



# Lived Experience of Unskilled Migrant Workers in Lafarge Cement Plant, Ewekoro, Ogun State

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## INTRODUCTION

Munday and Daniel (2016) defines lived experiences as a “personal understanding of.” the world gathered through first-hand encounters with everyday events. Everyday occurrences are diverse and defined by the sorts of engagements, affiliations, and activities that people engage in. The lived experiences of people are peculiar to the activities they engage in, such as their jobs, families, religious associations, and social clubs among others and these experiences largely influence their perception of life itself. The lived experiences of migrant workers remain a distinctive area of study marked by the duo-shock they are exposed to. The first is the cultural shock and the second is the expectational shock. Most migrant workers move in a bid to secure a better future, improved condition of service and generally to improve the standard of their lives. However, these people are often faced with disappointment when they realize the host countries do not always meet their expectations. Adjusting to the new cultures they find themselves in.

Unskilled migrant workers have unique lived experiences that are shaped by their experiences of migration, working in unfamiliar environments, and adapting to new cultures. These experiences can greatly impact their sense of identity, belonging, and overall well-being. Additionally, these migrant workers

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may face specific challenges such as language barriers, discrimination, and limited access to resources, which further shape their lived experiences.

Nigeria, a largely diverse nation is home to several nationalities from around the world. the migration of people from all around the world to the country is motivated by several factors some of which include; business, education, and tourism, among others. however, the influx of workers into the country is usually recorded from neighbouring and underdeveloped countries such as Mali, Niger, the Congo, and Sudan among others (NIS, 2019).

Unskilled workers are individuals who work in manual labour or low-wage service industries and have no prior experience, particular talents, or formal training. They are also referred to as unskilled or blue-collar workers (Ayodele, 2015). However, because of their degrees and skills, these categories of workers are frequently financially marginalised, resulting in a different type of experience for workers in this category (Gbadebo, 2007). Class analysis has frequently depicted unskilled workers as being in approximately identical job and market settings. Their employment relationship is characterised by a unique type of contract known as a “labour contract,” which is distinguished by unpredictable compensation, limited asset specificity, and substantial job unpredictability. The lives of unskilled workers would be encapsulated in three fundamental concepts that would describe the dynamics of their lives both within and outside of the workplace. These fundamentals are framed by the workers’ social, family, and religious lives, from which meanings to define their lives were derived in order to comprehend how employment affects unskilled workers, their lives, and the people with whom they engage socially.

The social lives of unskilled migrant workers vary depending on factors such as their distinctive employment (department and duties allocated), geography, and individual circumstances. According to Newman (2017) in her book “The Social Lives of Unskilled Workers,” unskilled migrant workers face a number of socioeconomic hurdles that negatively affect their overall well-being. For example, they may have limited access to social networks and support programmes, making it more difficult for them to find and keep a job, as well as obtain healthcare, education, and other services. They may also face bias and stereotyping at work and in their communities, further isolating them and making it harder for them to advance in life.

Religious beliefs and practices may have a substantial influence on the lives of low-skilled workers, according to research on migrant workers conducted by Pearce and Melinda (2014). The precise manner in which religion influences the religious lives of unskilled workers differs according to factors such as their unique religious tradition, region, and personal circumstances. Kutsche (2018) highlighted in his book “Religion and the Working Class” that religion may be a kind of support and society for unskilled employees, supporting them in dealing with the challenges they face on a daily basis. A study of Catholic migrant farmworkers in California, for example, revealed that their faith helped them find meaning in their horrible working conditions and establish a sense of community with their co-workers.

According to Susan (2014), the family lives of migrant unskilled workers can be impacted by a number of factors including job schedule, earnings and the resources available to them. Unskilled migrant workers often leave without their families in the search for greener pastures. After acquaintance and settlement with their jobs, the environment, society and people, they then decide to bring in other members of their families. However, the family lives of these workers are largely dependent on their working conditions, geography, and financial buoyancy among others. These conditions often restrict access to their families back in their home countries as they may be unable to accommodate them.

In Nigeria, there is a growing number of unskilled workers which might be attributed to poverty, poor economic structure, and unemployment among others (Industrial Training Fund, 2022). However, this number has continued to increase as a result of the unending streams of immigration from neighbouring countries legally and illegally. The porosity of the Nigerian borders has made the inward flow of these migrants easier and they continue to expand in number and dominate the unskilled sector. Migrant workers are predominantly found in the construction and manufacturing industries in Nigeria because low-skilled opportunities are relatively open at these levels. It is therefore pivotal to understand the lived experiences of these migrant workers, to understand the motivations behind their migration decisions, and what they have at stake and to gain and also to understand the challenges and opportunities the host country presents them. This study strictly considered unskilled migrant workers in a multinational cement plant to have a better understanding of the dynamics of their lives and also to contribute to the body of existing knowledge.

Preconceptions regarding unskilled migrant workers in the construction and manufacturing industries are frequently based on financial insecurity, health issues, illiteracy, and a low standard of living, among other factors stemming from the nature of their jobs, salary scale, and long hours of exposure to hazardous elements (Duncan et al., 2012). However, the prevalence of these preconceptions has been exacerbated as a result of insufficient studies on unskilled migrant labour, particularly in Nigeria's cement industries. The majority of the literature on the lived experience of unskilled migrant workers in the cement industry has been performed to demonstrate the health risks of cement manufacture. According to the studies, unskilled migrant workers in the cement sector are subject to occupational hazards and risks as a result of working circumstances that expose them to physical, physiological, and psychological harm (Alakija et al., 1990).

In addition, there hasn't been enough research on unskilled migrant workers in Nigeria to properly comprehend the scope of their working circumstances and the influence on their general well-being. This study vacuum creates a huge information gap, impeding the development of effective policies and initiatives to safeguard vulnerable workers. Future research must look deeper into the specific issues encountered by unskilled migrant workers in

Nigeria's manufacturing industry in order to meet their special needs and guarantee their rights and safety are protected. These workers will continue to be exploited and harmed unless their experiences are fully understood (Adedokun, 2003).

The study aimed to; understand the challenges of full-time unskilled migrant workers in the Lafarge Cement Plant, Ewekoro, investigate the effect of work on the social, family and religious lives of unskilled migrant workers, and describe the methods adopted by unskilled migrant workers in the management of organizational hazards and risks.

The Ewekoro Lafarge cement facility is notable for its significant industrial operations in cement manufacture. However, there is relatively little research on the lived experiences of workers in cement industries in Nigeria, and no studies on the lived experiences of unskilled migrant workers at the Lafarge cement factory in Ewekoro. The majority of manufacturing industry research is centred on Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA), production medical consequences, and state-level migratory industrial workers. This study explored the lived experience of unskilled migrant workers to comprehend how influences inside the work organisation affect the workers' life, wellness, and survival in order to get adequate descriptive information on the lived experience of unskilled migrant workers in the Lafarge Cement Plant.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Relevant concepts and literature were reviewed in line with unskilled workers, migrant workers, poor conditions of service, and gender dynamics in labour among others.

### *Unskilled Migrant Workers in the World*

Foreign workers were classified as expatriates, immigrants, or migrants in previous investigations on international labour (Human Rights Watch, 2014; Van den Bergh & Du Plessis, 2012). Migrants are those who relocate to another nation to work or live. Immigrants are persons who have moved to the host country from another country. According to the demographic patterns of migration, which have increased to unprecedented magnitude and variety, there were 232 million migrants worldwide in 2013, accounting for 3% of the world's population. Southeast Asia's most populated nations are the Philippines (4,500,000), Indonesia (6,000,000), Thailand (500,000), and Vietnam (500,000), with an estimated 20 million Southeast Asians working overseas (Cheng, 2016). Labour-intensive employment and language hurdles may limit these people's social relationships and acculturation tendencies. Immigrant populations may be excluded due to a lack of social links to their host societies, and the conditions of their job may have a substantial impact on their health and cultural adaption. Migrant workers' mental and physical health can be harmed by their employers' isolation and exploitation, limited access to

medical treatment, and a lack of a sense of belonging to a wider community (Aung et al., 2020). In a study by Bustamante (2017), in his book *Stress, Trauma, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in Migrants*, migrant workers frequently encounter traumatic events and challenging circumstances such as racial prejudice, urban violence, police harassment, forcible removal from their homes, incarceration or exclusion, and expulsion. Stress and trauma have been related to a variety of mental diseases, including Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), schizophrenia, and suicidal behaviour. Both pre- and post-migration issues increase the probability of poor psychological health connected with immigration.

### *Quality of Life of Cement Factory Workers*

Work-life is part of life, and the workplace environment affects an individual's social, cultural, and life attributes (Kesser, 2004). The World Health Organization has defined life quality as "individuals' decision of perceiving their status in life, being associated to their aims, aspirations, benchmarks, and concerns about life" (Birsal et al., 2017). The goal of evaluating people's mental, physical, substance, social, financial, well-being, and many other aspects in terms of situation and fulfilment is clearly borne out by classifying life quality. Life quality is measured on two levels: personal and social. Thereby personal evaluation symbolizes an individual's contentment, social evaluation represents constructs such as an individual's residence, economic status, and social contacts (Demirkan, 2012). Workers in cement industries face health problems related to their skin and sense organs, gastrointestinal system, and respiratory system due to work conditions such as heat, noise, dust, and climatic conditions (Turkkan, 2015). All negative work-related aspects pose a risk to one's health and thus affect one's life quality in the temporary or long run advancements toward the workers' working environments in the nation are spearheaded by Labour (No. 3857, 2003) and Occupational Health and the Safety Law (No. 6645, 2015), however not to the anticipated degree. The presence of an occupational nursery has grown. This legislation is also significant (Regulations governing occupational doctors and other health professionals, purpose, approval, duty and education, 2013).

To understand the dynamics of the lives of unskilled migrant workers the study adopted the transcendental phenomenological theory. Transcendental phenomenology aims to understand human experiences in order to describe these experiences while setting aside preconceived thoughts, notions and assumptions (epoche). The suitability of descriptive phenomenology in studying the lived experiences of unskilled migrant workers is further emphasized through its means among which is bracketing. Ideas, notions and thoughts are conceived as a result of observation, prevalence and occurrences. In Nigeria, people have preconceived ideas about unskilled migrant workers merely from their appearances, cultural differences and adaptability. However, preconceived ideas often deter objective knowledge due to the prior

understanding of issues. Bracketing, therefore, excuses these prior notions, assumptions and thoughts, and allows for transcendental subjectivity which refers to the neutralization of preconceptions, biases and notions in studying the lived experience of people.

### METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a qualitative research methodology and utilised the exploratory research design to understand problems that are not clearly stated through investigations. The study was situated in Ewekoro Local government of Ogun State which houses the popular Lafarge cement plant. The population of the study were the migrant workers who held low-tier positions within the organization and those whose job requirements demanded little skills, qualifications, certifications and supervision. A total number of 5 unskilled migrant workers were interviewed while those who held positions were interviewed as key informants. The data was analysed thematically in accordance with the objectives of the study.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Challenges in the cement plant affect workers differently. Some of the general challenges that affect all workers include poor transportation services, bad roads, low/no accommodation, and poor infrastructures among others. Unskilled migrant workers in all categories however are faced with some common challenges while there are also departmental challenges peculiar to workers in their line of duty. According to a Junior Staff from the Electrical department;

*the challenges I am facing as an electrical engineer in the site here, first of all the issue of mobility, the major challenge I have as a staff irrespective of my discipline or area of specialization, mobility is a problem. A situation where you close from work and then maybe for the last 2 hours before closing you are thinking of how you will get home because the mobility is very poor, the workers are more than the cars for transit, that is my major challenge—4:6 ¶ 14 in IDI with Junior Electrical Staff*

The excerpt above depict frustration on the part of the worker, a migrant, who expressed displeasure about the transportation services provided by the Organisation. The shortage of buses poses a major challenge to workers who in their numbers have to return home after every day's work. Some of the workers, especially the migrants residing in Abeokuta, Ilaro, Ifo, and Sagamu among others often struggle to go home as they do not have personal transportation systems for ease of movement. Migrant workers in the plant live far away from the organization in order to get affordable housing and as a result

of their unfamiliarity with the environment. Some of these migrants are dependents and have to put up with their countrymen within the region, thereby deciding their accommodation.

*Firstly, leaving your house to a plant that is almost 60 km is not easy, there is transportation risk from the trailers and then going that distance every day to and fro is a challenge.—18:7 ¶ 16 in IDI with Junior Electrical Engineer*

From this statement, it can be concluded that transportation is a major challenge to all workers within and outside the plant. Transportation challenge apart from causing physical stress has other psychological effects on the worker some of which include absenteeism from work due to established phobia, loss of enthusiasm, and emotional strain among others. Apart from this, workers are vulnerable to accidents, stress, body pains, and kidnapping which is of growing concern around Papa, Ewekoro, Owode and some other parts of Ogun State (Punch, 2022). All these issues combined inevitably have impacts on the effectiveness and efficiency of workers on the job. The issue of transportation can further expose the worker to risks of being queried or even fired. Due to the bad roads and unavailability of buses, workers get to work late and as a recurring cycle, workers tend to resume late to work every day.

Challenges for all workers further transcend beyond the issues of transportation and low infrastructure. Another challenge workers face is red-tapism which is a common feature of bureaucratic organisations. From the response of a facility management officer;

*The major challenges I think is getting work done and delivering at the right time. Some of the activities need urgent attention and based on the fact that you need lots of clearances could lead to delay and that is a challenge that I face. You need authorization before you can get work done.—19:7 ¶ 16 in IDI with Facility Management Officer*

The excerpt above represents the fear of the participant of not delivering the job at the right time. This challenge, however, is not peculiar to this worker as all workers in the plant go through processes before getting work done. However, migrant workers have a reservation towards cases of delays as they believe these cases might provide ground for undue punishment, discrimination and marginalization.

The welfare of workers is paramount to the quality and quantity of work done (Jerome, 2019). From the mines department, an operator, who migrated from Togo, lamented about their welfare and their promotion. Worker's welfare ranges between increases in salary, incentives, bonuses, extended leave, holiday packages, feeding, and accommodation among others which often promotes performance, productivity, quality service delivery, efficiency and effectiveness. His statement below reads;

*Well one of the major challenges include the bad welfare, they are not taking care of us maybe because we are foreigners. Another issue is the promotion is not there at all and it is too slow. I have been working here for over 8 years and I am still where I am, I am not moving forward, I am still a worker as I have been since I was employed—21:7 ¶ 16 in IDI with Operator\_Mines*

Promotions in formal organisations can be used as a yardstick of success and achievement because it is often viewed as a reward for hard work and dedication. These rewards often come with a title, increase in pay, personal space and prestige. However, a case where a dedicated and hardworking staff does not get promoted in time has negative effects on the person who would feel downcast due to the stagnation in their career. According to the Operator at the mines, since his employment 8 years ago, he has not been promoted. He however believes this is not the case for native workers as they do not have the same career advancement scheme. He believes his nationality is used to discriminate against his career progression and this is a major challenge for him.

Another challenge migrant workers face generally is communication challenges with the natives and expatriates who work with them. Cement plants often partner with foreign investors and firms for their expertise and also due to the technicalities of the machinery used in the production process. In Nigeria, professionals in cement plants are largely the Chinese and Indians well known for their expertise and acquaintance with large industrial machinery. However, these expatriates who are not from English-speaking countries tend to communicate with the help of translators. In cases where there are no translators, communication becomes a problem and this can be dangerous for workers in sensitive work departments as instructions can be misinterpreted. The excerpt below affirms how communication can pose a challenge to getting work done.

*Well it hasn't been easy, there are good and bad sides to my experiences, there are frustration challenges, there are leadership challenge so your ability to comprehend these challenges makes you a man. Getting to the plant and your colleagues might pose a challenge because they might not like you because you are from a different country and then from your superiors especially those who are natives, if it was with a fellow countryman who understand the language then it is okay but then communication challenge with expatriates and natives sometimes is an issue. Then having good rapport with your bosses is another thing, so managing the challenges makes you a man.—18:7 ¶ 16 in IDI with Junior Electrical Engineer*

Apart from the communication challenge, he emphasized how the relationship between colleagues and superiors can pose a challenge. The cordiality of a relationship can either be an advantage or disadvantage at work. The participant believes that maintaining a good rapport with colleagues and bosses can ease the challenges faced. This emphasizes the role of mutuality, consensus and cooperation at work. Workers who do not have good relationships among

themselves are vulnerable to fights and quarrels which is unhealthy for a goal-oriented corporation. Individual differences, backgrounds, religious beliefs, and ethnicity among others build up differences in opinion. However, tolerance among workers would not only promote peace but foster cooperation and goal attainment. These challenges would then transcend to the description of the disposition of these migrant workers towards their jobs.

A worker's disposition to their job is informed by the conditions of service, payment, incentives, benefits, challenges, and welfare among others. Feelings of happiness, sadness, motivation and enthusiasm depend on the conditions the department and organisation at large expose them to. However, findings from this study gathered a large array of data on the feelings of workers towards their work and job satisfaction.

The excerpts from the engineer at the utility department and the operator at the mines who are both migrants depict sadness, frustration and acceptance of an 'ill-fated' job. According to them;

*Often time all of us migrants and natives not just me we feel bad but it is our job we know that this is the thing that brought us to the job so we have to do the job.—2:9 ¶ 22 in IDI with Engineer Utility Dept*

*Well you have to feel happy because there is nothing more you can do, so since it is your fate you just have to hold on and do your work—21:9 ¶ 20 in IDI with Operator\_Mines*

From the responses of these workers, they are not satisfied with their jobs as a result of the challenges and working conditions which to them is not favourable. However, their economic status and responsibilities would not afford them the liberty of resigning which is also complimented by the widespread unemployment and meagre opportunities. Their migration decision from their home countries was informed by the prospects and opportunities in a different country. However, these expectations are met with utter disappointment and their expression of sadness is a build-up from their experiences which they have been subjected to daily without any positive changes. Many workers especially those confronted with challenges may fall into this category as a result of the physical, psychological and emotional pressure exerted on them by their organisation. The recognition and acceptance of this situation would only result in demotivation, loss of enthusiasm to work and achieve results, loss of focus and zeal.

The social lives of unskilled migrant workers in this study revolve around time spent off the job for leisure, meeting with friends, relaxing, engaging in social activities, and personal time. The social lives of these workers are dependent on the time afforded them by their jobs which would be decided by working hours, work category (general/shift), job demands, sensitivity of position and office, and social acceptance/integration among others.

*This job takes my time, I don't have a vibrant social life, I only watch football once in a while and I do so on my phone, my social life is poor right now and it is something I must tell you.—10:7 ¶ 16 in IDI with Power Generation Worker*

The statement of the power generation worker above shows the negative effect of work on the social life of the worker. The loss of a vibrant social life explains time consumption by duty which has affected the participant's personal time. The worker describes a vibrant social life as one which affords time to engage in social activities, leisure, time with friends and ultimately not being disturbed by work or abruptly called for duty. The implication of this on the worker is the switch from a flexible social life to a rigid work life which with its psychological effects would inevitably affect the worker. Loss of social life depicts loss of intimacy with friends, loss of leisure time, loss of social networks or a significant reduction in interaction with peers, colleagues, or family. It further depicts the loss of association and indulgence in activities among others. However, in managing the situation, the participant watches football on his phone to occupy himself while work surrounds him. This engagement serves as a social activity filling the void of physical relationships and interaction would create a sense of companionship to the participant and would be seen as a temporal exit from work life.

The power generation worker related his lived experience and explained that engagement in social activities such as interaction with peers, and patronising viewing centres among others have been affected by the work as well leaving him at the mercy of his mobile device for companionship. Working long hours may have detrimental effects on people if not properly balanced. For unskilled workers whose routine work barely affords time for self-care, they are further challenged by issues which may revolve around financial, religious, family or business lives. However, the case is not relative to all migrant workers within the organization. According to a junior patroller;

*Okay, first I am from Ghana, you understand, so I am not outgoing person, I don't look for people and I don't like people looking for me, that is my kind of person but for the work affecting my social life it is not, in fact I rest well here unlike when I was in Ghana because it is 3 days morning 7 to 7, 3 days night 7 to 7 and 3 days off so I have time to relax well—5:12 ¶ 26 in IDI with Junior Patroller\_Production Process*

From his statement, the job does not affect his social life as he has enough time for his social circle, and engages in social activities and leisure time. This emphasizes the pact of job roles on the social lives of workers. The generalized notion of the social lives of unskilled migrant workers in cement plants can be disproved as findings from this study have proven otherwise.

The family lives of unskilled workers often depend on a number of factors some of which include distance, migration, nature of job (department) and finance (Susan, 2014). Most unskilled migrant workers, depending on the

work department, are often challenged with proximity and time constraints. This challenge is faced largely because most of these workers move away from their homes in search of jobs and when secured they are not able to reside with their families for purposes which often include full settlement, difficulty in moving, settling and establishing families, security of organisation's location among others. The effect of distance on family lives of unskilled workers is exemplified in the following excerpts;

*My wife and children are in Ila-Condji. I don't really have time for them, although for me going to home is not far but then due to the nature of my job I am not able to move around easily.—1:11 ¶ 30 in IDI with Carpenter*

*Well, my family is in Ghana and the truth is I don't have time for them. I have not seen my immediate family since October last year when I was on leave and before I see them again will be by May and that is because of the requirements of the job.—12:13 ¶ 26 in IDI with Section Hand Engineer*

The excerpts above from migrant workers in different work departments within the organisation reveal how distance could create a barrier between workers and their families. It can further be noted that some unskilled migrant workers bear the brunt of poor family relationships due to their jobs which do not afford them time and which have taken them away from their homes. According to the carpenter, his family resides in Togo which he does not see as a problem with travelling to meet them. However, his mobility is impaired by the nature of his job which does not afford him time to go on such visits. This emphasizes the dependence of unskilled workers' family lives on their specialization. Due to the workload, workers often are not able to make time for themselves and their families which would then shape their lived experiences within and outside the organisation. This further leads to the loss of bonds, ties and intimacy between workers and their families as proximity plays a crucial role in the development and sustenance of relationships.

The religious lives of unskilled workers according to Kevin (2006), may be confronted by a lack of autonomy in their working schedule. Working hours may span across prayer times, worship days and hours, especially in manufacturing organisations where there is a continuity of work. Kutsche (2018) in his work on "*Religion and the Working Class*" emphasized the need for religion by unskilled workers who often fall back on it as a form of support which helps them in managing challenges within the work organisation. Religion provides a sense of community and belonging which may assist workers in coping with their situation with the belief in the existence of a Supreme God who would lighten their burden.

*I guess that is one part it has really affected because there are some Sundays that I am on duty in the mornings and there are some Saturdays that I am on night duty and then I have to come back on Sunday and if there is holdup I will get home late and then I would not be able to go to church, so it has really, I mean*

*the work has really affected my religious life and participation.—3:16 ¶ 44 in IDI with Instrumentation Dept Worker*

The statements above were made by Christian workers within the facility. According to him, their religious lives are heavily affected by work because of the nature of their duties. These shift workers are affected by their work schedule which does not permit time, especially when days of worship collide with duty days. Their religious lives and participation are further impaired due to fatigue accumulated from work days and the urge to rest would inevitably be pushed to free days.

*Yes, I have time to practice, everyone knows, they give us time to practice, there is a mosque there and we go for Jummah every Friday, they allow us do that so all is going on well smoothly.—9:12 ¶ 28 in IDI with Panel Beater\_Mechanic*

The statements above show a deviation from the experiences of the Christian workers who are confined by work and time and as a result do not practice their religion comfortably. This statement is backed by the testimony of the panel beater who describes his religious and work life as accommodating. He explained that his job permits him to freely worship and he faces no difficulty with religion. This shows he has no religious challenges or hindrances at work and his duty does not influence his religious participation in any way. Muslims are to observe their five daily prayers, but in cases where there are constraints, this might not be possible.

In every work Organisation, there are hazards and risks involved. However, the nature of work conducted in such Organizations would determine the types of risk and hazards to be expected, the intensity and the severity of such on human life. In cement plants, there are established risks and hazards which affect not only the well-being of workers alone but also the well-being of residents within the location of the establishment. Prominent among these hazards and risks include pollution in all its forms. Osinem (2005) defined pollution as the production or release of substances which alter the environment and make it less favourable to man, animals and plants. Pollution in this context is a disorder within the environment. It is a by-product of energy conservation and resource use resulting in contamination, defilement, mischief, perturbation and reduction in the value of an object or thing. Cement plants are large production organisations that engage in several processes from extraction of raw materials to manufacturing and distribution to the final consumers.

*Sometimes we have challenges of all those ermm blasting problems, when they are blasting the explosives and other things, it makes people have the shock and all those heartbeats from the shock of the blasting.—15:13 ¶ 34 in IDI with Time Officer\_Administrative*

The time officer described the danger in the blasting of rocks and stones which he believes can induce shock and health challenges. The process of extracting limestone or breaking it into smaller pieces for the purveyors to transport would require the use of explosives in blasting them. These sounds pollute the environment and can trigger shock, detrimental to the auditory integrity of workers within the area and can pose risks when the debris breaks apart. These hazards are experienced by workers irrespective of their work departments as they usually navigate the same routes in getting to their houses and are exposed to the sounds too.

In managing hazards and risks, several steps must be taken at the individual and management levels to ensure the safety of workers and the undisturbed process of production. Workers must ensure they abide by safety rules and make use of their personal protective equipment and the management must ensure measures are put in place to foster safety through the provision of protective equipment, sensitization and empowerment of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) department.

The excerpts below provide a vivid description of how workers protect themselves.

*Well, I guess working with the right tools and making sure I am always with my PPE I mean the helmet, boot and my nose mask because of the dust and everything.—3:17 ¶ 46 in IDI with Instrumentation Dept Worker*

*Well I use my nose mask always to protect myself because of the dust, then I use my PPE. Then I use anti-allergy.—19:14 ¶ 32 in IDI with Facility Management Officer*

*Uhhh...the step I take is when I get to work, I work with patience, I don't rush so that mistakes or accidents won't happen to me because if it happens there is an extent to what the management can do to help me, so I am always safety conscious. - 6:10 ¶ 24 in IDI with Machine Operator\_Mine Dept*

The instrumentation department worker ensures he works with the right tools and makes use of his personal protective equipment to manage hazards and risks. The personal protective equipment of workers in cement plants includes a reflective vest, helmet, safety boot, nose mask, respirator and goggles. These are usually provided to workers to mitigate the eminent hazards and risks they would face in their line of duty. The instrumentation department worker believes working with the right tools is the first step in managing occupational hazards and risks. This is to describe that in the process of work, the use of the wrong equipment can be detrimental to the health and wellness of workers as well as others around them. It is however common in most manufacturing processes to see workers using substituted tools in place of the right one in order to get work done without delays. This could be attributed to a number of reasons some of which include; delay in acquiring new tools, misplacement or mismanagement of tools, and conversion of the organisation's tool for personal use among others. Also, the response from

the facility management officer shares similarities with the instrumentation department worker. According to him, he also makes use of his PPE and goes further to use an anti-allergy. The use of anti-allergies describes the dynamics of workers within the organisation and the need to ensure the wellness of workers is paramount. Anti-allergies in cement plants are used to manage cases related to industrial pollution which is the primary challenge of workers within the facility. His response is followed by the statement of the machine operator at the Mines who explained that a key measure in managing hazards and risk in his line of duty is patience. He believes that working with patience will yield positive results due to the delicacy of the job.

The findings of the study on the general challenges of unskilled migrant workers in cement plants are well complimented by a variety of literature on the subject matter. According to Alice (2011), unskilled migrant workers are more vulnerable to all sorts of physically demanding assignments than other workers. This supported the report from the study which emphasizes how the time schedule of workers especially in the mine, engineering and transport departments exposes them to more work responsibilities which often strains their physical and mental well-being. Poor working conditions were emphasized by the workers as a major challenge which would significantly hamper their efficiency and effectiveness. This result is supported by the Bureau of Labour Statistics (2010) which states that “the condition of work would affect factors such as mental, emotional and psychological wellbeing which would reflect on the motivation to work, efficiency, effectiveness, job performance, medical wellness, financial stability and social relationships.

Findings on the social lives of unskilled migrant workers are complimented by the work of Hills et al. (2002) in ‘low skill as a social disadvantage’ where he discussed the impact of low skills as predictors of family and social disintegration, poor accommodation, poor health, limited income among others. This is followed by the Miliband (2006) who emphasized unskilled migrant workers might be ostracized and excluded from social engagement due to their involvement, activity and participation in communal activities. From the findings, migrant workers barely have time for social activities, although this does not generally apply to all workers a larger proportion of the population reported having little to no time for engagement in social activities. The family lives of unskilled migrant workers often depend on a number of factors some of which include distance, migration, nature of job (department) and finance (Susan, 2014). Most unskilled migrant workers, depending on the work department, are often challenged with time constraints. This challenge is faced largely because most of these workers move away from their homes in search of jobs and when secured they are not able to reside with their families for purposes which include full settlement, difficulty in moving, settling and establishing families, and security of organisation’s location among others. The religious lives of unskilled migrant workers according to Kevin (2006), may be confronted by a lack of autonomy in their working schedule. Working

hours may span across prayer times, worship days and hours, especially in manufacturing organisations where there is a continuity of work.

Findings from the study revealed that unskilled migrant workers ensure their well-being by abiding by safety rules and making use of their personal protective equipment. This report is emphasized by Glendon (2000) in 'Safety Behaviours among cement factory workers' where she stated safety behaviours are essential in every work organisation to ensure accidents don't occur. However, despite compliance with safety behaviours, unskilled migrant workers are still vulnerable and sustain injuries while working due to the nature of their jobs. This is backed by Sana (2013) who explained that workers are exposed to a variety of hazardous conditions due to the nature of cement manufacturing and the machinery it uses, including loud noises, melting substances, debris, dangerous tools and machinery, and high levels of dust.

## CONCLUSION

Unskilled migrant workers in the Lafarge Cement Plant have different experiences (positive and negative) due to their exposures, work departments, challenges faced and relationships maintained within and outside the work environment. These experiences shape the workers' perception of reality and influence their performance at work, social and family relationships, religious participation and their work-life balance. Several challenges and hazards also confront these workers and impair their abilities to perform their jobs effectively. However, these workers some of those who have no choices due to their responsibilities have continued to work despite the unpleasant situations they find themselves in. In conclusion, the lived experience of unskilled migrant workers is largely dependent on their work department within the organisation, measures put in place to manage the welfare of workers by the organisation and organisational rules and policies. The study therefore recommends the following:

1. Decentralised measures should be put in place to capture the needs of unskilled migrant workers in their departments. The study has revealed that different departments are challenged by different problems therefore as stated by Selznick (1949) in his "Situational Approach", there are no universal guidelines for all situations.
2. Stringent measures should be imposed by the government to mitigate pollution from cement plants as they are disastrous and threaten the lives of workers and residents.
3. The organisation should adopt more measures to ensure the ease of mobility of workers to and from the workplace and their areas of residence.

4. Housing schemes should be implemented to accommodate migrant workers especially those whose residences are far from the work location and are unfamiliar with the terrain. This would further reduce the risk of road accidents and insecurity.
5. A review of the organisation's policy should be made to accommodate the social, family and religious needs of unskilled migrant workers as this would help in achieving and enhancing work-life balance.
6. More measures should be put in place to manage eminent challenges, hazards and risks in work departments in order to protect the lives and well-being of unskilled workers.

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