected to understand their perceptions of bullying as a witness. The participants were asked during the study to reflect on their experiences, describe the psychological behavior from their perceptions, and share their opinions. The objective was to create a better understanding of workplace bullying and organizational culture. The results may be used to raise awareness of the actions, patterns, obstacles, and prevention opportunities for scholars, managers, and individuals who experienced or witnessed bullying and the effect of organizational culture. In-depth interviews and journaling were used to collect data.

There were 13 prearranged questions used to explore the victims' and witnesses' perspectives of how workplace bullying had impacted the individuals and gain an understanding of the impact of organizational culture on bullying. Using qualitative methodology allowed me to ask follow-up questions during the interviews to further understand the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives. After collecting the data, the information was coded into specific groups and classified by common themes grounded in the participants' experiences and reactions. I reduced the responses by grouping and classifying them by common themes. The criterion for taking part in this study was participants must (a) be employed as organizational full-time, part-time, or per-

diem workers, (b) be 18-60 years old, (c) have experienced workplace bullying directly or indirectly, and (e) live in in the New York State area of the United States.

Limitations of the Study

Certain limitations may have affected the results. The potential limitations of the current qualitative phenomenological study were the (a) degree of honesty of the participants' responses during the interviews, (b) input of 25 qualified participants, and (c) the amount of time available to conduct the study. Some participants may not have wanted to attend and complete an hour of responding to interview questions, thus limiting their full participation; this could have limited the amount of data gathered during the interview. A strategy to prevent or avoid this limitation was to ensure participants' privacy and confidentially and complete the interview process within 1 hour; all participants had sufficient time to respond and to avoid possible distractions.

Another limitation which may have affected the results was the sample size and the input of 25 qualified participants. Ritchie et al. (2013) found qualitative study samples must be small and the data collection instrument must be reliable. A final limitation was the reliability of the data collection instrument. A strategy to mitigate weaknesses or limitations was to guarantee participants' privacy and confidentiality by de-identifying their name and the name of their organization. A general strategy to mitigate limitations was to ask participants if they understood what was being asked and if they had any questions about responding.

Delimitations of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the perceived effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture on victims and witnesses through the lived and firsthand experiences of organizational employees in the New York State area. I used a purposeful snowball sampling technique to recruit nonsupervisory employees and subordinates who worked at an organization at the time of the study or who had recently left the workplace. The study was limited to 25 participants living in the New York State area. This limitation was based on Ritchie et al.'s (2013) recommendation which suggested qualitative study samples must be small. The location where the research took place was where I live and work. The research was delimited to the New York State area since no similar studies had been conducted in the area (see Alberts & Brooks, 2016; An & Kang, 2015; Houck & Colbert, 2016; Namie, 2014). Conducting the study near my location was convenient and involved no cost to the participants.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study was to fill a gap in the literature and provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon (see Smith, 2015). The study was significant because workplace bullying affects everyone involved, especially coworkers (Naimie, 2014). This study provided an understanding of how individuals are affected by workplace bullying from the victims' or witnesses' perspectives (see Murphy, 2013; Samnani, 2013). It was needed to explore how workplace bullying and the organizational culture affects the work environment and how these concepts are interrelated. According to Murphy (2013) and Samnani (2012), this lack of information was identified as a gap in

the literature. The results of this study helped to fill the gap and contributed to the body of knowledge. The findings were useful in expanding the knowledge base of the phenomenon of bullying and organizational culture in the New York State area. This research provided findings showing that organizational culture, leadership, and management are related to workplace bullying (see Chen & Park, 2015; Samnani & Singh, 2014). Results also provided leaders with information to take a more realistic stance against workplace bullying and understand how it influences the organizational culture.

This qualitative phenomenological study added to the continuing discourse of workplace bullying and organizational culture, and provided greater understanding of how bullying affects victims and witnesses and the overall performance of the organization. The workplace culture can only be successful by fostering a sense of belonging for workers (Murphy, 2013). Workers deserve to have their place of employment free of bullying and undesirable stress (O'Farrell & Nordstrom, 2013). To maximize productivity in the workplace, workers need to feel emotionally, physically, and socially safe. The workplace culture must foster a sense of belonging for workers to be efficacious (O'Farrell & Nordstrom, 2013; Pilch & Turska, 2015). The findings of this study may add to the safety of the work environment for businesses (Duignan, 2016; Hurley et al., 2016).

Implications for Social Change

Addressing the problem of workplace bullying added value to workers' quality of life as well as significance to the body of knowledge on this subject. The results of this

study added to the body of knowledge and the management field and may help educational or organizational leaders gain practical knowledge, allowing them to mitigate bullying. Mitigation of bullying in the workplace may improve workplace safety and satisfaction and improve organizational culture. The social contribution of this study was raising awareness of workplace bullying and organizational culture; businesses may use the findings to develop organizational policies which may mitigate incidences of workplace bullying. Correct policy development may influence the corporate culture to deter this phenomenon (Einarsen et. al., 2016; Pastorek et al., 2015). The findings may help scholars and practitioners identify ways to create cultures and environments that have fewer negative behaviors. This study may fill the gap in the literature on how victims and witnesses perceive organizational culture, leadership influences, and workplace bullying. The significance of exploring the organizational culture and isolating workplace bullying within organizations was organization managers, leaders, and employees may use the material from the study to mitigate the problem. It is needed for U.S. leaders and managers to understand the importance of operating their businesses in environments free from bullying (D’Cruz & Noronha, 2016).

Summary

Though a significant amount of research exists on organizational culture and workplace bullying, there is little research from the perspective of the victims and witnesses on workplace bullying and organizational culture (Burriss, 2012; Chen & Park, 2015; Giorgi, 2012; Namie & Namie, 2014). This qualitative phenomenological study addressed the perceived effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture on

victims and witnesses through the lived experiences of organizational employees in the New York State area. This study advanced the body of knowledge by filling a gap on the lived experiences of bullied employees within organizations in the New York State area. This study gave voice to the lived experience of organizational employees, lacking in the body of knowledge (see Murphy, 2013; Samnani, 2013).

Chapter 1 included an introduction and the background of the research study, statements of the problem and purpose, the significance, conceptual framework, assumptions, and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature relevant to workplace bullying and organizational culture and the context for exploring the relationship between workplace bullying and organizational culture. The chapter provides an in-depth review of the literature that explains workplace bullying and the additional components, including victims, witnesses, leadership and management, and organizational culture. Chapter 3 presents the research design, including an explanation of the research methodology, method and design, study population and sample, participant selection, instruments, data collection and analysis procedures, validity and reliability, and ethical considerations. Chapter 4 details how I collected and analyzed the data, including a written and graphic summary of the results. Chapter 5 contains a discussion and interpretation of the findings, the limitations of the research, recommendations for future studies, implications for positive social change, and a conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A literature review is a written summary of peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and other documents describing the past and current state of information, including the literature on topics and documents needed for a study (Galvan, 2015). This literature review addressed the key elements of this study including victims, witnesses, leadership and management, workplace bullying, and organizational culture. According to Carden and Boyd (2013), these elements have a substantial effect on the workplace. The progression of the research in these areas may provide a more solid groundwork for workplace policies and future studies. Most academic papers conclude with suggestions regarding areas where further investigation is warranted, which could also be a starting point for identifying study gaps (Namie 2014). The literature reviewed for this study provided a more in-depth presentation of the major elements to support the perceived gap in the literature.

Workplace bullying is a serious problem in today's businesses and corporations, affecting victims and witnesses of bullying and overall organizational performance of organizations (Alberts & Brooks, 2016; Desrumaux et al., 2016; Eriksen et al., 2016). Workplace bullying has been linked to physical and psychological distress and decreased work commitment, and reduced work productivity of individuals experiencing bullying or witness the bullying in the workplace (Eisenberg et al., 2016; Namie, 2014; Valentine et al., 2016). The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceived effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture on victims and witnesses through the lived and personal experiences of organizational employees in the

New York State area. Workplace bullying often affects the victims and witnesses (Desrumaux et al., 2016; Eden, Heiman, & Olenik-Shemesh, 2016). The experiences involving the organizational culture and workplace bullying were addressed as they related to work-related incidents in the United States (Willis et al., 2016).

The research problem was to advance the knowledge and fill the gap regarding workplace bullying and organizational culture in the New York State area. The study addressed the topic while allowing bullied individuals and witnesses to share their experience (see Einarsen et al., 2016). The study affected the fields of organization and management because the research provided findings regarding the relationship between organizational culture and workplace bullying from the perspective of victims and witnesses of the bullying phenomenon. This research was relevant and timely, and results may provide a much clearer understanding of the extent of the issues.

This study may contribute to the knowledge of the organizational culture breeding bullies and how to reduce further development of these cultures. For scholars, this study may fill the gap in the literature concerning how victims and witnesses perceive organizational culture and workplace bullying. Practitioners may benefit from recommendations that address workplace bullying based on suggestions or reactions from participants. A solid understanding of each element of this study, as shown in Figure 2, offers a foundation for other researchers to explore the relationship between organizational culture and workplace bullying further.

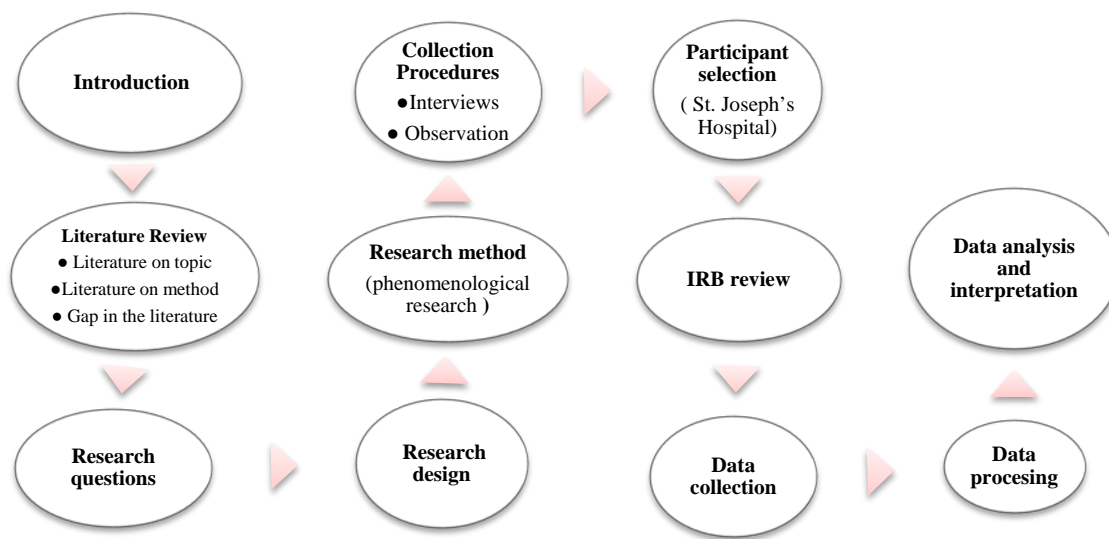


Figure 2. Literature relationship and the research plan (Moustakas,1994).

This extensive literature review includes scholarly books, peer-reviewed electronic and print academic sources, research documents, doctoral dissertations, and academic and business journals on the topic of workplace bullying and organizational culture. The research mostly focused on the literature published after 2013, showing the direction of this qualitative phenomenological study. Table 1 provides a summary of the resources used when conducting the current study.

Table 1

Literature Review Sources

Source	2013 and later	Prior to 2013	Total
Non-peer-reviewed or books	8	10	20
Dissertations	4	0	4
Peer-reviewed articles	176	0	176
Total	188	10	198
Percentage of total	95%	5%	100%

Title searches for this qualitative phenomenological study included key words of *workplace bullying, victims and witnesses, and organization culture*. Title searches were retrieved from Walden University Library databases including ProQuest, Business Source Complete, Emerald Management Extra, Psych Articles, and Elsevier Dissertations and Theses. Additionally, I used the Google Scholar search engine and hardbound copies of literature from the local library to develop a comprehensive review of pertinent literature. This chapter provided a background and overview of workplace bullying and organizational culture. Topics addressed include leadership, management, organization culture, and organizational workplace bullying. The historical overview and background section of the problem provides detailed discussions of previous studies concerning workplace bullying and organizational culture:

- historical overview and the background of the problem;
- workplace bullying in the United States;
- conceptual framework;
- types of workplace bullying behavior;
- victims and witnesses of workplace bullying;
- effects of workplace bullying on victims, witnesses, and organizations;
- leadership and the organization;
- efforts to eliminate workplace bullying;
- relationship between organization culture and bullying; and
- gap in the literature.

Historical Overview and Background of the Problem

Workplace bullying is a phenomenon that has been widely recognized and researched since 1976 in the United States; therefore, the body of literature is shallow compared to research conducted in other countries (Vrooman, 2016). Introducing the phenomenon of workplace bullying to the United States came by way of Brodsky (1976). Brodsky defined *harassment behavior* as repeated and persistent attempts by an individual to torment, wear down, frustrate, or elicit a reaction from another individual. Usually the only person who complained about the harasser was the victim or target (Brodsky, 1976). Brodsky documented bullying resulted in strong negative effects to a victim's health and well-being. Brodsky also described victims of bullying as conscientious employees who were typically overachievers in the workplace. This persistent tormenting behavior seeks to provoke, intimidate, pressure, frighten, or cause discomfort to the chosen victim and witnesses (Brodsky, 1976). Brodsky further described the harasser as a person believing rank has its privileges, needing complete obedience.

Most research on workplace bullying originated in countries, such as Finland, Sweden, Italy, France, Germany, Britain, and Australia (Vrooman, 2016). As Americans have gotten more knowledge of bullying in general, it is useful to gain a solid understanding of the background and history of workplace bullying. While bullying behaviors were once ignored or considered a normal part of childhood and adolescence, workplace bullying has slowly become a societal problem (Lewis, Megicks, & Jones, 2016). Workplace bullying has a long history, with a considerable number of studies on

the effects of adult bullying, including the pain, suffering, and inconvenience caused by nonphysical, psychological bullying, and mobbing-type behaviors, however, there has been minimal research completed on how the behavior affects victims and witnesses of the bullying phenomenon (Trépanier, Fernet, & Austin, 2016).

Swedish psychologist Heinz Leymann was the first researcher to conceptualize and seek to understand the phenomenon of workplace bullying (Carden & Boyd, 2013). According to Leymann (1990, as cited Einarsen, 2014), the original term to describe workplace bullying in Europe was mobbing. Leymann coined this term in the 1980s and defined it as hostile and unethical interactions in the work environment by one or multiple individuals to one defenseless individual. As the definition of mobbing was used more throughout Europe and defined more as victimization, the phrase workplace bullying emerged to the forefront (Carden & Boyd, 2013). The topic of workplace bullying gained popularity with public audiences in the late 1980s by help of British journalist Andrea Adams using a series of BBC radio documentaries (Yamada, 2013). Adams authored in 1992 the first book using bullying at work as its operative term. In the 1990s, it took the psychological abuse and harm caused by bullying in the workplace to attract the attention from American practitioners and researchers (Yamada, 2013). It became evident this was a topic requiring attention, even after all these years of research the fact concerning the victims' and witnesses' experience still remains uncertain (Georgakopoulos et al., 2011).

While researchers have explored, workplace bullying since 1980s, there has yet to be a universal and comprehensive definition of the phenomenon (Chirilă & Constantin,

2013). This lack of definition continues to be a challenge for researchers and organizational leadership and management (Sercombe & Donnelly, 2013). Leymann's (1990, as cited in Einarsen, 2014), defines the definition of workplace bullying as aggressive action that individually can be harmless, but in a group and over time can be destructive remains as "the exceptional definition of workplace bullying" (p. 23). Namie (2014) defined workplace bullying as repeated abusive mistreatment without physical violence; however, the most practical definition is workplace bullying is a destructive act against an individual (Berry et al., 2016; Chirilă & Constantin, 2013).

Brodsky (1976, as cited in Schindeler, Ransley, & Reynald, 2016) was one of the first researchers to explore workplace bullying in the United States. Researchers did not, recognize the importance of Brodsky's work until the early 1990s when medical practitioner-scholars in Britain and the United States revived the research to understand the effects of verbal abuse on medical students and nurses. According to Frazier (2011) and Schindeler, Ransley, and Reynald, (2016), workplace bullying was a larger epidemic than realized by the other researchers. As the interest on workplace bullying grew within the research community, it became evident that this topic needed attention and research was still needed (Chen & Park, 2015; Schindeler et al., 2016). According to Carden and Boyd, (2013) and Einarsen et al., (2015), reducing workplace bullying is imperative to the American competitiveness in the global economy and to keeping the American workforce satisfied.

Earlier behavioral and management workplace studies and discussions have failed to show a relationship between organizational culture, leadership, and management of the

organization with bullying and organizational productivity (Tong, Tak, & Wong, 2015). Workplace bullying in the organizational culture negatively affects both employees and organizations (Mata, 2016; Valentine et al., 2016). Inappropriate workplace bullying behavior in organizations ranges in severity from minor vulgarity to homicide (Namie & Namie, 2011). Namie and Namie (2011) argued research on workplace bullying and related risk factors began in the 1980s in the United States. The factors associated with long-standing workplace bullying showed significant effects from witnesses and victims, who can affect their capability to perform the job as expected (Bame et al., 2013). Only the psychological and physiological stress affects the victims and witnesses, but can also damage the corporation's progression (Bame et al., 2013; Newport & Shain, 2014).

Bullying occurs when one individual has power over another (Bame et al., 2013). Several behaviorists and political scientists from the late 1950s through the 1980s studied and discussed how different behaviors could affect people's lives, including their working environment (Einarsen et al., 2016). This lack of a formal definition for workplace bullying causes confusion in organizations and across the country (Eriksen et al., 2016). Various definitions of workplace bullying emerged from Bachrach and Baratz's (1962) discussion of leadership power and how power displays control of one individual over another within institutions. The employee-employer relationship can be linked to the history of the U.S. labor and employment laws (Howell, 2015), similar to the master-servant relationship.

Brodsky (as cited Schindeler, Ransley, & Reynald, 2016) reviewed the historical background of workplace bullying. Brodsky reviewed the medical records of several

workers' compensation cases and their connection to multiple variations of harassment behavior. Brodsky identified this phenomenon as a problem and began studying workplace bullying in the 1980s (Yamada, 2013; Schindeler et al., 2016). The germinal work of Brodsky and later the seminal work of Leymann (1990, as cited in Einarsen, 2014), prompted other authors to research workplace bullying in the United States (Murphy, 2013; Namie & Namie, 2014). According to Namie and Namie (2014), workplace bullying is repeated mistreatment of any employee by one or more people that causing health-endangering and malicious effects. Bonde et al., (2016) and Eriksen et al., (2016) referred to workplace bullying as frequent individual actions, behaviors, and organizational practices focused on one or more employees which are not welcomed by the victim.

Einarsen et al., (2016) defined bullying as mistreatment by power seeking management and leaders as well as the influence of negative attitudes and behaviors. This author further described bullying as leadership by intimidation for personal advancement, effecting morale, and productivity of those being bullied (Einarsen et al., 2016). Hurley et al., (2016) agreed, by suggesting bullies will continue to perform these behaviors if there is no fear of consequences. According to Beakley (2016), bullying is gradual and may be silent or unknown by the parties involved; as the bullying accumulates over time, negative behaviors by bullies may become more harmful and further recognized by the targets and witnesses (Bonde, et al., 2016).

According to Morris (2016), physical contact in workplace bullying is a form of workplace violence. Morris (2016) contended workplace violence is an escalated

response that may be a result of workplace bullying. Workplace violence includes physical assaults, homicides, suicide, and other high-level violent behaviors. Forty years after Brodsky's study, Sojo, Wood, and Genat (2016) argued workplace bullying can be more harmful to targets than sexual harassment. As the interest grew, the boundaries of workplace bullying research expanded beyond the borders of management and psychology into law, education, medicine, human resources management, and industrial relations (Laharnar et al., 2015).

Workplace Bullying in the United States

The issue of workplace bullying in the United States has significantly affected individuals, employee, and the organizational performance overall (Branch, Ramsay, & Barker, 2013). There are many alarming statistics derived from governmental and non-governmental studies offering clear insight into the reality of the workplace bullying phenomenon in the United States. Branch et al., (2013) claimed there had been a more academic focus on workplace bullying since 1980 and the phenomenon influenced the United States significantly. Based on the 2014 results of the U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey, 37% of all U.S. workers experienced bullying in the workplace, and 15% have witnessed the phenomenon. While 68% of bullying is same-gender harassment, however, 80% of those who bully women are other women (Namie, Christenen & Phillips, 2014). According to Namie and Namie (2014), workplace bullying often initiates on an individual level where a manager or leader bullies a subordinate. Einarsen et al., (2014) found the organization often allows bullying to manifest within the culture until other individuals can observe the bully's behaviors.

Evidence of bullying is present at all organizational levels (Einarsen et al., 2016). Power et al., (2013) and Zabrodska and Kveton, (2013) found higher-ranking employees had more frequent opportunities to bully others. This research complimented of the study conducted by Napoletano, Elgar, Saul, Dirks, and Craig, (2015), who found managers and supervisors were the most likely to bully employees within their organization. Samnani (2013a) concluded 20% of workers reported witnessing an organizational culture of bullying and perceived the workplace as unsafe. This study showed that subtle forms of bullying behaviors and organization passive cultures are more likely to induce misunderstanding for victims and witnesses. This confusion decreases their likelihood to react against the bullying. Witnesses also experienced greater confusion and will tend to side with the perpetrator, particularly when the perpetrator is an important organizational member. Witnesses may internalize the behaviors, leading to increased permeability of the bullying through the organization (Samnani, 2013b).

Bullying can also relate to health-related issues and productivity loss. According to Escartín, Ullrich, Zapf, Schlüter, and van Dick (2013), the impact of workplace bullying spreads from individuals to teams within the workplace. The witnesses may be a part of a larger team with the bullying victim, and other workers may be unaware of the workplace bullying issue. The epidemic may eventually grow within the organization. Laschinger and Nosko, (2015) claimed stress-related illnesses might emerge from individuals within different groups and departments in the organization.

Stress-related illnesses can lead to higher absenteeism and lower productivity, resulting in billions of dollars lost yearly by domestic organizations (Namie, 2014).

According to the American Institute for Stress, stress can lead to reduced productivity, absenteeism, turnover, accidents, and medical costs including workers' compensation awards. These issues cost organizations about \$300 billion annually in added costs or lost profits (Hollis, 2015; O'Keefe, Brown, & Christian, 2014; Samnani, Boekhorst, & Harrison, 2015). Hurley et al. (2016) stated that the American workplace is a prime arena for workplace bullying for the following reasons: service sector growth, fewer resources, and a decline in union membership, diversification, and reliance on contingent workers. Hurley et al., further explained this causes an opportunity for personality clashes where bullying begins to emerge, especially in power seeking individuals.

Samnani et al., (2015) also found more pressure within different markets to produce more with fewer resources than before, which is also a breeding ground for bullying. Samnani et al., (2015) further explained that the function of unions was to balance power, open communication across boundaries, and address disputes; however, the decline in union membership caused an increase in bullying as well. Another risk factor for the modern workplace is mixing diversities and backgrounds causing aggression and bullying (Bergbom, Vartia-Vaananen, & Kinnunen, 2015). Bergbom et al., (2015) and Hershcovis, Reich, and Niven (2015) asserted the workplace becomes less cohesive and bullying if there is a lack of interpersonal relationships between employees. This overview presents the issues surrounding workplace bullying in the United States. It is evident that additional research from the victims' and witnesses' perspective of workplace bullying is needed to protect employees in the workplace.

Anti-Bullying Legislation in the United States

Many anti-bullying advocates continue to seek new legislation in the United States employment law but have had no success (Yamada, 2015). Hurley, Hutchinson, Bradbury, and Browne, (2016) stated other countries have addressed the workplace bullying issues more than the United States. The United States' Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects individuals from discriminatory employment decisions based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age, but do not offer any protection from bullying in the workplace. Current laws do not protect employees from workplace bullying because in 77% of bullying cases reported the personnel involved were not in a protected group defined by race, gender, ethnic origin, religion, age, or disability (Yamada, 2015). Hurley, Hutchinson, Bradbury, and Browne, (2016) stated without legal employment protections from bullying, the only solution to stop the bullying is for the victim to resign.

McDonald, Brown, and Smith (2015) acknowledged the seriousness of the issue and stated legislators must address bullying since there are no legal remedies available. Protection from workplace bullying is minimal since there are no federal laws in effect (McDonald, Brown, & Smith, 2015). Unless one is a member of a protected class, no recourse was available to protect organizations and employees against bullying. In a recent survey of the American public, results found a majority of the American public, who were aware of workplace bullying, agreed it was time for legislation (Namie & Namie, 2014). Namie and Namie's (2014) quantitative survey reported 72% of all Americans were aware of the abuse, however, of 72% were aware of the abuse, 93%

agreed Americans needed laws to protect against abuse. Namie and Namie's quantitative survey also found 50% of the respondents to the survey were self-defined conservatives who strongly supported the Healthy Workplace Bill. Yamada (2015) drafted the Healthy Workplace Bill to help employees, since there was little recourse for workplace bullying under the law. Legislators introduced the Healthy Workplace Bill in 28 states as a potential law to protect from the abuse of bullying. Yamada found legislators introduced bills in the past to consider workplace bullying a crime. Yamada found inconsequential litigation practices precluded the passing of laws. Yamada (2015) stated with 28 states enacting bullying legislation, lawmakers needed to establish laws and provide a clear definition of workplace bullying, and organizations and employees would have adequate protection.

The body of knowledge needed a more in-depth study to show the lived experiences of bullying employees in organizations would help convince legislators to pass the appropriate law. Until such in-depth study is completed, the seriousness of the bullying situation may be unclear to lawmakers. It may also be unclear to lawmakers if they should pass laws making the bullying scenario illegal. Without appropriate policies employees, organizations, and leaders may still have no resolution or legal recourse to the workplace bullying issues.

Conceptual Framework

Schein in 1980s developed the organizational culture model (OCM) to make culture more visible within an organization. Schein (1983) defined culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved problems of external

adaption and internal integration. Schein (1983) recognized three levels of culture: (a) artifacts, such as the visible organizational structures and processes; (b) espoused values, such as strategies, goals and philosophies; and (c) underlying assumptions which are the beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings which are the source of values and actions. Schein proposes the structure of organizational culture could best be regarded as consisting of different layers, as shown in Figure 3.

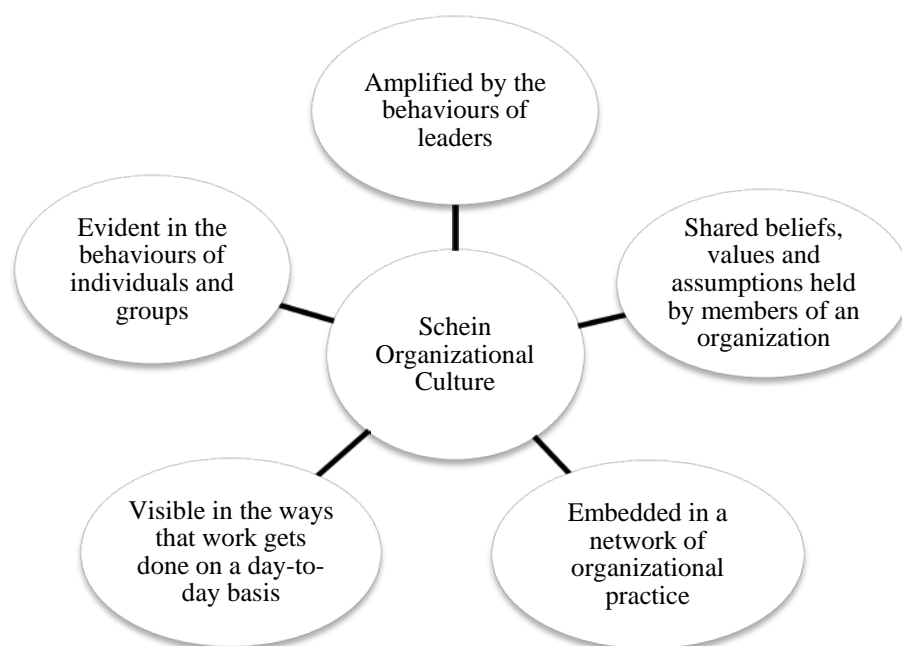


Figure 3. Organizational structural model: Organization culture indicating different levels of culture (Schein, 1983).

There are direct and indirect mechanisms within organizations. Schein maintains the organizational culture should be examined at the level of deeply held basic assumptions which group members share. The historically established structures stored in the organizational members' almost unconscious realm offering direction and meaning for man's relations with nature, with reality and in human relationships, while the

artifacts are regarded as materialized expressions of the values and basic assumptions (Schein, 1983).

The Schein's organizational culture model (OCM) is directly influenced by direct mechanisms; these mechanisms include typical behaviors, opinions, statutes, and appointments. Indirect mechanisms do not affect the organizational culture directly; however, they are determinative, involving the company mission, formal guidelines, corporate identity, rituals, and design (Schein, 1983). The first research question of this study was focused on the lived experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying and the perceived effect of workplace bullying at an organization in the New York State area. Schein's (1983) OCM guided this question as Schein found leaders create and change organizational culture. Successful organizations experience a positive corporate culture, which is an important characteristic of all successful organizations; however, organizational leaders can unknowingly support bullying in an organization's culture affecting the employees (An & Kang, 2015; Barrow, Kolberg, Mirabella, & Roter, 2013). As Schein (1983) described, leaders create, change, and affect organizational culture; the author repetitively showed that patterns of culture filter throughout the organization to new and old employees. These patterns of culture may be important to uncovering how bullying persisted in the organizational culture and viewed as acceptable behavior. The values, beliefs, and policies followed by an organization create its culture.

The organizational culture can dictate how employees cooperate with each other and behave properly within the corporation. According to Schein (1983), the values of

the employees play a significant role in determining the organizational culture. The thought process and attitude of individuals within an organization have a profound influence on the culture of any specific company. Organizations do not adopt a culture in a single day; instead, it is formed in time as the employees go through various changes, adapt to the external environment and solve problems (Schein, 2004). Employees gain insight from their experiences and start practicing from these experiences daily, forming the culture of the workplace (Schein, 2004). The personnel must follow and respect their company culture to execute their work to the company's standards and enjoy their job. Difficulties arise when people are incapable of adjusting to a new work culture and then feel discouraged and unwilling to perform their jobs.

According to the Schein (2004), it may be easier to effect change at the first two levels than at the level of underlying assumptions. Recognition of the multiple layers of culture can significantly motivate organizations trying to reduce toxicity. Without a supportive organizational culture, workplace bullying can persist and lead to poor organizational performance, and extra expenses (Cleary et al., 2013; Imran, Arif, Cheema, & Azeem, 2014). Schein's OCM provides relevance to understanding the phenomenon of workplace bullying, and how these experiences affect victims and witnesses of workplace bullying and organizational productivity overall. Schein (1996) stated the organizational psychology or culture may change if leaders become involved as social units throughout the organization. According to Schein (1996), managers need to learn more about the culture even within units and departments. This may help the managers learn more about the subordinates, roles, and satisfaction with the workplace on

a more personal level. Schein (1996) further explained that observation is important to learning about organizational culture and understanding how everyone is affected within the organization. The observations may offer insight into what employees are experiencing, the safety of the workplace, and may provide an indication of issues, such as workplace bullying.

In developing organizational culture, Schein (1996) also stated it is helpful to implement control systems. Schein (1996) asserted that control systems could be achieved by offering incentives and developmental programs helping with learning behavior. The Nowak (1998) learning theory may allow employees to learn a behavior; thus, organizational culture can be taught, mirrored, and presented consistently (Schein, 1996). The major areas helping to control the culture were developed by Schein (1996) and included: operators, engineers, and executives. Schein (1996) described operators as individuals in a position to become managers and perform most of the work. Engineers work within the underlying aspects of the organization and prefer to work with machines and not with people (Schein, 1996). Schein (1996) explained executives are those in the upper echelon of the organization such as the CEO and directly liable to shareholders. In these positions, Schein (1996) described employees should learn to insert themselves into the culture without fear to work collectively towards the same goals.

Types of Workplace Bullying Behavior

Some organizational leaders may allow bullying in their workplace unknowingly by not being involved in the decision-making process, creating cultures where members are afraid to express themselves, or using an authoritarian approach to conflict resolution

(An & Kang, 2015; Barrow et al., 2013). Imbalance of power becomes a concern when members perceive a leader as unreasonable or unjustified in using power to force others to be submissive (Einarsen et al., 2016). Organization leader may believe these behaviors are needed to increase productivity or work quality (Einarsen et al., 2016). The unknowing bully may replace the effective behaviors of involvement and constructive criticisms with negative behaviors which victims and witnesses could perceive as bullying (Einarsen et al., 2016). The second research question of this study was focused on the actions or behavior viewed as bullying in the organization. The question aligns with Schein's (1983) OCM, as Schein found bullying tactics come in multiple forms or behavior, making a victim and witnesses confused and unsure whether bullying occurred. To help organizations recognize bullying behaviors, Schein, (1983, 2004), Pilch and Turska (2015), and Smith (2016) identified several categories of bullying behaviors.

Dispute-related bullying results from an interpersonal conflict where the victim has not provoked the perpetrator, but the perpetrator reacts to a perceived wrongdoing. The perceived slight may be a work-related conflict, such as the victim not agreeing with the bully on a current work process being the most efficient and economical way of completing a task. The perpetrator may think that bullying the victim will force the victim to agree with their line of thought (Sharkey et al., 2015).

Work-related stalking occurs when one person intrudes and initiates unwanted communications with another person in which the victim fears for his or her safety. Judicial derelict (secondary) bullying occurs when an employee feels bullied by an entire system as opposed to an individual or group. This results when an employee decides to

report the bully and ask for help, however, the organizational authorities show a lack of concern and assistance. Bullying may also involve retaliation in response to reporting a bullying incident. Organizational leaders and other employees may blame and ostracize the victim for exposing wrongdoing.

Body language as bullying occurs when communicating nonverbally to victims. Touching someone is an example. Touching someone, if done in a violent or aggressive manner, clearly does not show an openness and familiarity toward someone. It shows the individuals are not mutually comfortable and communication will not flow easily (Shetgiri, Espelage, & Carroll, 2015).

Cyberbullying occurs when sending hateful e-mails; cyber bullies who are supervisors often monitor subordinates' e-mail because they do not trust their employees. The reason behind the sudden increase in cyber-bullying rates is the availability of internet access to almost everyone everywhere and its prevalence in the workplace. Controlling bully occurs when a person controls or manages others to complete tasks. A controlling style of management for a bully produces results by controlling others with power and generating fear in employees.

Accidental bully occurs when high-stress levels, workplace uncertainties, and increase caseload is present without additional resources, pushing the employee to become an accidental bully (Walton, 2016). The accidental bully may not be aware of their behaviors toward others. During high stress periods, the accidental bully focuses solely on the mission and tends to make employee needs low priority (Tofler, 2016). This bully type may cause harm by using inappropriate comments or actions toward others. An

accidental bully typically practices these behaviors for less than six months. An accidental bully may insult others out of frustration by using sexual or personalized comments (Walton, 2016).

The Victim and Witnessing of Workplace Bullying

Workplace bullying exists across all professions and may occur at any organization (Salin, 2015). Men and women are guilty of bullying, although men have a greater likelihood of being bullies (Indvik & Johnson, 2012; Namie & Namie, 2014). Workplace bullying can be present at all organizational levels. Bullies can be managers, assistants, co-workers, colleagues, supervisors, or other personnel (Zabrodska & Kveton, 2013; Salin, 2015). While the history of workplace bullying is extensive, there has been minimal research completed on how the behavior affects victims and witnesses of the bullying phenomenon (Brotheridge, 2013; Burriss, 2012; Murphy, 2013; Schultz, 2012).

The witness, according to Membere et al., (2015), is an observer of the organizational culture and workplace bullying who has not directly experienced the phenomenon first hand. This definition was the standard to describe a witness throughout this study. Witnesses have perceptions of workplace bullying in addition to those persons affected directly by the phenomenon. Persons affected directly are the primary victims. Membere et al., (2015) stated that witnesses were the second most affected by workplace bullying after the victim. Employees who witness bullying behaviors at work were concerned about being the next victim (Naimie, 2014). Adverse influences on witnesses may include but were not limited to workplace disruption, concern, and sickness (Membere et al., 2015).

The victims are often the target of bullies who want to tease, torment, humiliate, upset, threaten, or intimidate them (Smith, 2016). Human resources professionals view victims as ideal employees because they are usually self-starting, truthful, ethical, detailed, knowledgeable, and emotionally intelligent (Hurley et al., 2016). Victims seem to have an unrealistic view of the workplace bullying situation (Morris, 2016). Victims may be non-confrontational, which accounts for the difficulty defending themselves in the place of work bullying (Morris, 2016). The bully may perceive this non-confrontational characteristic as shyness, low social aptitude, or anxiety, leading him or her to view the target as weak (Morris, 2016; Hurley et al., 2016).

Observers may experience similar mental and physical health and working relationships concerns as targets while not directly affected by the negativity of workplace bullying (Aziri & Idrizi, 2015). Witnesses of bullying frequently feel a lack of control and are displeased that organizational superiors are not taking proper action to stop the bully (Høgh et al., 2015). Much like the victims, witnesses to bullying report intensification in depression, anxiety, pressure, loss of morale, and increased absenteeism (Escartín et al., 2015; Murphy, 2013). Workplace bullying and the effects of organizational culture, about victims and witnesses of the bullying phenomenon, is still an issue for further exploration. It is still unknown how individuals perceived their personal lived experiences of the phenomenon. The rich, first-hand, lived experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying may add to the body of knowledge on workplace bullying and organization culture (Bradshaw et al., 2013).

Effect of Workplace Bullying on Victims, Witnesses, and the Organization

Although the phenomenon of workplace bullying has few seminal works to document its history, there are few academic research studies providing a solid understanding of the issue on victims and witnesses of bullying and how to address it. Namie and Namie's (2014) analysis of 1,000 participants of workplace bullying, found 40.1% of bullies had more senior status than victims, while 19.0% had the same standing, and 7.1% were of lower status or subordinates. Namie and Namie (2014) stated most bullying victims are females. They also found bullies tended to prey on same-gender victims; the researchers Namie and Namie (2014) also explained that while workplace bullying does not fit into sexual harassment or discrimination category, it is just as damaging to an organization's employees. Workplace bullying affects staff and corporations (Eriksen et al., 2016; Fox & Cowan, 2014).

Individual or employee consequences includes stress, depression, and physiological effects, while organizations experience decreased productivity, high legal costs and increased rates of sickness, absenteeism, and turnover (Glambek, Matthiesen, Hetland, & Einarsen, 2014; McCrystal, 2014). According to Branch et al., (2013) and Kobussen, Kalagnanam, and Vaidyanathan, (2014) workplace bullying discourages employees and groups of individuals, alienates possible change agents, upsurges inflexibility, and becomes cancerous for the company. Workplace bullying is an organizational and societal problem having destructive effects on the biological and psychological well-being of victims and witnesses (Appelbaum, Semerjian, & Mohan, 2012; Jenkins, Winefield, & Sarris, 2013; Tuckey & Neall, 2014). Victims and witnesses

of bullying can experience adverse effects related to health, safety, and welfare (Naimie, 2014). Naimie (2014) discussed health symptoms victims experienced during the bullying experience. The seven frequently mentioned health symptoms in the study were: (a) nervousness, stress with (76%); (b) loss of concentration with (71%); (c) disturbed sleep with (71%); (d) short-tempered, easily startled and continuously on guard with (60%); (e) stress headaches (55%); (f) preoccupation over details at work (52%), and (g) nightmares and flashbacks with (49%) (Naimie, 2014).

Murphy (2013) mentioned the lack of literature on victims and witnesses of workplace bullying; after exploring the few studies available. Murphy (2013) recognized victims often felt disrespected, and viewed themselves as slaves, animals, and even prisoners. Neither victims nor witnesses reported bullying experiences to avoid being classified as a victim or becoming the next victim (Murphy, 2013). Murphy (2013) stated the damage to employees could lead to gradual emotional and psychological abuse. Psychological effects can include depression, burnout, posttraumatic stress disorder, prolonged duress stress disorder, psychological trauma, lowered self-esteem, anxiety, panic and anxiety attacks, depression, low self-esteem and confidence, suicidal thoughts, lack of motivation, alcohol and substance abuse, and several other detrimental issues (Murphy, 2013).

The cruel nature of bullying can cause not only psychological harm to those targeted but also physical illness, such as increased likelihood of cardiovascular disease (Barrow et al., 2013; Nelson et al., 2014). No one is exempt from experiencing workplace bullying, and it is common in the industry. Bullies, in fact, dominate, manipulate, and

exploit their victims (Barrow et al., 2013). If the illness is significant enough, employees may exceed their sick-leave balance, causing them to experience financial problems, leading to further stress and reduced self-esteem (Eriksen et al., 2016). The damage to physical and mental health are often visible to employers but overlooked as indicators of stress (Lereya et al., 2015). Individuals experiencing stressed can lose the capacity to interact and deal with the everyday issues within the workplace (Eriksen et al., 2016).

In Desrumaux, Machado, Przygodzki-Lionet, and Lourel's (2015) study, the authors found bullying causes serious physical stress-related effects to the victims. Victims of a hostile work environment can suffer from depression, insomnia, and anxiety. Desrumaux et al., (2015) explained that management or leadership styles are prominent factors of a bullying culture within the workplace. This type of bullying culture can cause decreased staff self-confidence, increased absenteeism, and decreased creativity (Desrumaux et al., 2015). Murphy (2013) and Naimie (2014) argued victims suffer many physical and psychological issues; this argument aligns with the research of Barrow et al., (2013), who stated victims experience significant health problems.

The works of Barrow et al., (2013), Desrumaux et al., (2015), Murphy (2013), and Naimie (2014) substantiated the goals of this study, to explore the perceived effects of bullying and organizational culture on victims and witnesses of the bullying phenomenon. The studies reviewed labeled the undesirable effects of workplace bullying as anxiety, hopelessness, pressure, loss of confidence, and increased absenteeism. The United States has higher instances of workplace violence than Europe (Namie & Namie, 2014). Based on the Negative Acts Questionnaire (NAQ; Namie & Namie, 2014) 46.8%

of the workers studied in the United States reported experiencing one negative act of bullying at least weekly. Workers in the United States are less likely to report bullying for fearing job loss and financial security compared with other countries (Namie, 2014).

There is also a financial and organizational cost to workplace bullying (Namie, 2014). Several researchers argued workplace bullying cost companies millions in lost time and productivity. High turnover, increased operating cost, and decreased quality of product or service deliverables are economic drains on an organization with inherent bullying issues (Namie 2014). Bullying in the workplace has a large financial impact on business; Harrison Psychological Associates reported organizations waste more than \$180 million in lost time and productivity within a two-year period resulting from bullying (Crumpton, 2014; TeenHelp, 2013). Crumpton (2014) found costs to organizations, with incidences of these behaviors, to be between \$6 and \$13 billion yearly. Bame et al., (2013) found bullying causes issues of harassment, leads to expensive litigation costs and other organizational costs. Polinsky and Shavell (2014) found litigation costs not limited to attorney fees, but also included the time leaders must spend away from the organization in litigation. Polinsky and Shavell stated that for each dollar awarded to a victim in a lawsuit, the organization incurred another dollar for the costs of litigation. According to Bame et al., (2013) there are other organizational costs because of bullying. Employees could not concentrate on their work when they were busy defending themselves and trying to prove a bullying scenario. Bame et al., acknowledged the difficulty in proving wrongdoing when occurred. The inability to concentrate because

of a bullying scenario contributed to more downtime, affecting productivity, and the costs of bullying soared (Bame et al., 2013; Crumpton, 2014; Polinsky & Shavell, 2014).

Research results found the bullying within organization culture is unprofessional and boorish behaviors resulting in a high financial cost for a company and negative effect on the victims and witnesses of the phenomenon. The authors Bame et al., (2013) recommended that organizational responsiveness and awareness of the issue of workplace bullying can be an important tactic in identifying and deterring workplace bullying. Organizational, leaders, managers, and HR experts must highlight the need for bullied personnel to isolate bullies to their superiors. Woodrow and Guest, (2014) argued workplace bullying is an important issue and recommended organizational policies and procedures addressing workplace bullying. Victims and witnesses are the focus of workplace bullying studies, and their perspective may provide further insight into the phenomenon.

Effects on Employee Job Performance

The effects of workplace bullying on job performance are important to organizations because if employees are dissatisfied, employee turnover increases, and productivity decreases. This section was important to this study as job performance also affects other issues as tenure and organizational reputation (Celep & Konakli, 2013). The results of Woodrow and Guest's (2014) survey showed nearly 49% of the respondents reported being bullied and increased to 77% when asked if the participants had witnessed workplace bullying or been bully's target. The participants' answers showed common forms of mistreatment and the participants rated job satisfaction as unsatisfactory.

Woodrow and Guest's (2014) study showed bullying influenced job satisfaction, which impacted the productivity of those witnessing or experiencing bullying behavior.

Woodrow and Guest's (2014) study did not describe the lived experiences of the employees.

Salin (2015) conducted a study analyzing 293 participant replies to three different versions of case descriptions and found targets of workplace bullying suffered harsh negative consequences on job satisfaction. Salin indicated leaders assumed dissatisfied targets would eventually and automatically quit their jobs. Participants in the study feared when targets quit, the bully would move to the next target. Salin (2015) found the direct negative influence of bullying on job productivity severely affected organizations efficiency. Bame et al., (2013) explained how an unaddressed bullying scenario affects job performance in such a negative light victims and bystanders left their positions causing issues of major turnover. Bame et al., reported top management tended to ignore most of bullying cases. Because of management's tendency to ignore bullying, job satisfaction suffered, and victims thought their only option was leaving the organization. Workplace bullying behaviors can have an adverse effect on job performance. The research showed job performance maintained a rating of unsatisfactory when issues of bullying were present (Celep & Konakli, 2013). Targets of workplace bullying suffered harsh negative consequences in job performance (Salin, 2015). This agrees with the findings of Bame et al., (2013) suggesting job performance was so severely affected victims thought their only option was leaving the organization.

Leadership and the Organization

Leadership and organizations in this study are important components making up the companies where people work. Since organizations are the main place of business in society, they are also the main setting where workplace bullying occurs. Parker (2014) found literature which substantiated a study on workplace bullying and the devastating effects on leadership and organizations. The organization plays an important role in the workplace bully scenario (Valentine, Fleischman, & Godkin, 2015). Namie and Namie (2014) reported 72% of American employers are aware of a bullying scenario at their workplace, either condoned or sustained bullying and fewer than 20% of employers in the United States acted to stop bullying.

While bullying scenario can have long-lasting adverse effects on an organization, organizations often do little to combat the bullying scenario (Valentine et al., 2016). As Einarsen et al., (2016) explained, “organization and management are responsible for intervening in cases of interpersonal conflicts and workplace bullying” (p. 24). Barrow et al., (2013) stated workplace bullying can cause chronic stress; leaders must determine if they are contributing to the bullying culture in their organization. Self-interested leaders may be more concerned with gaining organizational profits than ensuring the smooth operation of their business and the well-being of the employees helping to earn those benefits (Barrow et al., 2013). Because of the misunderstanding of the bullying problem, organizations can inadvertently encourage bullying behavior (Georgakopoulos et al., 2011). Georgakopoulos et al., (2011) mentioned that if a leader is a bully, the employees often emulate the leader and the bullying scenario becomes a culturally accepted

organizational norm. Apathetic leaders tend to enforce bullying behaviors in their organizations; as previously mentioned, this can be harmful to employees and costs organizations billions annually (Barrow et al., 2013; Valentine et al., 2016).

Organizational structure can play an important role in the bully scenario, and bullying has profound adverse effects on organizations and employees (Valentine et al., 2016). Georgakopoulos et al., (2011) stated that misunderstanding of the bullying issue might have contributed employees emulated bully leaders of organizations. These findings aligned with the results of Valentine et al., (2016), who showed that workplace bullying was harmful to employees and costly to organizations. Many organizations have done little to improve the situation (Valentine et al., 2016), and no peer-reviewed and scholarly research have found a positive correlation between workplace bullying and organizational productivity.

Relationship Between Organization Culture and Leadership

Multiple researchers have tried to define workplace bullying and organizational culture; most authors identify culture as a multidimensional concept including the individual's values, beliefs, and assumptions building an organization (Kochan, 2013). Corporation culture influences behavior within an organization and serves to reinforce the benefits of unified goals and shared responsibility. The organizational culture is the universal routine referring to the core and fundamentals of an organization (Kochan, 2013). The position defines the realism of the organization and dependent reflections such as the experience of working at the organization, individual interaction with others, and anticipated actions or behaviors. The nature of organizational culture varies at every

workplace and is reliant on the personnel and the recognized principles, policies, and practices at the given organization (Kochan, 2013).

According to Appelbaum, (2013) prosperous organizations align worker interests and goals with organizational goals. The responsibility of successful leaders and managers is to produce a corporate culture rewarding workers' efforts (Fischer & Martinez, 2013). The most competent personnel are emotionally engaged and comfortable in their workplace. Generous and efficient organizational leaders deliver mechanisms and community systems in their company expanding productive employee relationships and lessen workplace struggle and bullying (Kossek et al., 2012; Tambur & Vadi, 2012). In the absence of such organizational leadership, the organizational culture tends to be more confrontational and unfriendly, resulting in augmented levels of employee conflict, bullying, and hopelessness among staff (Tambur & Vadi, 2012). Ineffectual and uncivil leaders produce an atmosphere of pressure, conflict, bullying, and discourtesy in their company (Pilch & Turska, 2015).

Leadership and the management relate to the existence of workplace bullying; an organization where bullying prospers can be a result of tyrannical management (Neislon, 2013). Non-autocratic management and leadership improve worker performance, which can advance business overall success and profitability (Ashraf & Khan, 2014; Oladapo & Banks, 2013). Managers and organization leaders can contribute toward positive work environments if they can restrain their adverse behavior (Laschinger & Fida, 2014). If leaders take part in workplace bullying, the occurrence becomes normalized and can lead to decreased staff self-confidence and overall organizational efficiency (Laschinger &

Fida, 2014). Sheppard, Sarros and Santora (2013) explained cooperative management is the most effective type of leadership in complex businesses. Cooperative management creates a constructive employee relations climate by building interactions and networks through the organization (Sheppard et al., 2013). Scholars have found that HR policy and training can affect worker behaviors, which can contribute positively or negatively toward organizational performance (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Such policies can deter workplace bullying behaviors if incorporated correctly; these policies are worthless without management support (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Leaders of successful organizations develop their employees and promote equity, autonomy, self-reliance, and self-management (Tessema, Tsegai, Ready, Embaye, & Windrow, 2014; Yang, Caughlin, Gazica, Truxillo, & Spector, 2014)

Organizational Culture and Workplace Bullying

Organizational culture has received sufficient attention in the business and academic sectors as a principal factor in organizational effectiveness (Tong et al., 2015). The behavioral studies of the 1950s through the 1980s addressed the importance of creating a positive work environment. The culture of an organization mirrors the actions of its leaders and managers, as well as the individual powers within the organization (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2015). Leaders and managers tend to carry out their personal beliefs and standards when developing the company's mission statement, goals, structures, and procedures. Culture is "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external and internal adaptation" (Schein,

2004, p. 26). Workplace bullying can disrupt productivity and potentially damage the organization's culture (Arora, Arora, & Sivakumar, 2016).

Alvesson and Sveningsson, (2015) described organizational culture as a system of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs, governing how people behave in organizations. The author explained these characteristics provide group-thinking assumptions accepted and adhered to throughout the organization. Employees may begin to develop norms based on the organizational culture. Pilch and Turska (2015) explained the corporate culture sets the tone of the organization and influenced by top management and leadership. The corporate culture is the biggest factor related to the environment employees enter daily. It supports the productivity, and organizational goals based on the framework authoritarians have provided (Pilch & Turska 2015). Pilch and Turska (2015) noted minimal research exist on how organizational culture relates to bullying development. Organizational culture allows levels of disrespect in the daily atmosphere in the workplace (Hofstede, 2015). According to An & Kang (2015) organizations become tolerant of certain behaviors and permit or reward the misbehavior. Georgakopoulos et al., (2011) discovered 72% of bullies are organizational executives, management personnel, and "when the bully is the boss, subordinates emulate that behavior as a culturally accepted organizational norm and subordinates may become bullies" (p. 15). Strong leadership and an excellent foundation for corporate culture are instrumental to successful goal achievement. Without strong leadership, negative behaviors may emerge having an overall negative effect on the organizational culture (Fortado & Fadil, 2012; Pilch & Turska, 2015).

The effects of bullying on an organization's culture can be devastating. Trépanier et al., (2015) stated bullying promotes a negative culture, and a dissatisfaction of employees' needs; this could lead to employee burnout. Naimie (2014) found that executive leaders and managers are not indifferent to bullying, and so their actions reinforced bullying behavior within organizations. Georgakopoulos et al., (2011) examined bullying behaviors and found negative organizational cultures worsened the bullying problem. Georgakopoulos, et al., (2011) determined leaders and managers perceive bullying as tough management, rather than abuse. Organizations superiors did not know how to deal with a bullying scenario, therefore, they ignored bullying, and bullying became part of an organization's culture.

During their qualitative study, Cleary et al., (2013) suggested toxic leaders had a crucial role in creating and promoting toxic cultures in their organizations, thereby promoting a bullying scenario. Hogan and Coote (2013) hypothesized organizational culture was an invisible yet powerful means to provoke desired organizational outcomes. Hogan and Coote (2013) collected data from 100 principals of law firms and found an organization's culture significantly influenced market outcomes, financial, and market performance, and employee attitudes and effectiveness. These authors further found a positive organizational culture was fundamental to organizational effectiveness (Hogan & Coote, 2013). The results of research validated the importance of a positive organizational. Georgakopoulos et al., (2011) found leaders often ignored bullying behavior and rewarded it as a 'tough boss' management approach. Ignored bullying practices then became an accepted part of an organization's culture. The effect of

bullying on organizational culture as a result is detrimental to the organization, and its mission, goals, and outcomes.

Oladapo and Banks (2013) conducted a study to better understand the effects of workplace bullying on employees and the self-proclaimed, accused manager or supervisor. This study provided a solid defense for the need to keep organizations safe and free from unhealthy threats such as workplace bullying (Oladapo & Banks, 2013). According to Oladapo and Banks, a safe workplace focused on a culture providing a safe and healthy environment by achieving the following factors introduced by the Luxembourg Declaration for Workplace Health Promotion: “Improving the work organization and working environment; promoting active participation; and encouraging personal development” (p. 81). These authors (2013) suggested a safe workplace also involves encouraging employees to focus on lifestyle changes such as promoting physical health, mental health, spiritual health, and overall health awareness. This attention to health and safety may better address organizational culture issues by dealing with occupational health.

The data for this phenomenological study were collected by 24 managers and 779 subordinates by questionnaires, surveys, and interviews (Oladapo & Banks, 2013). The results indicated that the bullies also experienced stress and decreased confidence after being accused of bullying, rather found guilty or not guilty (Oladapo & Banks, 2013). Oladapo and Banks (2013) found 75% of participants witnessed bullying of coworkers; 47% of participants were personally bullied at some point; and 27% admitted to having been bullying directly in the last 12 months. These results stress the prevalence of the

workplace bullying phenomenon. Twenty-five percent of the self-proclaimed bullies left the organization where the accusations occurred whether guilty or not (Oladapo & Banks, 2013). At the conclusion of their study, Oladapo and Banks (2013) suggested the carrying out a Work Cover management program that should alleviate workplace bullying issues by creating and adhering to policies, investigating complaints as timely as possible, communicating with the accused bully, target, and witnesses, and including training for the managers investigating these issues. The suggestion of this Work Cover program may provide a perceived safer organizational culture, better working conditions, and a more effective organization; however, the program should be evaluated every one to two years for effectiveness (Oladapo & Banks, 2013). This study provided a solid foundation that supporting the importance of health, safety, and awareness.

Efforts to Eliminate Workplace Bullying

As Namie and Namie (2014) explained, “work should not hurt” (p. 9), Bame et al., (2013) agreed, by stating that employers should protect employees, as they are a company’s most valuable resource. Many organizational leaders and managers asserted that organizations operate based on equal opportunity and all employees deserve equal treatment and consideration. There are many actions which can be taken to resolve bullying behaviors throughout the workplace and towards a bully-free environment. The third research question of this study was focused on the leadership and management skills needed and action taken to manage the type of culture to reduce workplace bullying. The question related to Schein’s (1983) OCM, as Schein found that leadership creates and changes the culture, but culture also affects and even defines leadership in organizations.

It is a critical reciprocal relationship. Schein (1983) provided categories to describe culture; Schein's OCM also provides reference points to create cultural change. The responsibility resides with senior leaders, management, and HR to build organizational change.

This level of cultural change needs a comprehensive approach and compact actions; a new logo, corporate style or customer-orientation' training will not suffice. It is important that a good employee's work performance be acknowledged and rewarded. Schein, (1983) found leaders create and change an organizational culture influencing bullying behavior. The theory justified this study as information and knowledge on the effects of bullying on organizational culture could serve as a guide to correctly carry out change benefiting all employees and the organization. If leaders and managers were aware of the effects of bullying on a secure working environment or culture, they could promote policies preventing bullying incidents, and contribute to organizational productivity.

It is also important to understand that employees at all levels should be involved in the effort to create a bully-free environment (Pastorek et al., 2015). Providing all employees, including leaders, supervisors, and managers, with training will help employees identify if bullying behaviors are present, which training will facilitate addressing the problem (Bame et al., 2013). The best way for organizational leaders to combat workplace bullying within organizational cultures is to create policies to stop bullying before it exists in a working environment (Valentine, Fleischman, & Godkin, 2015; Brotheridge et al., 2012). Leaders and managers can improve their organizations by

creating a balance between focusing on the organizational mission and employees when conducting daily business tasks. To ensure employees have a safe work environment free of bullying, leaders and managers can incorporate anti-bullying statements into the strategic plan, the employee handbook, and educational brochures posted on bulletin boards (Pastorek et al., 2015).

Bame et al., (2013) recommended the following: (a) specifying zero tolerance of bullying; (b) including workplace bullying in the health and safety section of documents, including job application forms; (c) creating and publishing a proper investigation and adjudication process for potential cases of bullying; (d) developing a progressive disciplinary process for managers and supervisors to follow; (e) creating counseling procedures and drafting nondisclosure agreements; and (f) providing recurring education on anti-bullying policies. The organization's anti-bullying policy should be part of training to ensure that all employees understand what bullying involves, the company policy on bullying, and how to report bullying. Managers also need training on how to address bullying when it occurs (Kitterlin-Lynch, Tanke, & Stevens, 2016). Kitterlin-Lynch, Tanke, and Stevens (2016) explained training should occur regularly to remind all employees about the anti-bullying policy and reinforce a bully-free workplace as an important aspect of the organizational culture. Bullies may need special training or intervention to recognize, acknowledge, and change their disruptive, costly behaviors (Kitterlin-Lynch, Tanke, & Stevens, 2016). Valentine (2012) suggested continuity should involve maintaining the organizational culture throughout any outside cultural elements that may occur, such as changes in values and norms. Leadership succession would help

maintain the continuity and culture of the organization, resulting to a culture without workplace bullying (Valentine, 2012).

To prevent communication failure, leaders should use networks to communicate their message. One-on-one and small-group meetings are more useful channels of communication and efficient in helping employees change behaviors (Marinova et al., 2015). When organizational leaders distance or seclude themselves from their subordinates, they may fail to realize bullying occurs in the organization (Parker, 2014). Parker (2014) suggested leaders set a standard to create a culture which does not tolerate bullying. Parker found organizations needed a Human Resource Department which understood the seriousness of the situation and supported actions removing this type of behavior. The results of research found most Human Resource Departments did not have clear policies prohibiting or forbidding bullying practices (Parker, 2014). Most targets of bullying were unprotected because of unclear or non-existing policies.

Recommendations to resolve the issue of workplace bullying across all industries include training implementation and education materials to reduce the potential for stressors in the workplace (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Employee assistance programs should also be made available for victims of bullying to improve their health and well-being. Creating a code of ethics can be a crucial step to developing a culture of an organization of integrity (Woodrow & Guest, 2014; Valentine, Fleischman & Godkin, 2015). The code of ethics contains broad guidelines employees are expected to adhere to. Though implementing a code of ethics will not ensure employees will behave ethically, a code of ethics is an important component of encouraging ethical behavior in an

organization because they include guidance which employees can use to create an ethical environment (Valentine, Fleischman, & Godkin, 2015). Valentine, Fleischman, and Godkin, (2015) suggested establishing a code of ethics is the easiest and least expensive way of encouraging ethical behavior. Johnson, (2015) asserted when a code of ethics is properly designed and managed with integrity and as a living, dynamic, cultural guide, there should be no doubt about the moral foundation of the organization. The body of knowledge needs more detailed research pertaining to lived experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying and organizational culture. Until such in-depth study it is not completed, the seriousness of the bullying situation may be unclear to employees, leaders, and organizations.

Gap in the Literature Review

As with all research, it is significant to formulate questions needing further investigation and identify gaps in the literature which must be researched (Namie, 2014). Georgakopoulos et al., (2011), Hogan and Coote (2013), and Cleary et al., (2013) did not indicate any material or solid evidence on the lived experiences of the individuals or the effects on organizational culture through those lived experiences. These authors acknowledge the importance of the research materials focusing on the perspective of the victims and witnesses, but admit there was not sufficient data focusing on the perceived effects of workplace bullying, and corporate culture on victims and witnesses through the lived and individual experiences of organizational employees. Since the effect of lived experiences of employees in organizational culture was unknown, a gap existed in the literature.

As Georgakopoulos et al., (2011) determined if leaders and managers ignored bullying rather than addressing it, then bullying becomes an acceptable part of the organizational culture, leading to undesirable results on organizational performance. Namie and Lutgen-Sandvik (2010) showed victims and witnesses of bullying observe actions by the accomplices. The accomplices can be active or passive and include other staff within the organization. The witness is not an active participant in the bullying but observes the behavior targeted at others in the workplace. Namie (2014) explained symptoms of stress, negative attitude, and dissatisfaction in the workplace are more prevalent in people witnessing workplace bullying than those who have not. Workplace bullying is on the rise; according to the 2014 WBI-Zogby survey, 13% of U.S. employees reported to have experienced bullying, 24% stated they had been experienced bullying in the past, and an additional 12% say they have witnessed workplace bullying. While statistics vary, recent studies showed that nearly half of all American workers had been affected by workplace bullying, either as a target or as a witness to abusive behavior against a co-worker (Bowling, Camus, & Blackmore 2015; Duffy & Sperry, 2013).

Namie (2014) found in any given year, 37% of United States workers report persistent abuse and another 21% (17.5 million) report observing workplace bullying. An estimate of 65.8 million U.S. workers overall are affected either directly or indirectly by workplace bullying (Membere et. al., 2015; Namie, 2014). Other researchers have reported prevalence rates of workplace bullying within the United States at nearly 50%, and 72% of Americans were aware workplace bullying occurred in their organizations (Samnani & Singh, 2012). Báez-León et al. (2016) and Hintz (2012) asserted the victim's

and witness's perspective on workplace bullying is an area with minimal research. Namie, (2014) addressed the significance of the research resources focusing on the employee participation but admitted there was inadequate data on victim and witness perceptions of workplace bullying. Naimie (2014) suggested to the researchers, to examine the victims of bullying and those exposed to the behavior to understand the impact of bullying and organizational culture completely.

Laharnar et al., (2015) disproved the common belief that negative behaviors associated with workplace bullying are limited to a few rude or discourteous employees (Laharnar et al., 2015). In addition to the bully, organization cultures with inherent bullying situation may involve the bully's enablers and observers as well as the target (Namie, 2014). Namie (2014) concluded workplace bullying is an organizational concern spanning beyond the interactions between the bully and the target. There is still a gap in the research literature on the lived experiences of employees on the organizational culture in American organizations (Burris, 2012; Tye-Williams, 2012).

Tye-Williams (2012) reviewed research on the lived experiences of victims but found nothing concerning other employees, such as witnesses of the bullying phenomenon in organizations. Burris' (2012) qualitative phenomenological study found bullying prevalent in American organizations. Burris (2012) suggested a study of the effects of bullying from a bystander's perspective. Carroll and Lauzier (2014) and Cleary et al., (2013) suggested a study, including the experiences of employees. Other staff, such as non-victims, also needs to be included in bullying research, since they may have experienced similar effects when witnessing or experiencing bullying tactics

(Brotheridge, 2013; Burris, 2012, Schultz, 2012). Emdad, Alipour, Hagberg, and Jensen, (2013) recognize there is evidence bullying not only impacts the victim but also the witnesses to the bullying behavior. Bullying effects, the whole organization, not just the victim, and noted there has not been much attention as to the observers of workplace bullying. The goal of this quantitative study was to explore the health impacts associated with those bullied and the observers of bullying. A questionnaire was sent to 1,577 individuals with a final response total of 949. Ten percent of the respondents felt bullied and 9% reported being an observer of bullying according to the study (Emdad, Alipour, Hagberg, & Jensen, 2013). The findings according to the authors were “the observers of bullying, the bystanders, reported significantly more general stress and mental stress reactions than the employees from workplaces without bullying” (p. 15). Emdad, Alipour, Hagberg, and Jensen, (2013) recommended that more research needs to be done regarding the “health effects of workplace bullying and the many kinds of bullying processes at workplaces” (p. 18). The next section includes a discussion on the findings related to the gap in the literature supported by references from the Chapter 2 literature review.

Results Related to the Gap in the Literature

The following gap have been filled, or partially filled, by this study: A lack of sufficient data focused on the perspective and the perceived effects of workplace bullying and corporate culture on victims and witnesses through the lived and individual experiences of organizational employees. The current study addresses this gap with the inclusion of the perceptions and the perceived effects of workplace bullying, and

corporate culture on victims and witnesses through the lived and individuals' experiences of organizational employees. The gap in the literature relating to workplace bullying and corporate culture provided an opportunity for further study and exploring the topic. Findings from the current qualitative study extends the literature showing, from the 25 in-depth interviews conducted, 100% of the participants perceived workplace bullying has the potential to affect employees across departments adversely and the entire corporation. Following the analysis of the data, the experiences of bullying behavior and organizational culture adversely affected the participants because they felt insulted, helpless, upset, and devalued. The witnesses and the victims of the workplace bullying expressed surprise at the absence of leadership, lack of resolution to the issues, lack of policies and procedures, and lack of organizational awareness.

Findings from the current study support the existing literature related to workplace bullying and the organizational culture such as Murphy's (2013) research work who suggested a qualitative study on cultural practices on bullying and organizational culture. Murphy (2013) explored the perspectives and lived experiences of the participants about the perceived effects of bullying on job satisfaction and organizational culture. Murphy's findings showed a need for further research to review how or to what extent the culture of an organization allows bullying behavior to exist. Carroll and Lauzier (2014) and Cleary et al., (2013) found bullying is toxic and creates a liability for organizations; both authors suggested a study focusing on the experiences of employees. Rodkin, Hanish, Wang, and Logis, (2014) reported the lack of literature to help understand the perspective of the victim on bullying. Their study explored the

reactions of victims and witnesses to six distinct types of bullying. Rodkin et al., (2015) chose a quantitative study method of studying 127 volunteers who were working adults at the average age of 22. The participants were presented with a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of six categories of bullying; threat to professional status, destabilization, isolation, overwork, verbal taunts, and violence. Within each category, the participants were given three choices of reactions to the bullying categories; assertiveness, avoidance, and seeking formal help. To avoid receiving biased responses, the study did not include the terms *bullying* or *victim*. Results of the Rodkin, et al., (2015) study showed the most common reaction to bullying is the mode of avoidance, linked to victims not seeking help to stop the bullying. Taking the avoidance stance is a concern because it shows a lack of trust in the leaders and managers. Some people link the mode of assertiveness to the possible threat to professional status, overwork, and isolation. Rodkin, et al., (2015) stated victims often seek formal help to reduce or remove the bullying actions of verbal taunts or violence. The victim needs to report the incident to a higher authority such as the personnel office or manager. The study recommended organizations could implement an anti-bullying strategy of prevention instead of intervention, however, the study was limited to a sample of participants who were victims under age 25, and college students who held retail type positions and may not represent the general population.

The current study extends this research with findings by disclosing the effects workplace bullying has on all organization members. Organizational leaders and managers could use these findings to carry out interventions which could prepare future victims and

witnesses on how to address workplace bullying within their organization. This study included one overarching question and three subquestions, and focused on 25 employees from St. Joseph's Hospital who were the victim or witnessed the bullying phenomenon in the workplace. The overarching research question for this study was as follows: How do employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture?

Finding 1

Finding 1 of this research study relates to the overarching question; discussing the culture of an organization is a vital component of the success of the organization. The participants revealed often the culture of an organization was a determining factor on the participant's preference to work in such organization. Six (26%) of the participants stated that the environment was horrible, unhealthy, and toxic. Pseudonym Final Sample Participant 3 (PFSP3) stated, "I feel isolated and there is no sense of belonging at this company." PFSP4 said, "It is a ridiculous environment, cussing out people, promoting and supporting a hostile work environment." Five (21%) stated their organization did not have any leadership, and six (26%) also shared their work environment was conducive to bullying; it was accepted as the norm. Five (21%) of the participants thought they work better in a positive environment; Six (26%) were not happy because of the changes in place. PFSP5 said, "This place has no structure, everyone knows their job duties, no repercussions, no supervisory skills, no leadership, jobs done half of what they have to do, excuses made regarding the errors; it has become quantity over quality." PFSP6 said, "It is a horrible, worst-ever work environment, it is very dysfunctional, and no

leadership.” PFSP12 said, “up until the store manager of this incident left for another store, the culture in our store was stressful.” PFSP17 stated, “The bully culture is supported from the top down. I remember when the manager made condescending remarks at a staff meeting about overall staff performance.”

Organizational culture has been studied by Schein and others since the 1950s. Schein (2004) said it was important to know the organization because it displays the actions of its leaders as well as individual strengths (p. 414). Schein also stated, “leaders externalize their own assumptions and embed them gradually and consistently in the mission, goals, structures, and working procedures of the group” (p. 406). The feelings shared by the participants also support the literature of this research. The participants in this study shared when bullying was present in the organization it was not an excellent work environment. These findings relate to the study by Omar, Mokhtar, and Hamzah, (2015) highlighting the lack of leadership was strong among the participants. Omar, Mokhtar, and Hamzah, (2015) stated organizational leaders often assume employees can be manipulated into a culture. In this current study participants reveal the lack of leadership puts them in an awkward position. Six of the participants reported the work environment was unhealthy and toxic. The participants’ feelings noted the organization was conducive to bullying. The research shows there are impacts of bullying on the organization. Namie (2014) stated workplace bullying is hostile and destructive for organizations and their employees. Samnani, (2013), stated there is no model in place to help organizations in preventing workplace bullying, and concern exists regarding the ethical positions of the organizations.

The need for leadership responsibility and accountability in organizational culture was a theme that surfaced with all participants. All participants agreed there was a need for leadership responsibility and accountability; everyone needs to be accountable for his or her actions and especially leaders. One participant stated that everyone has professional accountability, and everyone needed to act like professionals. Another participant was adamant when stated employees and leaders must be held accountable for their behaviors and actions. Another participant thought leaders were responsible for allowing organizational culture at any given time. The following finding relate to the subquestions (SQs) of this qualitative study.

Finding 2

The first subquestion (SQ1) asked about the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly. Finding 2, relating to SQ1 of this study, discusses those perspectives, helping to explain the behaviors of bullies and how participants feel or felt during the experience of witnessing bullying. Participants shared feelings, beliefs, and thoughts relating to their lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture. When witnessing or being a victim of the workplace bullying many participants felt afraid, helpless, and embarrassed. Such feelings are unsurprising because, according to the participants, bullying supervisors got desired results by controlling others through using power and creating fear. Some participants also felt angry, stressed, and worried, meaning they were emotionally, psychologically and physically affected. Witnesses who

become angry sometimes decide to confront the bully, but if their attempts to address the bullying were unsuccessful, they were more likely to become bullying targets. This finding relates to Matthiesen and Einarsen's (2010) description of scapegoating, in which bully targets an individual because the bully thinks the victim deserves the harsh treatment. The bully might consider the victim to be expendable and an easy target for unleashing frustration and stress. When both the victims and witnesses, and the bully are angry at each other, predatory bullying may occur, with both parties seeking each other's destruction. Whoever has less power becomes the loser (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2010). To maintain controlling power, bullies may prevent other employees from making decisions, decrease their self-confidence, and hinder their productivity (Namie, 2014).

One participant, with 25 years of experience in her field, reported a bully had ruined her self-confidence and hinder her performance where she was considering retirement. This participant explained: "From a rating of 1 to 10, I once considered myself a rate-10 performer, but today I feel like I am a rate-6 performer. Sometimes I feel like I cannot do anything right" (PFSP8). Participants in the study who witnessed workplace bullying were distracted from their work tasks, not because of fear but because of frustration from hearing unprofessional comments directed at victims. As PFSP11 explained, "Sometimes as an unnecessary and unprofessional distraction for everyone, the bully needed attention and wanted to prove they can control everyone's working environment. Their unprofessional [behavior] affected all of us."

Many study participants indicated they did not want to report workplace bullying. They instead wanted to remain subdued to avoid bullying while they decided how to

escape the bullying, such as by taking sick leave and transferring to a different department or company. According to PFSP18, “In the office where I worked, all of the employees tend to work harder and respond with a sense of urgency when summoned by the bully. They tried to avoid the bully in any way by taking annual leave and sick leave days above what they normally would take.” The participants focused on avoiding and escaping rather than reporting because they believed reporting would not be effective. Namie (2014) reported victims wait an average of 22 months before reporting bullying. Some participants in the currently study were victims of workplace bullying for 3–10 years. Because of the lack of policies and the often-confusing nature of covert bullying, covert bullying behaviors are not challenged until a violent act occurs (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). The way an organization’s high-level managers respond to bullying reports can send a strong message to employees about workplace bullying. Leaders who do not take direct action against bullying convey to employees that workplace bullying is not a problem (Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010) and should not be reported. The following subquestion (SQ) provides added information for this qualitative study.

Finding 3

The subquestion 2 (SQ2) of this study asked: What types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within the organization? Finding 3, relating to SQ2 of this study, discusses the actions of bullying in the organizations. It was an open-ended question focusing on participants’ perspectives of bullying in the workplace as it was important to hear the personal accounts of information based on interviews. When the interviews were transcribed one of the first theme arose showed a consistent view of specific behaviors

accepted within the organizations and contributed to the bullying action within organizations.

The words and phrases identified were linked to intimidation and verbal abuse, lack of respect, belittling action in front of others, graphic language, and display of abusive power. Job intimidation was noted by 17 (71%) of the participants followed with intimidation by 12 (50%) as an acceptable behavior. Lack of respect was a behavior shared by 12 (50%) of the participants. PFSP 6 explained when supervisors are using intimidation tactics, such as correcting a behavior of an employee in front of others to show an example of what will happen to them if they mess up, will create a culture of fear. She stated, "The fear coupled with the lack of respect for the employee makes the employee doubt their abilities." PFSP12 explained "It was acceptable that managers used verbal abuse (cussing, yelling, screaming) and the belittling of staff in front of others as an action of terrorizing the employees." PFSP13 recalled more than one occasion, which continues today, where, she explained "The supervisor used verbal abuse, such as calling the employee names, using curse words in front of others to intimidate not just the victim, but other employees as well."

The bullying actions, revealed 21 (88%) participants, were carried out by a supervisor, and 17 (71%) revealed the bullying actions were committed in front of others. The bullying actions involved yelling, screaming, and verbal abuse per 12 (50%) of the participants. PFSP 12 remembered an incident in the workplace: "Our store manager, a woman, belittled one of the supervisors (another woman) until the supervisor had an anxiety attack. Several of us heard the yelling and 911 was called." The manager

frequently would hold the threat of reduced hours or a written warning over the heads of certain employees. He stated, “Her treatment of employees was legendary.” PFSP13 stated, “The supervisor made condescending remarks at a staff meeting about overall staff performance.” PFSP17 explained, “I worked in a fast-paced environment and the supervisor often, out in the open, did name calling to her employees. This caused fear, shame, and apprehension, and others just turned away while this went on.” FPSP23 stated, “My supervisor screamed in public and targeted the weaker workers; this is not productive and creates a toxic environment, just about every day this happened.” PFSP24 explained, “A supervisor in the company always chose one high-performing member of his team to bully, one at a time, probably because he felt threatened by the employee’s success.” Each interview allowed the participant to describe and share their perspective experiences and what they witnessed.

As Namie and Namie (2014) asserted, “work shouldn’t hurt.” Rose, Shuck, Twyford, and Bergman, (2015) agreed by, stating employers should protect and not damage their most valuable resource, which is their employees. Many organizational leaders stated that their organizations are based on equal opportunity and all employees deserve equal treatment and consideration workplace bullying, however, this research showed a lack of equal opportunity and treatment because only a select few are targeted and bullied in the workplace per participants’ perspectives. Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2015) stated “because of employers’ costs associated with bullying, such as productivity loss, costs regarding interventions by third parties, turnover, increased sick-

leave, workers compensation, and disability insurance claims and legal liability—employers should logically be motivated to stop bullying” (p. 9).

Many actions can be taken to resolve bullying behaviors throughout the workplace and to work toward a bully-free environment. The initial step is for organizational leaders to understand the costs and risks associated with workplace bullying so that the leaders are motivated to address the issue. It is also important to understand employees at all levels should be involved in creating a bully-free environment (Indvik & Johnson, 2012). Providing all employees, including leaders and supervisors, with training will help employees identify whether bullying behaviors are being shown, which supports addressing the problem (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). Organizational leaders can also determine whether bullying is occurring by requesting management reports and official briefings from the human resources department. These and other techniques for removing workplace bullying are discussed below. The following subquestion (SQ) provides further information for this qualitative study.

Finding 4

The third subquestion (SQ3) involved hearing the participants point of view of what they felt would help the organization mitigate bullying. Finding 4 relate to SQ3; discussed the lack of leadership was a theme noted in the literature review as well as in the input from the participants of this current study. One participant stated the supervisor did not have a backbone; another one said the bully was not a leader, had no training in how to become a leader, and a good leader would not let this happen to its employees. As mentioned in the literature review, the ability to motivate and inspire subordinates is

critical and according to Olive and Cangemi, (2015) leadership should reach a different level, discover what motivates the individuals, and tap into the source to get the best from employees. Organizational leadership style affects employee behavior and attitude and the degree to which employees will commit to productivity. Some participants reported watching bullying de-motivated them to produce.

Participants shared what actions could minimize bullying behavior. The responses overwhelmingly reflected the need for the organizations to take a stronger stance against bullying from the top down. Twelve participants (50%) stated the actions they expected from their organization to prevent bullying were to not allow the behavior, and have zero tolerance to prevent bullying. Eleven (46%) of the participants shared policies should be in place to prevent bullying. Ten (42%) said creating a better environment is expected from the organization. It is important for the employees to be heard, and six (25%) of the participants felt the organization needed to listen to the employees and protect them, with five (21%) who felt the issue of bullying should be addressed immediately by the organization. PFSP4 stated, “The director should take more control of the department; bullying should not be tolerated, if it occurs, you will be terminated.” PFSP6, explained, “It is a horrible environment, very dysfunctional, there is no leadership; supervisors should listen to their employees and get rid of the bullies. HR [human resources department] is a joke, they will not do anything to jeopardize their own position.”

Leaders may improve their organizations by creating a balance between a focus on the organizational mission and employees when conducting daily business tasks. To ensure employees have a safe work environment free of bullying, leaders can incorporate

anti-bullying statements into the strategic plan, the employee handbook, and educational brochures posted on bulletin boards. The best way for organizational leaders to combat workplace bullying is to create policies to stop bullying at its roots (Studer, & Mynatt, 2015). For leaders who would like to add anti-bullying language to the company policies, Studer and Mynatt, (2015) recommended: (a) specifying zero tolerance of bullying; (b) including workplace bullying in the health and safety section of documents, including job application forms; (c) creating and publishing a proper investigation and adjudication process for potential cases of bullying; (d) mapping out a progressive disciplinary process for managers and supervisors to follow; (e) developing counseling procedures and nondisclosure agreements; and (f) providing frequent education and training on anti-bullying policy.

The organization's anti-bullying policy needs to be presented in training to ensure all employees understand what bullying involves, the company's policy on bullying, and how to report instances of bullying. Managers also need training on how to address bullying when it occurs (Indvik & Johnson, 2012). Indvik and Johnson (2012) asserted training should be provided regularly to remind all employees on the antibullying policy and to reinforce a bully-free workplace is an important aspect of the organizational culture. Bullies may need special training or intervention to recognize, acknowledge, and change their disruptive, costly behaviors (Indvik & Johnson, 2012).

Summary and Transition

Many managers and leaders fail to realize the impact of workplace bullying and the organizational culture has on the employees and the organizations (Namie, 2014). The

lack of understanding contributes to low job satisfaction, leading to high employee turnover, decreased employee productivity, and company failure (McTernan, Dollard, & LaMontagne, 2013). This research shows the lack of literature on victims and witnesses of workplace bullying on the organizational culture, particularly their perceptions, experiences, and its impacts on them. Workplace bullying is hostile with intimidating personality traits and destructive for organizations and their employees. This additional information could add to the body of knowledge and provide a foundation for additional studies. With the results of this study, leaders may be encouraged to change their organizational culture, and ensuring a more positive work environment. Conclusive findings revealed that violence occurs in various places, such as the workplace, which causes a disruption to employees and the organizations, mainly victims and witnesses of workplace bullying. The results showed victims and witnesses of workplace bullying felt uncomfortable, upset, overwhelmed, intimidated and threatened, and feared of what they experienced. Lack of trust toward the organizational management and leadership, along with not being taken seriously and feeling no protection from the bully represented many of the respondents. The feelings shared by all the participants were being stressed; experienced a threat of losing their job, frustrated, and felt helpless and had a fear of receiving backlash. The bullies used intimidation tactics the most, with abusive language, such as cursing or using graphic language and bigoted speech, in most participant responses.

Victims may find coworkers and others within the organization do not provide support when faced with the workplace bullying phenomenon. The following impacts to

victims are a result of workplace bullying: stress and anxiety, sleep disruption, difficulty concentrating, headaches, rapid heartbeats, and exhaustion. The result showed evidence that bullying not only impacts the victim and also the witnesses to the bullying behavior. Employees who witness bullying behavior at work were concerned about being the next victim. The findings showed that the witnesses reported significantly more general stress and mental stress reactions than the employees from workplaces without bullying. Witnesses often experience feelings of being in a lack of control and angry at the organization for not exercising appropriate action to stop the bullying. Much like a victim, witnesses also report an increase in depression, fear, and stress.

There were many additional discussions that exhibited several examples of how workplace bullying and the organizational culture impacts employee, productivity, and the organization. Examples of bullying include those who instigate a rumor or belittle others and criticize a co-worker, causing the targeted individual to become a victim of workplace bullying. Inappropriate behaviors by supervisors, such as yelling repeatedly and using a foul language in front of others, was a contributor to health issues of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying. In this study, the victims and witnesses reported many of the same destructive acts, however witnesses are not usually active, but observes.

The results of the study also indicated negative organizational culture because workplace bullying in the upstate New York State area. The research results showed the organizational culture was hindered by lack of policies and procedures as well as organizational awareness. Oladapo and Banks (2013) supported having a safe workplace

free from bullying and any additional unhealthy threat. The lack of policies and procedures within an organization is an elevated risk and could threaten the integrity of the organization if a lawsuit develops or other heightened scrutiny and investigations. The finding revealed co-workers as well as managers and supervisors are often the sources of workplace bullying. This research complemented the research of Indvik and Johnson (2012) who found managers as well as supervisors were most often the source of workplace bullying. Leaders externalize their own assumptions and embed them gradually and consistently in the mission, goals, structures, and working procedures of the group. Collaborative teamwork among all levels of a corporation is the basis of every organization to produce a great organizational culture. To achieve the goal and maximize all aspects of the organization, all members must adhere to the rules, regulations, and procedures in place to achieve organizational success. The study recommended organizations could implement an anti-bullying strategy of prevention instead of intervention.

The study reported negative effects of bullying in the form of fear, depression, stress, loss of morale, and increased absenteeism. This in-depth study helped to explore and clarify the perceived effects of workplace bullying through the lived experiences of organizational employees and bullying's effects on organizational culture through these lived experiences. The gap in literature on the effects on victims and witnesses and the role of leadership and the organizational culture may be filled with the findings of this research.

Chapter 2 provided an in-depth analysis of the literature. This in-depth analysis revealed the specific gap on the lived experiences of victims, witnesses, or bystanders relating to workplace bullying (Burriss, 2012; Báez-León et al., 2016; Hintz, 2012). There is a lack of literature from the perception and perspective of the victim or witness of bullying (Burriss, 2012; HelpTeen, 2013; Naimie, 2012). An exploration of this gap was needed to help leaders to change their organizational culture, particularly in the New York area (Bullying Statistics, 2013; U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey, 2012). This chapter displayed the current literature relating to the workplace bullying phenomenon, specifically relating to victims and witnesses. The description of workplace bullying, witnesses, organizational culture, leadership and other studies were included to provide support and demonstrate the topics discussed in this chapter.

An extensive history of workplace bullying dates to the original exploration of the phenomenon in Europe, and how workplace bullying has created challenges in the United States as well. This research aligned with Schein's organizational culture model (OCM). Schein (1993) found patterns of culture filtered throughout the organization. Schein's OCM and other reviewed literature were used to develop the research questions for the current study. This information can contribute to solutions to diminish bullying issues in their organizations (Burriss, 2012; Barrow et al., 2013). Chapter 3 of this proposal addresses the purpose and the reasoning for the qualitative phenomenology design. This rationale includes a description and clarification of the data collection and leadership procedures. Chapter 3 presents the research method, as guided by the problem statement and the research questions supported by the literature review in chapter 2.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Several professionals have completed research to understand victims and witnesses of the bullying phenomenon (Brunetto et al., 2016; Celep & Konakli, 2013; Eisenberg et al., 2016; Jones et al., 2015). These researchers addressed the gap identified in the body of knowledge; however, little data existed concerning the lived and individual experiences of bullied employees and witnesses related to organizational culture. Exploration of workplace bullying within organizations was critical because leaders and managers may use the findings from the studies to reduce or eliminate workplace bullying. This study was designed to fill a gap in the existing literature by providing a voice to the victims and witnesses. The gap was apparent in the unresearched New York State area, representing a diverse potential of untapped resources for organizations and other businesses concerned about workplace bullying (Cleary et al., 2013; Georgakopoulos et al., 2011; Hogan & Coote, 2013; Newport & Shain, 2014; Pilch & Turska, 2015). The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of victims and witnesses in the upstate New York State area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture.

The phenomenological qualitative method was the suitable technique because data were collected throughout face-to-face interviews and my journal to obtain the participants' perspectives. The overarching research question guiding the study and the standards for choosing the population and sample size was the following: How did individuals who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture? Data

collection continued until data saturation was achieved. The data were analyzed to identify themes on the participants' experiences and perceptions. The analysis led to an understanding of the essences of the participants' experiences and perceptions (see Moustakas, 1994). Chapter 3, contains discussion of the methodology, research design, and population for the study, including the validity, and reliability of the collected data. The chapter also addresses the ethical considerations for participants and the limitations of the study. The chapter presents a summary identifying the main points in the chapter and leads to Chapter 4, addresses the data analysis and results from the research.

Relevance of Research Method

This research design was qualitative phenomenological. The phenomenological design was the most appropriate for the study because the objective was to explore the perceived effects and experiences of workplace bullying related to organization culture. This method was the proper technique because it allowed me to gain the most information from participants for analyzing and reporting (see Moustakas, 1994). This design allows in-depth research of lived experiences, which permitted gathering insight on workplace bullying and organizational culture (see Moustakas, 1994). Qualitative research allows the researcher to be involved with the participant on a closer level than quantitative research (Berger, 2015). Qualitative studies enable the researcher to display empathy while collecting data and use caution to remain unbiased (Berger, 2015). The quantitative method, in contrast is used when a single, ultimate truth needs to be discovered. The quantitative approach is suitable when the researcher plans to collect numerical data and statistically analyze the data to determine relationships between

variables. The current study did not involve statistically analyzing numerical data; therefore, the quantitative method was not needed to meet the goals of this study.

The qualitative phenomenological design was appropriate to collect and analyze the data needed to answer the research questions. According to Moustakas (1994), phenomenology allows the extraction and exploration of knowledge and the specifics of a phenomenon according to the experiences of participants. Other research designs, such as case study, ethnography, and grounded theory were not suitable for the study. The intent of the case study design is to focus on an occurrence of a problem in a bounded system, such as in a single company or compare a set of cases and factors (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The ethnographic design is appropriate when the goal is to understand and describe a cultural group. The grounded theory design is ideal when the goal is to create a theory based on the data collected (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). These qualitative designs were not suitable for the study. The goal of the study did not involve examining a single occurrence of the phenomenon, as in case study research; examining a cultural group, as in ethnographic research; or developing a theory, as in grounded theory research.

The phenomenological design aligned well with the qualitative methodology (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) stated selecting the qualitative phenomenological design allows the researcher to explore specifics, such as how workplace bullying affects the organizational culture. The qualitative phenomenological methodology is appropriate when the study proposes to understand, discover, and interpret how the participants experienced a phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Because the phenomenological design aligned with the methodology and the research questions, it was the design of choice for

this study, allowing the collection of the correct type of data by in-depth interviews and the author's journal to answer the research questions.

Using in-depth, semistructured interviews allowed me to obtain rich, quality, firsthand data regarding participants' experiences (see Hesse-Biber & Griffin, 2013; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). I used a researcher's journal to record unique data based on the experience of the participants. Digby, Lee, and Williams, (2016) found a researcher's journal is important to record experiences, thoughts, expressions, and observations as noted by the researcher in a study. In the current study, the body language of the participant was part of those experiences, thoughts, and observations. In-depth interviews and a researcher's journal are common data sources in phenomenological studies (Hesse-Biber & Griffin, 2013). Use of these instruments also permits the researcher to obtain equivalent information from all participants (Hesse-Biber & Griffin, 2013).

In qualitative research, the data analysis consists of text analysis to develop a description and themes, and interpretation consists of stating the larger meaning of the findings (Moustakas, 1994). In the current study, responses were analyzed by Mustaka's van Kam method, and were coded manually using NVivo 10 to categorize the common themes and relationships. The qualitative method and phenomenological design were appropriate because of the unavailability of models and programs that explored patterns and themes that affect the individuals being bullied or to suggest methods to assist organizations in mitigating bullying. The qualitative method fit this research study's goals. Using a phenomenological design aided in understanding bullying as it was recalled, perceived, and experienced by the victims and witnesses.

Population, Sample, and Related Procedures

Population

The general population for this qualitative phenomenological study included organizational employees from the New York State area. The specific study sample of this phenomenological study consisted of employees (nonsupervisory employees and subordinates) who had either been a victim or witnessed workplace bullying in New York state. For site authorization and confidentiality purposes, written permission was obtained from the director of the organization for this study (Appendix D). The setting for interviews of this study was a confidential location, arranged and agreed upon by the participants for confidentiality.

For participation, employees must have had in-depth experiences regarding the central phenomenon and willing to describe their lived experience as well as discuss the organizational culture of their workplace. Accordingly, to participate in this study, individuals must have been: (a) currently employed or previously employed; (b) either a victim or a witness of workplace bullying; (c) at least 18 – 60 years of age, (d) had GED or High School diploma, and (e) lived in in the New York State area of the United States. There was no other criterion for the population. The location selection was suitable due to the proximity to the researcher's residence in upstate New York. Selection of the participants using purposive and snowball sampling method (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Sample Size

Sampling is a vital part of a study and includes the selection of a population, persons, or groups that meet standards permitting participation in a research study

(Leach, Poyser, & Butterworth, 2016). According to Marshall, Cardon, Poddar and Fontenot (2013) “If everyone cannot be tested, then the only other choice is to select a sample that is a subset of that population” (p. 86). Twenty-five individuals of the study population were recruited to participate in this qualitative phenomenological research study. Researchers stated a small sample size of 25 participants is suitable for qualitative, phenomenological research (Leach et al., 2016). Leach et al. (2016) explained phenomenological researchers depend almost exclusively on lengthy interviews with a carefully selected sample of participants. Twenty-five participants completed an interview, and it was determined data saturation had been achieved; therefore, no additional participants were recruited. The sample size of 25 members was suitable for the study because the goal was to explore the perceived effects and experiences of the participants in depth. The purpose was not to gather standardized information from a large-scale, statistically representative sample of the population. Studying the small sample in detail resulted in a comprehensive understanding of workplace bullying and organization culture (Leach et al., 2016).

Participants Enrolment Approach and Sample Criteria for the Study

Sampling is an important part of a study involving selecting a population, individuals, or groups meeting specific criteria allowing participation in a research study (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Participants were recruited through purposeful and snowball sampling techniques (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The condition for purposive sampling technique was to have a definite purpose and exact participant in mind. This technique was beneficial, rapid, and proportional to a primary concern (Bryman & Bell,

2015). Purposive sampling was used in the study to recruit victims and witnesses who experienced workplace bullying on the organization culture. The purposive sampling procedure is one type of nonprobability sampling technique, and it was convenient and inexpensive for the study (Leach et al., 2016). After obtaining a few participants through this method, snowball sampling was used to get additional participants. Researchers use the snowball sampling technique if the sample for the study is limited to a small subgroup of the population (Siddiqui, et al., 2016). This type of sampling technique worked like chain referral. After observing the primary subject, the researcher asks for assistance from the subject to identify people with a similar trait of interest (Siddiqui, et al., 2016). At the end of each interview, the participants were asked to provide referrals of other potential participants (Siddiqui, et al., 2016). At the beginning of each participant's interview, the participant was asked to verify he or she met the sample criteria. The interview contained questions to obtain the individuals' perceived effects and experiences of workplace bullying in relation to the organizational culture. This purposive sample in the study was designed to seek individuals' understanding and perspectives on workplace bullying, which linked to goals of the study.

After obtaining the approval from the St. Joseph's Hospital and Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix E, F, and G), potential participants from St. Joseph's Hospital were contacted and informed about the study. Selecting participants was accomplished by using purposive and snowball sampling method. A face-to-face (purposive) and e-mailed invitation was sent out requesting individual participation in semi-structured in-depth interviews; describing the intention

and voluntary nature of the qualitative study. Purpose of the recruitment of participants was talking with St Joseph's employees in groups (from each department) through daily team huddles and meetings to explain the research (communicate the study details) and allow people to ask questions. Potential participants received recruitment letter before being approached. Potential participants have had ample time to decide whether to participate.

The e-mail invitation recruitment of participants was performed by emailing all managers of the St. Joseph's Hospital, asking them to kindly forward the email and the attachments to all staff employed within their department, inviting them to participate in my research, as they deem appropriate. The letter asked the person to call for additional information or if interested in taking part in the study or return a post card or send an e-mail. The recruitment letter (see Appendix B) was brief but did include information about how the person was identified, what is involved if the person participates and an overview of any risks or potential benefits. It did also let the person know how to inform someone if he or she wants to participate, not to participate, or where to get answers to additional questions, and who is doing the study and why. With this method, considerable care was taken so that the person contacted does not feel pressured to participate

Through the initial recruitment letter and snowball sampling, 39 potential participants responded. Of the 39 potential participants, 28 signed and returned the informed consent form, however, only 25 participated in an interview. During the data analysis phase, no one participant withdrew from the study. The final sample size was 25 participants, 13 witnesses and 12 targets (see Appendix I). Each participant met the

participation criterion of having experienced or witnessed the workplace bullying. To participate in this study, individuals met the following criteria: (a) currently employed with St. Joseph's Hospital (full-time, part-time, per-diem); (b) either a victim or a witness of workplace bullying; (c) at least 18-60 years of age, (d) has GED or High School diploma, and (e) living in the upstate New York State area of the United States. Potential subjects had to be excluded if the individual did not meet these criteria. These criteria were verified twice: when the participant signed the consent form and at the beginning of the interview. The participants were asked to share their unique perspectives and experiences on the phenomenon under study. The specific study sample population of this phenomenological study included working Americans from St. Joseph's Hospital (non-supervisory employees, and subordinates) who have had been a victim or witnessed workplace bullying in upstate New York State. The sample selection was further based on the participants' ability to complete the interview by responding to the interview questions helping to address the research questions for this study.

All individuals interested in participating in the study were required to sign an informed consent form before being interviewed. Participation in this study was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefit to themselves. Participants were asked to participate in a brief, follow-up interview to confirm my understanding of the responses. All participants, reserved the right to be notified of any potential risks, including risks to confidentiality. This implies a responsibility to explain fully and meaningfully what the research was about and how it will be disseminated. Participants were aware of their right to refuse to participate;

understood the extent to which confidentiality will be maintained; were aware of the potential uses of the data, and were reminded of their right to re-negotiate consent. The participants were informed that the results of the research study may be published but their identity will remain confidential and their name will not be disclosed to any outside party.

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

After obtaining the endorsement from the Walden University and the Saint Joseph's Hospital IRBs, potential individuals were contacted and informed about the study. All individuals who were interested in participating in the study were required to sign an informed consent form before being interviewed. The consent form contained a brief background of the study, an outline of the study procedures, and an explanation of rights of the participants throughout the data collection process (see Appendix C). The form also included a description of how the data would be used and an explanation that all data would remain confidential (Glambek, Skogstad & Einersen, 2016). By signing the informed consent form, each participant confirms a willingness to participate in the study and be recorded during the interview. Any potential participant who did not sign and return the informed consent form was not able to participate in the study. Participation in this study was voluntary, and participants could have withdrawn themselves at any time. All participants reserved the right to be notified of any potential risks, including risks to confidentiality.

The study included multiple techniques to ensure the confidentiality of the study participants. After data from the interviews and researcher's journaling with scanned

copies of the informed consent forms were collected in a setting ensuring the confidentiality of the participants, to protect the participants' identities, all study materials were stored securely. All hard copy materials were stored in a locked area only the researcher could access. Electronic materials were stored in a password-protected computer only the researcher could unlock to ensure confidentiality of the information. To further protect the participants' identities, each participant was assigned a code, which was used rather than the participant's name throughout the study. Using the codes helped maintain a focus on the data, rather than on the participants providing the data. According to Glambek et al. (2016), ensuring the participants of confidentiality is the researcher's priority; if the participants think their privacy is secure, they may provide more honest and open answers to questions related to highly sensitive and personal topics. To further protect the participants' identities, all study materials arranged to be secured for five years following completion of the study, after the hard copy materials is scheduled to be shredded, and electronic materials will be permanently deleted. Only one person, the researcher, had access to the identifiers linking each participant's name to the identification number.

Data Collection

To achieve the goals of the study, data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions and a researcher's journal. Participants were briefed on the procedures and the purpose of this study, including a review of the informed consent forms and confidentiality measures. The informed consent forms explained the interviews would also be audiotaped. Semi-structured interviews were the

primary source of data collection to get the most information from participants.

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015) interviewing is one of the primary qualitative data collection techniques. The semi-structured interview strategy offered a less formal environment; therefore, participants felt more comfortable sharing their experiences. An in-depth, semi-structured interview as a data source allows the researcher to acquire similar information from all interviewees and allows the interviewer to seek clarification to questions (Hesse-Biber Griffin, & Griffin, 2013). Data collected using semi-structured interviews allowed the interviewer to obtain rich, quality data of effects and experiences, and to request additional information to get a more accurate picture of workplace bullying and organization culture (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Hesse-Biber, Griffin & Griffin, 2013).

The face-to-face interviews took place in a quiet office within St Joseph's Hospital setting arranged and agreed on by the participant for confidentiality of the participant and the organization. These semi-structured interviews (to be audio-recorded) took no more than one hour, which allowed participants to freely respond based on their perspectives and experiences of workplace bullying. The semi-structured interview design was the most appropriate technique for this qualitative phenomenology design study since the purpose was to use conversation, discussion, as well questioning participants to provide insight on the investigation themes. To confirm the accuracy, the data collection and analysis activities was detailed. The recordings were transcribed manually after each interview was conducted. Data collection continued until saturation was achieved (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Random contact was carried out with potential

participants by informal and formal contacts, sharing information about the study. The Livescribe Echo Smartpen electronic device was used to record the live interviews.

The Livescribe Echo Smartpen as presented by Van, Sajjadi, & De (2015) is an electronic recording device which records words, voices, emotions, pauses, virtually everything the researcher hears during the interview process. The Livescribe Echo Smartpen also allows the researcher to write and make notes even as it simultaneously records the interview. The written notes of the interviewer became electronic notes on the interviewer's laptop. After the interviews were recorded on the device, the interview information was uploaded to the computer by USB cable and into a file. The interviews then were transcribed into a Microsoft Word document (Van Sajjadi, & De, 2015).

A researcher's journal allows opportunities for a researcher to identify themes and ideas, while clarifying fragmented ideas, meanings, insights, and experiences of the participant (Mackenzie et al., 2013). A researcher's journal was the secondary principal data source for this study. A researcher's journal is a commonly used tool allowing a researcher to record the rich, first-hand experiences of participants (Brigham et al., 2014). After notification of its use to the participant, the researcher used the journal to record the experiences, expressions, and observations identified by the researcher during the interview experience which the recorder was unable to record (Hall, 2016).

The phenomenological design allowed me to focus on a literal experience of a participant (Moustakas, 1994). Using a journal in this study was important to record and capture unique data based on the literal experience of the participants. Hall (2016) found a researcher's journal important to record experiences, thoughts, expressions, and

observations; therefore, the body language of the participant was part of those experiences, thoughts, and observations while interviewing (Hall, 2016). Kleinsmith and Bianchi-Berthouze (2013) stressed the importance of the need to become more aware of body language in life-effective situations. A researcher must be aware of a participant's body language (Hall, 2016). The body language of a participant shows distress or anxiety as well as a depth of meaning to responses (Hall, 2016). The semi-structured interviews and the author's journal were tools for this study to explore the perceived effects and experiences of workplace bullying related to organizational culture.

The ground rules in qualitative studies also include data saturation (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). Saturation occurs in research when an interviewer hears the same information from the participants, signifying no additional information was available and a saturation point occurs (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar, & Fontenot, 2013). The sample size was increased by continuing to conduct additional interviews until the study reached data saturation (Cleary et al., 2014). The data were analyzed to identify themes on the participants' experiences and perceptions. The analysis lead to an understanding of the essences of the participants' experiences and perceptions (Moustakas, 1994). Using a historical study methodology map shown in Figure 4 was necessary for this study and consists of the major steps of collecting, transcribing, categorizing, analyzing, documenting, and presenting findings of these data in a time-ordered manner. As shown in Figure 4, after collecting and transcribing the data, the data was analyzed using Moustakas's (1994) modified van Kaam method to understand victims and witnesses experience workplace bullying on the organization culture. The

modified van Kaam method involved understanding the essence, meaning, and structure of an individuals' lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994).

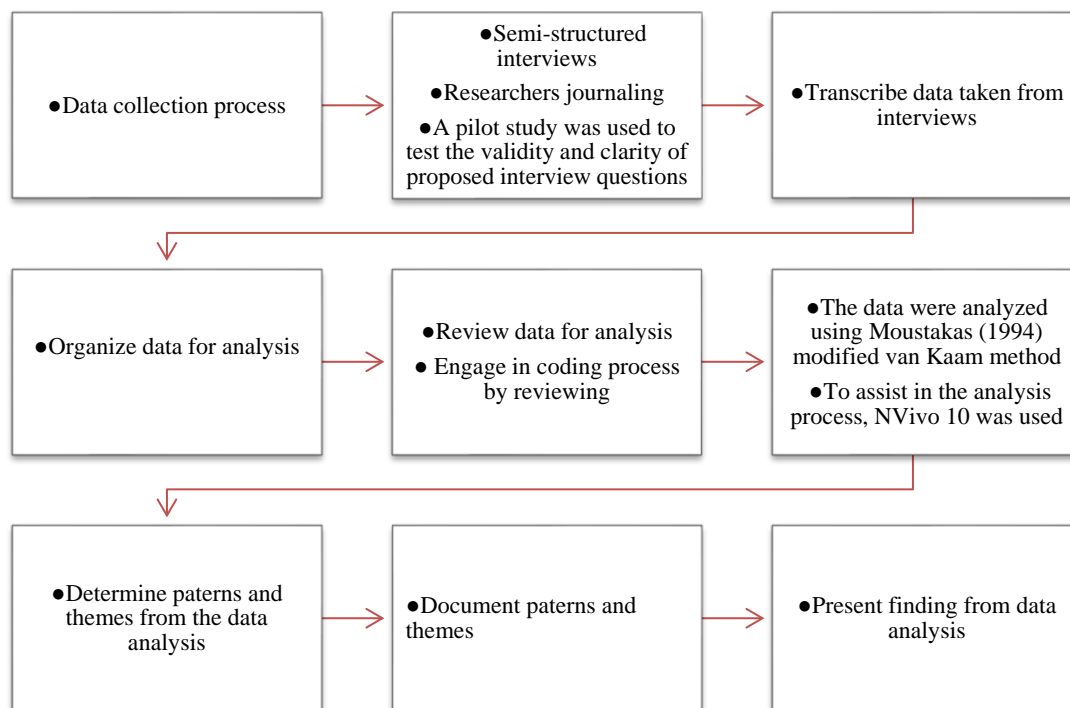


Figure 4. Historical study: Qualitative methodology map.

When using Moustakas's (1994) modified van Kaam method, a preliminary step included of applying epoche to set aside prejudgments and biases. Applying epoche helped ensure the focus to remain on how the participants experienced and perceived the effects of workplace bullying relating to the organizational culture. Epoche was used to view all data neutrally, regardless if the data were from witnesses or victims. After applying epoche, Moustakas's seven steps were completed (Moustakas, 1994). To help in the analysis process, the student version of NVivo 10 was used.

Given the innovations in software technology, electronic techniques of data coding are gradually being employed to obtain rigor in dealing with such data (Hilal &

Alabri, 2013). NVivo 10 was the text management software package used for qualitative analysis to code and analyze the data (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). The software reduced a considerable number of manual tasks and gave the researcher more time to discover tendencies, recognize themes and derive conclusions (Hilal & Alabri, 2013). The software was used to code data, search for specific words, query, group similar ideas, and link data. The process assisted in identifying patterns, themes, constructs, and meanings in the participants' responses, which in turn uncovered relevant meaning. Compound matrix queries were used in NVivo 10 to search for variation in structure, themes, and meaning, alleviating the process of identifying patterns and identifying themes.

The NVivo 10 software assisted to examining the data for emerging themes and larger patterns related to bullying behavior, and its effects on the lived experiences of employees on organizational culture. The researcher bias was reduced further through organizing and managing the transcribed interview data in NVivo 10. NVivo's nodes feature was used to organize the data. The nodes are filing boxes and allowed all information related to a theme to be summarized and viewed together (Hilal & Alabri, 2013).

Instrumentation

The main instrument for data collection and analysis in the qualitative phenomenological study was the researcher (Lewis, 2015). The data collection interview protocol consisted of 13 questions to ensure the participants met the participation criteria and to obtain demographic, workplace bullying and organization culture information in the upstate New York State area. The interview protocol located in Appendix A,

incorporated open-ended questions used to collect information about the participants' experiences, and understanding workplace bullying and organization culture. The 13 questions coordinated with the central research question of the study. The questions were neutrally phrased to avoid influencing participants' responses and preventing participants from feeling judged. Questions were asked from various aspects, including the perspectives of subordinates, victims, and witnesses. The participants were invited as well to identify what might have contributed to the bullying, how the bullying affected them personally, and how the bullying affected the workplace and the organizational culture. These open-ended questions allowed the participants to be straightforward with their responses. Open-ended questions provide the researcher with an opportunity to gain insight on the opinions on an unfamiliar topic (Tourangeau et al., 2016). To test for any possible weaknesses in the design of the interview questions the interview process and procedures prescreened five participants. Prescreening helped to ensure validity and reliability of the interview questions and make the necessary changes to the interview instrument (Ferris, Lian, Brown, & Morrison, 2015). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), the interview process helps to yield information and capture the participants' voices. The interview questions corresponded with the research questions of this study. By using a semi-structured interview guide, the researcher was flexible to obtain additional information not obtainable from the original questions. The first set of questions of the interview included demographic information; however, the second set of questions included workplace bullying and organizational culture information are listed in Appendix A.

The journal notes provided information to answer the research questions by providing insight into participant's lived experiences. The Livescribe Echo Smartpen was used to record the research journal. The Livescribe Echo Smartpen allows the researcher to write and make notes while recording the journal (Van Sajjadi, & De, 2015). The written notes of the researcher became electronic notes on the author's laptop (Van Sajjadi, & De, 2015). The Livescribe Echo Smartpen allowed me to use the journal during the interview and make notes while recording the journal. Immediately after each interview I went over the notes to insure the journal contained all information while the information was still fresh in my mind. Zetronix, high definition recorder was used as a backup in case of an emergency. Pseudonyms were created to protect the participants privacy and the accuracy of the study. I maintained the study and all the other important materials in an encrypted, password protected computer for a minimum of five years. The required length of time according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011).

Pilot Study

A pilot study is a helpful tool in testing the validity and clarity of proposed interview questions (Croteau, 2016). A pilot study is also a method of testing the interviewer's strategy, skills, and the approach on the data collection and provides an opportunity to practice creating an environment where the participants feel comfortable sharing personal information (Croteau, 2016). A pilot study was used to test the validity and clarity of proposed interview questions on a group including five employed participants. A pilot study was a critical step in the planning phase of a study; a test run

indicated if the interviewer comfortable with the ambiguity and lack of structure involved in qualitative research (Croteau, 2016).

Though completing a pilot study requires extra time and resources, this small investment allows the researcher to become familiar with the integral parts of the data collection process and avoid major setbacks later in the study because of incorrect or non-descriptive data (Croteau, 2016). The interviews were held in a private and quiet room providing no distractions. The researcher informed each interviewee about the study, any risks which might arise, and that the researcher would record the interview session. The unique identifier and code was assigned to each participant, i.e. 0ygu5f26. The gender of the participants consisted of two male and three females. All participants must have held full-time, part-time, or per-dime employment with an average employment of five years; age ranges from 18-60. If needed, I would have used the results of the pilot study to make changes to the interview instrument. The results of the pilot study did not present any weaknesses in the design of the interview questions, process, or procedures.

Data Analysis

Preparation of Data

All interviews and journal notes were transcribed immediately after each of the interview sessions, while the information was fresh to maintain reliability and credibility of the research. Stuckey (2014) found the immediate verbatim transcription of interviews is necessary to ascertain reliability, credibility, and trustworthiness of research. The appropriate computer software such as Microsoft Word and NVivo 10 was used to complete the transcription of the interviews. After transcription was complete, the

interviews were ready for member checking. In qualitative research, member checking is a tool used to assist the researcher ensure document accuracy (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). Member checking allowed the participant to review the transcribed information, verify the validity of the experience, and that the document conveys the lived experiences of the participant (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). After the member checking was complete, the interview transcripts were revised, and ready for uploading into the NVivo 10 software for qualitative methodologies for coding and analysis of the data. The NVivo software is an all-inclusive qualitative data analysis software package helping the researcher in organizing and analyzing the data (Saldana, 2013).

The NVivo software assisted me to code and analyze the data. The NVivo10 software was used as well to examine the data for emerging themes and larger patterns related to bullying behavior, and its effects on the lived experiences of employees on organizational culture. The first step for document analysis in the NVivo software was to create a new project in NVivo10 by clicking on New Project on the NVivo initial screen. After naming and creating the new project, I imported the interview transcript, which was in a Microsoft Word format to NVivo10. I then imported the interview's corresponding journal notes, which was also in a Microsoft Word format. The next step in NVivo was creating nodes. The nodes are virtual filing boxes allowing all information related to a theme to be summarized and viewed together (Ravikumar, Myers, Kowler & Tovar, 2015). The next step in the NVivo process was creating charts to visually present and display data results. The coded information from the NVivo software provided

information on the themes and patterns found in the interviews and researcher's journal. The deep level analysis of the NVivo software allowed the data analysis to align with the research questions and qualitative phenomenological design.

Phenomenological Data Analysis

After the data were collected and transcribed, and coded with Nvivo10 the data were analyzed using Moustakas' (1994) modified van Kaam method to understand how individuals, particularly victims and witnesses, experienced workplace bullying on the organization culture. The student version of NVivo 10 was utilized to assist in the analysis process. Many qualitative researchers use this software to sort information and highlight key points within data. Using the software also allows for quick recall and later analysis. NVivo's nodes feature was used to organize the data. The nodes are virtual filing boxes allowing all information related to a theme to be summarized and viewed together (Ravikumar, Myers, Kowler & Tovar, 2015). After reviewing the interviews and the journals notes several times, the transcripts were ready to be uploaded into the NVivo software for coding. This step was repeated until all interviews and the corresponding journal notes were imported. After the documents were imported, the software displays those on the list view section of the main window. If the participant used words, phrases, or derivatives repeatedly, a node for the words was created in the NVivo software. A list of commonly used words and phrases was developed. Each node represents a code, theme, or idea about the data to be included in the study. The data were coded for review by category or source. Since this study coded interviews and researcher's journals about workplace bullying, victims and witnesses' experiences, and the organizational culture,

these terms and others became nodes in NVivo. The nodes were created by selecting the *New Node* option in the software, named the node, and create the node. Each NVivo code initially formed a potential category or node in the software. The corresponding categories were grouped together to form refined categories, which formed the final themes and a coding index to organize the data (Saldana, 2013). The process continually developed the themes throughout the data analysis process as new insights developed. According to Saldana, (2013), the term *node* represented a code, theme, or idea about the data the researcher wants to include in the project. Coding allowed the researcher to classify or tag data for review by category, as well as source, and enabled a researcher to retrieve all data related to a node at one time (Saldana, 2013).

When using Moustakas's (1994) modified van Kaam method, a preliminary step consists of applying epoche to set aside prejudgments and biases. Applying epoche helped to ensure the focus remains on how the participants experienced and perceived the workplace bullying phenomenon on the organization culture (Moustakas, 1994). Epoche was used to view all data neutrally, regardless if the data were from witnesses or victims of the workplace bullying. After applying epoche, Moustakas's seven steps was completed (Moustakas, 1994). Before beginning the analysis process, epoche was applied to avoid prejudgment by recognizing and setting aside preconceived notions, personal beliefs, and judgments to understand how the participants experienced and perceived workplace bullying within their organization (Moustakas, 1994). Epoche is an ancient Greek term which, in its philosophical usage, describes the theoretical moment where all judgments about the existence of the external world, and consequently all action in the

world, are suspended (Moustakas, 1994). Within qualitative research, epoche can reasonably be interpreted as highlighting a period when momentous events occur in the experiences of a researcher, but any impact from the memory needs to be put aside during data collection (Van Manen, 2016). According to Van Manen, (2016) the term was employed in the 20th century by Edmund Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, who saw it as a technique, more fundamental than that of abstraction and the examining of essences, serving to highlight consciousness itself. Epoche was used to view all data neutrally, regardless if the data were from witnesses or victims. Researcher bias further was reduced through organizing and managing the transcribed interview data in NVivo 10. After applying epoche, van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data was initiated; providing a seven-step process of analyzing the data collected (see Figure 5).

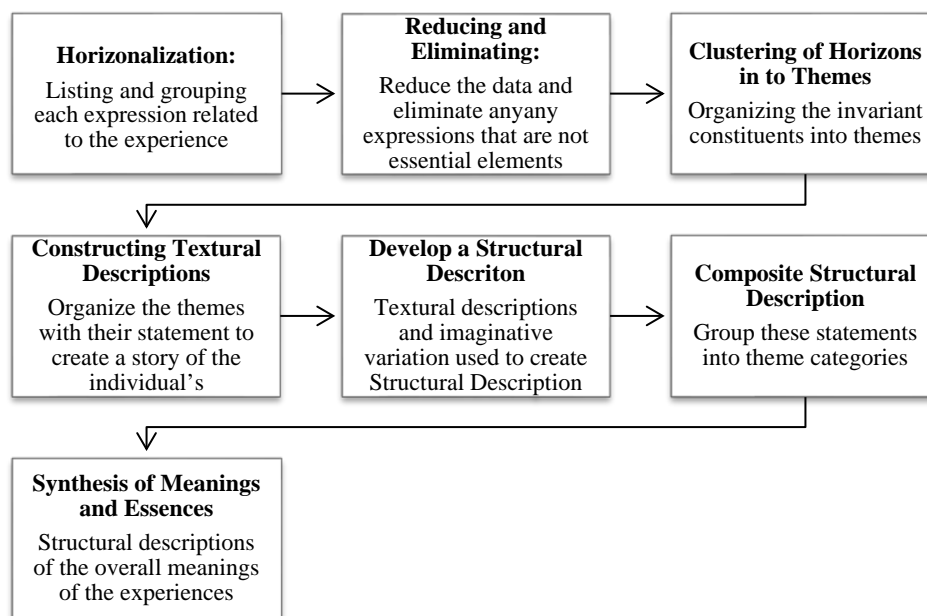


Figure 5. Moustakas's modified seven steps of the van Kaam method data analysis study methodology (Moustakas, 1994).

Listing and grouping. The first step in data analysis was coding the data to convert the interview responses into a structured form. Coding helped identify similarities in the pieces of data, while data was grouped into categories. To categorize the data, every statement was treated as having equal value and benefit, this process is known as horizontalization (Moustakas, 1994). To accurately group words and phrases, the transcripts and audio recordings were reviewed multiple times. Grouping the data is valuable because a single piece of data might not be strong enough on its own, but different strands of data taken together can provide compelling evidence of an idea or crystallize a point of view (Silver & Lewins, 2014).

Reducing and eliminating. In the second step, the process of reducing and removing the constituencies accrued. The data were reduced to the essential ideas or constituents, meaning if data were unclear and vague, the data were removed and only horizontalization of the data remained. To determine if a word or phrase was an essential expression two questions have been posed: (a) does the word or phrase contains an expression of the experience that is necessary to understand the phenomenon? (b) Is it possible to abstract, dissect, and label the expression? Statements not meeting these criteria were eliminated. To further reduce the data, repetitive words and phrases, vague, or overlapping were deleted or sorted into descriptive terms.

Clustering and thematizing. The third step involved organizing the non-repetitive, non-overlapping constituents into core themes. To qualify as a theme, the ideas had to relate to the participants' lived experiences regarding workplace bullying on the

organization culture. NVivo10 was used to assist in clustering the non-repetitive and non-overlapping constituents, which eased the process of identifying patterns and themes.

The non-repetitive and non-overlapping constituents were clustered and developed.

Themes were compared to the interview transcriptions to ensure the themes were explicit or implicit in the participants' responses. Compound inquiries were made in NVivo10 to search for variations in structure, themes, and meaning.

Constructing textural descriptions. The fourth step involved developing textural descriptions of each participants lived experiences on workplace bullying in organization culture. These descriptions included verbatim examples showing themes and delimited horizons of a participants lived experience. It also included thoughts, feelings, consequences of behaviors (Moustakas, 1994). According to Moustakas (1994), the presentation of data was shown by verbatim examples. Quotations from the interviews will be used to describe the themes from the participants' perspectives.

Developing structured description of the information. The fifth step of the phenomenological research, suggested by Moussakas, allowed me to hear the experiences of bullying directly from the victims and witnesses. This way I clearly understood their perceptions, feelings, and impacts of the experience. By clustering common words and actions, it provided a picture of the reported negative behaviors from victims and witnesses experienced such as job intimidation

Composite structural description. In the sixth step, the textural descriptions and imaginative variation were used to construct structural descriptions for the participants. This description derived from a compilation of the group findings as well. Using the

imaginative variation allowed me to understand the structural essences of the lived experiences of the group (Moustakas, 1994). According to Moustakas (1994), the structural description of the essence of the experience was derived, presenting a picture of the conditions precipitating an experience and connect with it. Completing this step resulted in a deeper understanding of the participants lived experiences.

Syntheses of the meanings and essences. The seventh step consisted of integrating the textural and structural descriptions to uncover the essences of the participants' lived experiences of workplace bullying on the organization culture (Moustakas, 1994). This last step of the phenomenological model used the composite textural and composite structural descriptions to create a synthesis of the findings and provided meanings and essences of all the lived experiences described (Moustakas, 1994). This synthesis was a detailed summary of the data analysis with practical applications derived from the transcriptions. After completing the steps in this section, the researcher reported all findings and draw conclusions leading to an answer to the research question (Moustakas, 1994). In this step, the meaning behind the participants was uncovered resulting in a thorough understanding of the phenomenon, and answers to the central research question and the subquestions.

Qualitative Validity

This phenomenological study was guided by establishing trustworthiness, validity, and reliability throughout the research (Elo et al., 2014). Schwandt and Guba (2007) established emergent methodology criteria of trustworthiness for qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy study. The model of trustworthiness consisted of

credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To ensure the soundness and the value of the results of this study, it was important to consider the concepts of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability as presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Criteria to Establish Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research

Emergent Methodology	Trustworthiness Criteria
Credibility	Internal validity (believability of the findings)
Transferability	External validity (evidence supporting findings)
Dependability	Reliability in qualitative research (repeatability)
Objectivity/Confirmability	Neutrality (control of researcher bias)

Note. Methodology criteria of trustworthiness (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007).

A series of techniques can be used to conduct qualitative research that achieving the criteria for assessing the trustworthiness (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). The emergent trustworthiness criteria listed in Table 2, contributed to this research to adopt the trustworthiness to improve the believability of qualitative inquiry. Researchers employ emergent methodology criteria of trustworthiness while gradually building a construct for understanding their findings (Elo et al., 2014).

The goal of the qualitative researcher in achieving the trustworthiness was to remove bias and increase truthfulness by overcoming the researcher's perspectives of the study, provide evidence supporting findings, and establishes believability and repeatability of the study (Schwandt, et al., 2007). From this perspective, Hulley et al., (2013) indicated that researchers should promote the study validity by establishing trust with the participants. To build trust prior to the interviews, the participants were familiar with the purpose and process of the study. The transcribed data were coded and analyzed,

and a wise precaution was retained to transcribe the explanations of the participating members from interviews correctly. Englander (2012) stated that validity depends on cautious instrument construction to ensure the instrument measures what it needs to measure or useful sampling procedures. As a result, the interview questions were cautiously constructed from the literature and theory, aligned and guided the study. This alignment and guidance promoted validity as the interview questions in this study were designed to produce and extract responses and information, aligned with theory and literature.

The primary data collection for this study consisted of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and a researcher's journal. Using these instruments established validity as they connect and worked together to ensure a total picture of the lived experience of the participant. Jacob and Furgerson (2012) expounded on the value of interview protocol, which not only listed the interview questions but extended to the procedural level. Having an interview protocol in place before conducting interviews provided validity to the study as it promoted consistency, helped to ensure procedural steps were taken, yet gave flexibility to the participants (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Having an interview protocol in place also assisted the interviewer to stay on track, as it allows the interviewer to ask questions while observing the participant for rich information to add to the researcher's journal. The interview protocol proposed for this study (see Appendix A) presented the introduction, an overview of the study, reminded for the consent form and recording, confidentiality, and the interview questions. It is necessary and productive for interviewers to make the participants comfortable during an interview (Grenz, 2014).

Making the participant more comfortable helped the participants to express themselves more openly on their experiences (Wolgemuth, et al., 2015).

Credibility. Credibility involves the consistency and accuracy of the data collected. To establish credibility, it is important for the researcher to capture and understand the phenomenon from the participants' perspectives, since they are the only ones who fairly can judge the credibility of the results (Lewis, 2015). Lewis (2015) explained in the credible research, the data are consistent and cohesive, rather than scattered and contradictory; credibility was established through maintaining an extended contact with the respondent, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the individual. To establish credibility, data collection continued until saturation was reached, and participants reviewed the transcription of their recordings. This way participant ensured accuracy and completeness. During the member checking process, participants had the opportunity to clarify further their responses, which helped guarantee the accuracy of the data collected. The credibility was enhanced by triangulating the data with semi-structured interview questions and a researcher's journal, which recorded observations outside of the interview sessions. Data triangulation was used in this study to enhance the understanding of the issues of workplace bullying and organizational culture. Using data triangulation improved understanding of the issues and promoted the validity and reliability of the study (Guion et al., 2013; Hussein, 2015).

Dependability. Dependability is a consideration of the research design (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). As stated by Schwandt, Lincoln, and Guba, (2007) a dependable study needs to be accurate and consistent; thus, the dependability was

associated with the consistency of findings. To set up dependability in the study, each interview was recorded and transcribed using Microsoft Word and NVivo10. The transcripts from each interview captured the participants' responses and create a clear audit trail. Silver and Lewins, (2014) stated that by creating "an audit trail, there is a clear and constant path between the collection of the data and its use" (p. 114).

Transferability. Yin (2015) suggested for reliability purposes, an effective study must be replicable. The author found reliability is established when the study is dependable and replicable by another researcher using the same decision trajectories. This qualitative, phenomenological study was reliable, consistent, and easily replicable using similar populations of organizational employees across the different states of America. Russell et al. (2011) found that reliability depends upon the research being consistent to yield similar results in subsequent testing. As a result, a researcher achieves reliability in research when results are consistent in subsequent tests (Russell et al., 2011). Using an appropriate interview protocol, which included semistructured interview questions, this study yielded consistent information in subsequent testing, which promoted value and reliability (Russell et al., 2011). Russell et al.'s principle of consistent research also applied to the researcher's journal. The researcher's journal allowed me to clarify fragmented ideas, meanings, insights, and experiences of the participant's lived experiences of workplace bullying (Silver & Lewins, 2014). Consistency with interview protocol and with using the researcher's journal yielded similar results throughout the study and therefore, promoted value and reliability (Russell et al., 2011). As further evidence of reliability, I established a detailed data collection

protocol (see Appendix A) for interviews, collection of data, and as a guide. The validity of the study was completed through the use of a research database through the NVivo software program. NVivo is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) software package designed for qualitative researchers working with rich text based information. Grasso et al. (2014) found the use of electronic software left less room for human error and therefore, promoted reliability.

Confirmability. Confirmability occurs when the study results can be corroborated by others. The researcher can improve the confirmability by documenting the steps for data collection process (Silver & Lewins, 2014). Other researchers can follow a clear, methodological audit trail to determine the type and nature of the raw data used in the study, how the data was analyzed, and how categories and themes were formed. A methodological audit trail can serve as a map for other researchers to use when conducting a similar study (Silver & Lewins, 2014). The detailed step-by-step account of data collection provided for replicability as well, which also better confirms the findings in the original study in the current study to improve the study's confirmability.

Generalizability. Generalizability is applied by researchers in an academic setting, and is a final issue in qualitative analysis (Cooper & Schindler 2003). Generalizability refers to the extent to which findings from a study apply to a wider population (Neuman, 2003). Most qualitative research studies, if not all, are meant to study a specific issue or phenomenon in a certain population, of a focused locality in a particular context. According to Neuman (2003) study results based on random samples are considered generalizable, while study results based on other methods of identifying

participants are not. As Cooper and Schindler (2003) referenced, possible external threats to this study could have been that the participants were selected purposively, which could have limited the generalizability of this study, as well as the participants altering their normal behavior due to being selected to participate in this study. The results of this study are not broadly applicable to many different types of people or situations; therefore, this study may limit the generalizability. The generalizability of this study may be limited by the characteristics of the study participants. The study participants represent a very specific group of individuals who experienced or witnessed the workplace bullying within organizational culture, and the results may not apply to other individual groups with different characteristics. A practical approach to assessing generalizability for qualitative studies is to adopt the same criteria for validity, which is using systematic sampling, triangulation, constant comparison, proper audit, and appropriate documentation (Cooper and Schindler, 2003; Neuman, 2003).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are important in any study and can have great impacts on the success of the study, based on information gained from participants and its sensitivity (Hurley et al., 2016). To safeguard human subjects in research and to adhere to the key principles of the Belmont Report of respect, justice, and beneficence, there was an ethical and mandatory responsibility for me to obtain IRB approval (Hegler-Dailey, 2013). The IRB approval was obtained from St. Joseph's Hospital and Walden University To address potential ethical concerns, Hegler-Dailey (2013) stressed the importance and responsibility of ethically incorporating privacy, informed consent, confidentiality, and

protection from harm in a qualitative phenomenological study. According to Harriss and Atkinson (2015), ethics should be considered during all parts of the study, especially data collection, where participants are directly involved. Harris and Atkinson (2015) also noted epoche, as an important ethical consideration that is the first step in the process of phenomenological reduction (Moustakas, 1994). According to Moustakas (1994), “In the epoche, we set aside our prejudgments, biases, and preconceived ideas” (p. 84). Careful collection, storage, and data use took place during this study. The informed consent forms were used to alert the participants of the study, as well as highlight their right to withdraw from the study without consequences.

To further protect participants from any unethical issues or concerns. All members of the population had equal opportunity to participate in the study. The epoche process was used as described by Moustakas (1994) to remove the researcher’s biases and thoughts on the research topic. For security purposes, all participants were referred by a code during and after the face-to-face semi-structured interview process. There was no use of participants names on the recordings as well. Using locked, password computers, password-protected e-mail accounts, and protected transcriptions was essential and a priority. Participant names or any additional identifying information were not to be revealed during the reporting of findings and analysis. These ethical considerations in place protected participants before, during, and following the completion of this research. After the five-year mandatory period, the research material will be shredded and destroyed to ethically protect participant identity and any other names the participants mentioned. To ethically avoid bias, as a researcher I remained

neutral, presenting no feelings, assumptions, and beliefs during the interviews, while not diverting from the original interview questions (Hesse-Biber, & Griffin, 2013).

Limitations and Delimitations

This qualitative phenomenological study was limited to 25 qualified participants in the upstate New York State area. The limitation of 25 qualified participants was common in qualitative research and Ritchie et al.'s (2013) recommended qualitative study samples must be small. A small sample size in qualitative research enriched the evidence (Ritchie et al., 2013). If the results of this study showed further room for data collection because of the continuous finding of additional information, the researcher would have increased the sample size by continuing to conduct interviews until data saturation (Cleary et al., 2013). Cleary et al., (2013) found a qualitative study sample should stop at redundancy or data saturation. Trotter (2012) stated data saturation is reached when the concepts or ideas are repeated, thereby providing no additional information. Data saturation could occur with 10 or 20 qualified participants. Boffa, Moules, Mayan and Cowie, (2013) and Cleary et al., (2013) found there are other issues to consider when selecting an appropriate sample size such as time constraints, university expectations, and the researcher's ability to find qualified sample participants. Because of time constraints, university expectations, and the difficulty in finding qualified sample participants, I limited this study to 25 qualified sample participants, which conformed to qualitative research and university standards. As a researcher I did not expect this limitation to affect the results of this proposed study, and therefore, no negative consequences were expected.

This qualitative phenomenological study was limited to participants in the upstate New York State area; limiting the demographic sample. There was a gap in the research for the experiences of workplace bullying, since there were no studies present in this area. The participant sample was limited to regular employees within St. Joseph's Hospital in upstate New York State area. Participants were required to be (a) 18 years or older, and (b) must have experienced the bullying scenario as a target or a witness; and (c) live or work in the New York State area. The rationale behind the criteria was individuals younger than 18 years of age are minors, usually in high school and outside the scope of this study. Participants must have experienced workplace bullying either as a target or a witness to be able to relate their experiences, and participants must work or live in the upstate New York State area since the study was limit in the same area. These limitations were unavoidable, as they comprised the inclusion criteria the participants must meet to qualify for the study and therefore, no adverse consequences were expected.

Summary

Chapters 1, 2 and 3 contain detail information on the various components of the current qualitative, phenomenological study. Chapter 1 includes a presentation of the problem, the background of the problem, and the purpose statement. Workplace bullying is a significant problem having a severe negative affect on employee's psychological and physical health, as well as organizational performance. There is a lack of research on the perceptions and experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying on the organization culture. Because workplace bullying can be overt or covert, it was important to explore the lived experiences of individuals who experienced bullying phenomenon.

Chapter 2 contains a discussion providing a foundation for understanding the historical overview of workplace bullying and the organization culture, the definition of bullying, and the leadership style and bullying behavior. The chapter also included discussion of the negative effects of workplace bullying and efforts to reduce or eliminate bullying.

Chapter 3 includes a discussion of the methodology used in the proposed qualitative phenomenological study to explore both victims and witnesses perceived effects and experiences of workplace bullying on the organization culture. The chapter included the reasoning for selecting the research method and design. In Chapter 3, there was also a discussion of the study population, sample, and geographic location, as well as informed consent and confidentiality. The chapter also contained a description of the data collection method, validity, the pilot study, and the data analysis procedures. There is no specific structure for reporting the findings of a phenomenological study; therefore, the goal of the current study was to prepare a finalized product which will be clear enough for readers to get a better understanding of what it is like to experience workplace bullying on the organization culture. Chapter 4 provides detailed analysis and results of the data collected from the 25 participants that were interviewed for the study. In chapter 4 is a review of the study sample, data collection process, and data analysis process. The chapter also contains a presentation of the themes identified during data analysis. Chapter 5 includes a discussion and interpretation of the findings and the limitations of the current research, followed by recommendations for future studies. The chapter consists of a discussion on the implications of the present findings that contributes to positive social change with the study conclusions.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

The objective of the study was to explore victims' and witnesses' experiences and explain organizational culture relating to workplace bullying. Workplace bullying has affected more than 54 million people in U.S. organizations (Namie & Namie, 2014). Because the perceived effects of workplace bullying are primarily organizational, bullying presents organizational issues (Cleary et al., 2013; Pilch & Turska, 2015). It is important that the organizations and their leaders focus on workplace bullying to mitigate bullying (Rousseau, Eddleston, Patel, & Kellermanns, 2014). This study addressed the gap in the literature regarding the perceived effects of workplace bullying on the organizational culture through the lived and personal experiences of organizational employees from the New York State area.

I used the qualitative methodology for the exploration of the phenomenon. The qualitative methodology allows for exploring and understanding of a phenomenon from participants' lived experiences (Smith, 2015). The qualitative methodology was the best methodology to allow for exploring of the phenomenon of workplace bullying. The phenomenological method included face-to-face, audiotape-recorded interviews to explore the participants' perspectives. Data collection focused on interviewing organizational, nonsupervisory employees and subordinates, which further supported the use of qualitative methodology. The participants were interviewed using semistructured questions aligned with the overarching research question and three subquestions, which allowed participants to respond based on their perspectives and understanding of workplace bullying and the organizational culture. The interview process yielded

information to capture the participants' perspectives on workplace bullying and the organization culture. The research findings represent a compilation of perceptions from 25 nonsupervisory and subordinate employees who experienced workplace bullying. Exploration of the effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of workers' experiences resulted in improved understanding of individuals' subjective lived experiences of bullying in the organizational culture.

Chapter 4 includes the data analysis with descriptions of data collection, results, and findings based on the methodology outlined in Chapter 3. This chapter also includes a discussion of how the data were coded with NVivo 10 software, which is a qualitative data analysis software package assisting researchers in organizing and analyzing data (Woods, Paulus, Atkins & Macklin, 2016). I also provide a detailed description of the data analysis using "the modification of the van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 120). The presentation of the emergent themes provides a detailed view of the data analyzed in the study. A summary concludes Chapter 4. The following areas are included in Chapter 4:

- review of the research problem and purpose statement,
- pilot study,
- data collection process,
- data analysis process,
- Moustakas's seven steps of analysis process, and
- results and findings of the research.

Review of Research Problem and the Purpose Statement

Based on data from studies and reports on workplace bullying and the organization culture, the conservative estimate of workplace bullying in the United States was about 13% of the workforce at any given time (Namie & Namie, 2014). Media accounts suggested that the occurrence of workplace bullying was on the rise in the United States (Okechukwu, Souza, Davis, & de Castro, 2014). The general research problem of this study was that workplace bullying is a significant problem in today's businesses and corporations, affecting victims and witnesses, as well as the overall performance of the organization (Alberts & Brooks, 2016; Desrumaux et al., 2016; Eriksen, Hogh, & Hansen, 2016). The problem affected almost half (47%) of American working adults; about 71.5 million workers, who experienced bullying directly or witnessed it (Namie, 2014). In over half (62%) of the known cases of workplace bullying, employers either worsened or ignored the offense (Namie, 2014).

The specific problem of the study was workplace bullying linked to the physical and psychological distress and decreased work commitment of individuals who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process, and reduced organizational work productivity (Eisenberg et al., 2016; Namie, 2014; Valentine et al., 2016). Forty-eight percent of Americans are the target of bullies at work and suffer serious physical and psychological harm, and decreased work productivity (Akella, 2016; Allison & Bussey, 2016; Chen & Park, 2015). The direct and indirect cost associated with this phenomenon to organizations is enormous (Cleary et al., 2013). The financial estimate of replacement hiring and training of a new employee averages over 150% of the lost employee's salary

(Rockett, Fan, Dwyer, & Foy, 2017). The study will contribute to the body of knowledge on how victims and the witnesses of workplace bullying and the organization culture. The gaps in literature on the effects on victims and witnesses, as well as the role of leadership and the organizational culture may be filled with the findings of this research.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore and understand the perceptions of victims and witnesses in the upstate New York State area on the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture. Each study participant was interviewed, and the resulting data were analyzed to identify common themes on the lived experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying. The intent of this study was to help organizational leaders see a possible need to change their organization's culture to mitigate bullying. The findings shared in this study may provide more information which can be used by organization leaders and managers to address current and future organizational culture, leadership, and workplace bullying issues in the United States.

The research questions designed for this study helped to explore the personal lived experiences of workplace bullying in the upstate New York State area. Individual experiences of workplace bullying and the impact of workplace bullying, and the organizational culture were explored. The qualitative method allowed the data to be organized based on common patterns and themes, and analyzed using "the modification of the van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data" (Moustakas, 1994, p.120), relating to the research questions. The overarching research question for this study was: How do employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the

upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture? The following subquestions (SQs) were used for this qualitative study:

SQ1. What are the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly?

SQ2. What types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within the organization?

SQ3. According to victims' and witnesses' experiences and perceptions, what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders to create an organizational culture that may mitigate bullying?

The first research question asked about the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the employee perspective in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly. It was an open-ended question focusing on participants' perspectives of bullying in the workplace; as it was important to hear the personal accounts of information based on interviews. Participants were able to share feelings, beliefs, and thoughts. These perceptions helped to explain the behaviors of bullies and how participants felt during the bullying experience. The second research question led to asking participants their opinions on the actions or behavior of bullying in the organizations. This open-ended question focused on participants' perspectives of bullying in the workplace to bring forth personal accounts of information based on interviews and observations not present in the literature. By answering research question three, participants provided their opinions and suggestions on what leadership

and management actions are needed to reduce workplace bullying. This situation presented an opportunity to hear the perspectives and experiences of the victims and witnesses from the participant's perspective, and their recommendations on organizational culture and workplace bullying. Their responses could help construct a strategy to combat workplace bullying.

Role of the Researcher

According to Lien, Pauleen, Kuo, and Wang, (2014), research is a craft and the role of the researcher is a key component serving as an instrument and deserving attention. The researcher is further described as the "main research instrument" (p. 8) and must speak the study's language, present themselves as sociable, and gain insight from the data to provide analysis and direction (Lien, Pauleen, Kuo, & Wang, 2014).

According to Høffding and Martiny, (2015) the craft of interviewing includes transcribing, which requires the researcher to pay attention, listen closely, be sensitive to the subject matter and participant, and notice when there are differences throughout the verbal exchange when listening to the recording. While conducting the interviews a considerable responsibility was taken for data collection to answer the central research question. The interest in the topic of workplace bullying came from the perspective that workplace bullying is a significant organizational problem, and also an employee relations issue, remaining prevalent, pervasive, and problematic for employers and employees alike (Namie & Namie, 2014). My previous job experience within human resource capacity improved my communication and social skills, ability to engage with individuals of all backgrounds, and the ability to interact with individuals discussing

sensitive topics needing confidentiality and anonymity. The high conscience and integrity was maintained by removing biases and prejudgments and avoiding leading participants in any direction or another with any leading questions or responses.

There were 11 males and 14 female participants in this study. To alleviate bias, before the data collection began, I completed journal entries on workplace bullying experiences, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings to release all preconceived notions on the phenomenon. This bracketing or epoche is described by Moustakas (1994) to be open, receptive, and free from judgment during the data collection process. The participants in this study did not have a prior relationship with the researcher, which removed any conflict of interest.

Pilot Study

Validity, reliability and accuracy are possibly the most important aspect of research (Croteau, 2016). To test for validity and clarity, and any possible weaknesses in the design of the interview questions, the interview process and procedures were set up as a pilot study with five participants; using the same target group (employees), but in a different area (region and practice of the St. Joseph's Hospital) to avoid contamination of the study population. A pilot study was a critical step in the planning phase of a study; a test run can indicate if the interviewer is comfortable with the ambiguity and lack of structure involved in qualitative research (Croteau, 2016). The results of the pilot study were to be used to make changes in the design of the interview questions, process, or procedures instrument if needed. There was no change to the interview process and procedures in place.

The sample for the pilot study included of a group of five, two male and three females from the Fayetteville (North-East practice of St. Joseph's Hospital). The face-to-face interviews were held in a private and quiet room with no distractions. Each interviewee was informed about the study, any potential risks, and that the interview session would be audio recorded. After signing the informed consent form, these individuals participated in one-on-one interviews. Each participant was assigned a unique identifier and code, for example 58hdhyjkk7. Each participant represented a status of their employment. All participants had full-time employment in upstate New York State, with the typical age between ages 18-65.

The data responses were entered into NVivo10 software for analysis and as a record of all relevant experiences shared by the participants. I used a journal to record responses and jesters of the pilot group while the interviews were being audio-recorded. The information was compiled to note any common patterns and similarities from the participants. Irrelevant and insufficient data such as items not related to bullying actions or behaviors were eliminated. The validation of the pilot study concluded the pilot study did not present any weaknesses in the design of the interview questions, the interview process, and procedures. The participants indicated that the questions were effective in soliciting valuable information relating to the central phenomenon; therefore, the interview questions were not changed. During the interviews in the main study, I found it helpful to include impromptu, probing questions to obtain rich data regarding each participant's unique experiences.

Pilot Study Results

The following tables present the pilot study's questions and results in tabular format. Table 3 presents interview question 3, with subquestions (a), (b), and (c) which asked participants, if they witnessed or experienced any bullying behavior in this job or any previous jobs and to describe the situations. The subquestions were designed to allow the participants to share how they felt when they witnessed or experienced bullying in their workplace.

All five participants (100%) witnessed or experienced bullying behavior in their current job or any previous job, however, while describing their situations some participants felt emotional and experienced voices change. The actions of job intimidation were witnessed by three participants (60%), however, two participants had personal experienced (40%); and the bullying was a behavior tolerated in the workplace which they would like to see changed. These questions were designed to help understand, from the participants' perspectives, exactly what they experienced or witnessed bullying in their workplace. The responses showed (100%) of the bullies were the supervisors or employees and 100% of participants said the victims were targeted by the bullies. This question also revealed that the bullying actions, per four (80%) of the participants occurred in front of others, one (20%) shared that belittling in front of others occurred. Three participants (60%) shared witnessing bullying made them feel uncomfortable, upset, overwhelmed, and feared of what they viewed. Two participants (40%) explained they did not want to be in the bullying environment, have resentment, and are defensive. One participant (20%) felt intimidated and threatened by what was witnessed.

Table 3

Pilot Study Interview Question #3 Finding: Bullying Behavior

Situation(s) and feeling(s)	Number of Participants (N=5)	Percentage of Participants
Witnessed or experienced bullying behavior	5	100
Supervisors or employees was the bully	5	100
Targeted individuals	5	100
Actions in front of others	4	80
Made to feel uncomfortable/overwhelmed	3	60
Emotional abuse/verbal	2	40
Actions were disturbing/stressful	2	40
Values are different	1	20
Lack of trust and leadership	3	60
Belittled the employee in front of others	2	40
Fear, threatened, and not wanted to work	2	40
Argumentative/loud	1	20
Lack of trust/not taken seriously	3	60
Did not protect employee	2	40
Stressed	5	100
Job threat/fear of losing job	4	80
Frustrated	3	60
Angry	4	80
Helpless	5	100
Fear of backlash	1	20
Resentment/defensive	1	20

Luck of trust, along with not being taken seriously and feeling no protection from the bully represented four (80%) respondents. The feelings shared by two (40%) participants were being stressed, experienced a threat of losing their job, and frustrated.

One participant (20%) felt angry, resigned, helpless, and feared of receiving backlash. The bullies used intimidation tactics the most, with abusive language, such as cursing or using graphic language and bigoted speech, in three (60%) responses. Four (80%) participants shared feelings of having no protection, lacking leadership, and not having trust with the organization. Four participants (80%) agreed they expected their organization to have enforceable policies.

Results of the interview question four are presented in Table 4, including subquestion (a) and (b). This includes what actions participants took or could have taken after they experienced or witnessing the bullying? How and to whom participants reported the bullying actions they witnessed or experienced, and what types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying in their organization? These questions revealed two respondents (40%) did nothing when witnessing the bullying behavior, which includes one of the participant also stating she quit the job. One participant (20%) stated he/she contacted a supervisor, another participant stated he/she filed a formal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaint, and another filed a complaint with the human resources department. Reporting to the human resources office was reflected by one participant (20%); five participants (100%) of the participants stated they would report to someone else, such as a supervisor, if it was not their supervisor conducting the bullying. In terms of types of actions or behavior viewed as bullying within their organization, three participants (60%) stated the bullying behaviors and actions involved verbal abuse, name calling, yelling, and screaming. Overwhelmingly four participants (80%) stated intimidation and job intimidation is a behavior needed to change in the

workplace. Three participants (60%) stated the lack of respect is a behavior needing to change, along with use of graphic language (cursing, bigoted speech) and belittling actions in front of others. Two participants (40%) felt the abusive power behavior was also a behavior that needed to change. Results to interview question five and the subquestion (a) are presented in Table 4. What actions did leadership take regarding workplace bullying, and were there changes implemented? This question revealed two in leadership roles (60%) did nothing to address the bullying, however, the remaining (40%) took the needed action to address the issue, but no immediate change was implemented.

Table 4

Pilot Study Interview Question #4 and 5. Finding: Actions After the Bullying

Action(s)/Behavior(s)/Reporting	Number of Participants (N=5)	Percentage of Participants
Did nothing	2	40
Contacted supervisor	1	20
Filed complaint with the Equal	1	20
Filed complaint with HR	2	40
Quit the job	1	20
Actions were disturbing/stressful	3	60
Verbal abuse, yelling, and screaming.	3	60
Act upon themselves	3	60
Contacted the superiors	3	60
Changes implements	3	60
Job intimidation	2	40
Cursing, graphic language	2	40
Belittles in front of others	2	40
Abusive behaviors	2	40

How the participants felt about their individual organizational culture is reflected in Table 5, which consist question 6, 7, 8, and 9. According to the participants, three (60%) felt the organization should provide education and training around bullying, two (40%) viewed bullying as acceptable behavior and conducive to allow the bullying behaviors in their organization. Two participants (40%) thought the culture had no leadership, was toxic, and unhealthy for the employees.

Table 5

Pilot Study Question #6, 7, 8 and 9. Findings: Organization's Culture

Situation(s)	Number of Participants (N=5)	Percentage of Participants
Should provide education/training	3	60
Bully is acceptable/conducive	2	40
No leadership	2	40
Not wonderful, toxic/unhealthy	2	40
Not happy because of changes	1	20
Afraid to be in the loop	1	20
No resources or support	5	100

Question 10.11 and 12 results are presented in Table 6, asked the participants what actions they expected from their organization to prevent bullying. Four participants (80%) wanted the organization to have written policies in place to prevent bullying. Two participants (40%) responded they wanted a better workplace environment, the organization to have a zero-tolerance policy, and the option of getting rid of the bullies. It was also expected by one participant (20%) that the organization would address the

bullying issues immediately. One participant (20%) did not expect the organization to do anything to prevent bullying. Question 12 is reflected in Table 6, as well. It asked participants what specific actions, in their perspective, could be taken in their workplace to minimize the bullying behavior.

Table 6

Pilot Study Question #10, 11 and 12. Findings: Preventing Bullying

Actions to Prevent Workplace Bullying	Number of Participants (<i>N</i> = 5)	Percentage of Participants
Put policies in place	4	80
Create a better workplace	2	40
To have zero tolerance	2	40
Get rid of bullies	2	40
Address immediately	1	20
Expect nothing	1	20
Set up policies	3	60
Training to not allow the behavior	3	60
Change the culture	3	60
Higher-ups need to take a stand	2	40
Hard to talk about the situation	2	40
Need better communication	1	20
Reduce the fear	1	20

From the participants' perspective of the, three (60%) stated they want to have policies in place, with training geared toward removing bullying behaviors in their workplace. Three participants (60%) indicated a change is needed within the culture, shared it is hard to talk about the situations, and two (40%) would like to see the upper level of the management within the organization take a stronger stance against bullying.

Better communication is another vehicle one participant (20%) revealed, stating something needs to be in place to help reduce the fear employees are experiencing around bullying behaviors he or she had witnessed

Data Collection Process

The interviews were established at the convenience of the participants. A quiet and confidential location for the interview was needed to ensure confidentiality, easy access to the participant, participant comfort, and reduce or eliminate down on noise and interruptions for the recording (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Quiet and confidential location also allowed the participant to focus on the interview questions. Interviews were held in a private offices and classrooms at St. Joseph's Hospital, after business work hours, or during the lunch hour. Participants were briefed on the procedures, any risks and benefits, and the purpose of this study before the interview and the journaling process began, and provided with assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality of the study. The informed consent form and the confidentiality measures were reviewed again before the interviews started. No interviews exceeded a one-hour and there was a question and answer period for the benefit of the participants. The interviews were interactive and engaging for the researcher as well as the participant. Each participant was also asked clarifying questions, which aided in understanding of their perspectives and experiences and the data collection activities were clear and specific to ensure accuracy.

Face-to-face voice recorded interviews were the primary method of collecting data. Each interview lasted between 11 and 35 minutes; the time required depended on

how much information the participant shared. At the beginning of each interview, the participant was thanked for volunteering to participate in the study. The participant was told he/she was assigned a code number (ex: Srt246FgR2) and the pseudonym final study participant (PFSP 1-25) number to protect his/her identity. Each study participant was given an opportunity to ask any questions on the consent form and the interview. Every participant was also reminded he/she had the option to terminate the interview or withdraw from the study at any time.

Each participant was informed there was no right or wrong answers to the interview questions because the intent was to understand how the participant viewed and understood the world. An interview guide (see Appendix A) was used to conduct the interviews and ensure data were captured regarding the participants' demographics and lived experiences relate to the phenomenon under study. The first three interview questions were developed to capture the demographics of each participant. The remaining nine questions were open ended and were used to explore the participants' personal accounts relating to workplace bullying and the organizational culture. Impromptu probing questions were also asked to clarify and better understand vague responses and obtain more detailed information.

The interviews led to an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences on workplace bullying and the organizational culture, including the severity and impact of bullying. After each interview was completed, the audio recording was manually transcribed in Word documents, which were later imported into NVivo 10 software. NVivo 10 software was used to assist with data analyses data and identify emergent

themes. The journal entries were used to make note of any nonverbal behaviors which could not be captured on the audiotape, including signs of emotion, displaying a hesitation in the response, tearing, facial expressions linking to the change in the tone of voice, and signs of anxiety experiences of the 25 participants being interviewed.

Researcher's journaling was not used to observe individuals who are not part of the study. A researcher's journal was a commonly used tool allowing a researcher to record the rich, first-hand experiences of participants.

The phenomenological design allowed me to focus on a literal experience of a participant (Moustakas, 1994), therefore, using of journal in this study was important to record and capture unique data based on the literal experience of the participants. To help structure the research journal, each page of the journal was divided into four sections. Section one documented/recorded experiences, section two documented and acknowledged thoughts and emotions, section three documented expressions, and section four referred to observations, therefore, the body language of the participant was part of those experiences, thoughts, and observations while interviewing 25 potential participants. The data from the research journals was used as another form of primary data to supplement the principal sources of data. The journals helped to identify themes and ideas, while clarifying fragmented ideas, meanings, insights, and participant experiences.

Participant Summary

The participants included in this study were selected because they could provide direct perceptions from experiences pertaining to workplace bullying and organizational

culture in a workplace. According to Moustakas's (1994), "In phenomenology, perception is regarded as the primary source of knowledge, the source that cannot be doubted" (p. 52), hence the perceptions and the personal experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying and organizational culture were a key component to the findings presented in this study. The participants were assured their identity would be confidential, and they would remain anonymous throughout the study and the presentation of findings. To ensure the confidentiality of each participant, each person was assigned a pseudonym indicated by the number of the participant, and if they were male or female. Using pseudonyms ensured each response was anonymous, and the actual names of the participants remained private. Each participant was assigned an envelope which was used to store a hard copy of their electronically signed informed consent form, a copy of the interview guide, handwritten notes by the researcher taken during each interview, and a hard copy of the transcription. These envelopes were all placed in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home office.

The interview guide consisted of 13 questions which included demographics and questions about workplace bullying, leadership, and the organizational culture, which elicited responses regarding the personal lived experiences of workplace bullying in an organization. Following the data collection, the final sample size was 25 participants. This chapter reports the findings of 25 participants.

The demographic information collected from this study are shown in Appendix I. As shown in Appendix I, the participants came from various fields of work, such as administrative positions, nursing, education and finance, environmental service,

transport, phlebotomy, security, and other departments; the total represented on the illustration was 25. Additional demographic details were collected throughout the interview process that were not necessarily significant for this study but could be beneficial in other capacities. The years of employment are found in Appendix I, and this number varied with five years at a minimum served and a maximum of 35 years.

Although the interview guide was used as a basis for the questions in this study, the probing questions were used to gain the most data possible to answer the research question. The lived experiences described were all relevant to the questions asked; moreover, some of the added information was still rich with points which benefited the study and enriched the data that was initially being sought from the interview question. Of the participants, 23 were employed full-time and one part-time. The demographics of the 25 study participants are presented in Appendix I. As indicated out of 25 participants from the range of areas of employment, 13 of the study participants were victims of bullying, and 12 were only witnesses of workplace bullying. This variety indicates workplace bullying occurs in many career fields, which brought a greater understanding of workplace bullying in different work environments. The participants' roles associated with geographic location are listed as well. The in-depth individual interviews were conducted along with a researcher's journal as the means of data collection for this qualitative, phenomenological study. The interviews ranged from 11 minutes to 35 minutes to complete. The length in pages of the transcribed interviews ranged from four pages to seven pages per interview, totaling 125 pages of transcribed data. Table 7 displays the interview length and transcript length of each participant.

Table 7

Length of Interviews and Transcripts

Participant Code	Length of Interview	Pages of Transcripts and Notes
PFSP01	11min	4
PFSP02	14min	4
PFSP03	34min	5
PFSP04	20min	7
PFSP05	16min	6
PFSP06	11min	5
PFSP07	14min	4
PFSP08	19min	6
PFSP09	16min	7
PFSP10	13min	5
PFSP11	15min	5
PFSP12	15min	7
PFSP13	16min	4
PFSP14	19min	5
PFSP15	19min	4
PFSP16	22min	5
PFSP17	29min	5
PFSP18	20min	6
PFSP19	28min	5
PFSP20	16min	4
PFSP21	18min	4
PFSP22	19min	4
PFSP23	30min	6
PFSP24	18mn	4
PFSP25	25min	4

Participants: 25 Minutes: 458 min Transcripts & Notes: 125 pages

Data Analysis Process

Before beginning the analysis process, epoche was applied to avoid prejudgment by recognizing and setting aside preconceived notions, personal beliefs, and judgments to understand how the participants experienced and perceived workplace bullying on the

organization culture. The participants' perceptions were viewed objectively to avoid bias which is another part of epoche. The continual focus was on envisioning the experience through the participants' lenses of reality. Researcher bias was further reduced through organizing and managing the transcribed interview data with NVivo 10 software. The NVivo software was used to code data, search for specific words, query, group similar ideas, and link data. This process assisted in identifying patterns, themes, constructs, and meanings in the participants' responses, which in turn uncovered relevant meaning (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2016).

All 25 face-to-face interviews and journal notes were transcribed immediately after each of the interview sessions, while the information was fresh in the mind of the researcher to maintain reliability and credibility of the research. This chapter presents the findings of 25 participants. Stuckey (2014) found the immediate verbatim transcription of interviews necessary to ascertain reliability, credibility, and trustworthiness of research. The transcription of the interviews was done manually, and no computer software was used. After transcription was complete, the interviews were ready for member checking. In qualitative research, member checking is a tool used to assist the researcher in ensuring the accuracy of a document (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell & Walter, 2016). Member checking allowed the participant to review the transcribed information, verified the validity of the experience, and that the document conveyed the lived experiences of the participant (Birt et al., 2016). All the participants agreed to review their transcripts, except one because of his personal time constraints. One of the 25 participants who

declined also stated that he felt he had given sufficient time and information to the research and felt further review would be redundant.

The copy of the transcripts was returned to the 25 participants who agreed to review them by postal mail within St. Joseph's Hospital. The participant had a one-week deadline within to return the document back to the researcher for corrections. If the participant did not return the interview transcript to the researcher for changes after the one-week deadline, it was assumed the document was correct. The participants returned their transcripts within the one-week deadline with no prompting necessary. Most of the participant had no major changes, however, some participants added to their transcripts. After the participants completed member checking, the interview transcripts were revised, and ready for uploading into the NVivo10 software for qualitative methodologies for data coding and analysis.

After applying epoche, Moustakas's modified van Kaam method was initiated. The method provided a systematic way of analyzing the phenomenological data. According to Moustakas (1994), this data analysis method is one of two methods best to use by human science researchers. The "modification of the van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data" (Moustakas, 1994 p. 120) consists of a seven-step process to gain a true understanding of the participant experiences and derive an accurate presentation from the data collection (Moustakas, 1994). The first step in the Moustakas, (1994) is horizontalization or listing, which was used to ensure the researcher was accepting of each statement and gave each statement equal value. The interviews were initially transcribed and then each question and participant response was highlighted

using NVivo10 software to further accent and separate each statement. The next step involved in the analysis was to reduce the data and remove any invariant constituents that which did not provide a moment for the experience described. The data remaining was reviewed for themes and invariant constituents emerging throughout each interview. These themes were used to create an overall experience to describe the overlapping views of the participants (see Figure 5).

The NVivo qualitative software was used for assistance with the analysis of this study. The NVivo software is an all-inclusive qualitative data analysis software package which helped the researcher in organizing and analyzing the data (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2016). The NVivo software was used to code in data analysis for this study. Saldana (2013) found the core meaning of in NVivo was “in that which is alive” (p. 91) or in coding referring to the literal language of the participant. Saldana further stated NVivo coding was suitable for all qualitative studies, but especially for studies with a focus on the voice and experience of the participant using the participant’s terms. Bernard, Wutich, and Ryan, (2016) confirmed Saldana’s findings and reported to create a code with significance, coding in qualitative research must captivate and embrace definite qualities of the participant’s experiences. For the above reasons, NVivo coding was appropriate for coding this qualitative, phenomenological study which explored the lived experience of the participants.

Steps of the Coding Process and Data Analyses

Several steps were used for coding purposes. After reviewing the interview transcripts and the researcher’s journals notes several times, the research material was

uploaded into the NVivo software for assistance with coding. This step was repeated until all interview transcripts and the corresponding researcher's journal notes were imported. After the transcribed documents were imported, the software displayed them on the list view section of the main window. The first step for document analysis using in NVivo coding was the researcher must adjust to words and phrases that give emphasis to the research if spoken aloud (Saldana, 2013). If the participant used words, phrases, or derivatives repeatedly, a node was then created in the NVivo software.

A list of significant statements emerged from the interviews and journal entries, and a list of commonly used words and phrases developed. Each node represented a code, theme, or idea about the data to be included in the study. Since this study coded interviews and researcher's journals about workplace bullying, organizational culture, leadership, perceptions, and experiences, these terms and others became nodes (NVivo software referred to terms as nodes) in NVivo. According to Saldana, (2013), the term node represented a code, theme, or idea about the data which a researcher wished to include in the project. The nodes were created by selecting the *new node* option in the software, named the node, and created the node (Saldana, 2013). As the coded process of each interview and corresponding researcher's journal were established, patterns of same or similar statements or nodes were developed in subsequent interviews and journals. The list of significant statements was then developed, which emerged from the interviews and journals.

Each NVivo code initially formed a potential category, or node in the NVivo software. As the number of codes developed, the researcher grouped the codes together

into initial categories (Saldana, 2013). Coding allowed me to classify or tag data for review by category, as well retrieve all the data related to a node at one time (Woods, Paulus, Atkins, & Macklin, 2016; Saldana, 2013). As the coding progressed and several codes developed, the codes were grouped together into initial categories (Saldana, 2013). I grouped related categories together to form refined categories (Saldana, 2013). The refined categories evolved and formed the final themes and a coding index to organize the data (Moustakas, 1994; Saldana, 2013). The coding index relating to themes throughout the data analysis process as was constantly refined throughout the process of data analysis as new insights emerged

Each interview and corresponding journal entries was coded, and the patterns of same or similar statements or nodes developed in subsequent interviews and journals. Following the validation of the themes, I was able to construct individual textural descriptions from each of the 25 transcriptions to further validate the invariant constituents found in the initial stages of analysis. According to Moustakas (1994), these descriptions provide a clear perspective of the experience including thoughts and feelings as well as the suggested using verbatim examples. I constructed individual structural descriptions of the victims and witness perceptions of the experience of workplace bullying and the organizational culture overall. Using imaginative variation, Moustakas (1994) contended the researcher constructs underlying themes that further illustrate the invariant constituents as well as universal structures which exemplify how workplace bullying may manifest in other areas.

Following the individual structural descriptions, I constructed textural-structural descriptions. The composite textural description identified the themes or commonalities amongst all participants provided the true essence and meaning of the participant experiences. I also developed a composite structural description, which similarly explains the commonalities but differs in describing the researcher's perspective of underlying invariant constituents and themes. The last step is a synthesis of the meanings and essences of responses discovered from the research which represents all participants. These seven steps summarize the "modification of the van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data" (Moustakas, 1994 p. 120) used to evaluate the data collected from this research. Detailed description of Moustakas's seven step are presented next.

Moustakas's Seven Step of Analysis Process

Researcher bias was further reduced through organizing and managing the transcribed interview data in NVivo 10. The software was used to code data, search for specific words, query, group similar ideas, and link data. This process assisted in identifying patterns, themes, constructs, and meanings in the participants' responses, which uncovered relevant meaning (Woods, Paulus, Atkins & Macklin, 2016). After applying epoche, Moustakas modified van Kaam method was initiated. The method provided a systematic way of analyzing the phenomenological data. The seven steps in the method are discussed below (see figure 5).

Moustakas's Step 1: Listing and Grouping

The first step in Moustakas's analysis method was implemented by listing and grouping the data. Every statement was treated as having equal value and benefit—a

process known as *horizontalization*. The horizontalization process led to identification of the invariant constituents related to the phenomenon. According to Moustakas (1994), horizontalization is an important part of the process of phenomenological modified van Kaam data analysis. Horizontalization allows the researcher to better understand the experience described by the participant. From a nonbiased perspective, the researcher must evaluate each statement independent of others when reviewing the transcriptions (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) contended horizons are “a never-ending process and, though we may reach a stopping point and discontinue our perception of something, the possibility for discovery is unlimited” (p. 95). Moustakas (1994) presented verbatim examples of horizontalizing to emphasize textural meaning and identify invariant constituents as well. Horizontalization is a part of the phenomenological reduction process (Moustakas, 1994). The following excerpt is a verbatim example of horizontalizing to emphasize textural meaning and identify invariant constituents. Each statement was given equal value in understanding the participants perception and experiences relating to workplace bullying and the organizational culture.

Participant responses, example 1:

Researcher (R): Okay, now we’re going to talk about organizational culture.

This is the combination of assumptions, beliefs, values, and artifacts, so please describe your beliefs and the values of the organizational that you had about the organizational culture after you witnessed and/or experienced the workplace bullying?

(Pseudonym Final Sample Participant) PFSP10: For 16 years, I loved my job. I loved the people that I worked with. In the meantime, when I left the job I felt devastated. I did not want to leave my management, they were wonderful, however, (she) the bully is the only one person that I had an issue in my 24 years that I spent in this organization.

Researcher (R): How did that make you feel?

PFSP10: Emotionally draining.

Researcher (R): Please describe your beliefs and the values of the organizational that you had about the organizational culture after you witnessed and/or experienced the workplace bullying?

PFSP10: After the incident, my perception concerning the organization culture changed because I was bullied by my supervisor for a long time, and no one did nothing about it. I left my job, afterward, however, I cannot imagine too much of change from the organizational culture standpoint, but I know she, the bully did not change.

PFSP10 described her reaction relating to the organizational culture and the workplace bullying. Her emphasis was on the type of organization she worked for and her surprise and disappointment at the discovery of the presence of workplace bullying, because she seemed to expect a better working environment. Although there may have been a greater organizational culture, her perception of the organization and its culture was skewed because she was bullied by her supervisor for a long time. It appears the organizational culture cannot be clearly represented if those are normally present within a

given culture are the bully themselves. This indicates the organizational culture could change based on who is at work and who is the bully at a given time and for a given timeframe.

Moustakas's Step 2: Reducing and Eliminating

The second step involved reducing the data to the essential ideas, or invariant constituents of the experience. Statements which did not meet these criteria were eliminated. Repetitive, vague, or overlapping data were deleted or presented in more descriptive terms. According to Moustakas (1994) similar to horizontalization are meaning units which also allows the recognition of each statement as a single, important component of the experience or essence. Moustakas (1994) supported meaning units are a part of the process of phenomenological reduction where the researcher can extend listening to creating textures and meaning from the statements made by participants. Meaning units are derived from the horizontalization of the data and according to Moustakas (1994) "are listed" (p.118) to make invariant horizons more identifiable. In the example below, each statement is separated and given equal value as a meaning unit of the experience described by the victim or witness of the workplace bullying. These are excerpts taken verbatim from the transcriptions. The remaining statements were identified as the invariant constituents of the experiences.

PFSP3. Participant 3 described the scenario where she witnessed workplace bullying in her department working as a nurse. She explained the bully's reaction as well as how she felt about the organizational culture at this workplace:

1. The manager assumed there was this other person involved.

2. The staff member was directing these things to yet another person. And the screaming and yelling was making no sense but that's all the person did. There was no breath, there was no pause in the conversation, there was nothing.

PFSP5. Participant 5 described what she saw when she witnessed bullying and how it made her feel. She also provided clear examples of workplace bullying behaviors and specific situations:

1. I observed, I guess it was very an uncomfortable situation because it was not just one employee involved but almost two.
2. It was a hostile environment because you only did your job, you did not talk, you were not greeted, you were not comfortable doing anything.
3. Like there was this one incident where the company had invited us to take the class because it was an educational institute. And the supervisor was, did not want to sign off on it and the employee wanted to take the class.
4. So it was such an abuse of supervision, such an abuse of power.

PFSP12. Participant 12 described the scenario she witnessed, the organizational culture, her thoughts and perceptions of the lack of leadership, and her reactions to workplace bullying. She attributed the allowance of workplace bullying within the organization and the notion that people could do what they wanted to do in the workplace when they were in certain positions.

1. I don't really feel like, at that point . . . I don't feel like I should have said anything to her because that would put my job in jeopardy, you know.

2. I didn't really want to work there anymore. I mean I knew I wasn't going to be there further after this incident, but after that . . . I couldn't believe it. It just, it totally changed my view upon the company itself.
3. They valued teamwork and loss prevention, and everybody working collectively as a whole within the company. But after seeing that, I didn't believe it as much, you know.
4. You know, you always want to make your employees feel great at the workplace, not down.
5. You don't want anybody to hate coming in to work.
6. You should be able to come to work and enjoy yourself . . . you know, especially doing something that you love.

Moustakas's Step 3: Clustering of Horizons in to Themes

Eliminate irrelevant data, cluster the remaining information, and identify themes, was the next step. The third step consisted of organizing the invariant constituents into themes related to the participants' lived experiences regarding workplace bullying and the organizational culture. Irrelevant and insufficient data such as items not relating to bullying actions or behaviors were removed. According to Moustakas's (1994), themes may be found in the data once repetitive statements are removed. After reviewing the data for horizons and meaning units, Moustakas's (1994) suggested for the researcher to notice and report the invariant constituents found in the responses made by each participant. The unchanging patterns began to result in themes of the research.

The data analysis matrix presents each category found in the study: (a) bullying behavior and the organizational culture, (b) actions or behavior viewed as bullying within the organization, and (c) comprehensive actions to mitigate bullying. The core themes for each category are explicitly presented in Table 8, and the interview questions which elicited the responses leading to the invariant constituent are displayed as well.

Table 8

Data Analysis Matrix: The Core Themes for Each Category

Categories	Themes	Interview Questions
Category 1: Bullying Behavior and the Organizational Culture	1. <i>Bullying perception and the behavioral experience</i>	3,4,5,6,7
	2. <i>The feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying.</i>	3,4,6,7,10
	3. <i>Organizational culture and the lack of leadership responsibility, and accountability.</i>	4,6,7,8,9,10
	4. <i>Witnesses were reluctant to act due to fear of retaliation.</i>	3,4,5,6
Category2: Actions or Behavior Viewed as Bullying within the Organization.	5. <i>Absence of leadership</i>	5,8,9,10
	6. <i>Acceptable behaviors and actions at the organizations enabled the bullying</i>	5,11,12,13
Category3: Comprehensive Actions to Mitigate Bullying.	7. <i>Lack of Policies and Procedures</i>	11,12,13
	8. <i>Expectations</i>	8,9,10,11,12,13
	9. <i>The suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying.</i>	10,11,12,13

Viewing this matrix helps provide clear relationships between the categories, the context of the interview question, and the theme derived. The category of organizational culture was stressed in interview questions 4, 6,7,8,9, and 10. The interview guide can be referenced in Appendix A with the exact questions.

Moustakas's Step 4: Constructing Textural Descriptions

Following the formation of themes, horizons, and meaning units, Moustakas's (1994) described the next step in modified van Kaam analysis as individual textual descriptions. According to Moustakas's (1994), including verbatim examples are necessary to illustrate "the collection of data and its analysis and synthesis" (p. 184). These descriptions provide verbatim examples from the transcriptions capturing the experience of the victims or the witnesses of workplace bullying on the organizational culture. The excerpts included provide a clear understanding of the essence and what the experience means to each participant (Moustakas, 1994). The following narratives present the thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and descriptions of the workplace bullying scenarios as well as the aforementioned elements described firsthand by research participants.

Individual textural description, example 1: PFSP1 described her perceptions and experience of being a victim of workplace bullying as a form of a daily routine which seemed like a normal behavior: "Days started to go by and it was just like this was the normal thing." She described how she was bullied at work from her supervisor. She stated that: "technically I was forced basically to work even on my days off. I didn't have a choice to say yes or no, it was just I had to be there, or I was going to lose my job."

PFSP1 had worked for this organization for a couple of years and described frustration of experiencing the bullying incidents. She felt the bully was completely wrong in treating her and drove her to leave the company: “it drove me to leave. This place it was much like a family to me because, and I was there for so long, but it made me leave. I got tired of my job, and I didn’t appreciate it anymore.” As well she stated the job affected her mentally: “this job affected me mentally, because I started when I was younger, and I left when I was 18 turning 19. I did not have much of a childhood, so they were family. I mean it was just a little depressing, but you know I got through it.”

PFSP1 was disappointed at the level of disrespect she faced and sought out someone who might be able to help in some capacity. She started with reaching out to her manager, who had been with the organization since it opened. PFSP1 felt confident this supervisor could help resolve this bullying situation. She explained that the supervisor physically came to the organization, but no actions were really taken to address the issue, she stated “the leadership was not organized; therefore, no action was taken.” PFSP1 was surprised at this lack of action and began to feel differently towards the organization. PFSP1 described her initial expectations of the organization to be a peaceful, team environment where everyone worked together. She stated, “It was a wonderful place to work; they offered me an excellent job in my early age, until the incident happened.” Once she began to experience and witness bullying, her perceptions about the organization completely changed: “I felt lost. I think they were very unorganized.”

PFSP1 described her challenge with understanding how behaviors like this were allowed to occur in the organization. There were no policies on workplace bullying, and

no resources or support provided, and nothing developed following this incident, therefore, she left the company. In considering what action there should be implemented to minimize workplace bullying, PFSP1 stated: “Communication within the departments it is very important, so everybody could be on the same page pertaining to any problem or issues raised.” PFSP1’s experiencing the workplace bullying contained all core textural themes contributing to her perceptions and descriptions of the experience: behavioral descriptions, absence of leadership, respect and disrespect, helplessness, bullying unresolved, disappointment, expectations, lack of policies and procedures, and organizational awareness.

Individual textural description, example 2: The experience of workplace bullying for PFSP2 was a sore area that affected how she looked at an organization she thought it was a family to her. Initially PFSP2 described several mentally abusive incidents that she experienced and witnessed. She began to describe a supervisor yelling and expecting a lot from subordinates because there were a lot of work to be done. She said these encounters happened often and were normally misconstrued by those in supervisory positions. PFSP2 described her expectations of what leadership should be and how it should have looked in this organization. She felt that leaders should serve as examples, but this often was not the case. PFSP2 described leaders who were interested in their own needs and goals and ignored the common good of the organization. She also explained that experiencing of the demeaning behaviors in front of others caused her to experience physical problem and feel differently about the organization culture and her future within the organization: “I’ll be having chest pain and make me so stressed out like

I usually think I'm going to have a heart attack and pass out." Further she stated: "I really believe that this organization it's all about money and they don't care about your feelings." PFSP2 was disappointed to experience and see how leaders were treating her. She stated: "I really can't afford to lose my job but I'm getting to that point that I am suffering not only here at work but also at home thinking about the belittling experience that I am going through every day in this organization." She was helpless in the situation and knew that there was nothing she could do to make a change or resolve the issues: "I voiced my feelings to a few individuals and my frustration, but in the end, I decided not to say more because of who the person was, I decided there was really not much that I could do." PFSP2 was adamant that leaders should lead by example and she felt it begin with their actions and behaviors.

Aside from the bullying actions and behaviors, PFSP2 had expectations when she joined the organization. She described the organization as a place she thought she would feel safe and furthermore, she mentioned: "I felt that everyone had each other's back. Before I was hired everyone was like a big family, and everyone supported each other. We were all there to get the job done, however, after experiencing and seeing some of the bullying, I think the culture of this organization changed considerably." PFSP2 described the reputation of the organization as strong and unwavering until she realized workplace bullying had infested the environment and those working there. PFSP2 had not witnessed any enforcement of policies and procedures to address the workplace bullying incidents. PFSP2 felt that the workplace had not improved minimally; yet, she was disappointed that the family dynamic of the organization no longer existed following the years she had

worked for the organization. She encouraged the need for organization leaders “to communicate everyday with the employees, and care about them constantly, and their opinion must be count to make changes.” PFSP2’s experience with being a victim of workplace bullying contained most of the core textural themes: behavioral descriptions, absence of leadership, respect and disrespect, helplessness, expectations, lack of policies and procedures, and organizational awareness.

Moustakas’s Step 5: Develop a Structured Description of the Information

Using the phenomenological research as suggested by Moustakas’s (1994) allows the researcher to hear the experiences of bullying directly from the victims and witnesses. This allowed me to understand their perceptions, feelings, and impacts of the experience. By clustering common words and actions, it provided a picture of the reported negative behaviors from victims and witnesses experienced such as job intimidation. Job intimidation tactics were overwhelmingly used by the bullies as the number one reported negative behavior, followed by abusive language. The participants shared the bully would use repeated statements, continuously, which instilled fear and caused the victims to feel inadequate about their skills.

Individual structural description, example 1: Participant (PFSP1) shared she was at home on her day off when her supervisor called and made her to show up at work while using the abusive language. She states such bullying occurred “all the time and technically I was forced basically to come even though it was my day off. I had to come to work; I did not have a choice to say yes or no, it was just I had to be there, or I was going to lose my job.” The participant mentioned that the yelling was loud, and her

supervisor used curse words. This happened to her at least once or twice a week, “I was emotionally drained and felt depressed.... I got tired of my job, and I didn’t appreciate it anymore, which drove me to leave.”

The administration operated in a culture of an unorganized manner and discredits an individual’s job performances in front of others. PFSP1 stated: “the organization was unorganized and there were a lot of people that were collage youngsters, therefore, the management forced the dedicated employees to work harder.” She felt inadequate, and incompetent, even though I she was a regular employee there. She explained the other supervisor physically came to the organization, but no actions were taken to address the issue, after reporting it. She stated: “the leadership was not organized; therefore, no action was taken, no one listened to my experience or cared how I felt. PFSP1 stated, “the hostile work environment is supported by the higher-ups; this organization has no leadership or structure.”

Individual structural description, example 2: PFSP25 provided an example of what she describes as an intimidation tactic: The employee continually belittled and intimidated other employees of another ethnicity in the hallway and says, “Why are you here?”, “I do not need your help.” and “I do not understand you.” This kind of stuff happens daily according to the PFSP25. She stated, “I see this as belittling and intimidation.” She stated: “it made me feel bad for the person that was being talked down, because we are humans and no human being should feel being belittled.” She mentioned this is a wonderful place to work, however, it is dysfunctional, not effective and there is no leadership.

Individual structural description, example 3: PFSP6 worked in the truck driving industry briefly; however, it was long enough for him to witness workplace bullying. He began working for a family truck driving business that he was excited to join, and he was sure that he would be happy working for this company. He stated, “my experience about seeing somebody get bullied it was totally uncomfortable, because I am used to it.” PFSP6 was utterly shocked to witness bullying; however, he was please when the management addressed the situation. This experience affected him emotionally and mentally because the bully behavior was so bad and according to him, his was very confused trying to understand why the bully did belittled the other person. He further specified “I think somebody can die out of bullying. That is why it affected me so bad emotionally, physically, and mentally.”

Individual structural description, example 4: PFSP7 moved to America a few years ago and was not familiar with the terminology associated with workplace bullying or what it looked like when she first moved to this country. Once she experienced the behavior, she learned what it was and what it looked like. PFSP7 had a quiet and timid demeanor and preferred to stay to herself. She was not confrontational, but she had a heart to help people. PFSP7 was bothered to recognize workplace bullying behaviors and was unsure about how to respond. PFSP7 wanted to report the bully; however, the PFSP7 was scared and timid about approaching anyone, until one day she approached the management and solved the problem. The bully, and PFSP7 left the organization, but in the meantime, PFSP7 was damaged after the experience. PFSP7 still has a vivid picture of the bullying situation and is still cautious of her day-to-day actions, even in a new

work environment. Even in describing the incidents, PFSP7 was nervous and timid. This workplace bullying experience may have a lasting impact on PFSP7 because she felt like: “it is always possible that it can happen to me again.”

Moustakas’s Step 6: Composite Structural Descriptions

The composite structural description is described by Moustakas’s (1994) to derive meaning from what the group shared in its entirety using imaginative variation and how the group formed their feelings. Developing a composite of textural of the information began with listening to the audio recordings again and rereading written notes taken during the interviews. Then combining the written notes with the audio recorded notes until the experience of the participants was realized. Each participant shared their experiences by including how they felt about the situation in which they had been placed. Of the participants, the majority shared it was a supervisor and the management who conducted the bullying actions, the other part was employee to employee. It was common to hear the bully was in a leadership and management position and abused his or her power. One of common actions noted was the bullies using abusive language, which involved the bully confronting victims by calling names, yelling, belittling, talking down, and overworking. The participants relayed the bullies enjoyed belittling their victims in front of others, it was an abuse of power, and it seldom occurred in a one-on-one basis.

The witnesses and victims of workplace bullying were filled with high expectations of a good, happy organizational culture meeting their needs of challenge and motivation at work. They may have been naïve to believe that everything in the workplace would be perfect; however, they never imagined they would be exposed to

bullying behaviors forcing them and others out of an organization they planned to work with for an extended timeframe. In 10 of the 25 accounts described, the witnesses and the victims left the organizations and the commonality is they felt uncomfortable or unsafe in the work environment. The witnesses would have taken further actions to protect the victims if they did not fear for the loss of their jobs or other consequences they may have incurred if they reacted. The witnesses felt helpless because they ultimately had to ignore or accept the organizational culture and go along with what was happening to avoid being bullied or being removed from the organization, however, few of them stood up and confronted the bully in a polite behavior. The witnesses and the victims were hopeless, unsatisfied, emotionally drained, unsafe, and afraid.

The expectation of values and goals within the organizational culture were expressed and implied from participants. Entering the organization with the ideals the organization would be a place of integrity, morals, guidelines, and goals were a common belief amongst participants. The victims and witnesses realized these ideas were false and felt great disappointment and dismay regarding the scenarios they described. They felt as though they had been tricked by the organizations that they chose to work for due to the impression they would be protected, happy, productive, and led by individuals who cared about them, respected them, and wanted to see everyone succeed. The organizations failed, in the eyes of the victims and witnesses, to uphold their beliefs and align with their values. The victims and witnesses' acknowledgment and acceptance of organizational failure regarding events that occurred 10 or more years prior may have led to underlying

stress and anxiety. These underlying issues may have also led to the vivid descriptions of workplace bullying shared by the victims and witnesses during the interviews.

There were also cases where witnesses were beginning to feel some levels of anxiety and stress because they were disappointed at the existence of the experiences overall. They felt helpless and were motivated to act to protect the victim, yet there were no outlets to vent the frustration and in cases where there were, the bullying remained unresolved. Many of the witnesses just sought closure in the situation since there was no way to understand why the behaviors were occurring and the only way they could find closure was to leave the organization. The witnesses might have been able to move forward with the idea the bullying was out of sight it may also be out of their minds. The witnesses seemed to be haunted by the experiences they shared, because the descriptions were so vividly accounted as though they had just occurred and the different levels of emphasis on certain phrases portrayed tension and anxiety. The stress scar may have underlying effects on both victims and witnesses for a long time and a lack of support, policies and procedures, and absence of leadership may make these participants question their safety at other organizations they work for in the future. The experience of organizational awareness and leadership accountability may create a better organizational culture as these participants transition into other organizations.

Moustakas's Step 7: Synthesis of Meanings and Essences

This section integrates the meanings derived from the composite textural description as well as the composite structural description (Moustakas, 1994). The essence of the lived experiences of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying in the

upstate New York State regarding organizational culture is described in this section.

After eliminating and reducing the data, themes were formed, and the invariant constituents were created and provided the true experience of the victims and witnesses in this research. Experiencing and witnessing workplace bullying is an unpleasant, stressful, and unfair situation for someone to find themselves. The workplace bullying behaviors may initially be ignored, but as actions continue, behaviors normally intensify and both victims and witnesses realize the behaviors are unacceptable and should not be tolerated. Victims and the witnesses found themselves trapped in helpless situations they could only escape from if they made the decision to leave the jobs that they may have initially loved. Despite minimal actions to speak up for victims and confront the bully, the witnesses were in a torturous state to stand by and watch someone else ultimately, be used and abused, at the behest of someone who was no better than they were as a person.

The lack of policies and procedures displayed in the organizations described by the victims and witnesses left these man and women in a state of constant fear and reluctance to do or say anything outside of work related activities. The witnesses were bound by the four walls of a building to be obedient, loyal, quiet, and agreeable, or otherwise face the consequences of leaving and not being able to provide for their families or work in a capacity that could have made them happy. These participants had goals, aspirations, and abilities that may have been desirable to the organizations they worked for, yet the fact so many of them made the decision to leave, they will never know how successful they could have been because they either did not go back to work or had to start over with another organization.

The lasting effects of these participants (victims and witnesses) of workplace bullying may follow these men and women to other organizations and they may closely scrutinize every movement made by others for fear bullying may strike again. The witnesses may not seek management or leadership as a place of refuge in most cases, because they will have less trust and faith for individuals in those roles. The damage created to the victims and witnessing workplace bullying is evident in the accounts described in this chapter. The overall essence of the experiences was captured by the actions and behaviors allowed within the organization and the role of leadership; such that the reality is seemingly employees are simply pawns in the game of business played by the organization. The players are interchangeable and can be replaced at any given time. All employees are stakeholders, consumers, producers, and players of the organizational culture and its existence. The presence of all employees, regardless of their autonomy in making decisions or having equal say, provides a portion of the organizational culture and its role in the work environment.

Finding of the Research Study

In this study, the focus was on the overarching research question and three research subquestions to explore the effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of workers' experiences in the state of New York. The interview protocol located in Appendix A, was designed to collect information about the participants' experiences, and understanding on workplace bullying and organization culture. The following section details the results of using Moustakas's (1994) modified Van Kaam method. The data represents the foundation of the study, derived from

participants' statement and phrases transcribed from the 25 semi-structured interviews and journaling notes. An in-depth examination of the collected data developed key words, themes, and categories. After an in-depth review and examination of the data, three distinct categories and their nine themes were revealed to provide further clarification based on the experiences and participants perceptions.

Category 1 covers bullying behavioral descriptions representing the workplace bullying and the organizational culture based on the gathered data of bullying actions perceived and experienced by the participants. Category 2 provides information about the types of actions or behavior viewed as bullying within their organization from the perspectives and the experiences of the participants. Category 3 provides evidence based on the victims' and witnesses' experiences and perceptions, of what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders, managers, employees and the organizations overall to create an organizational culture mitigating bullying. The themes came from the experiences and the perceptions of the victims and witnesses, however, the actions taken by the witnesses helped to provide a more in-depth look from the participants' experiences (see Table 8).

The three primary categories, along with the nine themes, addressed and answered the overarching research question, and 3 subquestions of this study. The overarching research question that guided this study was as follows: How do employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture? The Category 1 and its themes, including the interview questions 3-11 (see Appendix A) correspond with the

overarching research question and explored the lived experiences and perceived effects of employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process related to organizational culture in the upstate New York State. The following subquestions (SQs) guided this qualitative study:

SQ1. What are the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly? The Category 1 and its themes, including and the interview questions 3-10 (see Appendix A) corresponded with this research subquestion and explored the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on the organizational culture from the perspective of employees who were bullied directly.

SQ2. What types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within their organization? Category 2 and its themes, including the interview questions 5-13 corresponded with this research question and explored the types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within their organization based on the perceived effects and the experience of bullying on the organizational culture as perceived by employees and designed to answer this research question.

SQ3. According to victims' and witnesses' experiences and perceptions, what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders to create an organizational culture that may mitigate bullying? Category 3 and its themes, including the interview questions 8-13 corresponded with this research question and explored the comprehensive actions that could have been adopted by leaders and the organizations to create an

organizational culture that may mitigate bullying based on the perceived effects and the experiences of bullying on the organizational culture as perceived by employees and designed to answer this research question.

Finding 1: Results for the Overarching Research Question

Finding 1 of this research study associates with the overarching research question; conversed that the culture of an organization is a vital component of the success of the organization (see Table 9 and 10). The participants revealed often the culture was not a place they would prefer to work in. Six participants (26%) remarked the environment was horrible, unhealthy, and toxic. Participant (PFSP3) said, "I feel isolated and there is no sense of belonging at this company." PFSP5 stated, "It is a ridiculous environment, email, face-to-face is so aggressive, cussing out people, promoting and supporting a hostile work environment, uses foul language." Five participants (21%) stated their organization did not have any leadership, and six participants (26%) also shared their work environment was conducive to bullying, it was accepted as the norm. Five participants (21%) felt they work well in a positive environment; five other participants (21%) were not happy because of the changes that were in place. PFSP25 stated, "This place has no structure, everyone knows their job duties, no repercussions, no supervisory skills, no leadership, jobs done half of what they have to do, excuses made regarding the errors; it has become quantity over quality." PFSP3 stated, "This administration operates in a culture of lying and misrepresentations to discredit [an] individual's job performances in front of others. The lying was incorrect, more like gossip and no facts to back it up, it was just intimidating. I felt inadequate and incompetent". PFSP6 stated, "it

was a horrible, worst-ever work environment, it was very dysfunctional, no leadership. The manager walks the floor continually just to intimidate people and she belittles people in front of others.... I remember -----, she was so scared, she went to her doctor and had to get some medication to help her through the day.” PFSP12 stated,” the company is no longer in business. But up until the store manager of this incident left for another store, the culture in our store was stressful to say the least. There were many complaints about her.” PFSP17 stated, “The bully culture is supported from the top down. I remember when the manager made condescending remarks at a staff meeting about overall staff performance. Resentment is felt by us.”

According to 24% of the responses indicated that supervisors engage in or allow workplace bullying because they lack the leadership skills needed to influence subordinates and to manage with emotional intelligence. PFSP7 shared this perception as follows: “I believe supervisors engage in workplace bullying because they lack emotional intelligence skills and because they lack these skills, they tend to abuse their authority and power. They tend to become abusive of their authority and power only if they can get away with it.” PFSP7 mentioned that “leaders allow supervisors to bully in the workplace because they can get the job done, whereas on the other hand, a nice and professional supervisor might not be able to get the same level of productivity out of the same employees”.

Some participants (12% of responses) perceived supervisors use or allow bullying because of limited leadership skills and rely on the skills of a bully to achieve the desired results and control of the work environment. PFSP20 stated the following perception: “I

honestly believe bullying in the workplace is directly linked to the bully's lack of experience in terms of leadership skills and emotional intelligence. Their ability to influence through leadership is all out of whack, and [it] seems like the bully relies on their bullying tactics to get employees to respond." According to PFSP2, "Leadership needs to take a more proactive role to be on the lookout for bully behaviors in [the] workplace, especially if everyone in the office knows that this kind of behavior has been going on for more than a year."

According to 27% of the responses, supervisors engage in workplace bullying to feel a sense of power and to motivate employees to achieve performance expectations. PFSP17 said the following of a supervisor who lacks leadership skills: "Bullying is the only known way for them to get the job done. In their eyes, they see results, increase productivity, better statistics, more discipline when their employees respond to them (the bully)." PFSP18 also addressed this idea: "Supervisors engage in workplace bullying as a negative motivation and to give them a sense of power. In their minds, this power gives them a false sensation that they are smarter and more knowledgeable."

The words and phrases identified were linked to intimidation and verbal abuse, lack of respect, belittling action in front of others, graphic language, and display of abusive power. Job intimidation was noted from 17 participants (71%) followed with intimidation by 12 participants (50%) as an acceptable behavior. Lack of respect was a behavior shared by 12 (50%) of the participants. PFSP6 explained that when supervisors are using intimidation tactics, such as correcting a behavior of an employee in front of others to show an example of what will happen to them if they mess up, will creates a

culture of fear. She stated, “The fear coupled with the lack of respect for the employee makes the employee doubt their abilities.” PFSP12 stated “It was acceptable that managers used verbal abuse (cussing, yelling, screaming) and the belittling of staff in front of others as an action of terrorizing the employees.” PFSP13 recalled more than one occasion, which continues today, where, she stated “The supervisor used verbal abuse, such as calling the employee names, using curse words in front of others to intimidate not just the victim, but other employees as well.”

Of the participants, 10 (42%) said they would contact their supervisor or manager after they witnessed bullying. Five participants (21%) revealed they would go over their supervisor’s head and contact the Board chair or President of the organization. Four participants (17%) stated they would take the opportunity to pull the bully aside and have a little talk with the bully. Human resources was the place to typically file a personnel complaint; four participants (17%) would take the initiative to file a complaint with their human resources office. PFSP3 stated, “I would report only bullying directed at me. If it warrants using others to support my claim, I would do it.” PFSP16 stated, “There is something in place for employees to file, but I have no confidence in how it will go, there is disrespect and option for retaliation and I fear that I will lose my job if I filed.” PFSP21 shared she often witnessed bullying in the office as the office manager, and said, “I would have informed the [administrators] when the supervisor was bullying other staff, but nothing changed, so why should I report?”

Table 9

Final Study Interview Results: Feeling About the Organization's Culture

Feeling(s)	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
Not wonderful/unhealthy/toxic	7	25
No leadership	7	21
It is acceptable/conducive to bullying	7	21
Need to provide training and education	6	23
Not happy due to changes	5	15
Like working for a positive organization	5	25
It is getting better	4	10
Isolated, no sense of belonging	4	12
Moves slowly	3	18
Needs a culture survey	3	13
Quantity over quality	2	8
Too much secrecy	1	4
Afraid to keep themselves in the loop	1	4

The need for leadership responsibility and accountability in organizational culture was a theme that surfaced with all the participants. All participants agreed there was a need for leadership responsibility and accountability; everyone needs to be accountable for their actions especially leaders. One participant claimed that everyone has professional accountability, and everyone needed to act like professionals. Another was adamant in her statements that employees and leaders must be held accountable for their behaviors and actions. Another participant felt leaders were responsible for allowing organizational culture at any given time (see Table 10).

Table 10

Final Study Interview Question Results: Tolerated Behaviors

Behaviors	Number of Participant	Percentage of Participants
Job intimidation	18	75
Intimidation	13	54
Lack of treatment with respect	13	54
Belittles in front of others	10	42
Abuse of power	9	38
Going around/not staying	5	21
Not being honest	3	13
Cursing, graphic language	3	13
Passive/aggressive	2	8
Not being accountable	2	8
Not enough focus on communication	2	8
Not managing expectations	2	8
Favoritism	2	8
No work ethic	2	8
Fudging on time	1	4
Unfair promotion	1	4
Zero tolerance	1	4
Argumentative	1	4

Conclusion for the Overarching Research Question

Participants in the current study shared five principles of organizational culture which, based on the responses from the participants, reveal the lack of leadership puts them in an awkward position. Seven of the participants reported they felt the work environment was unhealthy and toxic. The participants' feelings noted that the organization was conducive to bullying. The research shows that there are impacts of bullying on the organization. Omar, Mokhtar and Hamzah, (2015) referenced workplace bullying is hostile and destructive for organizations and their employees. Naimie (2014) also stated there is no model in place to assist organizations in preventing workplace bullying, and concern exists for the ethical positions of the organizations.

The witnesses were mostly in subordinate positions to the bully as well and therefore, felt less apt to voice an opinion or say anything whatsoever for fear of being targeted or terminated. In 12 of the 14 cases described in this research, the bullying was unresolved. This made the witness feel the environment was unsafe and many of them left the organization because of the organizational culture. PFSP5 shared, I left the organization, I was fortunate enough to leave, not everybody is as fortunate enough. The fear of being attacked by the bully was not the only stressful truth that witnesses feared. According to Samnani, (2013), the witnesses could also feel helpless because they are unable to speak up on their behalf or do anything to fix the bullying situation. The guilt and shame could add pressure and stress to a witness and result in lowered productivity and a toxic work environment. The issue was not only the witness could not approach the bully, but 11 of 14 participants also thought that leadership was absent in protecting the

victim. The bullying was unresolved, and the bullying behavior was either addressed minimally by leadership or not at all. If there were any discussions or reprimands for the bully per se, they were only a “slap on the hand.” Leadership was not explicitly available in two of the three remaining scenarios. In one scenario, the target and the witness chose not to report the workplace bullying situation. In the second scenario, leadership never inquired about how things were going in the workplace for employees. The leaders did not use employee opinion surveys or simple, verbal conversations to gather information about employee satisfaction in the workplace. The imbalance of power becomes a trap which bullies fall into and begin to misuse power and abuse others. This is dangerous and risky for the sake of the bully and the organization as evidenced in the research participant’s descriptions.

The research results indicate the organizational culture was hindered by lack of policies and procedures as well as organizational awareness. Oladapo and Banks (2013) supported having a safe workplace free from bullying and any additional unhealthy threat. The lack of policies and procedures within an organization is an elevated risk and could threaten the integrity of the organization if a lawsuit develops or other heightened scrutiny and investigations. PFSP6 witnessed a scenario where the victim filed a complaint with the EEOC because of many allegations to the organization, won the case. The organization still did not make changes. PFSP6 shared, I was just really surprised, and they did not actually change things, and so I was shocked at that. They were being sued, they settled out of court, I was just shocked they did not change the situation. They just left things like they were.

The need for leadership responsibility and accountability in organizational culture was a theme that surfaced with all participants. All participants agreed there was a need for leadership responsibility and accountability; everyone needs to be accountable for his or her actions and especially leaders. One participant stated everyone has professional accountability, and everyone needed to act like professionals. Another was adamant in her statements employees and leaders must be held accountable for their behaviors and actions. Another participant felt leaders were responsible for allowing organizational culture at any given time. The following is a review of the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying and its impact on organizational culture. The following subquestions (SQs) provided additional information for this qualitative study

Finding 2: Results for the Research Subquestion 1(SQ1)

The results shown in Tables 11 are the results of the findings of research subquestion 1 (SQ1). Finding 2 of this research study associates with the research subquestion 1 (SQ1) of this study; discussing the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly. Participants shared feelings, beliefs, and thoughts relating to their lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture. This helped to explain the behaviors of bullies and how participants feel or felt during the experience of witnessing bullying. When experiencing or witnessing the workplace bullying many participants felt afraid, helpless and embarrassed.

Table 11

Final Study Interview Question Results: How Situations Made You Feel

Feeling(s)	Number of Participants (<i>N</i> = 25)	Percentage of Participants
Frustrated	11	46
Stressed	10	42
Feared backlash	9	38
Helpless	6	25
Mixed	6	25
Lack of trust/not taken seriously	5	21
Job threat/fear of losing job	5	21
Angry	4	17
Put self in the middle to protect	4	17
Fear throughout organization	3	13
Resigned	3	13
Had to take antidepressant	2	8
Created more work	2	8
Uncomfortable/upset/overwhelmed	17	71
Resentful/defensive	8	33
Not wanting to work there/environment	7	29
Intimidated/threatened	7	29
Fearful	5	21
Skills questioned/insecure	3	13
Inadequate/incompetent/inferior	3	13
Was argumentative/loud	3	13
Ignorant behavior/pointless	2	8
Physical ill/nausea/headaches/sleepy, crying	1	4
Medication for stress	1	4

Employee job satisfaction is important to an organization. Of the participants, 16 (70%) said while at work they felt uncomfortable, upset, and overwhelmed. Eight participants (33%) said they have resentment and defensive feelings about their job. Six of the participants (25%) said they did not want to work in environment where the bullying was present with the intimidation and threatening behavior. Such feelings are unsurprising because, according to the participants, bullying supervisors obtain desired results by controlling others through using power and generating fear. Some participants also felt angry, stressed, and worried, meaning they were emotionally, psychologically and physically affected. PFSP19 stated she felt physically ill, had nausea with a headache, and was wondering how does she can effectively keep doing her job in this state of mind? According to PFSP19 this happened on a regular basis, and she did not want to come to work. PFSP25 added, "It was 15 years of hell, I hated to go to work, it physically made me sick, nauseated to hear someone basically beat someone down with their negative words on a regular basis. You know, I threw up one time".

PFSP2 said, after witnessing bullying, witnesses who become angry sometimes decide to confront the bully, but if their attempts to address the bullying were unsuccessful, they were more likely to become targets of bullying. Many of the responses (42%) indicated the participants felt afraid, helpless, and embarrassed as they were continually bullied. According to PFSP1, "Lots of times I felt confused because I did not understand what I did wrong." PFSP10 shared the following: "I had to do something to figure out what I needed to do because I really felt like (not sure why) I was going to lose my job. I felt really desperate, and I was afraid that they eventually were going to figure

out how to push me out the door.” She stated, “I felt hopeless because there was no one I could turn to for help.” In some of the responses, (39%) participants expressed anger, stress, and the need to escape the recurring the workplace bullying. Escape included looking for a job in another department or at another company. PFSP confided, “Witnessing workplace bullying in a daily basis really created a concern if I really wanted to continue working in such a negative environment.” In a small number of the responses, participants explained that they felt lower self-confidence (10%) or lower productivity (9%) than when they began their jobs.

This finding relates to Matthiesen and Einarsen’s (2010) description of scapegoating, in which bully targets an individual because the bully thinks the victim deserves the harsh treatment. The bully might consider the victim to be expendable and an easy target for unleashing frustration and stress. When both the victims and witnesses, and the bully are angry at each other, predatory bullying may occur, with both parties seeking each other’s destruction. Whoever has less power is the loser (Matthiesen & Einarsen, 2010). To maintain controlling power, bullies may prevent other employees from making decisions, decrease their self-confidence, and hamper their productivity (Namie, 2014). PFSP3 stated, “I felt inadequate and incompetent and my job performance reflected that.” PFSP3 stated “It upsets me and makes it hard to stay focused on what I need to do, the manager is bullying my supervisor, she [the supervisor] always drags me into the situations that I don’t have anything to do with, she [the supervisor] has no backbone, she can’t defend herself and just takes the abusive behavior from the manager. The manager belittles her in front of others.” PFSP6 stated, “I don’t like the

bullying action, but I can't get in the middle; if I get involved, it might all turn on me.” PFSP13 noted, “I am fearful for my job, just emotionally drained and disgusted, but I need my job.” PFSP14 expressed, “I am concerned about the possible escalation and it is actually hard to talk to the person being bullied.” PFSP16 stated, “I feel insecure and angry that the supervisor [the bully] has the power over the employees.” PFSP19 explained, “I just want to protect them, just want to help them; I don't enjoy working where I can't help.”

One participant, who had 25 years of experience in her field, reported that a bully had ruined her self-confidence and hindered her performance to a point that she was considering retirement. Participant (PFSP8) explained, “From a rating of 1 to 10, I once considered myself a rate-10 performer, but today I feel like I am a rate-6 performer. Sometimes I feel like I cannot do anything right.” Participants in the study who witnessed workplace bullying were distracted from their work tasks, not because of fear but because of frustration from hearing unprofessional comments directed at victims. As PFSP11 explained, “Sometimes as an unnecessary and unprofessional distraction for everyone, the bully needed attention and wanted to prove they can control everyone's working environment. Their unprofessional [behavior] affected all of us.”

Many study participants indicated they did not want to report workplace bullying. They instead endeavored to remain subdued to avoid bullying while they determined how to escape the bullying, such as by taking sick leave and transferring to a different department or company. According to PFSP18 “In the office where I worked, all of the employees tend to work harder and respond with a sense of urgency when summoned by

the bully. They tried to avoid the bully in any way by taking annual leave and sick leave days above what they normally would take.” The participants focused on avoiding and escaping rather than reporting because they believed reporting would not be effective. Namie (2014) reported victims wait an average of 22 months before reporting bullying. Some participants in the current study were victims of workplace bullying for 3–10 years. Because of the lack of policies and the often-confusing nature of covert bullying, covert bullying behaviors are normally not challenged until a violent act occurs (Woodrow & Guest, 2014). The way an organization’s high-level managers respond to reports of bullying can send a strong message to employees about workplace bullying (Namie & Lutgen-Sandvik, 2010).

According to one-third (33%) of the responses, participants did not anticipate a reaction from management because the supervisors were the bullies. Many participants believed that supervisors were bullies because they lacked leadership and people skills. PFSP17 described one supervisor as follows: “The bully had no leadership style, grew up in a tough neighborhood in Chicago, and he tried to lead his squad by using that tough, rough image he learned in the neighborhood.” PFSP12 addressed the lack of positive leadership skills: “Supervisors who bully have the technical skills and are very knowledgeable in their job but struggle when dealing with people. Because supervisors lack leadership or people skills, they tend to influence employees by using negative motivation supported by ugly and demeaning type words.”

Almost one-quarter (23%) of the responses indicated organizational leaders and supervisors were out of touch with workplace conditions and therefore unaware of or

unconcerned with workplace bullying. PFSP3 expressed this feeling as follows: “On paper it seems like my supervisor wanted to have the title of a supervisor but did not want to deal with responsibilities.” PFSP11 explained, “I saw my supervisor was just buying time and looked-for excuses not to be in the office. He tried hard to be gone a lot.” According to 19% of the responses, supervisors did not understand how to address workplace bullying because the organization lacked policies, training, and guidance on workplace bullying.

A less common response (13%) was leaders and supervisors ignored workplace bullying for the longest extent, possible and would only intervene when needed. PFSP13 explained one bully was not fired until the company downsized: “The department where I was assigned was known as the dead-end department for supervisors. After I retired, our company experienced a draw-down with eliminations of positions. I learned that the supervisor that bullied me was too young to retire, so they laid him off.”

A perception expressed in 12% of the responses was leaders and supervisors supported bullying if productive outcomes were achieved. PFSP21 shared the following situation where he was not reprimanded by his supervisor for bullying a subordinate but realized he had the full backing of his supervisor if productive outcomes were achieved in the workplace: “My supervisor picked up the complaint, walked over, and opened a drawer in a book cabinet that contained a large stack of papers. He grabbed the complaint and literally tossed the complaint in the drawer and told me there is where the report was going to stay.”

Conclusion for the Research Subquestion 1(SQ1)

The composite structural description described by Moustakas (1994) to derive meaning from what the group shared in its entirety using imaginative variation and how the group formed their feelings. The victims and witnesses of workplace bullying were filled with high expectations of a good, happy organizational culture meeting their needs of challenge and motivation at work. They may have been naïve to believe everything in the workplace would be perfect; however, they never imagined they would be exposed to bullying behaviors that would force them and others out of an organization they planned to work with for an extended timeframe. In 10 of the 14 accounts described, the participants left the organizations and the commonality is because they felt uncomfortable or unsafe in the work environment.

The witnesses would have taken further actions to protect the victims if they did not fear for the loss of their jobs or other consequences they may have incurred if they reacted. The witnesses felt helpless because they ultimately had to ignore or accept the organizational culture and go along with what was happening to avoid being bullied or being removed from the organization. Both the victims and witnesses were unhappy, unsatisfied, unproductive, unsafe, and afraid.

The expectation of values and goals within the organizational culture were expressed and implied from participants. Entering the organization with the ideals that the organization would be a place of integrity, morals, guidelines, and goals were a common belief amongst participants. The victims and witnesses realized these ideas were false and felt great disappointment and dismay regarding the scenarios they described.

They felt deceived by the organizations they chose to work for due to the impression they would be protected, happy, productive, and led by individuals who cared about them, respected them, and wanted to see everyone succeed. The organizations failed, in the eyes of the victims and witnesses, to uphold their beliefs and align with their values. There were also cases where participants were beginning to feel some levels of anxiety and stress because they were disappointed at the existence of the experiences overall.

Witnesses of the bullying phenomenon felt helpless and were motivated to act to protect the victim, yet there were no outlets to vent the frustration and in cases where there were, the bullying remained unresolved. Many of the witnesses just sought closure in the situation since there was no way to understand why the behaviors were occurring and the only way they could find closure was to leave the organization. The witnesses might have been able to move forward with the idea that since the bullying was out of site it may also be out of their minds. All the witnesses seemed to be haunted by the experiences they shared, because the descriptions were so vividly accounted as though they had just occurred and the different levels of emphasis on certain phrases portrayed tension and anxiety. The stress scar may have underlying effects on these participants for a long time and a lack of support, policies and procedures, and absence of leadership may make these participants question their safety at other organizations they work for in the future. The experience of organizational awareness and leadership accountability may create a better organizational culture as these participants transition into other organizations.

Finding 3: Results for the Research Subquestion 2(SQ2)

The results shown in Tables 12 and 13 are the results of the findings of research subquestion 2 (SQ2). The subquestion two of this study asked: What types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within the organization? Finding 3, relates to SQ2 of this study, which discussed the actions of bullying in the organizations. It was an open-ended question focusing on participants' perspectives of bullying in the workplace as it was important to hear the personal accounts of information based on interviews. When the interviews were transcribed one of the first theme that arose demonstrated a consistent view of specific behaviors accepted within the organizations and contributed to the bullying action within organizations. The words and phrases identified were linked to intimidation and verbal abuse, lack of respect, belittling action in front of others, graphic language, and display of abusive power. Job intimidation was noted from 17 participants (71%) followed with intimidation by 12 participants (50%) as an acceptable behavior. Lack of respect was a behavior shared by 12 participants (50%) (see Table 12).

PFSP6 explained that when supervisors are using intimidation tactics, such as correcting a behavior of an employee in front of others to show an example of what will happen to them if they mess up, will creates a culture of fear. She stated, "The fear coupled with the lack of respect for the employee makes the employee doubt their abilities." PFSP12 explained "It was acceptable that managers used verbal abuse (cussing, yelling, screaming) and the belittling of staff in front of others as an action of terrorizing the employees." PFSP13 recalled more than one occasion, which continues today, where, she stated "The supervisor used verbal abuse, such as calling the employee

names, using curse words in front of others to intimidate not just the victim, but other employees as well.”

Table 12

Final Study Interview Question #7 Results: Tolerated Behaviors

Behavior	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
Job intimidation	18	75
Lack of treatment with respect	13	54
Belittles in front of others	10	42
Abuse of power	9	38
Going around/not staying	5	21
Terrorize	4	17
Not being honest	3	13
Cursing, graphic language	3	13
Passive/aggressive	2	8
Not being accountable	2	8
Not communication	2	8
Not managing expectations	2	8
Favoritism	2	8
No work ethic	2	8
Fudging on time	1	4
Territorial	1	4
Unfair promotion	1	4
Zero tolerance	1	4
Argumentative	1	4

The bullying actions, per 21 participants (88%), were carried out by a supervisor, and 17 participants (71%) revealed the bullying actions were in front of others. The bullying actions involved yelling, screaming, and verbal abuse per 12 participants (50%) (see Table 13).

Table 13

Final Study Interview Question Results: Bullying Situation(s)

Situation(s)	Number of Participants ($N = 24$)	Percentage of Participants
Supervisor was the bully	22	92
Acted in front of others	18	75
Yelled, screamed (verbal abuse)	13	54
Targeted individuals	12	50
Verbal, e.g. "Do it my way"	10	42
Emotional abuse	10	42
Belittled	10	42
Was distressing/disturbing	9	38
Called names	7	29
Lack of trust/leadership	7	29
Cussed	5	21
Misrepresented to discredit	4	17
Played games, e.g. "I'm in charge"	3	13
Values are different	3	13
Became target after 6 months	2	8
Culture of lying	2	8
Different personalities	2	8
Made to feel uncomfortable	2	8
Threw items	1	4

PFSP12 remembered an incident in the workplace: “Our store manager, a woman, belittled one of the supervisors (another woman) until the supervisor had an anxiety attack. Several of us heard the yelling and 911 was called.” The manager frequently would hold the threat of reduced hours or a written warning over the heads of certain employees. He stated, “Her treatment of employees was legendary.” PFSP13 explained, “The supervisor made condescending remarks at a staff meeting about overall staff performance.” PFSP17 stated, “I worked in a fast-paced environment and the supervisor often, out in the open, did name calling to her employees. This caused fear, shame, and apprehension, and others just turned away while this went on.” PFSP23 explained, “My supervisor screamed in public and targeted the weaker workers; this is not productive and creates a toxic environment, just about every day this happened.” PFSP24 noted, “A supervisor in the company always chose one high-performing member of his team to bully, one at a time.” Each interview allowed the participant to describe and share their perspective on what they experienced and witnessed. The perspectives were gathered in numerical order and summarized with the highest rating listed first. The following table presents the summaries of the participants’ answers to the key open-ended interview questions in tabular format.

Conclusion for the Research Subquestion 2(SQ2)

Many organizational leaders assert their organizations are based on equal opportunity and all employees deserve equal treatment and consideration workplace bullying, however, shows a lack of equal opportunity and treatment because only a select few are targeted and bullied in the workplace. Witnessing workplace bullying is an

unpleasant, stressful, and unfair situation for someone to find themselves. The workplace bullying behaviors may initially be ignored, but as actions continue, behaviors normally intensify, and witnesses realize the behaviors are unacceptable and should not be tolerated. These witnesses found themselves trapped in helpless situations they could only escape from if they made the decision to leave the jobs that they may have initially loved. Despite minimal actions to speak up for victims and confront the bully, the witnesses were in a torturous state to stand by and watch someone else ultimately, be used and abused, at the behest of someone who was no better than they were as a person.

Finding 4: Results for the Research Subquestion 3(SQ3)

The results shown in Tables 14 and 15 are the results of the findings of research subquestion 3 (SQ3). Finding 4 relate to research subquestion 3. The third research subquestion question involved hearing the participants' point of view of what they felt would help the organization to mitigate bullying. Most of the participants said bullying was not in the employee handbook, however, the other participants stated their companies lacked training and policies on bullying. One participant noted the supervisor did not have a backbone; another one said the bully was not a leader, had no training in how to become a leader, and a good leader would not let this happen to its employees. Some participants reported watching bullying de-motivated them to considerably. PFSP10 asserted, "I never heard or attended any training on the topic of bullying, nor to my knowledge there was not antibullying policies in place." PFSP11 explained, "I was given an employee handbook when I was hired as a new employee, but the booklet does not address the topic of workplace bullying." In more than one-fourth (28%) of responses,

participants said they could not depend on organizational leaders to implement training and anti-bullying policies because leaders were not knowledgeable on the topic of workplace bullying. According to PFSP4, “I think workplace bullying happens due to lack of education and training in the workplace and [leaders] will not take any action if there are no regulations, policies, or laws in place to back them up.” PFSP14 similarly said, “Supervisors do not have policies or regulations in place to help, guide, and enforce their leadership decisions.” Some participants (10% of responses) said their companies lacked official procedures for reporting workplace bullying and would welcome a company training program and policies on how to report bullying behaviors. Participants shared what actions could be taken to minimize bullying behavior. The replies reflected the need for the organizations to take a stronger stance against bullying from the top down (see Table 14, and 15).

Table 14

Actions Expected to Prevent Bullying

Action(s)	Number of Participants (<i>N</i> = 24)	Percentage of Participants
Not to allow bullying/have zero tolerance	12	50
Put policies in place	11	46
Create a better workplace	10	42
Listen to employees/protection	6	25
Address immediately	6	25
Standard Operating Procedures in place	5	21
Get rid of bullies	3	13
Expect nothing	3	13
Address the behavior/give warning	1	4

Table 15

Specific Actions That Could Be Taken to Minimize Bullying

Action(s)	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
Training to not allow the behavior	12	50
Change the culture/behavior not acceptable	11	46
Set up policies/make change	10	42
Higher-ups to come out against bullying	10	42
Tools to improve communication	9	38
Need better communication	8	33
Change the mindset/top down	8	33
Reduce the fear	6	25
Willingness to report and bring outside attention	5	21
Supervisor/director should take control and not allow	4	17
Authority to confront/leadership	2	8
Hard to talk about the situation-need to make it easier	2	8
Written documentation/termination	1	4

Twelve participants (50%) stated the actions they expected from their organization to prevent bullying were to not allow the behavior, and have zero tolerance to prevent bullying. Eleven (46%) of the participants shared that policies should be in place to prevent bullying. Ten (42%) participants stated creating a better environment is expected from the organization. It is important for the employees to be heard, and six (25%) participants felt the organization needed to listen to the employees and protect them, along with five (21%) participants who felt the issue of bullying should be addressed immediately by the organization. PFSP 4 explained, “The director should take more control of the department; bullying should not be tolerated, if it occurs, you will be

terminated.” PFSP6, stated, “It is a horrible environment, very dysfunctional, there is no leadership; supervisors should listen to their employees and get rid of the bullies. HR [human resources department] is a joke, they will not do anything to jeopardize their own position.”

Conclusion for the Research Subquestion 3(SQ3)

Leaders may improve their organizations by striving to strike a balance between a focus on the organizational mission and employees when conducting daily business tasks. To ensure employees have a safe work environment free of bullying, leaders can incorporate anti-bullying statements into the strategic plan, the employee handbook, and educational brochures posted on bulletin boards. The lack of policies and procedures displayed in the organizations described by the witnesses left these women in a state of constant fear and reluctance to do or say anything outside of work related activities.

Summary of Findings to the Research Questions

This research demonstrates the lack of literature on victims and witnesses of workplace bullying, particularly their perceptions, experiences, and its impacts on them. Workplace bullying is hostile with intimidating personality traits and destructive for organizations and their employees. This additional information could add to the body of knowledge and provide a foundation for additional studies. With the results of this study, leaders may be encouraged to change their organizational culture, thereby ensuring a more positive work environment. The results show violence occurs in various places, such as the workplace, which causes a disruption to employees and the organizations, mainly victims and witnesses of workplace bullying. The results revealed victims and

witnesses of workplace bullying felt uncomfortable, upset, overwhelmed, intimidated and threatened, and feared of what they experienced. Lack of trust toward the organizational management and leadership, along with not being taken seriously and feeling no protection from the bully, represent many of the respondents. The feelings shared by all the participants were being stressed; experienced a threat of losing their job, frustrated, and felt helpless and had a fear of receiving backlash. The bullies used intimidation tactics the most, along with abusive language, such as cursing or using graphic language and bigoted speech, in most of the participant's responses.

Victims may find coworkers and others within the organization do not provide support or assistance when faced with the trauma of workplace bullying. The following impacts to victims are a result of workplace bullying: stress and anxiety, sleep disruption, difficulty concentrating, headaches, rapid heartbeats, and exhaustion. The result showed evidence bullying not only impacts the victim but also the witnesses to the bullying behavior. Employees who witness bullying behavior at work were concerned about being the next victim. The findings showed the witnesses reported significantly more general stress and mental stress reactions than the employees from workplaces without bullying. Witnesses often experience feelings of being in a total lack of control and angry at the organization for not exercising appropriate action to stop the bully of such tactics. Much like a victim, witnesses also report an increase in depression, fear, and stress.

There were many additional discussions showed several examples of how workplace bullying and the organizational culture impacts employee, productivity, and the organization. Examples of bullying include those who instigate a rumor or belittle

others and criticize a co-worker, which cause the targeted individual to become a victim of workplace bullying. Inappropriate behaviors by supervisors, such as yelling repeatedly and using a foul language in front of others, was a contributor to health issues of victims and witnesses of workplace bullying. In this study, the victims and witnesses reported many of the same destructive acts, however witness are not usually active, but observes.

The results of the study also indicated negative organizational culture due to workplace bullying in the upstate New York State area. The research results indicate the organizational culture was hindered by lack of policies and procedures as well as organizational awareness. The lack of policies and procedures in an organization is an elevated risk and could threaten the integrity of the organization if a lawsuit develops or other heightened scrutiny and investigations. The finding revealed co-workers as well as managers and supervisors are often the sources of workplace bullying. Collaborative teamwork among all levels of a corporation is the basis of every organization to produce a great organizational culture. To achieve the goal and maximize all aspects of the organization, all members must adhere to the rules, regulations, and procedures in place to achieve organizational success. The study recommended that organizations could implement an anti-bullying strategy of prevention instead of intervention.

Categories and Themes of the Study

An in-depth examination of the collected data developed key words, themes, and categories. After an in-depth review and examination of the data, three distinct categories and their nine themes were revealed. Each category has one or more themes as a subcategory to provide further clarification based on the experiences and perceptions of

the participants. The next section addresses the primary categories in depth along with the associated themes emerged from the data analysis. The findings generated by the study results enhanced the understanding of how employees experience and perceive the effect of the workplace bullying and the organizational culture. The three primary categories, along with the nine themes, addressed and answered the overarching research question, and 3 subquestions of this study (see Figure 6).

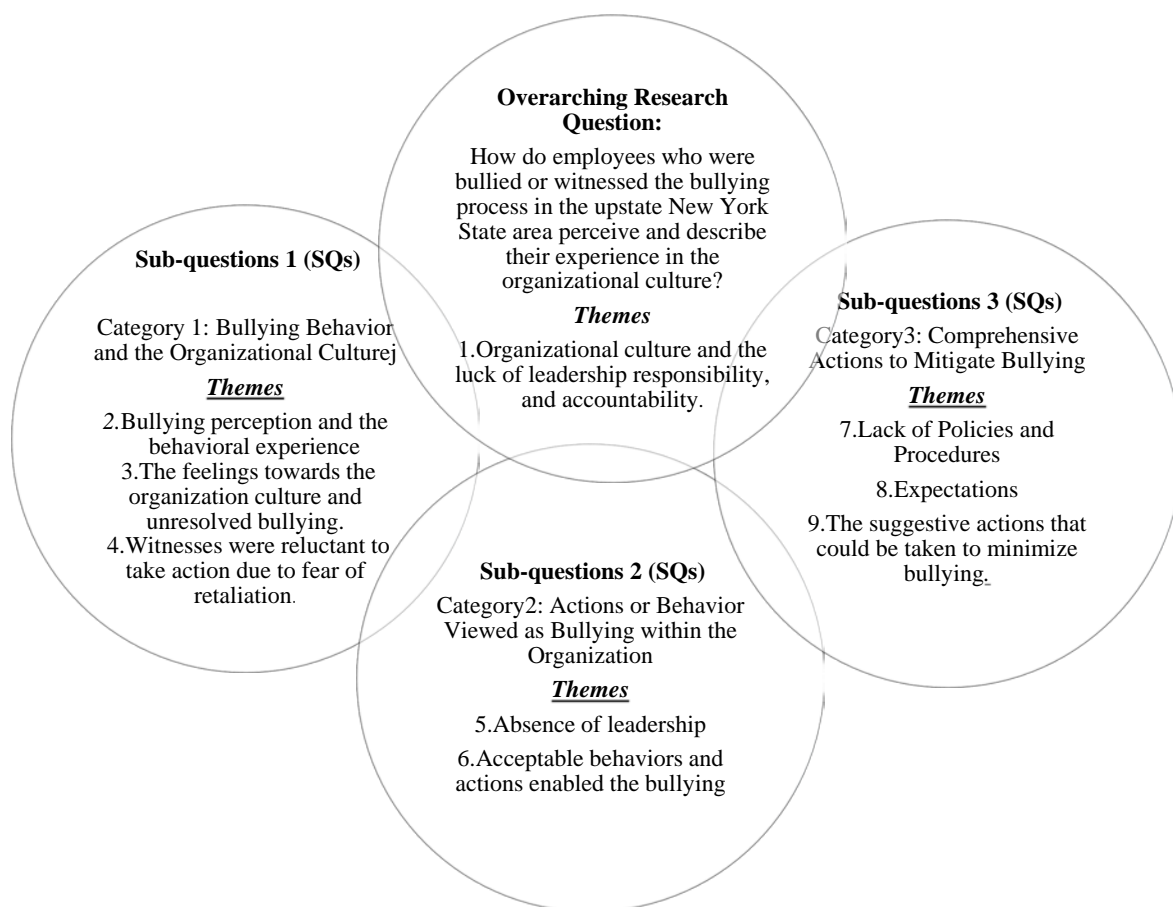


Figure 6. Relationship of the research questions, categories and themes.

Category 1: Bullying Behavior and the Organizational Culture

This fundamental category involving bullying behavioral descriptions which represents the workplace bullying and the organizational culture construct in Table 6. The overarching research question represents the main objective of the phenomenological study. The overarching research question guided this study was: How do employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture. This research question and the corresponding interview questions 4,6,7,8,9, and 10 revealed the one central themes from the research, which answered the overarching research question: (a) organizational culture and the lack of leadership responsibility, and accountability (see Table 16). For this research, the central theme is discussed in the next section.

Table 16

Themes for the Overarching Research Question

Category 1	Themes	Interview Research Question
Bullying Behavior and the Organizational Culture	1. Organizational culture and the lack of leadership responsibility, and accountability.	4.6.7.8.9,10

Theme 1: Organizational culture and the lack of leadership responsibility, and accountability. The need for leadership responsibility and accountability in organizational culture was a theme that surfaced with all the participants. Theme 1 is associated with the overarching research question of this study. All participants agreed that there was a need for leadership responsibility and accountability; everyone needs to

be accountable for his or her actions and especially leaders. One participant explained that everyone has professional accountability, and everyone needed to act like professionals. Another was adamant in her statements that employees and leaders must be held accountable for their behaviors and actions. Another participant felt that leaders were responsible for allowing organizational culture at any given time. The following is a review of the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying and its impact on organizational culture.

Many of the participants found there were leadership issues, which contributed to negative organizational culture. Leadership issues were prevalent, from all participants. PFSP1 stated, "I felt like ultimately, it would be to the best advantage to employers, if they would hold accountable their employees on an annual basis, let that be part of their annual evaluation." PFSP2 had similar views about accountability when she postulated in her interview that: "It's not ok to do these things, they would have to have some system in place holding them accountable when people come forward and express concerns and tell the truth about what's been said to them or done to them." PFSP3 stated: "I don't think that the policies that we have in place are going to do much good." PFSP4 explained "I never seen them make anybody have consequences for their actions." PFSP5, who experienced bullying as a victim, postulated a need for the following: "Just everyone be treated the same that's doing the same job and be held to the same level of accountability is probably what bugs me more than anything." PFSP6 stated, "Well, it's about the people that they put in the positions, the human resource positions, that's what's wrong." PFSP7 further found that it was her perception that there were leadership

problems in the firm that allowed bullying simply because they were not accountable and did not do much of anything except for outward appearances. When talking about experiences and perceived effects regarding leadership responsibility and accountability in organizational culture, PFSP8, who experienced bullying as a victim, reported experiences in this regard are that the leaders do not want to hear or deal with bullying issues. She expounded as follows: “you’re expected to put up with whatever it is that you’re having to deal with, and nobody wants to hear about it, nobody wants to deal with it, they just close the door to those kinds of issues, they do not really want to hear about it or deal with it at all.” PFSP9, who experienced bullying as a victim, reported her experience was much the same as PFSP8 experience with leadership. The supervisors and other leaders do not want to hear or deal with bullying issues. All that PFSP10 supervisor would say was a basic, “I’m sorry you’re having trouble, and I will talk to that person, but suck it up and do your job.” PFSP11, who experienced bullying as a victim and a witness, added it was her experience that some of the people in leadership positions are the ones doing the bullying.

PFSP12, a transporter who experienced bullying as a victim, found, “... it is ultimately up to the leaders to hold their people accountable to the policy.” PFSP13 further found, “I think . . . an accountability piece in the annual evaluation . . . would go a long way . . . that organizations just need to hold people accountable.” PFSP14, who experienced bullying as a victim and a witness, stated: “They (management) would have to have some system in place holding them accountable when people come forward and express concerns and tell the truth about what’s been said to them or done to them.”

When questioned about the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture, PFSP18, who experienced bullying as a victim, opined that leaders and management needed to attend management classes to help them focus and get a grip on management practices in supervisory positions. PFSP19, who experienced bullying as a victim and a witness, found that culture started at the top. PFSP19 further suggested that if the leaders had done their job then the individual would not be behaving in a bullying manner. PFSP21, who experienced bullying as a victim, opined while leadership accountability, leaders must learn to communicate differently and more openly. PFSP23, who experienced bullying as a victim, found “sometimes cultures need a change, culture starts from the top down, and that leaders need to be proactive in needed change; culture is whatever is being allowed at any given time and to change culture takes a while but once it unfolds.” The results of research revealed negative organizational culture due to the lack of leadership responsibility and accountability. This theme was prevalent throughout all the participants working within St. Joseph’s Hospital and affected all participants in the study. These issues also contributed to issues of anger and frustration in the participants as recorded in the researcher’s journal.

After reading through the transcripts several times, analyzing the perceptions and the experience of each participants by Moussakas (1994) modified Van Kaam, additional central themes emerged from category 1, related to the research subquestion 1 (SQ1) which asked: What are the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly? From the research subquestion 1 (SQ1) and

the corresponding interview questions 3-10, related themes emerged: (a) bullying perception and the behavioral experience, (b) the feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying, (c) witnesses were reluctant to act due to fear of retaliation (see Table 17).

Table 17

Themes for sub-question 1 (SQ1)

Category 1	Themes	Interview Research Question
Bullying Behavior and the Organizational Culture	2. Bullying perception and the behavioral experience.	3,4,5,6,7
	3. The feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying.	3,4,6,7,8,10
	4. Witnesses were reluctant to act due to fear of retaliation.	3,4,5,6

Theme 2: Bullying perception and the behavioral experience. This theme relates to research subquestion 1 (SQ1) of the study. A handout with definitions pertaining to workplace bullying definition and other related paperwork on the study was e-mailed or physically given to each participant before the interview and all 25 participants cited specific behaviors they perceived as workplace bullying. The following is the definition provided for each participant directly from the handout: For the purpose of this study, workplace bullying is defined as mistreatment of an employee that includes social exclusion, isolation, not greeting, ignoring the victim's presence, humiliation, demeaning, belittling, excessive deadlines, excessive monitoring of work, few or no tasks, threats, insults, and criticisms, all which may lead to high levels of stress and other

health endangering factors (Namie, 2014). This definition does not include physical abuse. Of the participants, 25 said while at work they felt uncomfortable, upset, and overwhelmed. They have resentment and defensive feelings about their job. Most of the participants said they did not want to work in environment where the bullying was present with the intimidation and threatening behavior, however many of the responses indicated the participants felt afraid, helpless, and embarrassed as they were continually bullied.

PFSP1 perceived the behavior as teasing, humiliating, and attacking in describing the workplace bullying scenario by explaining how she was forced to come to work and was verbally abused on her day off: “days started to go by and it was just like this was the normal thing. It occurred all the time, and one example is when my supervisor called and verbally abused me, so I can work on my day off.” She stated that: “I didn’t have a choice to say yes or no, it was just I had to be there, or I was going to lose my job”. Participant 1 said, “I felt inadequate and incompetent and my job performance reflected that. It upsets me and makes it hard to stay focused on what I need to do.”

PFSP2, described the bully as yelling and humiliating her in front of others and never admitting to any wrong doing. PFSP2 used terms such as, ridicule, yelling, and humiliation to explain how the bully treated her. She mentioned: “one day the workloads were so heavy, and I felt so overwhelming and stressed by the supervisors respond toward me when he started using terms such as ridicule, yelling, and humiliation in front of others while he was explaining his side of the responsibility, which later he denied.” Participant 2 stated, “I feel insecure and angry that the supervisor [the bully] has the

power over the employees.” PFSP3 pointed out that the supervisor was rude to the him and the witnesses as well as demeaning and strict. He said the supervisor did not greet him, would make him work hard than other employees, and would sent me home if I question his authority or judgment, which created a hostile work environment. The participant stated: “I guess when I challenge my supervisors while trying to address an issue, they at times feel very threatened. At that time, they find the ways to talk me down, humiliate, and verbally abusing me, and or sent me home constantly so I can shut-up.” PFSP3 noted, “I am fearful for my job, just emotionally drained and disgusted, but I need my job.”

Another workplace bullying behavioral description was by PFSP6 perspective, the behavior was described as embarrassing because the supervisor teased the victim in front of everyone on the team. PFSP6 thought the victim was “ostracized, ignored, demeaned, given excessive deadlines, and threatened.” She explained, “the bully would use foul language and yell to humiliate the victim in front of others.” PFSP6 described the bullying behavior as berating, insulting, and embarrassing.

According to PFSP7, “Lots of times I felt confused because I did not understand what I did wrong.” PFSP8 shared the following: I had to do something to figure out what I needed to do because I really felt like (not sure why) I was going to lose my job. I felt desperate, and I was afraid that they eventually were going to figure out how to push me out the door. I felt hopeless because there was no one I could turn to for help. In some cases, the responses, participants expressed anger, stress, and the need to escape the recurring bullying. Escape included looking for a job in another department or at another

company. PFSP11 confided, “Witnessing the workplace bullying on a daily basis really created a concern if I really wanted to continue working in such a negative environment.”

In a small number of the responses, participants explained that they felt lower self-confidence or lower productivity than when they began their jobs. PFSP12 noted:

“Sometimes I feel like I cannot do anything right, and I do not like feeling this way, and for this reason I am thinking of leaving the job.” PFSP12 described approaching the bully after he called the victim stupid in front of her; however, the bully began to yell at her and tell her to mind her own business. In this case, she chose to back down to avoid any further confrontation or to avoid becoming the target of the bullying behaviors. PFSP14 stated, “I voiced my feelings to a few individuals and my frustration, but in the end decided not to say more because of who the person was, I decided there was really not much that I could do.”

PFSP16 worked in housekeeping department service and was very sincere about the passion to want to help others, even those being bullied within her organization; however, she felt as though her position in the workplace made her voice less valuable and less likely to be heard or addressed. This was a common feeling amongst participant responses. PFSP16 stated, “I don’t feel like I should have said anything to her [the bully] because that would have put my job in jeopardy, you know . . . I didn’t want to put myself in a predicament to get fired.” PFSP18 from the victim perspective also felt helpless and as though there was nothing they could do to resolve the situation but to stay out of it. PFSP13 expressed the feeling that there was no one to turn to or report anything to because their HR department was not adequately solving the issues like workplace

bullying. PFSP15 wanted to do more, but felt helpless because HR was aware of the bullying situation, but nothing was really changed in the workplace. She described that although HR may have spoken to the bully, “they could not stop her from coming into our office, and slamming file cabinets . . . they could not stop that.” PFSP15 seemed to believe that HR had limited authority and the bully was still able to manipulate the workplace regardless of who was aware of the bullying behaviors. From a completely distinct perspective, PFSP21 felt helpless because she was new to the United States as an employee and did not want to create or cause drama in the workplace with being unsure about what was expected in an organizational setting. The researcher’s journal specified these members of the study unveiled body language of anger and prevention because of these involvements. The next theme relates to the SQ1 of the study, which described the feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying.

Theme 3: The feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying. The culture of an organization is a vital component of the success of the organization. This theme relates to research subquestion 1 (SQ1) of the study. The participants revealed the culture was not a place they would prefer to work in. As a group, the participants in this study reported they experienced and felt negative organizational culture because of workplace bullying. The results show that, as a group, 14 of the 15 participants reported negative organizational culture due to bullying because of the lack of leadership responsibility and accountability. The results show that, as a group, all participants in this study experienced negative organizational culture because bullying and unethical boundaries. Although the witnesses felt helpless and as though

there was little to nothing they could do to help, it appears that few did anything to help resolve the issues addressed in the cases described in this research. Twelve of 14 participants revealed the bullying situations they described were not resolved from their perspectives.

PFSP3 described feeling as though there was nowhere else to turn or no one to look to for more help. PFSP5 felt that simply because she worked for a private organization state that was accredited and reputable, there should have been a different outcome. She stated, "I was very, very disappointed at how it was handled." She believed they would have had better plans to address workplace bullying situations and was disappointed to learn there were none and she felt unsafe. PFSP6 also expressed disappointment as well as shock to learn about the workplace bullying behaviors she witnessed. PFSP8 also felt disappointed and expressed her concern that many others in the organization do not seem to care about the presence of workplace bullying or the victim unless it is happening directly to them which created an unstable environment. She felt as though the employees were selfish and only concerned about their work, productivity, and rise in the organization.

PFSP9 explained that the bully was moved to another department within the same organization and although the bully was no longer bullying the initial target, the bully began to mistreat new targets and the move did not resolve the initial bullying issue. PFSP10 also expressed disappointment and explained she did not feel comfortable with going to HR anymore because there was no resolution to what she described as "known bullying," however, she stated, "I understand they [bully and victim] were told to just try

to get along well enough to do the job and so it was never really resolved.” She stated that her perceptions about the organization changed altogether. PFSP11 was disappointed in the lack of response to workplace bullying. She felt, “any sort of like any action that could be perceived as harassment then those individuals would be disciplined.”

It seemed confusing to the participants that there were minimal to no actions taken to resolve the bullying incidents reported during this research which led to the feeling of disappointment and unprotected in the workplace. PFSP12 stated that due to turnover within the organization, workplace bullying situations were left to resolve themselves. PFSP13 explained management was “lackadaisical on it. I don’t think they enforced things the way they should.” Most of the all participants had similar reactions to the lack of leadership responsibility, and accountability pertaining to the organizational culture described as the next theme. The next theme is the organizational culture and the lack of leadership responsibility, and accountability. The author’s journal indicated these participants exhibited body language of anger and frustration because of these experiences. The next theme addresses the reluctance of witnesses to act because of fear of retaliation.

Theme 4: Witnesses were reluctant to act due to fear of retaliation. Theme 4 relates to research subquestion 1 (SQ1) of the study. Witnesses of the workplace bullying were reluctant to act because of fear of retaliation; of the participants, four said they would contact their supervisor or manager after they witnessed bullying. Two participants revealed they would go over their supervisor’s head and contact the Board chair or President of the organization. Three participants said they would take the opportunity to

pull the bully aside and have a little talk with the bully. Human resources department was the place to typically file personnel complaint; four of the participants would take the initiative to file a complaint with their human resources office. PFSP3 stated, “I would report only bullying directed at me. If it warrants using others to support my claim, I would do it.” PFSP6 stated, “There is something in place for employees to file, but I have no confidence in how it will go, there is disrespect and option for retaliation and I fear that I will lose my job if I filed.” PFSP21 shared that she often witnessed bullying in the office as the office manager, and said, “I would have informed the [administrators] when the supervisor was bullying other staff, but nothing changed, so why should I report?”

Category 2: Actions or Behavior Viewed as Bullying Within the Organization

This fundamental category describes the exploration of the types of actions or behavior viewed as bullying within the organization, which corresponds with the subquestion two (SQ2) asked: What types of actions or behavior were viewed as bullying within their organization? The purpose for asking the question was to collect specific actions or behaviors of leaders along with employees’ perceptions and experiences of how the actions influenced and effected employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the organizational culture. Participants discussed the actions without any restrictions to express whether a positive or negative influence occurred. This research question and the corresponding interview questions 3,4,5,8,9,11, and 12 revealed three themes from the research, which answered the SQ2: (a) absence of leadership, (b) acceptable actions and behaviors at the organization enabled the bullying (see Table 18). For this research, these themes are discussed in the next section.

Table 18

Themes for Subquestion 2 (SQ2)

Category 2	Themes	Interview Questions
Actions or Behavior Viewed as Bullying within the Organization.	5. <i>Absence of leadership.</i>	5,8,9,10
	6. <i>Acceptable behaviors and actions at the organization enabled the bullying</i>	5.11,12,13

Theme 5: Absence of leadership. This theme relates to research subquestion two (SQ2) of the study. According to Gokce, Guney, and Katrinli, (2014), leadership is an essential position of power that is influential in the workplace, however, “abdication of leadership or a so-called laissez-faire style of management also appears to provide fertile ground for bullying between peers or colleagues” (Gokce, Guney, & Katrinli, 2014, p. 13). Laissez-faire leadership may also cause bullying from a leadership or management role as well. Eleven of 25 participants described workplace bullying scenarios where there was a lack of leadership. Several of the participants witnessed bullying from a manager to subordinate level; however, there were two instances where the bullying was amongst colleagues. Six participants stated their organization did not have any leadership, and six also shared their work environment was conducive to bullying; it was accepted as the norm. Five of the participants felt they work better in a positive environment; five were not happy because of the changes that were in place.

PFSP3 described much of leadership as exhibiting bullying behaviors, thus not providing any assistance to make the environment better. PFSP5 stated that she reached

out to several people in leadership positions and nothing was really done to address the bullying situation. PFSP9 stated the supervisor bullied the victim in front of the supervisor's manager and nothing was done about it. PFSP10 also said the company president was present for a couple of the bullying incidents "and said nothing." There were participants that said they felt leadership laughed along with the bully or seemed to act like they were not aware of what was happening in the organization. PFSP5 noted, "This place has no structure, everyone knows their job duties, no repercussions, no supervisory skills, no leadership, jobs done half of what they have to do, excuses made regarding the errors; it has become quantity over quality." PFSP6 stated, "it is a horrible, worst-ever work environment, it is very dysfunctional, no leadership". PFSP12 explained, "Because our store sales figures were good, corporate seems to turn a blind eye to her behavior and retained her in managerial positions right up until the company closed." PFSP17 mentioned, "The bully culture is supported from the top down. I remember when the manager made condescending remarks at a staff meeting about overall staff performance. Resentment is felt by us." The next theme discusses the acceptable behaviors and actions at the organization contributed to and enabled the bullying

Theme 6: Acceptable behaviors and actions at the organization enabled the bullying. Theme 6 relates to research subquestion two (SQ2) of the study. This study was about the victims and witnesses' perceptions and experiences with bullying in the workplace. When the interviews were transcribed the first theme that arose demonstrated a consistent view of specific behaviors accepted within the organizations and contributed to the bullying action within organizations. All 25 of the participants stated they had

witnessed and/or experienced bullying in their workplace. The bullying actions, according to 21 of the participants, were carried out by a supervisor, and 17 revealed the bullying actions were in front of others. The bullying actions involved yelling, screaming, and verbal abuse per 12 of the participants, however, in terms of behaviors the words and phrases identified were linked to intimidation and verbal abuse, lack of respect, belittling action in front of others, graphic language, and display of abusive power. Job intimidation was noted from 17 of the participants followed with intimidation by 12 as an acceptable behavior. Lack of respect was a behavior shared by 12 of the participants.

FFSP6 explained that when supervisors are using intimidation tactics, such as correcting a behavior of an employee in front of others to show an example of what will happen to them if they mess up, will create a culture of fear. She stated, "The fear coupled with the lack of respect for the employee makes the employee doubt their abilities." PFSP12 stated "It was acceptable that managers used verbal abuse (cussing, yelling, screaming) and the belittling of staff in front of others as an action of terrorizing the employees." PFSP13 recalled more than one occasion, which continues today, where, she noted "The supervisor used verbal abuse, such as calling the employee names, using curse words in front of others to intimidate not just the victim, but other employees as well."

PFSP14 remembered an incident in the workplace: "Our store manager, a woman, belittled one of the supervisors (another woman) until the supervisor had an anxiety attack. The manager frequently would hold the threat of reduced hours or a written warning over the heads of certain employees. PFSP15 stated, "The supervisor made

condescending remarks at a staff meeting about overall staff performance.” PFSP17 stated, “I worked in a fast-paced environment and the supervisor often, out in the open, did name calling to her employees. This caused fear, shame, and apprehension, and others just turned away while this went on.” PFSP18 explained, “My supervisor screamed in public and targeted the weaker workers; this is not productive and creates a toxic environment, just about every day this happened.” PFSP24 stated, “A supervisor in the company always chose one high-performing member of his team to bully, one at a time, probably because he felt threatened by the employee’s success.” The next discusses relate to the category 3 of the theming process.

Category 3: Comprehensive Actions to Mitigate Bullying

Category 3 helped understand the interactions and dialog between the leadership and employees. The theme is suggestive actions to minimize bullying, including an overall assessment of what the participants felt they could or could not do when experienced or faced with witnessing bullying actions in the workplace. Research subquestion three asked: According to victims’ and witnesses’ experiences and perceptions, what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders to create an organizational culture that may mitigate bullying?

The purpose for asking the question was to collect specific actions of leaders according to victims’ and witnesses’ experiences and perceptions, of what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders to create an organizational culture which may mitigate bullying. Participants discussed the actions, which answered the SQ3 without any restrictions to express whether a positive or negative influence occurred. Themes

related to SQ3 are: (a) expectations, and (b) lack of policies and procedures, and (c) the suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying (see Figure 19). These themes are discussed in the next section.

Table 19

Themes for Subquestion 3 (SQ3)

Category 3	Themes	Interview Research Questions
Comprehensive Actions to Mitigate Bullying.	7. <i>Lack of Policies and Procedures</i>	11,12,13
	8. <i>Expectations</i>	8,9,10,11,12,13
	9. <i>The suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying</i>	10,11,12,13

Theme 7: Expectations. This theme relates to research subquestion three (SQ3) of the study. In addition to the expectation something would be done to resolve the workplace bullying incidents described during this study, there were additional expectations that 12 of 25 participants described which should be in any workplace.

PFSP1 expected there should be a chain of command and that policies and procedures must be adhered. PFSP2 expected, “let’s come together, have a common goal, keeping the community safe, and doing everything we can to protect others and try to help others.” PFSP3 expected that employees would be valued as an asset to the company. PFSP5 also expected to be valued as an employee and that the organization was in existence to provide a service to the public and those having an affiliation with the organization. PFSP6 worked for a family owned business and expected the company would value family and would treat employees like a family. PFSP9 expected if anyone

did anything considered wrong, then it would be corrected. PFSP12 explained she thought her organization valued teamwork, loss prevention, and employees and she expected the organization would be safe, moral, and ethical. Ultimately, each of these participants felt that an organization should provide employees with a sense of goals, teamwork, and safety as an employee. Each felt as though they were let down and learned that the organizations they worked for did not value the areas they expected would be valued.

Theme 8: Lack of policies and procedures. Theme 8 relates to research subquestion three (SQ3) of the study. All 25 participants expressed that they perceived a lack of policies and procedures on workplace bullying in their respective organizations. Most of the participants said bullying was not in the employee handbook, and in few cases of the responses, participants stated their companies lacked training and policies on bullying. Nine participants recalled having an employee handbook given to them listed policies and procedures; however, no participant recalls information, a clause, or any discussion about workplace bullying or how to address the issue.

PFSP1 contended she was not aware of any policies and procedures in her organization. PFSP2 worked in retail and explained the policies and procedures in the employee handbook mainly focused on loss prevention, but nothing on workplace bullying. PFSP3 does not recall any information about workplace bullying; however, she does recall, “it was about 60 pages long. It covered taking vacation, it covered sick leave, it covered 401k and employee benefits.” In covering the amount of detail in the workplace, it did not cover workplace bullying. PFSP4 worked in a healthcare setting and

explicitly recalls a handbook for students to abide by but nothing for the staff. PFSP5 mentioned that “I don’t feel like anything changed for the good or the bad . . . it just remained the same.” PFSP6 stated, I did not really know of any policies and procedures. PFSP7 explained “So far as the workplace bullying, nothing happened about that, it was just some of the practices that were going on were unfair to the employees, so those things were addressed.” PFSP8 stated “No, from my understanding after everything was over, everything went back to the way that it was.” PFSP9 stated. “I know they were managers and we were taking all this training, like sexual harassment and that kind of thing . . . but I never saw anything about bullying.”

PFSP10 explained “They did have an employee handbook. They were kind of implementing different policies . . . that’s actually one of the things I was brought in to handle.” PFSP11 noted, “I remember, you know, you’re given an orientation handbook and there’s usually general information.” PFSP12 stated, “No, not at all. I don’t even think that there were any policies that were in effect.” PFSP15 explained “Yeah, there was definitely an employee handbook. . . . where they have their goal or mission.” PFSP16 asserted, “I never heard or attended any training on the topic of bullying, nor to my knowledge there was not antibullying policies in place.” As PFSP17 explained, “I was given an employee handbook when I was hired as a new employee, but the booklet does not address the topic of workplace bullying.” According to PFSP18, “I think workplace bullying happens due to lack of education and training in the workplace and [leaders] will not take any action if there are no regulations, policies, or laws in place to back them up.” PFSP19 similarly stated, “Supervisors do not have policies or regulations

in place to help, guide, and enforce their leadership decisions.” Some other participants said their companies lacked official procedures for reporting workplace bullying and would welcome a company training program and policies on how to report bullying behaviors. The next theme discusses the suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying.

Theme 9: The suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying.

Theme 3 relates to research subquestion three (SQ3) of the study. Participants shared what actions could be taken to minimize bullying behavior. The responses reflected the need for the organizations to take a stronger stance against bullying from the top down. Twelve participants stated the actions they expected from their organization to prevent bullying were to not allow the behavior, and have zero tolerance to prevent bullying. Eleven of the participants shared that policies should be in place to prevent bullying. Ten said creating a better environment is expected from the organization; include training implementation and education materials to help reduce the potential for stressors in the workplace.

It is important for the employees to be heard, and six of the participants felt the organization needed to listen to the employees and protect them, along with five who felt the issue of bullying should be addressed immediately by the organization. PFSP4 stated, “The director should take more control of the department; bullying should not be tolerated, if it occurs, you will be terminated.” PFSP6 stated, “It is a horrible environment, very dysfunctional, there is no leadership; supervisors should listen to their

employees and get rid of the bullies. HR [human resources department] is a joke, they will not do anything to jeopardize their own position.”

Role of the Researcher

As a manager who worked in American corporation for more than 15 years, supervising both management and non-management employees; the acquired experience in leading, empowering, mentoring, coaching, interviewing, and training others was the foundation for establishing a connection with participants. Given the background, the importance to refrain from introducing personal bias into the data collection process, data analysis, and data findings was highly attained. The interview guide used for collecting data helped to minimize bias, while remained focused on the questions and the purpose of the study.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of lived experiences of victims and witnesses in the upstate New York State area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture. The study explored the impacts of bullying in the workplace and the organizational culture. The study focused on organizational employees, mainly victims and witnesses of the workplace bullying. Chapter 4 followed the four steps outlined in Chapter 3 to analyze the data. A pilot study was conducted with five participants to determine if there was a need to change any questions; it was determined no changes were needed. The qualitative study was conducted with 25 participants who responded to 13 semi-structured, open-ended questions, following the Moustakas’s seven steps of the analyses process.

This chapter describes the results and findings attributed to answering the research question. The chapter began with a restatement of the purpose and a description of the participants. The research in this study represents the lived experiences of 25 organizational participants. The results of the study were collected without bias, with the shared events from the participants being uploaded and coded into the NVivo software used for qualitative research coding. The data analysis process provided the details and examples of horizontalization and meaning units. This information was condensed by elimination and reduction and themes were formed based on the invariant constituents that remained. There was a presentation on individual textural descriptions, individual structural descriptions, composite textural descriptions, and composite structural descriptions. The data were analyzed to create a synthesis of the meanings and essences of the experience of witnessing workplace bullying.

Using the qualitative method allowed the data to be organized based on common patterns and themes, as they related to the research questions. After completing of the data analysis three categories arose with nine themes addressing the overarching research question, as well the three subquestions of this study. The results revealed that bullying was prevalent within the workplace and included actions of job intimidation and verbal abuse, including yelling, screaming, cursing, and name calling, as well as causing employees to feel stressed, uncomfortable, overwhelmed, and not want to work in this type of environment. The participants shared bullying behaviors are one thing that needs to be changed. A comprehensive summary is provided in Chapter 5, on the interpretations of the findings, impacts, the limitations experienced, the recommendations for future

studies, and the conclusion of the study. Chapter 5 provides an explanation of how the study results will contribute to the body of knowledge on the topic, outline a summary of findings of the theoretical foundations for the study and the conclusion, and inform the reader of implications present in the study.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The last chapter of this research study includes an evaluation of the findings associated with the work experiences of subordinate employees. The chapter incorporates research findings in comparison with the literature review discussed in Chapter 2. This study was important as the lives of several million people have been affected by workplace bullying (Namie & Namie, 2014). Since the effects of workplace bullying are primarily organizational, bullying creates organizationally focused issues (Cleary et al., 2013; Pilch & Turska, 2015). Workplace bullying creates an unnecessary expense for businesses and organizations. Hollis (2016) estimated the costs to be in the billions yearly. Workplace bullying's impact on the person's mental and emotional health and sense of well-being. The personalized, focused nature of the bullying action or behavior destabilizes and disassembles the targets and witnesses identity, ego strength, and ability to rebound from the phenomenon. Since workplace bullying affects so many lives and organizations, it was prudent to explore the phenomenon to gain the rich, first-hand knowledge of the lived experiences of participants. The results of this qualitative, phenomenological study may assist organizational leaders to see a possible need to change their organization's culture. A change in organizational culture could help mitigate bullying (Bullying Statistics, 2013; Carden & Boyd, 2013). This study was driven by the problem statement, that it was not known how individuals perceived their lived experiences of workplace bullying on the organizational culture in the upstate New York State area.

Restatement of the Problem

The general problem is that workplace bullying is a significant problem in today's businesses and corporations, affecting victims and witnesses, as well as the overall performance of the organization (Alberts & Brooks, 2016; Desrumaux et al., 2016; Eriksen et al., 2016). These experiences involved the organizational culture, leadership, and bullying leading to perceptions of unsafe environments. Organizational culture allows levels of distress in the daily atmosphere in the workplace (Schain, 1983). According to Brodsky (1976), organizations become tolerant of certain behaviors, and permit or reward the misbehavior. Creating a culture of regard is a step forward to avoid and minimize workplace bullying. The victims and witnesses were adversely affected by what they experienced, and many left their organizations because they no longer felt valued, respected, safe, or in a culture of regard. The data indicated victims and witnesses who were fearful and felt helpless regarding assisting each other.

Restatement of the Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to explore the perceptions of lived experiences of victims and witnesses in the New York State area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture. The qualitative phenomenological method allowed me to explore and gain an understanding of the lived experiences of the individuals (see Murphy, 2013; Tye-Williams, 2012). Chapter 5 includes a summary of the findings and conclusions, additional findings, and implications. I also offer recommendations for future research and future practice.

Summary of the Study

Workplace bullying is an organizational epidemic. The results of prior research indicated the lives of several million people have been affected by workplace bullying (Namie & Namie, 2014). Researchers have also found that business organizations are among the highest ranking for bullying complaints (Burriss, 2012; Giorgi, 2012). Examination of the issues created by bullying revealed gaps in the literature and presented an opportunity for in-depth study of the phenomenon, which added new information and contributed to the body of knowledge.

Chapter 1 contained an introduction to the study. The chapter included discussion of the background of the problem, the general and specific problems investigated, and the purpose of the study. The chapter also contained information on the significance of the study and the assumptions, scope, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Chapter 1 highlighted the research gap regarding how individuals perceived their lived experiences of workplace bullying and organizational culture in the New York State area.

Chapter 2 contained a review of the literature relevant to the topic of the study, establishing the context of workplace bullying and organizational culture. Chapter 2 included a historical overview of workplace bullying and its characteristics, legislative and organizational efforts in the United States and elsewhere to address the phenomenon, and misinterpretations of bullying behaviors and organizational culture. Chapter 2 highlighted the conceptual framework for this study: Schein's organizational culture model. I completed a detailed literature review to address each of the elements involved in this study. The studies reviewed were relevant to the research question and included

findings about victims and witnesses of workplace bullying, organizational culture, and leadership. I was careful to locate studies that focused on the research question and the information that best supported the research.

In Chapter 3, I discussed the qualitative method and the phenomenological design in detail. The qualitative method was employed with a phenomenological design including semistructured interviews with 25 participants in the New York State area. The data revealed participants' perceptions and lived experiences regarding bullying behaviors and organizational culture. I also used a journal to capture in-depth information regarding the interviews and my thoughts and observations of interviews. This chapter included the reasoning for selecting the research method and design. Chapter 3 also included the study population, sample, as well as informed consent and confidentiality. I also presented a description of the pilot study, methods to increase qualitative validity, and the data analysis procedures.

In Chapter 4, I presented a description of the participants, along with their reported lived experiences of workplace bullying and organizational culture. I used NVivo software to code and analyze the data. A phenomenological design was chosen to gain the richest and most detailed data from victims and witnesses regarding their experiences with workplace bullying. Moustakas (1994) explained that universal meanings and essences can be derived from individual accounts of experiences. The data were analyzed using "the modification of the van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 120). Samples of participants' responses were presented in Chapter 4. Moustakas (1994) supported that "scientific investigation is

valid when the knowledge sought is arrived through descriptions” (p. 84). These textural descriptions allowed me to identify meaning and essence from the composite descriptions and findings.

The categories and themes of workplace bullying and the organizational culture were discussed in Chapter 4. Nine themes emerged from the research questions and the semistructured interview questions related to the study. The findings implicated the organizational culture, the bullies, and the actions perceived as bullying as well as the effects on the victims and the witnesses of bullying. The research findings from this qualitative study went beyond what was reviewed in Chapter 2. New and untapped information regarding the effects of workplace bullying existed in the upstate New York State area that added to the body of knowledge. The specific experiences of upstate New York State employees were lacking in the body of knowledge. The findings of the qualitative study suggested bullying is present in the workplace and needs to be changed. The categories and themes were linked to many studies to demonstrate the horrific side of bullying in the workplace. Chapter 5 contains a review of the findings, themes, and implications, as well the conclusions and the summary of this study. Recommendations for leaders are presented, followed by recommendations for future research.

Interpretation of Findings and Conclusion

The composite textural description, composite structural description, and the synthesis of meanings and essences are indicative of the responses from all research participants. Witnessing or facing workplace bullying, and the organizational culture was found to have a significant, negative impact on participants. Victims and the witnesses

described a plethora of behavioral descriptions, examples of disrespect, descriptions of initial expectations, and lack of policies, procedures, and organizational responsiveness. There were many additional discussions which showed several examples of how workplace bullying and the organizational culture impacts employee, productivity, and the organization.

The exploration of workplace bullying and the organizational culture was designed to answer the overarching research question and three subquestions focused on the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on the organizational culture from the perspective of organizational employees in the upstate New York State area who experienced or witnessed it, which were as follows: How do employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture? The following subquestions (SQs) guided this qualitative study:

SQ1. What are the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly?

SQ2. What types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within the organization?

SQ3. According to victims' and witnesses' experiences and perceptions, what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders to create an organizational culture that may mitigate bullying?

Results of interviews were from 25 participants employed within St. Joseph's Hospital showed they felt workplace bullying was serious, needful, and a topic which must be addressed in the upstate New York State area. From the data analysis process, three categories of bullying emerged and revealed nine themes that exposed the participants' experiences and perceptions of bullying and the organizational culture in the workplace. The three categories are (a) Bullying behavior and the organizational culture, (b) Types of actions or behavior viewed as bullying within the organization, (c) Comprehensive actions and organizational culture to mitigate bullying.

Category 1 covers bullying behavioral descriptions representing the workplace bullying and the organizational culture based on the gathered data of bullying actions perceived and experienced by the participants. Category 2 provides information about the types of actions or behavior viewed as bullying within their organization from the perspectives and the experiences of the participants. Category 3 provides evidence based on the victims' and witnesses' experiences and perceptions, of what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders, managers, employees and the organizations overall to create an organizational culture that may mitigate bullying. From three categories nine themes were created:

Category 1 included: (1) bullying perception and the behavioral experience, (2) the feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying, (3) organizational culture and the lack of leadership responsibility, and accountability, (4) witnesses were reluctant to act due to fear of retaliation. Category 2 included: (5) absence of leadership, (6) acceptable behaviors actions enabled the bullying. Category 3 included: (7) lack of

policies and procedures, (8) expectations, and (9) the suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying. Based on the presence of these categories and emerging themes, the 25 participants provided detailed descriptions of how they perceived bullying in the workplace. The findings and conclusions of this study were organized by the research questions, and by themes emerged. Category 1, relates to the finding concerning the overarching research question and research subquestion 1. Category 2, relates to the finding concerning the research subquestion 2. Category 3, relates to the finding concerning the research subquestion 3.

Interpretation of Findings of the Overarching Research Question

Based on the presence of these categories and emerging themes, the 25 participants provided detailed descriptions of how they perceived bullying in the workplace. The overarching research question for this study was the following: How do employees who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experience in the organizational culture? All participants experienced workplace bullying as a victim or a witness, however, some participants experienced as a victim and a witness. Following the analysis of the data, in relation to the overarching research question, Finding 1, discussed that the participants were adversely affected by the experiences of bullying behavior and organizational culture because they felt insulted, helpless, upset, and devalued. The witnesses and the victims of the workplace bullying expressed surprise at the absence of leadership, lack of resolution to the issues, lack of policies and procedures, and lack of organizational awareness. The workplace bullying behavioral descriptions were elaborated in detail by

all 25 participants. The lack of policies and procedures was also a concern expressed by all 25 participants. The identification of dark leadership was not explored in detail in this study other than the acknowledgment that laissez-faire leadership exists and creates a more hostile work environment. In PFSP8's scenario, she described a situation where she does not believe leadership would have addressed the situation at all if it were not for the fact the victim kept complaining to different levels of management until something was done. She stated, "People don't care until it happens to them and companies don't care until it gets to a point where it's public or it can be a massive liability on their hands." Barling & Frone, (2016) also indicated there is a need to learn how leaders who practice passive leadership develop bullying behaviors.

Although this research identified examples of passive leadership, it does not identify how these individuals develop. In the present study, participants described scenarios where nothing changed in the organization even after the bullying situations were brought to the attention of leadership. This created disappointment in the witnesses and the victims and discussions about the need for policies and procedures, which would hopefully force leadership to address the complaint or do something to minimize the workplace bullying. The passivity of doing or saying nothing was frowned upon by witnesses and the victims in this study.

This study does shed light on negative outcomes coming from the organizational culture. Created a highly uncomfortable workplace was explicitly shared in the interviews with the participants and included in the textural descriptions. The witnesses and the victims were uncomfortable in the workplace, and even if they initially loved the job,

they decided to leave to avoid being confronted by the bully or otherwise. PFSP12 left the organization because of this discomfort and was defenseless and helpless against the attacks that could target her if she said or did anything the bully may perceive as a threat and come after her. This led to health endangering stress and depression; however, the witness alone may feel less helpless if they go along to get along with the bully, especially if the bully is a manager. The responses revealed there are perceived impacts to the employees who have witnessed or been a victim of the bullying phenomena such as but not limited to health problems, feeling stressed, and negatively affecting how the employee felt about his or her organization. Zhou, Guay, and Marchand (2017) reports there is evidence that bullying not only impacts the victim but also the witnesses to the bullying behavior. The authors said bullying effects the whole organization, not just the victim, and noted there has not been much attention as to the observers of workplace bullying.

Many participants reported that bullying made the workplace stressful and unhappy. As PFSP11 stated, "The culture is not one that you want to be associated with." As PFSP23 put it, "To put it technically, I think it [bullying] sucks." Many had feelings of worthlessness, hating their job; some experienced fear and dreaded their jobs, while others felt forced to leave their jobs. As PFSP23 reported, "I left, I left, and in hindsight I should have left sooner!" Because of these experiences, all participants in this study had negative experiences with workplace bullying on the organizational culture. Zhou, Guay, and Marchand (2017) explained that this could also isolate the witness and the victims and cause them to begin to believe that avoidance of the bully and ostracizing are a part

of the organization norms because they get used to the routine. This belief can cause health endangering results such as stress, depression, and other mental problems that may be underlying for a period of time before anyone, even the individual, realizes there is a problem. O'Donnell, and MacIntosh, (2016), suggested for targets to find witnesses as soon as possible, seek legal assistance early, and try to resolve the issue in the beginning stages. Although O'Donnell, and MacIntosh, (2016) has not proven this approach as a complete deterrent, it may offer a more favorable outcome. This alternative could help witnesses feel more helpful, less guilty; less disappointed, and address the issue of bullying resolutions. This process would also increase organizational awareness and bring workplace bullying topics to the forefront.

As a group, the experiences of the most participants in this study found negative organizational culture because of bullying because of the lack of leadership responsibility and accountability. Results of prior research established workplace bullying as a viable organizational issue that affects organizational culture (Georgakopoulos et al., 2011; Murphy, 2013). Research from the body of knowledge validated the importance of a positive organizational culture and its significance to organizations. The participants of this research also found leaders encouraged bullying as they did not want to address it. While Hogan and Coote (2013) found culture influenced behaviors, the participants in this study found that culture starts from the top and goes downward, and leaders must be proactive to have positive cultures. PFSP14 expounded that "...I said before it's got to be an adoption from the top down and must be enforced from the top down." and PFSP19 stated: "culture is whatever is being allowed at any given time and to change culture

takes a while but once it unfolds, and folks understand it is to be taken seriously, people either have to modify their behavior or they will be gone.” The results of the current research reflected that workplace bullying adversely affected the culture in organizations. The results confirmed and aligned the findings of Georgakopoulos et al., (2011) suggested organizational cultures worsened the problem of bullying as leaders were indifferent to bullying and their actions or lack of actions reinforced it.

Finding 1 of this study corresponds with the overarching research question were also significant as they confirmed and aligned with the body of knowledge as indicated by Hogan and Coote (2013) who found organizational culture was an invisible, yet powerful means used to produce desired organizational outcomes. Since of the outcome of bullying and its effects on organizational culture, it can become detrimental to an organization. Research on the topic was significant as it advanced the body of knowledge due to the findings of negative organizational culture due to lack of leadership responsibility and accountability and enforcing the organizational policies. These findings were in the upstate New York State area in the industries of business and health services and answered overarching research question. The major theme related to the overarching research question is presented next.

Theme 1: Organization culture and the lack of leadership responsibility and accountability. Theme 1, relates to the Finding 1 concerning the overarching research question. Organizational culture has been studied by Schein and others since the 1950s. Schein (2004) said it was important to know the organization because it displays the actions of its leaders as well as the individual strengths (p. 414). Schein also stated,

“leaders externalize their own assumptions and embed them gradually and consistently in the mission, goals, structures, and working procedures of the group” (p. 406). The feelings shared by the participants also support the literature in Chapter 2. The participants in this study shared that the organization where bullying is present was not a decent work environment. Highlighting the lack of leadership was strong among the participants and referenced in Andersen’s (2017) study. Andersen, (2017) stated that organizational leaders often assume employees can be manipulated into a culture. Based on the responses from the participants of this study, reveal the lack of leadership puts them in an awkward position. The participants’ feelings noted the organization was conducive to bullying. The research shows that there are impacts of bullying on the organization. Andersen, (2017) referenced that workplace bullying is hostile and destructive for organizations and their employees.

The need for leadership responsibility and accountability in organizational culture was a theme that surfaced with 100% of the participants. All participants found there were leadership issues and a lack of accountability that allowed bullying to exist. Leadership, organizational issues, and lack of accountability aligned with prior research of the phenomenon (Georgakopoulos et al., 2011; Murphy, 2013). Murphy (2013) found the lack of leadership was a contributing factor to bullying actions within the organization. The participants also found these issues were compounded with HR Departments and other organizational department were a part of the problem. The participants found that leadership does not want to address bullying, and therefore encouraged it, however, the participants also found that this type of culture starts from the

top and goes down. PFSP1 stated, “I felt like ultimately, it would be to the best advantage to employers, if they would hold accountable their employees on an annual basis, let that be part of their annual evaluation . . .” PFSP2 had similar views about accountability when she postulated in her interview that: “It’s not ok to do these things, they would have to have some system in place holding them accountable when people come forward and express concerns and tell the truth about what’s been said to them or done to them.” PFSP3 stated: “I don’t think that the policies that we have in place are going to do much good.” PFSP4 found that “I never seen them make anybody have consequences for their actions.” One participant found that she did not want to be associated with this type of culture, therefore, according to the data, leaders must be proactive in needed change initiatives to prevent and mitigate bullying.

Although the victims and witnesses felt helpless and as though there was little to nothing they could do to help. Twelve of 25 participants revealed that the bullying situations they described were not resolved from their perspectives. PFSP1 explained that due to the unresolved workplace bullying, many questions came to mind: “How can the rest of them feel this is acceptable? How much else is going on? How many others are out there [being bullied]?” She felt the need to question everything that was taking place within the organization. PFSP13 described feeling as victim though there was nowhere else to turn or no one to look to for more help. PFSP15 explained that with the presence of HR as well as the bully’s supervisor, the bullying scenario was still unresolved. She worked within a healthcare organization and expected that more would be done; however, she was stated, “I understand they [bully and victim] were told to just try to get

along well enough to do the job and so it was never really resolved.” PFSP16 shared that although the victim quit the job and settle out of court for monetary gain, the workplace remained the same without the discipline of any management staff or any other actions. PFSP18 explained that the bully was moved to another department within the same organization and although the bully was no longer bullying the initial target, the bully began to mistreat new targets and the move did not resolve the initial bullying issue. PFSP19 said that due to turnover within the organization, workplace bullying situations were left to resolve themselves. Finally, PFSP24 stated that management was “lackadaisical on it. I do not think they enforced things the way they should.” Most of the 12 participants had similar reactions to the absence of resolution and felt surprise and disappointment described as the next theme

Interpretation of Findings of the Subquestion 1 (SQ1) of the Study

The first subquestion (SQ1) asked participants about their lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area, which asked: What are the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture from the perspective of employees in the upstate New York State area who have been bullied directly? Themes emerged from data collection pertaining to research subquestion 1 will be discussed next: (1) bullying perception and the behavioral experience, (2) the feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying, (3) witnesses were reluctant to act due to fear of retaliation.

Theme 2: Bullying perception and the behavioral experience. This theme relates to Finding 2, concerning to the research subquestion 1 (SQ1). A handout with definitions was e-mailed or handed out to each participant before the face-to-face interview and all 25 participants cited specific behaviors they perceived as workplace bullying. PFSP1 described the workplace bullying scenario by explaining how the victim was made to complete extra work as though it were a normal job duty. Additionally, she said the bully was “blatantly demeaning to the victim by calling her names.” According to PFSP2, she described the bully as “yelling and humiliating the victim in front of others and never admitting to any wrong doing.” PFSP3 used terms such as, ridicule, yelling, and humiliation to explain how the bully treated her as a victim. PFSP5 pointed out that the supervisor was rude to her as well as demeaning and strict. Also, she said the supervisor did not greet her, would make her work extra hours, and would slam file cabinets in the office, which created a hostile work environment. Another workplace bullying behavioral description was by PFSP6, who mentioned the supervisor would send him home early, embarrass her, and threaten him.

From PFSP7’s perspective, the behavior was described as embarrassing because the supervisor teased the victim in front of everyone on the team. PFSP8 thought the victim was ostracized, ignored, demeaned, given excessive deadlines, and threatened. According to PFSP9, the bully was excessive in demands and threatening. She also said the bully would embarrass her as a victim in front of others. PFSP10 explained the bully would use foul language and yell to humiliate the victim in front of others. From PFSP10’s perspective, the bully would harass, tease, and embarrass the victim. PFSP12

described the bullying behavior as berating, insulting, and embarrassing. PFSP13 explained the behavior was more so mistreatment because the victim was singled out, asked to provide more information than others, and embarrassed in front of the team during meetings. PFSP23 perceived the behavior as teasing, humiliating, and attacking. PFSP25 explained that the bully would ignore, belittle, and exclude the victim and the witnesses.

Theme 3: The feelings towards the organization culture and unresolved bullying. This theme pertains to Finding 2, which relates to the research subquestion 1 (SQ1). While experiencing or witnessing workplace bullying, participants felt afraid, helpless, and embarrassed. Such feelings are unsurprising because, according to the participants, bullying supervisors obtain desired results by controlling others through using power and generating fear. Some participants also felt angry, stressed, and worried. Witnesses who become angry sometimes decide to confront the bully, but if their attempts to address the bullying are unsuccessful, they are more likely to become targets of bullying. This finding relates to Standen, Paull, and Omari, (2014) description of scapegoating, in which bully targets an individual because the bully thinks the victim deserves the harsh treatment. The bully might consider the victim to be expendable and an easy target for unleashing frustration and stress. When both the victims/witnesses and the bully are angry at each other, predatory bullying may occur, with both parties seeking each other's destruction. Whoever has less power become the loser (Standen, Paull, & Omari 2014).

To maintain controlling power, bullies may prevent other employees from making decisions, decrease their self-confidence, and hamper their productivity (Namie, 2014). One participant, who had 25 years of experience in her field, reported a bully had ruined her self-confidence and hinder her performance to a point that she was considering retirement. This participant explained the following: “Sometimes I feel like I cannot do anything right, and considering retiring soon.” Participants in the study were distracted from their work tasks—not because of fear but because of frustration from hearing unprofessional comments. As PFSP11 explained, “Sometimes as an unnecessary and unprofessional distraction for everyone, the bully needed attention and wanted to prove they can control everyone’s working environment. Their unprofessional [behavior] affected all of us.” PFSP13 similarly reported the following: I felt kind of disgust, not anger but a disgust, as in, “Don’t bother me because I do not have time for your games. I have work to do, so just go, leave. This was a total distraction at work that focused my attention away from my duties.”

Theme 4: Witnesses were reluctant to act due to fear of retaliation. Theme 4, relates to the Finding 2, concerning the SQ1 of the study. Based on the interviews the witnesses of workplace bullying could be secondary targets because witness statements could result in excessive workloads and work conflict with the aggressor. Participant PFSP6 said, “There is something in place for employees to file, but I have no confidence in how it will go, there is disrespect and option for retaliation and I fear that I will lose my job if I filed.” Participant PFSP21 shared she often witnessed bullying in the office as the office manager, and said, “I would have informed the [administrators] when the

supervisor was bullying other staff, but nothing changed, so why should I report?” It is believed victims of bullying do not report the bullying abuse they experience as they do not want to appear to be the victim as noted by Lund, & Ross, (2016). Namie and Namie (2014) referenced recent statistics of workplace bullying are low because employees failing to report incidents and avoiding the self-labeling as a target or a victim. Also noting that bullies are “self-centered crowned heads, duplicitous actors, and outright devil figures” (p. 19). The results revealed the victims of bullying categorized themselves as feeling like “slaves and animals, prisoners, children, and heartbroken lovers” (p. 21). This is similar to the references by this study’s participants as they shared their experiences witnessing bullying.

Interpretation of Findings of the Subquestion 2 (SQ2) of the Study

The second question queried the participants about: What types of actions or behavior were viewed as bullying within the organization? This research question yielded two themes: (a) absence of leadership, (b) acceptance actions or behaviors enabled the bullying, which were described in the sections below.

Theme 5: Absence of leadership. Theme 5, pertains to Finding 3 concerning the research subquestion 2 (SQ2). According to Gokce, Guney, & Katrinli, (2014), Einarsen et al. (2011), leadership is an essential position of power that is influential in the workplace, however, “abdication of leadership or a so-called laissez-faire style of management also appears to provide fertile ground for bullying between peers or colleagues” (Gokce, Guney, & Katrinli, 2014, p. 13). Based on the Finding 3, eleven of 25 participants described workplace bullying scenarios where there was a lack of leadership. Several of

the participants witnessed and experienced bullying from a manager to subordinate level; however, there were two instances where the bullying was amongst colleagues. PFSP3 described much of leadership as exhibiting bullying behaviors, thus not providing any assistance to make the environment better. PFSP5 stated that she reached out to several people in leadership positions and nothing was really done to address the bullying situation. PFSP9 said that the supervisor bullied the victim in front of the supervisor's manager and nothing was done about it. PFSP10 also said the company president was present for a couple of the bullying incidents "and said nothing." There were participants that said they felt leadership laughed along with the bully or seemed to act like they were not aware of what was happening in the organization.

The lack of leadership is a theme noted in the Literature Review as well as in the input from the participants of this current study. One participant noted the supervisor did not have a backbone; another one said the bully was not a leader, had no training in how to become a leader, and a good leader would not let this happen to its employees. As mentioned in the literature review, the ability to motivate and inspire subordinates is critical and, according to Afsar, Badir, and Kiani, (2016), leadership had to reach a different level, discover what motivates the individuals, and tap into the source to get the best. Organizational leadership style affects employee behavior and attitude and the degree to which employees will commit to productivity. According to this current study, some participants reported watching bullying de-motivated them to produce.

Theme 6: Acceptable behaviors and actions enabled the bullying. Theme 6, relates to Finding 3 concerning the SQ2 of the study. All 25 of the participants stated they

had witnessed or experienced bullying in their workplace. The bullying actions, per 21 of the participants, were carried out by a supervisor, and 17 revealed the bullying actions were in front of others. The bullying actions involved yelling, screaming, and verbal abuse per 12 participants. These actions were allowed within the organizational culture. Di Stefano, Scrima, and Parry, (2017) stated the organizational culture is one of antagonism and employees are fearful when violence and/or the threat of violence are present, which can affect organizational work performance. Another example of workplace violence is an individual threatening another by harassing, intimidating, giving verbal threats, or stalking. This study supports Di Stefano, Scrima, and Parry, (2017) research and other earlier studies. The organizational culture that supports the bullying actions leaves the employees thinking it is a negative, not positive environment to work in. Another noted factor that contributed to bullying actions was the actions were supported at higher levels in the organization.

Workplace bullying was demonstrated by the yelling and screaming were noted as behaviors that participants wanted to see change, as well as the supervisor or bully belittling employees in front of others. The yelling and screaming of a supervisor directly linked to Yamanda (2013) definition of a bully and is another example of behaviors acceptable at the organization. Sinha, et al., (2016) referenced organizations need to be innovative and become risk-takers who remove barriers to remain competitive. Workplace bullying is a barrier for organizations to remain competitive in their marketplace. Sinha, et al., noted the identification of a bully, who is typically trying to hide their identity within an organization, is sometimes difficult when the bully targets

their victims for destruction. Examples of bullying include those who instigate a rumor or group mobbing and criticize a coworker.

Interpretation of Findings of the Subquestion 3 (SQ) of the Study

The third question queried the participants about: According to victims' and witnesses' experiences and perceptions, what comprehensive actions could have been adopted by leaders to create an organizational culture that may mitigate bullying? The research question yielded three themes: (a) lack of policies and procedures, (b) expectations, and (c) the suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying.

Theme 7: Expectations. Theme 7, relates to the Finding 4 concerning the SQ3 of the study. In addition to the expectation that something would be done to resolve the workplace bullying incidents described during this study, there were additional expectations that 12 of 25 participants described should be in any workplace. PFSP1 expected that there would be a chain of command and those policies and procedures would be adhered to when warranted. PFSP2 expected, "let's come together, have a common goal, keeping the community safe, and doing everything we can to protect others and try to help others." PFSP3 expected that employees would be valued as an asset to the company. PFSP5 also expected to be valued as an employee and that the organization was in existence to provide a service to the public and all those in which the organization had an affiliation. PFSP6 worked for a family owned business and expected the company would value family and would treat employees like a family. PFSP9 expected that if anyone did anything that was considered wrong, then it would be corrected. PFSP12 explained she thought her organization valued teamwork, loss

prevention, and employees and she expected the organization would be safe, moral, and ethical. Each of these participants felt that an organization should provide employees with a sense of goals, teamwork, and safety as an employee. Each felt as though they were let down and learned that the organizations they worked for did not value the areas they expected would be valued.

Theme 8: Lack of policies and procedures. Theme 8, relates to the Finding 4 concerning the SQ3 of the study All 25 participants perceived a lack of policies and procedures on workplace bullying in their respective organizations. PFSP2 contended that she was not aware of any policies and procedures within her organization. Nine participants recalled having an employee handbook given to them listed policies and procedures; however, no participant recalls information, a clause, or any discussion about workplace bullying or how to address the issue. PFSP12 worked in retail and explained that the policies and procedures in the employee handbook mainly focused on loss prevention, but nothing on workplace bullying. PFSP9 does not recall any information about workplace bullying; however, she does recall, “it was about 60 pages long. It covered taking vacation, it covered sick leave, and it covered 401k and employee benefits.” In covering that amount of detail in the workplace, it did not cover workplace bullying. PFSP8 worked in an educational setting and explicitly recalls a handbook for students to abide by but nothing for teachers and staff.

Theme 9: The suggestive actions that could be taken to minimize bullying. Theme 9, relates to the Finding 4 concerning the RQ3 of the study. Most participants stated the actions they expected from their organization to prevent bullying were to not

allow the behavior, and have zero tolerance to prevent bullying. Proper policies should be in place to prevent bullying, and creating a better environment is expected from the organization, include training implementation and education materials to help reduce the potential for stressors in the workplace. Leon-Perez, Notelaers, and Leon-Rubio, (2016) noted various recommendations to resolve the issue of workplace bullying across all industries should include training implementation and education materials to help reduce the potential for stressors in the workplace. The inclusion of employee assistance programs should be available for victims of bullying to help improve their health and well-being. The program should include empowerment skills for work-related concerns

It is important for the employees to be heard, and six of the participants felt the organization needed to listen to the employees and protect them, along with five who felt the issue of bullying should be addressed immediately by the organization. PFSP4 said, “The director should take more control of the department; bullying should not be tolerated, if it occurs, you will be terminated.” PFSP6, stated, “It is a horrible environment, very dysfunctional, there is no leadership; supervisors should listen to their employees and get rid of the bullies. HR [human resources department] is a joke, they will not do anything to jeopardize their own position.” The next theme discusses the lessons learned from workplace bullying and the organizational culture. The study conducted by Naimie, (2014) provided evidence that workplace bullying is still an issue and recommended that organizational policies and procedures should be in place. The research supports the need for stronger leadership to help to improve the organizational

culture and minimize the workplace bullying, which will bring the staff confidence back and the organizational success.

Implications for Social Change and Recommendations

The intention of this qualitative, phenomenological research study was to assist in filling the gaps in the existing literature through the lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on the organizational culture in the upstate New York State area. The findings from this study indicate bullying behaviors in the workplace are a continued problem and affect an organization's most significant resource: the employees (Dickmann, Brewster, & Sparrow, 2016). Organizational leaders can use the findings to understand how workplace bullying occurs, as well as to understand the outcomes. This study could assist leaders in mitigating bullying scenarios in their organizations. This study provided essential information which could be used in the upstate New York State area, and other organizations across America.

Theoretical Implications

The foundation of this study was built on Schein's (1983) organizational culture model. Organizational culture has been studied by Schein and others since the 1950s. Schein (2004) said it was important to know the organization because it displays the actions of its leaders as well as the individual strengths (p. 414). Using this model allowed the study to fulfill its original purpose of understanding the perceived effects of workplace bullying through the lived experiences of organizational employees in the upstate New York State area. The components of Schein's (1983) organizational cultural model relate to the problem of bullying. Schein indicated that workplace culture develops

over time as individuals change and grow, adapt to the environment and solve problems together. Schein (1983) noted that leaders can create, change, and affect organizational culture. Patterns of positive and negative culture will filter throughout the organization to new and old employees. Sometimes the negative culture is viewed as acceptable behavior.

This study aligns with Schein's (1983) theory as participants reported patterns of bullying filtering throughout the organization and viewed as acceptable behavior. As an example of an organization accepting this cultural behavior, PFSP12 mentioned "the supervisors of my shift at this organization are very well identified as being 'bullies and tyrants' and the administration knew it, but because of accreditation and because they got the job done, they didn't care how many employees they lost." The results of this study confirm, align, and advance Schein's Model as the participants indicated there was negative organizational culture because of a lack of leadership responsibility and accountability.

Practical Implications

Several practical implications evolved from insights of this study. If applied, the practical implications could help leaders in mitigating workplace bullying, and could assist leaders to change a negative culture to a positive organizational culture. These implications could help to solve significant organizational issues if applied in a professional practice. These implications are: One of the first core themes that evolved in this study was the negative organizational culture because of lack of leadership responsibility and accountability. The study revealed evidence of negative organizational

culture due to lack of leadership responsibility and accountability. The results of this research strongly imply leaders must assume responsibility and accountability change their organization's culture. The participants found that leaders were responsible for allowing organizational culture at any given time, which agrees with the findings of Schein (1983) found leaders create, change, and affect organizational culture. Leaders could change their organization's culture by being responsible, holding everyone accountable, change unethical practices, and deal with bullying threats within the organization.

The second implication was that study participants perceived that supervisors may lack needed leadership skills and emotional intelligence. Leadership styles are an important consideration because individuals who use aggressive leadership styles, such as authoritarian and paternalistic styles, are more likely to engage in workplace bullying (Afsar, Badir, & Kiani, 2016). Supervisors may benefit from policies related to training which will help them develop and apply appropriate leadership styles and emotional intelligence skills, such as how to control anger and communicate effectively. Training may also decrease workplace bullying, the resulting attrition, and the costs associated with attrition (Binney, 2012). To further emphasize the importance of the policy, executive leaders and managers could facilitate the training, creating positive energy and setting the example in working toward a positive workplace environment.

Future Implications

Future implications are based on the findings of the study, as well as what the study did not find. This study establishes the need for further research on workplace

bullying in the educational and legal industries. Although the results of this study helped to shed additional light on the subject, there is still room for additional research on cultural practices if the different age groups and gender could be considered as a contributing factor of the phenomenon (Dalton & Ortegren, 2012). It is recommended that additional studies on cultural practices would be most beneficial with more diverse organizations.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

The potential limitations in the current qualitative, phenomenological study were: (a) the honesty of the participants' responses during the interviews, and (b) this research was limited to 25 qualified participants in the upstate New York area. The study involved 25 participants who agreed to take part and was conducted at their convenience. Everyone volunteered to participate and was advised of any potential risks. There were no known problems with the data collection, gaining confidence of the participants, nor any unanswered questions which could affect the results. Steps were implemented such as ensuring the privacy of the interviews and asking if the participant understood the questions being asked, to avoid any weaknesses in the design. All participants responded to each question, and based on the methodology, any irrelevant data were excluded. The time frame of the interview did not exceed an hour, which was noted to the participants with time constraints.

The last limitation is based on Ritchie et al.,'s (2013) findings qualitative study samples must be small. The study was conducted in the upstate New York area limiting the demographic sample. I limited this research to the upstate New York area as there

was a gap in the research regarding this area. When conducting interviews, it is necessary and productive for interviewers to make the participants feel comfortable (Grenz, 2014). According to research, making the participant feel comfortable during an interview often helped them relax, reduce stress levels, and assisted the participants in relaying their experiences to the interviewer (Gourlay et al., 2014; Wolgemuth et al., 2015). I utilized this theory to strengthen the outcome of the interview process in this study. The results of research found that in qualitative phenomenology, the research was from the first-person reports of life experiences (Moustakas, 1994; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). This study explored the first-person reports of the personal, lived experiences of workplace bullying of the participants. According to the interviews and the journal entries, all participants seemed passionate and truthful about their experiences as they expressed their perceived, lived experiences of the phenomenon. I based all conclusions of this study on the lived experiences of the participants; as a result, the conclusions are credible.

Recommendations for Future Research

This current research explored the lived experience and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture in the upstate New York State area. Based on the results of this research, it is recommended a future study on workplace bullying within the criminal justice would be beneficial to the body of knowledge. This recommendation is based on the fact that two participants in this study referred to bullying in the criminal justice system. One of the participants suggested that criminal justice procedures could infiltrate organizational culture. This presents a new gap in the body of knowledge. A new study could use a quantitative, casual comparative analysis to

view the organizational culture of an organization with criminal justice influence versus an organization without criminal justice influence.

Another possible gap in the research is workplace bullying among different organizational cultures. A quantitative, comparative analysis would be beneficial to the body of knowledge and would also prove beneficial to different types of organizations. A gap exists among the different types of organizational cultures and how they deal with workplace bullying. Based on the research of this study, there is a gap in the body of knowledge relating to workplace bullying in the medical field. Participants in this study were employees in the medical industry. These participants strongly suggested bullying must be further explored in the medical industry. A qualitative, phenomenological study could help the body of knowledge on the issues of bullying as faced in the medical world.

There is a gap in the research on workplace bullying and the different cultures in society. Diverse cultural backgrounds handle their issues in their own cultural ways. A qualitative study using the ethnographic design may prove beneficial to the body of knowledge on how these different cultures in society handle their issues of workplace bullying and if there are policies or procedures which would benefit other organizations. Samnani (2012) found expanded knowledge gained from understanding workplace bullying substantially supplemented the literature with enriched comprehension of the phenomenon. The above recommendations for future research could substantially supplement the literature with enriched comprehension of the phenomenon and ways to overcome the phenomenon. The above recommendations for future research could also expand the knowledge base of the body of knowledge, advancing current research.

Recommendations for Action

The data are based on the interviews of the 25 participants of this study. The findings showed that for participants, the leadership or managers were the bullies. Some actions perceived as bullying were: intimidation tactics, job intimidation threats, emotional and verbal abuse, name calling, yelling and screaming, throwing items at the victims, cursing, belittling in front of others, and a lack of leadership. The perceived impact bullying had on employees who witnessed bullying were: being stressed or fearful, not wanting to go to work, feeling frustration, being uncomfortable, feeling upset and resentment, and feeling they were working in an unhealthy, toxic, negative environment.

It is clear a transformation must begin with the leadership level of an organization. Based on the responses from the current study's participants, 12 participants felt the organization would prevent bullying and 11 participants expected policies to be in place. Another 12 felt training was needed to not allow the bullying behavior, and 11 participants felt the culture needed to be changed to where the bullying actions is not accepted. According to the Namie, (2014) an online instant poll of 338 site visitors asked, "What will it take for most U.S. employers to take workplace bullying seriously and stop it?" The results revealed 31% said it will never stop, it accomplishes what they want; 30% says it will stop when the laws are in place; 23% the majority will stop when they learn how expensive preventable bullying is; and 4% will stop when they see the immorality of abuse in the workplace.

Conclusion

The topic of workplace bullying typically does not become important to individuals until they or their loved ones become victims. Employees may try to cope silently because the bullying may be covert and never addressed by organizational leaders. Organizational leaders may need to help employees address bullying behaviors and make changes (USLegal.com, 2011). “Organizations that fail to recognize and deal effectively with the problem of workplace anger may end up with even more serious problems; a company may even be legally liable if they allow a hostile environment to persist” (USLegal.com, 2011, p. 2).

The 25 participants from St. Joseph’s Hospital revealed their lived experiences and perceived effects of workplace bullying on organizational culture in the upstate New York State area. The results of this research filled gaps, showed significance, and furthered current research in the body of knowledge on the topic. This was evidenced as the study gaps in the literature. There was a lack of literature exploring the lived experiences of workplace bullying of employees and gave voice to these employees. Giving voice to witnesses and victims of bullying is important as Murphy’s (2013) findings showed participant voices are the only way experiences could be measured. This study helped to fill a gap as it gave voice to the lived experiences of witnesses and bullied employees and staff in the upstate New York State area. The results of this research indicate witnesses and the victims are greatly affected by the exposure to workplace bullying.

This study also added to the literature that victims and witnesses also felt disappointed, because there was an absence of leadership, bullying was left unresolved, and there was a lack of policies, procedures, and organizational awareness. These elements create the overall suggesting that there is still a lot of work to be done by organizations in the United States to address and stop workplace bullying. There are definite benefits found in completing this research and adding to the body of knowledge on what victims and witnesses perceived and described when experiencing the workplace bullying phenomenon. This research may serve as a guide of the specific areas needing to be addressed to gain some leverage of the situation and where to carry out changes. More research could offer more to learn about this topic and add more to the body of knowledge and remaining gaps within the workplace bullying phenomenon.

The participants in the current study all agreed bullying needs to be explored in the upstate New York State area. There was a lack of literature exploring the lived experiences of bullying on organizational culture in the culturally diverse upstate New York State area. Burris (2012) conducted a study using six participants who reported on their bullied experiences in the Great Plains and on the East Coast areas. Murphy's (2013) study focused on participants in the Virginia area, but no studies were identified being conducted in the upstate New York State area. This study fit with and furthered current academic research of the phenomenon as it built on prior research (Burris, 2012; Murphy, 2013).

The results of this current study added value to and furthered scientific values of the phenomenon confirming the effects of the phenomenon (Brandt et al., 2014,

Novotney, 2014). This study added information to the ongoing discourse of workplace bullying so leaders may use the information to mitigate the problem (Murphy, 2013). The current study was practical as it allowed leaders and managers to see the lived experiences of employees and help them to deal with the workplace bullying and the organizational culture matters. Information leading to the mitigation of workplace bullying might benefit population, community, and society as job satisfaction may be enhanced and organizational cultures improved.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Dissertation Research: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study: Organization Culture and
Individuals Experience of Workplace Bullying

Interviewer: Luan Zeka

Interviewee code ID# assigned by the researcher: _____

Time of Interview: _____

Date: _____

Location: _____

(Ask for permission to record the interview): Part of the interview process includes audio- recording so the data may be reviewed. You as a participant will be briefed on the procedures and the purpose of this study before the interview and the journaling process begins, and provided with assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality. Do you give consent to be audio-recorded during this interview session?

(Review the purpose of the study): The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to explore and understand the perceptions of victims and witnesses in the Upstate New York state area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture.

(Framing of the Interview): The planned and structured research questions will serve as a guide in this interview; however, clarifying or follow-up questions may be asked in regard to what participants describe on the phenomenon to capture the whole picture or develop a greater understanding of the experience. This study will involve an interview that will be completed in 1 hour or less.

Please remember that the interview responses are confidential. If there is a question you would prefer not to answer or you need further clarification, please inform me. If you think at any time you would like to stop the interview or resign as a participant in this study, please alert me and you may do so with no consequence to you. As a reminder, this entire interview is being audio recorded and will be transcribed. Please hold for one moment while I start the recording [press *9] . . . thank you, Participant # _____. You will have an opportunity to review the transcription once all data has been collected and transcribed. Your interview transcription will be e-mailed to you for review. Please provide verbal confirmation that you have reviewed the informed consent form and consent to participating in this study. [Pause for reply] Thank you. We will begin.

Semi-structured Workplace Interview Questions

Demographics

1. How long have you worked for with the organization where workplace bullying occurred?
 - a. Years _____ Months _____
2. What was your status with this organization?
 - a. Full Time _____ Part Time _____ Per Dime

Workplace Bullying

3. Have you ever witnessed or experienced any bullying behavior in this job or any previous jobs?
 - a. How did the situation make you feel? Why?
 - b. Describe the effect of what you saw and heard?
 - c. Would you describe all individuals involved? (i.e. age, gender, status, race)
4. What actions did you consider taking when you witnessed or experienced workplace bullying? Why?
 - a. How and to whom did you report the bullying actions you have witnessed or experienced?
 - b. What types of actions or behavior are viewed as bullying within their organization?
5. What actions did leadership take regarding workplace bullying? Please explain.
 - a. Were there changes implemented? (i.e., Policies? Procedures? Personnel structure? If any?)

Organizational Culture

6. Organizational culture is the combination of assumptions, beliefs, values, and artifacts (Schein, 2004). Please describe the values of the organization culture and your beliefs (i.e. unconscious beliefs, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings—ultimate source of values and actions) that you had about the organizational culture before you witnessed and/or experienced workplace bullying?
7. Please describe your beliefs and the values of the organizational that you had about the organizational culture after you witnessed or experienced the workplace bullying?
8. Please describe the artifacts (i.e. policies or procedures) for the organizational culture before you witnessed or experienced workplace bullying?
9. Please describe the artifacts (i.e. policies or procedures) for the organizational culture after you witnessed and/or experienced the workplace bullying?
10. How did you feel about the changes?
11. What actions would you expect from your organization to prevent bullying?
12. What specific actions could be taken in your workplace to minimize bullying behavior?
13. Have you shared all that is significant with reference to the negative effects of workplace bullying?

Appendix B: Invitation/Introduction Letter

Dear Potential Participant:

My name is Luan Zeka and I am a student at Walden University working on a Doctor of Management degree. I am conducting a research study called: *A Qualitative Phenomenological Study: Organization Culture and Individuals' Experience of Workplace Bullying*. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to explore and understand the perceptions of victims and witnesses in the Upstate New York state area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture.

Your participation will involve being interviewed and responding to 13 questions. The setting for interviews of this study will be a confidential location (St. Joseph's Hospital), arranged and agreed upon by the participant for confidentiality of the participant and the organization. Your involvement will last approximately one hour, and your interview will be audio-recorded; however, your name will not be audio recorded. By signing this form, you also acknowledge that you are giving consent to have your interview recorded via Livescribe Echo Smartpen and Zetronix (high definition recorder that will be used as a backup in case of an emergency), and transcribed manually into a Microsoft Word document with assistance of NVivo 10 software.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without penalty or loss of benefit to yourself. You may be asked to participate in a brief, follow-up interview to confirm my understanding of your responses. The results of the research study may be published but your identity will remain confidential and your name will not be disclosed to any outside party. I will use codes to protect your identity. All data during the study, along with scanned copies of the informed consent forms, will be collected and stored on a password-protected computer in the researcher's (Luan Zeka) home office to guarantee privacy and confidentiality. The audio recording, the original documents, and backup disk will be kept in a locked safe location, located in my home for the duration of the research. All data and transcripts will be destroyed after five years.

Being in this type of study involves minimal risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as stress or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing, however, should the interview cause memories or emotions of a past experience to surface with in outward distress or other types of complaint, you will be asked to report back to the researcher for guidance to immediate support through St. Joseph's Health Employee Assistance Program: Carebridge Corporation, the St. Joseph's Employee Health Office, or St. Joseph's Behavioral Health services. The benefit of the participation is to contribute information to collection of in-depth data on the phenomenon of workplace bullying and the

organization culture in order to understand how individuals are affected by workplace bullying in the organization culture, practically, give a voice to the individuals who are the victims or witness of the bullying phenomenon, which is lacking in the existing literature; thereby ensuring a more positive work environment by enabling effective anti-bullying policies where the whole organization is involved in the mitigation of workplace bullying. No compensation is offered or will be paid.

There are requirements which one must meet to qualify for the study. These requirements are: (a) employed with St. Joseph's Health (Full-time, Part-time or Per-Diem status); (b) GED or a graduate of high school education; (c) 18 – 60+ years of age; (d) must have experienced the bullying scenario as a target or a witness, and (e) live in in the New York State area of the United States. Potential subjects will be excluded if the individual does not meet these criteria. If you agree to participate, I will contact you to schedule a convenient time for an interview. Your experiences and insights are valuable to this study. I would be grateful to you for your participation. Upon completion of the dissertation, I will contact you and forward a written summary of my findings by email, if you desire. If you have any questions, please e-mail at: luan.zeka@sjhsyr.org. Should any questions or concerns be verbalized regarding research, interview subjects will be encouraged to call the SJH-Research Office.

By signing this form, you acknowledge that you understand the nature of the study, the potential risks to you as a participant, and the means by which your identity will be kept confidential. Your signature on this form also indicates that you are 18 years old or older and that you give your permission to voluntarily serve as a participant in the study described.

Signature of the interviewee _____ Date _____

Signature of the researcher _____ Date _____

Appendix C: St. Joseph's Hospital Informed Consent Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study, which will take place from _____ to _____. This form details the purpose of this study, a description of the involvement required and your rights as a participant.

Information and Purpose: The interview for which you are being asked to participate in, is a part of a research study that is focused on examining the *organization culture and Individuals' experience of workplace bullying*. The purpose of this study is to *explore and understand the perceptions of victims and witnesses in the Upstate New York state area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture*. The primary research question that will guide this study is: *How did individuals who were bullied or witnessed the bullying process in the upstate New York State area perceive and describe their experiences which took place within the organizational culture?* This new information could add to the body of knowledge and provide a foundation for additional research that can benefit organizations by helping to affect social change

Your Participation: Your participation in this study will consist of an interview lasting about one hour. You will be asked a series of questions about your lived experiences. You are not required to answer the questions. You may pass on any question making you feel uncomfortable. At any time, you may notify the researcher that you would like to stop the interview and your participation in the study. There is no penalty for discontinuing participation. This study is voluntary. You are free to accept or turn down the invitation. No one at St. Joseph's Hospital will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to be in the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time without punishment or remuneration.

Benefits and Risks: The benefit of the participation is to contribute information to collection of in-depth data on the phenomenon of workplace bullying and the organization culture to understand how individuals are affected by workplace bullying, practically, give a voice to the individuals who are the victims or witness of the bullying phenomenon, which is lacking in the existing literature; thereby ensuring a more positive work environment by enabling effective anti-bullying policies where the whole organization is involved in the mitigation of workplace bullying. Being in this type of study involves minimal risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as stress or becoming upset. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing, however, should the interview cause memories or emotions of a past experience to surface with in outward distress or other types of complaint, the participant will be asked to report back to the researcher for guidance to immediate support through St. Joseph's Health Employee Assistance Program: Carebridge Corporation, the St. Joseph's Employee Health Office, or St. Joseph's Behavioral Health services. No compensation is offered or will be paid.

Confidentiality: The interview will be audio-recorded; however, your name will not be audio recorded. By signing this form, you also acknowledge that you are giving consent to have your interview audio recorded by Livescribe Echo Smartpen and Zetronix (high definition recorder will be used as a backup in case of an emergency), and transcribed manually into a Microsoft Word document with assistance of NVivo 10 software. Your name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the written report of the research. All your information and interview responses will be kept confidential. The researcher will not share your individual responses with anyone other than the research (committee members) supervisor. Reports coming out of this study will not share the identities of individual participants. Details identifying participants, such as the location of the study, also will not be shared. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purpose outside of this research project. I will use codes to protect your identity. All data during the study, along with scanned copies of the informed consent forms, will be collected and stored on a password-protected computer in the researcher's (Luan Zeka) home office to guarantee privacy and confidentiality. The audio recording, the original documents, and backup disk will be kept in a locked safe location, located in my home for the duration of the research. All data and transcripts will be destroyed after five years. You as a potential participant will be briefed on the procedures and the purpose of this study before the interview and the journaling process begins, and provided with assurance about ethical principles, such as anonymity and confidentiality. If you have any questions, please e-mail at:luan.zeka@sjhsyr.org. Should any questions or concerns be verbalized regarding research, interview subjects will be encouraged to call the SJH-Research Office.

Obtaining Your Consent in Person

If you feel you understand the study well enough to make a decision about it, please indicate your consent by signing below:

Subject's code ID# assigned by the researcher:

Subject's Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

Researcher Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

Appendix D: Authorization Letter



Walden University Institutional Review Board
100 Washington Avenue South, #900
Minneapolis, MN 55401
(866) 492-5336

3 May 2017,

Subject: Letter of Authorization to Conduct Research at St. Joseph's Health Properties (Hospital Health Center: SJHHC).

Dear Walden University Institutional Review Board:

This letter will serve as authorization for Mr. Luan Zeka, a student at Walden University to conduct the research project entitled *A Qualitative Phenomenological Study: Organization Culture and Individuals Experience of Workplace Bullying* at St. Joseph's Health (SJH; the "Facility"), pending review and approval by the appropriate IRBs.

The Facility acknowledges that it has reviewed the protocol presented by the researcher, as well as the associated risks to the Facility. The Facility accepts the protocol and the associated risks to the Facility, and authorizes the research project to proceed. The research project may be implemented at the Facility upon review, approval, or exempt designation from the Walden University IRB and the SJH IRB.

If we have any concerns or require additional information, we will contact the researcher and/or the Walden IRB.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Sulik MD".

Sandra Sulik, MD
Vice President for Medical Affairs, CMO
St. Joseph's Health

Appendix E: IRB of Record Stipulation of Roles to Reliant IRB

IRB of Record Stipulation of Roles to Reliant IRB

Walden University
College of Doctoral Studies
100 Washington Avenue South,
Minneapolis, MN 55401
Phone: 1.866.492.5336

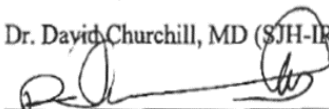
May 11, 2017

Dear Walden University Institutional Review Board,

Thank you for permitting the St. Joseph's Hospital Institutional Review Board (IRB), to serving as IRB of Record. St. Joseph's Hospital IRB has approved for the student researcher, Mr. Luan Zeka to collect the data under the general oversight of the site (without the oversight of the academic IRB), and that the site is willing to have Mr. Luan Zeka use the data in his dissertation. It is further understood that the reliant IRB at Walden University will provide direction and oversight following Mr. Zeka's data collection and analysis: oversight to the student's research dissemination (defense and ProQuest publication).

Sincerely,

Dr. David Churchill, MD (SJH-IRB Chair):



Date:

5/11/17

Appendix F: Walden University IRB Approval

Dear Mr. Zeka,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) confirms that your study entitled, “A Qualitative Phenomenological Study: Organization Culture and Individuals’ Experience of Workplace Bullying” meets Walden University’s ethical standards. Our records indicate the site’s IRB agreed to serve as the IRB of record for this data collection. Since this study will serve as a Walden doctoral capstone, the Walden IRB will oversee your capstone data analysis and results reporting. The IRB approval number for this study is 05-31-17-0372991.

This confirmation is contingent on your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the documents submitted to IRB@mail.waldenu.edu as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university and the oversight relationship is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, this is suspended.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within one (1) week of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes before receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB’s approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research.

When you submitted your IRB materials, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within one (1) week of their occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained at the IRB section of the Walden website:
<http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Researchers are expected to keep detailed records of their research activities (i.e., participant log sheets, completed consent forms, etc.) for the same period of time they retain the original data. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Congratulations!

Bryn Saunders
Research Ethics Support Specialist

Office of Research Ethics and Compliance
Walden University
100 Washington Ave. S, Suite 900
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Information about the Walden University Institutional Review Board, including instructions for application, may be found at this link:
<http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Appendix G: St. Joseph's Hospital IRB Approval



May 11, 2017

Luan Zeka, MCJ
Principal Investigator

SJHIRB 396

Your study, **Workplace Bullying Doctoral Dissertations** is granted "exempt" status.

It is important to note that the Research Committee be notified immediately if any of following occur:

- significant deviations from the approved protocol;
- serious complications or untoward effects result from the investigation;
- closing of the study;
- results of the study being written up for presentation or publication (any manuscript must be submitted to the Administration Office prior to presentation or publication).

If you have any questions or issues, please feel free to contact me at 315-472-7504.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Churchill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "D".

David Churchill, M.D.
Chairperson, Research Committee

Appendix H: Confidentiality Agreement

Name of Signer: Luan Zeka

During the course of my activity in collecting data for this research to explore and understand the perceptions of victims and witnesses in the Upstate New York state area relating to the effects of workplace bullying and organizational culture, I will have access to information, which is confidential and should not be disclosed. I acknowledge the information must remain confidential, and that improper disclosure of confidential information can be damaging to the participant.

By signing this Confidentiality Agreement, I acknowledge and agree that:

1. I will not disclose or discuss any confidential information with others, including friends or family.
2. I will not in any way divulge, copy, release, sell, loan, alter or destroy any confidential information except as properly authorized.
3. I will not discuss confidential information where others can overhear the conversation. I understand that it is not acceptable to discuss confidential information even if the participant's name is not used.
4. I will not make any unauthorized transmissions, inquiries, modification or purging of Confidential information.
5. I understand that violation of this agreement will have legal implications
6. I agree that my obligations under this agreement will continue after termination of the job that I will perform.
7. I will only access or use systems or devices I'm officially authorized to access, and I will not demonstrate the operation or function of systems or devices to unauthorized individuals.

Signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read the agreement and I agree to comply with all the terms and conditions stated above.

Signature: Luan Zeka

Date: 05/11/2017

Appendix I: Demographic Information

Demographic Information: Display of the Demographic Information of each Participant.


Identifier/ Code	Pseudonym	F/ M	Job Sector/ Level	Years of Employ	Status	Roles	Geographic Location
Sd345Hj1	PFSP1	F	Business	5	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
Fgrwk52J	PFSP2	F	Management	6	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
Hfg75Hj2	PFSP3	F	Business	9	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
Hjrt63hd	PFSP4	M	Business	5	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
Hgf35hG2	PFSP5	F	Education	12	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
Hfr35Gd2	PFSP6	F	Management	35	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
HjkRd52j	PFSP7	F	Nursing	21	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
KjrFgj35j	PFSP8	F	Health Office	12	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
frGn52Ku	PFSP9	F	HR	14	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
JkuRlo56	PFSP10	F	Technology	8	Part-Time	Witness	Upstate New York
LjrtG34hj	PFSP11	F	Ground	11	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
OuirTg34	PFSP12	M	Business	14	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
JkteOlu32	PFSP13	F	Construction	16	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
Kyroh3G	PFSP14	M	Therapy	19	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
Rtyjh5dw	PFSP15	M	Education	21	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
Awth34k	PFSP16	F	PSR	31	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
uRth893h	PFSP17	F	Nursing	19	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
Grujeoly5	PFSP18	M	Admin	13	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York

Kuteig45	PFSP19	F	Security	12	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
Ktrwo87h	PFSP20	F	EVS	7	Part-Time	Victim	Upstate New York
IZJhugj34	PFSP21	M	Finance	18	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
Jgdreb6	PFSP22	F	Phlebotomy	17	Full Time	Witness	Upstate New York
Jkfrs57gy	PFSP23	F	EVS	13	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
Jgkddd57j	PFSP24	F	Transport	27	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York
Frth45Gh	PFSP25	M	Education	23	Full Time	Victim	Upstate New York

Appendix J: NIH Training Certificate



Appendix K: CITI Program



Completion Date 28-Apr-2017
Expiration Date 27-Apr-2020
Record ID 23014266

This is to certify that:


Luan Zeka

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Human Research (Curriculum Group)
Social-Behavioral-Educational Researchers (Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

Trinity Health - St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center (Syracuse, NY)



Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w1c604353-69bb-4e00-b642-dc7aa08db7f1-23014266