

FAITH-BASED DISCRIMINATION OF WORKERS IN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS IN MBALE, UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

The recruitment of workers belonging to the Christian or Muslim faith by religious institutions has an impact on their relationships in Mbale. The existence of job opportunities in these institutions usually draws large numbers of applicants from all walks of life and faiths. Despite these expectations, religious institutions have scaled down their selection criteria from regular processes to a faith-affiliation basis. Hence, this study assesses the implications of faith-based discrimination of workers on Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale. A mixed-methods triangulation design was applied, with both qualitative and quantitative tools on a population of 1320 workers. 132 employees from 12 institutions out of 60 were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. 36 Questionnaires were used on 12 Managers, 12 Institutional heads, and 12 Human resource officers. 96 interview guides were applicable on non-management workers. The findings from the questionnaires and interview guides were analysed using SPSS, with percentages displayed in tables and figures based on concepts, themes, and sub-themes. The results suggest that there is higher faith-based discrimination in Christian than Muslim institutions. There are more destructive than constructive implications on Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale, such as non-compliance and the spread of misinformation about certain institutions, arousal of insecurity concerns, and limited provision of social services. The study recommends that religious policies hindering workers' opportunities need to be changed to inclusive recruitment policies for Christian-Muslim relations. Choosing and identifying desired people and even hiring or not hiring them based on preferences according to social identity and Taste-based discrimination theories, respectively, can delay such a move since its impact is highly destructive.

Keywords:

**Artificial Intelligence (AI),
Faith-Based Discrimination,
Religious Institutions, Christian-
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1. INTRODUCTION

Faith-based discrimination of workers in religious institutions in its various categories is a global challenge affecting the employment sector. It's a degrader against human rights and freedoms of people, including religious believers of all categories. This discrimination is posing a great threat to Christians and Muslims in the employment sector due to their large numbers compared to other religions (Calluso & Devetag, 2024) & Scheitle & Ecklund, 2020; Hill, Allemand, & Beatty, 2025). This may be as a result of people's aspirations based on religious affiliations as they try to improve their living standards and maintain attachments to certain organisations (Hallin, Västfäll & Andersson, 2022).

It has enormously affected the serving and potential workers in most employing institutions, especially those that are religiously founded, including both private and government-aided (Fox & Akbaba, 2015, and Bilchitz, n.d). Aroney (2020) suggests that such outcomes as pooling down religious buildings with other investments, increased competition in the transport sector, and violence like deliberate killings purely characterise this incidence. Currently, it has become an uncontrollable phenomenon, surpassing most governments' regulations for its subsequent eradication from the population (Aroney, 2020). Ajibade (n.d) notes that in some African Muslim-controlled countries such as Senegal, Sudan, and Egypt, for example, emerging reports show concern about working conditions whereby some Christians are being subjected to denying their belief or even making total conversions to Islam to get permission to work in such institutions. Moreover, it applies to both government and privately owned institutions founded on Islam.

In Uganda, much as the government, through its Constitution, prohibits religious discrimination and ensures freedom of belief, practice, and participation in religious bodies (U.S. Embassy, 2023), growing concerns about accessing jobs with disclosed religious affiliations still limit workers' chances (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2021). Employment decisions based on religion are generally unlawful unless there is a bona fide occupational requirement where religious affiliation is essential for the role (New Vision, 2010).

Cases of religious discrimination, especially from religious minorities of Muslims and Pentecostal Christian communities concentrated in Mbale City, indicate that job seekers are being disadvantaged in recruitment and promotions (New Vision, 2010). Although employers may implicitly favour applicants aligned with a particular religious group, affecting access to public and private sector jobs shouldn't be a general issue for all religious institutions against workers (Namutebi, 2015). Most adverts decree that potential job applicants should show readiness to promote specific religions before consideration (Great Uganda Jobs, 2020; Mugabi, 2015). Therefore, those confessing a different religion are technically avoided, leading to hostilities between Christians and Muslims, regardless of them all having the same qualifications (Namutebi, 2015).

1.1 Problem Statement

The selective staffing of workers in line with their faith affiliation over other job requirements in religious institutions has impacted the Christian and Muslim relationship in Mbale, Uganda. This arrangement, which seems accommodative to all yet internally aligned to particular religious principles, frustrates many workers. The favour shown to workers of one religious group over others in institutions with which they identify, more so in the previous and recent decades, has destabilised the spirit of religious co-existence. Believers in Christianity or Islam, capable of job opportunities and are already in the system, simply remind them how differently these religions operate. Initially, most religious institutions welcomed all job seekers for their full establishment within various localities. However, this has changed due to ever-rising employee demands in religious private institutions. Therefore, despite all set employment guidelines, institutions have devised their own yardsticks during recruitment. Certainly, this has practically narrowed chances for new job entrants as well as opportunists. And in turn, this poses a challenge to Christian-Muslim relations. Therefore, this study sought to investigate faith-based discrimination of workers in religious institutions and its implications on Christian-Muslim Relations in Mbale, Uganda.

1.2 Research Question

The study is guided by the research question;

What are the implications of faith-based discrimination of workers on Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study employs two theories in assessing faith-based discrimination of workers in religious institutions and how it relates to Christian-Muslim relations.

2.1.1 Social Identity Theory

This study is informed by Social Identity Theory, which was the work of Henri Tajfel and John Turner, who were social psychologists in 1979. This theory refers to how perceived thinking by a certain group affects its relationship with others (Vinney, 2021). Tajfel and Turner maintained that the kind of associations individuals believe in renders them sometimes more deserving than others, thereby dictating everything about their behaviours (McLeod, 2019). As a result, aspects such as in-group and out-group membership divisions are introduced. Therefore, the behaviours exhibited can easily define views that either diminish or create further differences. These misconceptions and differences developed against one another are instigated by social issues such as employment, community engagements, and politics (Gazi, 2014). They are built on vigilance to the extent that, in some places where particular religions fully control, those outside it can't access anything important from its endeavours.

Relating it to this study, Social Identity theory plays an important role in defining these two categories of religious bodies and institutions. Due to their establishment on different religious backgrounds in society, the leaders of each religion perceive the others, especially those seeking employment, as totally outside their ideological understanding. They are viewed with contempt in whatever they try to inquire or request in institutions belonging to other religions. This mainly emanates from the personal feelings of those carrying out the exercise of recruiting new workers to a bigger group of faith affiliation in their religious institutions. All the pessimism raised against other religious members is resurrected to determine who qualifies and who does not qualify, making discrimination evident. Therefore, this theory demonstrates why every religion prefers workers with similar faith, exemplified as front liners of discrimination against those considered outside their religious circles.

2.1.2 Taste-Based Discrimination (Employer Taste Model)

The study also incorporated Taste-based discrimination. The theory was originated by Gary S. Becker in 1971. This theory is a kind of labour market discrimination that is determined by the choice of the employing person or institution regarding workers. The employer is obliged to pay, or sometimes hire or not hire, individuals regardless of whether they can perform to expectations or have the necessary qualifications. In other words, Taste-based discrimination, also known as the 'employer taste model' (Krinitcyna and Menshikova, 2015), is practiced when those in charge of the labour market deliberately select some class of people or group over others and, in the process, treat them better or worse in comparison to those selected or unselected (Villiger, 2022).

Since this theory is associated with tasting and distasting people in their social groups, relating it to this study portrays a big picture of discrimination based on who Christians and Muslims are in terms of employment selection. Workers who are wanted are hired based on the institution's faith, and those with a different faith are left out. Similarly, answers related to when it is legitimate to discriminate against people according to their groups are examined to assess its implications in terms of religious co-existence between Christians and Muslims.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Constructive Implications on Christian-Muslim Relations

The employment of staff, whether in public or private religious institutions, plays an integral role in their well-being. Therefore, emerging opportunities are key for all. In this case, whenever there are results from the endeavours of their own religious belonging, vast celebrations follow and are upheld with much spiritual renaissance (Benefiel, Fry and Geigle, 2014). However, this study does not point out clearly what this means for believers emerging from different religions.

2.2.2 Destructive Implications on Christian-Muslim Relations

Discrimination based on religion has, for example, in American institutions, created great worries about workers' lives and their protections (Bassioni, 2021). A study conducted in American institutions observed that the majority of workers, especially those of the Islamic faith, underwent many troubles that sprouted after the 1960s, when the continent witnessed masses of Muslim refugees entering its various territories (Bassioni, 2021). Therefore, environmental as well as religious

prejudices have impacted many working populations' lives, as most of them do not know and can't afford to protect themselves from a widely practiced religion like Christianity on the continent (Bassioni, 2021).

According to Vang, Hou and Elder (2018), there is disintegration among people in terms of utilising the formerly built joint religious resources. These include misusing or even burying projects that both religions started for common understanding and unity of religions. For example, libraries and forums for discussing various worldviews, hospitality aid strategies, and aid pieces of equipment for believers may all be lost simply for maintaining a religion in a bolted manner that distances all the religious others (Vang, Hou & Elder, 2018). Scheitle and Ecklund (2016) also argue that many job applicants with Arab sounding name suffer more because many employing institutions, especially those of Christian faith, do not call them back for further interviews, which puts them in false hope, thus a danger to any Christian whether known to them or not..

Faith-based discrimination also creates multiple levels of mistrust in institutions, especially when workers are unaware of the missions of the establishments in which they work (Benefiel, Fry & Geigle, 2014). The illustration is that the reservation of opportunities from other masses, a case being employment between two groups (Christians and Muslims) marks new phases of misconceptions and assumptions (Benefiel, Fry & Geigle, 2014). Therefore, work plays a more vital role when it's given out than when it is held reservedly; for it complements the life satisfaction mandate (Benefiel, Fry & Geigle, 2014). Additionally, Messarra (2018) found that employees who undergo various faith-based discriminations have, most of the time, lost their institutional obligations and work curiosity. Hence, being rendered emotionally negative about religious bodies manifested in institutions, which again causes them to strive to gain and maintain coexistence amidst various employer institutions (Messarra, 2018).

Furthermore, Krinitcyna and Menshikova (2015) explicitly highlight that these negative implications have reduced workers' routines at work and levels of effectiveness, especially for those retained in institutions. Namutebi (2015) argues that, other than creating diverse relations and communal relationships from which workers originate, discrimination against workers may result in reduced trust in some institutions ranging from local to international believers of other religions. Additionally, some workers have been depressed, affecting both personal and family setups, especially when families have greater hopes of survival and boosted living standards in such institutions (Ryan & Gardner, 2018). Asim (2015) explicitly mentions that most workers who are victims of faith-based discrimination do not escape the problem of monetary constraint, which transitions them into other challenges like lost confidence even in their own beliefs should the professed faith provide no alternative to the challenge at hand.

2.5 Research Gap

From the literature reviewed, no study specifically points out the impact of discrimination against workers for being Christian or Muslim. Additionally, it does not explain how this affects their religious relations and co-existence. There are no recommendations proposed to accommodate all religious believers of both Christian and Muslim faiths during recruitment and even after being employed amicably. Therefore, this study is vital in engaging these two religions in their employment by displaying their impact so as to realise Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale. The aim is to make this a model for other regions and religions while addressing this knowledge gap.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This mixed-methods study used survey and historical designs, which incorporated qualitative and quantitative approaches. In the qualitative approach, a cross-sectional survey design was involved in administering questionnaires to determine characteristics of policies of employment and their implications on workers. A Historical design involving document analysis was applied as well to determine if those in charge of recruitment strictly adhere to the policies mentioned therein or even add in personal traits. In a quantitative approach, interview schedules were used to ascertain what workers in various work categories go through and how it impacts their relations in terms of their faith as either Christians or Muslims.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Mbale City, Uganda, a traditional homeland for the Bamasaaba (Bagisu) people, who are the dominant inhabitants. Administratively, the city has two divisions, Industrial and Northern, with a population of 371,626 according to a report from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2024). The selection of this city is due to its role as a commercial, political, social, religious, and cultural centre. Both religions have headquarters located in this city, where they have more influence due to their magnificent religious and other institutional infrastructural facilities set up, requiring workers for their daily operations.

3.3 Targeted Population

The study targeted 60 institutions with a total of 1320 workers. These numbers were obtained from the City Planning Department and the institutions during inquiries. The intention was to know the employment categories or work hierarchies in private religious institutions and establish the number of employees working therein, as given to them during inspections by the City Planning Department.

3.4 Sampling technique and Sample Size

One institution from each religion was selected. The study used a stratified random sampling technique where respondents were categorized into sections (Mfaeka, 2021). Therefore, 4 strata that included Management, Institutional heads, Human resource officers, and Non-administrative workers were picked. Therefore, 6 religious institutions, including educational facilities in the categories of a university, a secondary school, and a primary school, were picked. Others included a health center, a radio station, and a charity organization, with a total of 132 participants as shown in the subsequent table.

As indicated in the table above, 12 institutions out of 60 constituted the sample size, each represented by 11 respondents after determining lists of employment categories per institution. A total of 132 respondents (11 employment categories x 12 Institutions) from 1320 workers in all the institutions were selected, as shown in Table 1 below;

Table 1:

List of target respondents per religious Institution

Category of respondent	Number
Management Leader	1
Institutional Head	1
Human Resource Officer	1
Non-Administrative Workers	8
Total	11

Source: Field Data 2025

Since the total population of workers is below 10,000, determining a sample didn't require a formula; instead, a sample size of between 10 and 30% constituted a good representation of it, and 10% was good for analysis (Mugenda, 2003). Therefore, 132 (1320 x 0.1) respondents out of a larger target population of 1320 workers were selected. The same was applied to 6 religious institutions (60 x 0.1) purposively for balanced results. The number of institutions was equalled to avoid exaggerations for one religion, since Christianity had more (36) institutions, unlike Islam with fewer (24) institutions. Hence, 1 institution in the same category was picked to constitute 6, which summed up to 12 institutions (6 x 2), as shown here:

Table 2:

List of Religious Institutions selected

Institution	Christian	Muslim	Cumulative No.
University	1	1	2
Secondary School	1	1	2
Primary School	1	1	2
Health Centre	1	1	2
Radio Station	1	1	2

Charity Organisation	1	1	2
Total	6	6	12

Source: Field Data 2025

3.5 Data Collection Method

Qualitative data were collected using questionnaires from managers, human resource officers, and institutional heads. This was done using 36 interviews lasting between 10 and 20 minutes at selected times in their respective offices, one-on-one. This allowed ample elaboration of issues of how Christian-Muslim relations have been impacted by faith-based discrimination of workers during and after recruitment in religious institutions they lead. Also, 96 interview guides were used for the strata of non-administrative workers since most of them are direct victims of discrimination. Document analysis was used as well to supplement and triangulate data collected using the above methods.

3.6 Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the questionnaire and interview guides were analysed based on the views expressed by workers in institutions they lead and work in, respectively. The findings from the questionnaires and interview guides underwent statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and their percentages were displayed in tables and figures. Additionally, both quantitative data from questionnaires and interview guides were analysed based on concepts, themes, and sub-themes and then arranged in table format.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This study took keen observations on ethical matters. An ethical approval letter from the University Ethics Committee and the respective religious institutions' committees were all sought. Other ethical issues like informed consent and privacy were ensured before and after, such that both institutional and personal privacy were maintained. Confidentiality of respondents was observed sensitively in that no opinion raised by any respondent was sabotaged, excluded, or misrepresented by the researcher. Also, observation of plagiarism rules was followed without hesitation. In cases where borrowed ideas or literature were used, proper acknowledgments were made.

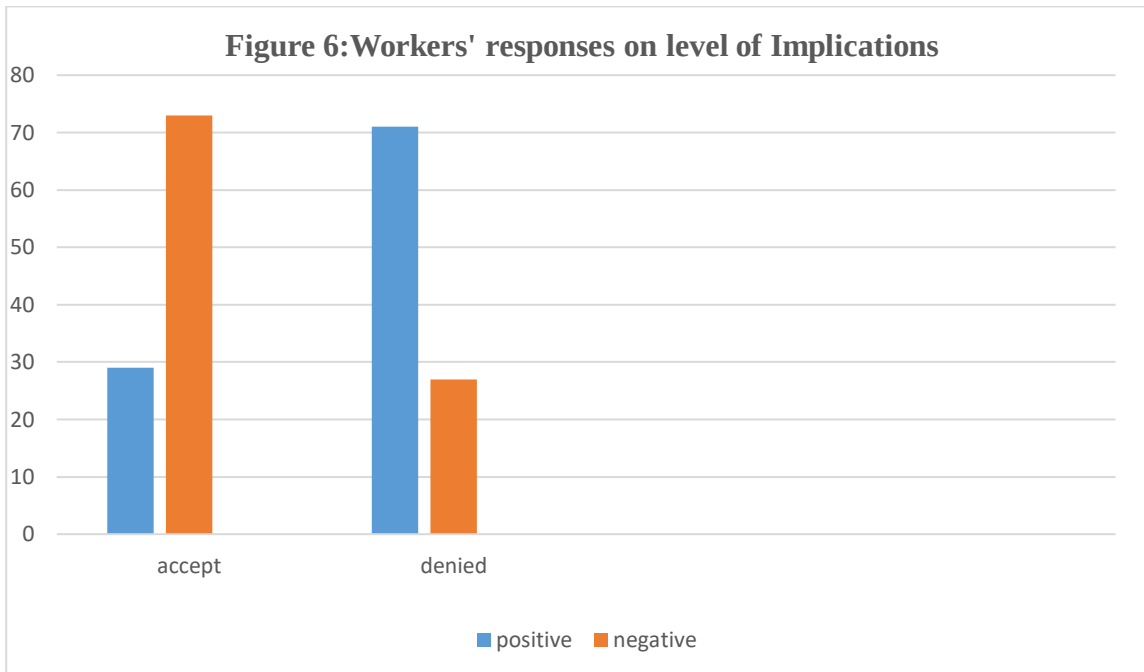
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.4 Results of implications on Christian-Muslim Relations

More than half (73%) of all respondents accepted that Faith-based discrimination of workers in Religious institutions has implications on Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale, compared to 23% who denied. Whereas 4% of the respondents said they do not know whether it has any implications or not. However, out of 73% of the participants who admitted that it has implications, a lesser proportion (29%) said it brings positive implications while the majority (71%) said negative. This is also represented in the bar graph below.

Figure 1:

Workers' responses on level of Implication



Source: Field Data 2025

The data is also presented narratively in themes. The analysis of the study shows two major themes. Out of the two are also several sub-themes showing both constructive and destructive implications on Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale. The constructive implications include: Preservation of religious and institutional culture and norms whereby only one faith flows across all workers. This phenomenon stimulates funding of core and relevant research on other religions, strengthens one's faith, and ensures reserved employment opportunities whereby those of one faith employed enjoy high status in communities of their residence, thereby improving their living standards. Others include: prevention of religious stereotyping statements and deepening alliances within a religion.

The destructive implications include: the rise of malice and negative thoughts. There is non-compliance and the spread of misinformation about certain institutions, which in turn provokes insecurity concerns. Additionally, there is a deepened foundation for continuous discrimination over generations. It also widens doors for the exit of gifted and skilled people to areas free from religious influence. It limits coverage and audience to listeners in the case of radio.

Furthermore, religious discrimination limits the provision of social services, increases anxiety and depression, and limits knowledge on doctrinal issues of other religions. It further discourages workers' cooperation and collaboration between religions and their institutions, which eventually limits opportunities for believers across the economic space.

Table 3:

Responses of Implications on Christian-Muslim Relations

Study themes	Sub-themes	Number of References per Institution		
		Christian	Muslim	Total
Constructive Implications	Preservation of the religious and institutional culture and norms	03	03	06
	Stimulates funding of core and relevant research on other religions	02	01	03
	Strengthens personal faith	06	08	14
	Prevents religious stereotyping statements	01	01	02

	Reserves employment opportunities	06	04	10
	Deepens alliances within a religion	03	04	07
Destructive Implications	Rouses malice and negative thoughts	03	02	05
	Non-compliance and spread of misinformation about certain institutions	04	08	12
	Arouses insecurity concerns	07	03	10
	Deepens foundations for continuous discrimination over generations	01	02	03
	Widens doors for the exit of gifted and skilled people to areas free from religious influence	00	02	02
	Limits coverage and audience for the case of radios	01	01	02
	Limits provision of social services	03	03	06
	Increases anxiety and depression	01	04	05
	Discourages cooperation and collaboration between religions and their institutions	02	01	03
	Limits knowledge of doctrinal issues of other religions	02	00	02
	Limits opportunities for believers, leading to economic hardship	02	02	04

Source: Field Data 2025

However, 11 respondents (23%) said that there are no implications related to faith-based discrimination of workers on Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale. Their arguments were that all religions seem not aware of such a phenomenon as there are no major calls, especially from religious leaders who could have already sought remedies for it. There is no felt presence of Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale, an indicator that such a problem lacks advocates; hence simply a battle between employers or employing institutions and employees, not religions. Likewise, some stressed that most religious believers have perceived information concerning this incidence and, as such, do not waste time searching for jobs in institutions owned by religions they do not believe in.

When asked what needs to be done to ensure amicable recruitment of workers in religious institutions for Christian-Muslim relations in Mbale, Most respondents, 78 (59.0%), requested that institutions, through their founders and managers, should ensure deliberate hiring of persons with the zeal of uplifting the institutions' performance based on abilities. Some 2 workers (1.5%) urged consideration of persons who are God-fearing regardless of the language they use to describe or pray to God. They said that "a religious person is better than an atheist". Still, some urged religious Institutions to give work freedom from any kind of religious affiliation, provided one fulfills the institution's mandate as specified in the job descriptions to workers.

Furthermore, 7 respondents (5.3%) implored that there should be mass sensitization of all religious communities, including all religious institutions, on how they can provide avenues to workers of other faiths. Additionally, induction of all new staff recruited into institutions about faith and work is vital so that workers are not so consumed by their faith. Their rights should be made known to them. Some respondents emphasised that work should be the greatest thing to rely on while in institutions unless it is a purely religious serving institution like a theological college. Again, some respondents urged that Institutions should prioritise academic credentials in their recruitment processes since the majority of tasks require the learned, unlike if it is providing religious programs only.

17 respondents (12.8%) suggested that adverts should be open to accommodate and provide opportunities for trials of all candidates, as is the case in some Muslim institutions. They should desist from indicating religion from the first stage,

especially in Christian institutions, unless it calls for only religious leaders. 6 respondents (5.5%) appealed for interfaith dialogue to mitigate stereotypes and promote inclusive hiring practices. Others, 2 (1.5%), said that Institutions shouldn't rush to appeal for conversions of some workers before employment. This is due to its associated dangers, as it deprives workers' right to religion provided in the Constitution and shows discrepancies between religions.

Similarly, 5 respondents (3.7%) suggested that all institutions should revisit the Equal Opportunities Commission Act of 2008, which upholds equality in recruitment and calls on all persons and employing institutions to refrain from selective employment of persons based on either religious affiliations or other forms.

Additionally, 3 respondents proposed that there is a need for the formation of religious advocacy groups that aim at curbing religious discrimination. Such groups are to lobby for balanced and multiple chances for all workers regardless of their religion in Mbale. Subscriptions by workers' unions and members are to necessitate movements around checking on such concerns. Also, National and International bodies that call to end faith-based discrimination should be reached for help. By doing that, religious institutions can be involved through seminars and inter-religious workshops or symposiums that make coalitions aimed at co-existence in work environments and the entire community.

Finally, 8 (6.0%) implored for mandatory ethical recruitment training for employers in both religious public and private institutions, as this prevents further problems. This is also represented in the table below:

Table 4: Responses on what needs to be done for amicable recruitment of workers for Christian and Muslim Relations in Mbale

Responses	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Deliberate hiring based on personal abilities	78	59.0
God-fearing personality	2	1.5
Mass sensitization and induction of Institution leaders and all new staff on legal rights and religious work ethics	7	5.3
Maintain open adverts	17	12.8
Foster interfaith dialogue to mitigate stereotypes and promote inclusive hiring practices.	6	5.5
No appeals and pushes for religious conversions	2	1.5
Revisit the Equal Opportunities Commission Act of 2008	5	3.7
Formation of religious advocacy groups for monitoring and accountability mechanisms on implementation of recruitment policies	7	5.3
Institutionalise mandatory ethical recruitment training for employers in religious private institutions	8	6.0
Total	132	100.0

4.2 DISCUSSION

The study was to build on the understudied faith-based discrimination in religious institutions and how it informs the relationships between Christians and Muslims in Mbale. Out of the sample, more than half of the workers admitted that there is discrimination in religious institutions based on faith affiliations. Workers of the Muslim faith reported higher levels of faith-based discrimination compared to Christians.

The results suggest that there is higher faith-based discrimination in Christian than in Muslim institutions. Therefore, this has major implications for Christian and Muslim relations in Mbale. This is irrespective of whether a worker is of a Muslim or Christian faith. This dilemma is possibly associated with religious institutions' policies against workers of other faiths, which thus give fewer opportunities to candidates, though some are already staff there.

The findings are consistent with but also add to the limited body of literature concerning Christian-Muslim relations and the adverse implications it creates for workers who seek jobs in employing institutions, including those standing purely on a religious basis. For example, a study on religious discrimination in the workplace found many negative impacts that workers go through in their stations (Schneider et al, 2022). These included verbal microaggressions, stereotyping, social exclusion, and othering, and negative experiences when observing religious holidays or displaying religious symbols (Schneider et al, 2022).

This study on faith-based discrimination of workers is possibly the first in Mbale to make a comprehensive examination of relationships between Christians and Muslims in the employment sector. Experiences of faith-based discrimination are mainly associated with no promotions to emerging and key positions in institutions. Additionally, forced attendance at key prayer sessions, disallowance of wearing religious attire on compounds, and name-calling.

Therefore, in assessing the implications of faith-based discrimination of workers on Christian-Muslim relations, the findings reveal a destructive relationship between Christians and Muslims both in their workplaces and the general community. The major destructive ones included non-compliance and the spread of misinformation about certain institutions, the rise of insecurity concerns, and limitations in providing social services. The constructive ones included significantly strengthened personal faith, reserved employment opportunities, and preserved religious and institutional culture and norms. They were all predetermined and analysed using themes descriptively, whereby the most recurring ones agreed with what Ryan & Gardner (2018) and Asim (2015) described as instruments that affect not only one person but entire families. These findings further align with the findings of many studies documented on the implications of faith-based discrimination in employment, according to Asim (2015) and Etherington (2019). It further agrees with what Bassioni (2021) found: environmental religious prejudices have impacted many working populations' lives, as most of them do not know and can't afford to protect themselves from a widely practiced religion like Christianity in comparison to other religions in a community like Mbale.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that evidence from religious institutions shows higher destructive implications than constructive implications as a result of faith-based discrimination of workers in religious institutions. Whereas there are some independent and interreligious bodies working hard to create a world free from religious and other forms of discrimination in the workplace based on one's faith, its realisation is slightly harder. This study emphasises that such an aspect will have to go deeper, from offices to real grounds where believers of these two faiths live and work. Otherwise, continuous lamenting won't yield any result but instead will provide more strength to the advancers; yet Mbale's religious institutions need to incorporate all workers of various faiths through inclusive and amicable recruitment policies for conducive working environments and religious relations.

Growing evidence shows that faith-based discrimination of workers in religious institutions of Mbale creates a lasting impact on Christian and Muslim relationships. Thus, the highlighted implications cause not only challenges to workers, but also to institutions as well. The results, in comparison with emerging issues globally, underpin the need to free religion from discrimination in work unless such institutions are founded for religious purposes only (US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2022), which most of them are not in Mbale and other corporations, since it is identified as a key determinant in terms of spoiling relationships between Christians and Muslims.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, both government and non-governmental bodies responsible for employment and inclusiveness, such as the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, among others, should take an interest in assessing recruitment procedures not only in government institutions but also in private and religious institutions. They should see how institutions recruit employees and socialize with them, and then advise where necessary for equal welfare.

More research is also required to highlight the challenges this poses for institutions, not just workers. For example, a study on religious discrimination among Muslim women in banks in India showed that religious-based discrimination forces workers to pass on their names simply to regain or acquire a new opportunity, which, however, is less discussed in religious matters (Akbaba, 2023; Ahmed, S & Gorey, K. M, 2021).

Additionally, future research is needed to guide the development of anti-faith-based discriminatory institutional policies that provide avenues for the inclusion of all able workers, thereby promoting peaceful coexistence. It should be thoroughly researched by all employment policymakers and interreligious advocacy bodies for its ultimate eradication from communities, thereby achieving favourable peace among all religious believers.

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