

A Balancing Act

An analysis of tension encountered by employees working in a diaconal organization



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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore tension that occurs in a diaconal organization among its employees due to the difference in religious values between the organization, the employees, and the clients who benefit from the organization's services. In this case, *Nadheim*, a diaconal project of *Kirkens Bymisjon* that offers services to persons with prostitution experience will be the focus because of the many different religious or moral beliefs that are held by employees and clients. One of the persons interviewed for this project brought up the purpose for researching this specific type of organization, "...in many other job situations personal faith would not be an issue."² However, in a diaconal organization, faith is a part of the foundation for the work and sometimes it collides with the worldviews of employees who have been entrusted with caring for clients who also have their own specific beliefs. The research question in this study is: *What kind of tension exists or has occurred among Nadheim employees because of the Christian values held by Kirkens Bymisjon and the Christian, non-religious, or other religious values held by employees and clients?* This research question is answered through the analysis of eight qualitative interviews, which include an interview with the general manager, assistant manager, and six of the employees at *Nadheim*. The research was conducted using a hermeneutical approach, which places emphasis on the particular context where the data was gathered. Therefore, this thesis provides thorough background information about *Nadheim*. The results of the study identified three different types of tensions at *Nadheim*: *tension from above, within, and below*. These tensions are related to the work of human service organizations, negotiation, the expression of diaconal values, and modern pluralism. The desire is that through this study there will be more dialogue in diaconal institutions about how organizations, employees, and clients can find ways to cooperate but that also clarity will remain regarding the purpose of the work.

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² Interview Informant 5, Nadheim 11.11.14

because from the first day I attended an introductory course I was made to feel welcome and I saw that they genuinely cared about how I was doing. This first impression made me decide to continue pursuing an education in Diakonia. They have also provided me with very good feedback regarding this project. I would also like to thank my husband Vidar who cheers me on to pursue my dreams and not give up despite the difficulties. Just as well, I want to thank my parents who taught me the value of education and constantly encourage me. Likewise, I am very thankful to my brother Emmanuel and my dear friend Melanie for spending their free time correcting my writing and giving feedback. Because I am a person with faith in God, I would also like to give thanks to God for giving me strength and wisdom in order to complete this project. Lastly, I would like to thank my advisor Anne Austad. She reassured that the extensive task of researching and writing a thesis is possible and provided valuable insight during this process.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Motivation

There are two reasons that have motivated me to pursue this project. Firstly, for some years, I have been interested in the topic of immigration. Globalization has made it possible for not only goods and services to move more freely across international borders, but also people. Due to Norway's high standard of living, it is now on the receiving end of the international migration movement, as wars, conflicts, and economic problems, among other phenomena, are bringing diverse peoples to Norway who are seeking new opportunities in life. The book *Norsk Slaveri* affirms this by talking about and giving various examples on how necessity around the world drives people from their home countries in search of a better future. (Reiss and Strøm-Olsen 2014:91-122). These new peoples are making Norway a more diversified and heterogeneous place. I myself am an immigrant to Norway. In contrast to many new arrivals, I chose to come to Norway out of my own free will and did not come here because of any difficulties in my home country. I have the opportunity to leave Norway whenever I want and resume my life in my place of origin if I choose to do so. That has not been the case for many that I have met during my time here. When I moved to Norway, I was introduced to women who migrated in search of better economic opportunities. Because of many different factors, the only way the women I met could make a living and send money home was to sell sex. These women have a variety of cultural, religious, and educational backgrounds, yet they are all trying to make a living in Norway. In Oslo, they are being met by diaconal organizations like *Kirkens Bymisjon* and its initiative *Nadheim*. I am compelled to find out how the Norwegian professional and secular point of view addresses the needs of these women while it is counterbalanced by the Christian framework that surrounds it.

Secondly, my own background of working in Christian organizations in the United States has increased my awareness about the way things are accomplished in Norway. In the U.S., it is quite common for employees in Christian organizations to profess a Christian faith. However, as *Kirkens Bymisjon* states in their motto, 'rom for alle' or 'room for everyone,' they are open to all types of persons with all kinds of different backgrounds, whether they are clients or employees of the organization. This means that in the context of *Kirkens Bymisjon*, employees who do not profess a Christian faith yet work in a diaconal organization are agreeing to work from Christian values in meeting clients with diverse religious backgrounds. Just as well, employees that profess a Christian faith are challenged to uphold organizational Christian values while at the same time they should remain inclusive in their interactions with fellow co-workers and clients

professing other beliefs. Through interviews with employees at *Nadheim*, I will look at the experiences and tension that occurs while engaging in diakonia from the perspective of those who work directly with a diverse group of persons, in this case persons who have experience in prostitution. This can be relevant in our times as Norway becomes more diversified through the immigration of persons seeking a better life and diaconal organizations will have to learn how to better meet the needs of new people. Just as well, if diaconal organizations are to continue in existence, it is relevant to consider a way in which the practice of working together with persons of different faiths in promoting justice and a better life (Lutheran World Federation 2009:88) is possible at the same time that foundational diaconal values are not completely dismissed.

1.2 Problem

Scandinavia is often referred to as one of the places in the world that is the most secularized (Aadland 2012:11). Still, this does not diminish the Christian history that paved the foundation for the commencement of innovative diaconal work among society's most vulnerable. Norway has numerous diaconal organizations, which have taken care of persons over the span of many years. Though these organizations have been replaced by the state as primary care giver to members of society, they still provide essential services to vulnerable persons. Meanwhile, Norwegian society is becoming more pluralist and diaconal organizations are meeting persons from all over the world who associate with numerous cultures and religions. Simultaneously, employees in diaconal organizations are just as diverse themselves. Many do not adhere to Christianity or base their motivation for working in a diaconal organization on Christian theology. Most diaconal organizations are open to having employees with diverse backgrounds and to working with others of different faiths. The Lutheran World Federation (2009:88) admonishes diaconal organizations to work with others of different backgrounds in order to promote unity, so that many hands will contribute and be able to complete the work. I find that this and other issues pertaining to diakonia are only discussed at the leadership level. How do diaconal employees assess the task of working with diverse clients and colleagues to promote values surrounded by a Christian structure? What kind of tension do they face in keeping this endeavor while working from their own personal values and motivations? More specifically, this project will attempt to answer this question: *What kind of tension exists or has occurred among Nadheim employees because of the Christian values held by Kirkens Bymisjon and the Christian, non-religious, or other religious values held by employees and clients?* In order to find an answer I chose to focus on the employees at *Nadheim* because their area of expertise interests me and because they are a varied group serving very diverse clients. Perhaps knowing the kinds of tension employees at *Nadheim* face can paint a picture of the challenges other employees in

diaconal organizations encounter while promoting discussion about how diakonia can be better carried out in the modern pluralist society.

1.3 List of Basic Definitions

Throughout this research, several terms are used that may be confusing. Therefore, a list of definitions has been created in order to facilitate the reading process.

Belief- “A state or habit of mind in which trust or confidence is placed in some person or thing, a feeling of being sure that someone or something exists or that something is true” (Merriam Webster Dictionary Belief 2015). *(According to Aadland (2012:40), in Norwegian the word **tro** means both faith and belief. Since the data was gathered in a Norwegian context and this thesis is aimed at a Norwegian audience, it is relevant to point this out. The words faith and belief are used interchangeably in this thesis to describe the phenomenon of having trust in a higher power or trust in the teachings or traditions of a religion. See definition of faith below.)*

Faith- “Belief and trust in loyalty to God and or belief in the traditional doctrines of a religion” (Merriam Webster Dictionary Faith 2015). *(The words faith and belief are used interchangeably in this thesis to describe the phenomenon of having trust in a higher power or trust in the teachings or traditions of a religion. See definition of belief above.)*

Client(s)- This is the term chosen in this project in referring to person(s) with prostitution experience who participate in activities at *Nadheim* and/or seek the assistance of *Nadheim's* social services. *(The Norwegian word used to describe person(s) using or seeking social assistance is 'bruker', which literally means 'user.' Through a Google search and in reading some social work literature from the United Kingdom, I found that in some contexts the word 'social service user' is also used in English to describe a person that benefits from or receives social services. For me personally, the term 'user' has a connotation of being too institutionalized and impersonal. Likewise, I have a lack of familiarity with the term 'social service user.'*

Spiritual- That pertaining to the religious realm (Merriam Webster Dictionary Faith 2015).

Tension- “A state in which people, groups disagree with each other. The act or action of stretching” (Merriam Webster Dictionary Tension 2015). *(Given that the research question has the word **tension** in it, I wanted to be clear about this specific term. The Merriam Webster Dictionary presents several different definitions for this word. The other definitions were related to hostility and striving. I think these two main definitions are suitable for the focus of this study because I want to focus on things that can be difficult for employees at *Nadheim* in their work and create differences among employees. Just as well, the word tension can also be defined as stretching. In a like manner, differences among persons may cause stretching in the views of people and lead to alternate ways of thinking. These two definitions will be important to keep in mind throughout this research project.)*

1.4 Literature Review

Before starting this project, I did not have a solid idea about what the research would focus on. However, I knew that I wanted to write about something related to persons involved in prostitution in Norway. By working in various projects that assist persons involved in

prostitution in Oslo, I learned that many of the persons selling sex on the street are women from Nigeria. I searched for information regarding Nigerian women in prostitution in Norway in order to get ideas. The search resulted in two theses and a bachelor project. Through his qualitative research interviews with Nigerian women who sell sex in Stavanger, and experience as an employee at *Albertine*,³ Årsvoll (2009:68) concluded that religion is important to Nigerian women because it gives them a meaning in life and helps them to endure the tough realities of prostitution. Nessa (2012) also focused on Nigerian women selling sex in Stavanger but ponders why Nigerian women migrate to Stavanger to be involved in prostitution. She provided some beneficial information related to the traditional religious African beliefs that Nigerian women hold. Just as well, an anonymous bachelor in social work project called *Please Pray for Me- Om Nigerianske Kvinner med Prostitusjonserfaring* (2012), provides a little bit of insight into the religious or the spiritual that is a part of being human. It asks the questions: do persons use religion as a crutch to overcome difficulties in life and how do social workers meet the spiritual side of persons? A majority of the clients *Nadheim* provides services to are from Nigeria. Now that the research area has been narrowed, I see that this information is useful for the background chapter and provides more insight on *Nadheim's* clients.

After narrowing down the research topic, I did a search on the library database Oria in order to get a better overview about similar kinds of studies. The following words were used in the search:

- *Kirkens Bymisjon*
- *Nadheim*
- Diaconal challenges

Just as well, a search was done using EBSCO Host using the following words:

- Diaconal challenges
- Diakonia, multiculturalism
- Diakonia, secularism, Norway
- Diakonia, religious, immigrants

³ *Albertine* is *Nadheim's* sister organization in Stavanger that also provides services to persons with prostitution experience.

Searches resulted in articles evaluating different initiatives run by *Kirkens Bymisjon*, such as work among paperless persons, people who are on the street, and people who need someone to converse with about difficult life topics. However, none incorporated the diaconal aspect of the work at *Kirkens Bymisjon* so they were not so useful to the research. The manager at *Nadheim* mentioned a paper related to the research topic. In her thesis *En hellig, alminnelig, sekulær barmhjertighet*, Aas (2009) analyses the diaconal profile of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. She interviewed leaders in different initiatives run by *Kirkens Bymisjon* in order to find out how they reflect on the employment or involvement of non-Christian staff and volunteers in different projects, and specifically focused on the inclusion of Muslim employees or volunteers. She concluded that the leaders were faithful to the values of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. Because of this an organizational culture was created where non-Christian employees were able to contribute to a type of diakonia non-Christian employees could call secular, yet the actions could still be considered diaconal if compared to the founding Christian values of the organization (Aas 2009:2, 68-71). Her project provided much background information regarding the diaconal framework of *Kirkens Bymisjon* and the organization's Christian values. It also dealt with one of the issues in this project, which is the topic of employees who do not profess a Christian faith yet work in a diaconal organization. Likewise, it provided some useful theories about how diakonia is carried out in secular times, which is suitable for this research. However, her findings were based on interviews with leaders and managers in different initiatives of *Kirkens Bymisjon* and focused more on the profile of the organization in general. Aas also wrote her thesis for a master in value-based leadership and structured her work around concepts related to that. Unlike her project, my focus is solely on *Nadheim* and not all of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. Instead of gathering the data from the leadership of the organization, I chose to focus on the point of view of the employees as they work with other employees and clients in a diaconal framework. Though I see the need to discuss the topic of diaconal values in this project, the focus will not be as thorough as in Aas' project.

In regards to theories, I have gathered these from recommendations from professors in the institute for diakonia at *Diakonhjemmet* and from looking at previous articles we had used during the course of this master study. I also found some helpful theoretical ideas while looking at Aas' thesis.

There is much framework information regarding the praxis of diakonia, but perhaps not enough information that can specifically be referred to as theory. However, I found that the books *Kan Institusjoner Elske?* (2009) and *Ledelse i Diakonal Virksomheter* (2012) edited by Einar

Aadland, have many interesting perspectives about carrying out diakonia in a secular and pluralist society and that pertain to the context and challenges I focus on. *Kan Institusjoner Elske* (ed. Aadland 2009) also provides some insight into a theory about modern pluralism by Berger and Luckmann. They postulate on how persons find meaning in life in a modern pluralist society. Aadland (2009) connects this theory to the praxis of diakonia in our times. This is important for this research since *Nadheim* meets many different people yet their work is rooted in a secular environment influenced by a Christian background. Lastly, I found the book *Human Services as Complex Organizations* (Hasenfeld 1992) very helpful in offering theoretical framework around the function of helping organizations like diaconal institutions. This information can be useful for this research because the employees, the primary focus of the work, are talking about their experiences of working in a diaconal organization. Thus, it will be essential to consider ideologies related to the place where employees execute their work.

1.5 Chapter overview

In the **First Chapter**, I present the research question and the problem, the reason for undertaking this study, definitions which might be helpful during the reading of this thesis, and a review of relevant literature. **Chapter Two** focuses on the methods used to complete this study, how the data was gathered, what the methodological approach was, and issues that I, as the researcher, have needed to be aware of during the completion of this project. **Chapter Three** provides background information on the context, specifically focusing on what *Kirkens Bymisjon* and *Nadheim* are. I also present some history about *Nadheim*, what *Nadheim* does, who their clients and employees are, and practical information about the locale and practices at *Nadheim*. **Chapter Four** presents theories and framework relevant to the research question. The theoretical framework presented is related to human service organizations, diakonia, and modern pluralism. **Chapter Five** discloses and analyzes the collected data. The data is categorized under themes that refer to what employees at *Nadheim* described as tension in their work. **Chapter Six** is a discussion on how the findings compare to the theories that were highlighted in chapter four. **Chapter Seven** is a summary about the project and the findings.

2 Method

Through this study, I want to focus explicitly on the employees who are working directly in a diaconal framework with a diverse group of clients in order to identify tension experienced first hand from those who are involved in this specific context. Therefore, it was essential to find methods that could help answer the research question in a proper and ethical way.

2.1 A Qualitative Research Project

For the purpose of obtaining the perspective of this particular group of employees in this particular setting, I chose to do a qualitative study. According to Schutz (cited in Bryman 2012:399), there is a large difference between the things studied in the social sciences and the things studied in the natural sciences. Schutz (cited in Bryman 2012:399) claims that the things mostly studied in the social sciences, which are people, are able to ascribe significance to their settings and situations. This type of reasoning has led many researchers to propose that in studying persons, a methodology must be used which differs from studying the natural world so that phenomena can be examined “through the eyes of the people” being studied (Bryman 2012:399). This type of methodology must allow for analysis from the view point of those being studied and not treated as if the persons being studied cannot ascribe their own meanings to what is occurring in society (Bryman 2012:399). In order to carry this out, researchers must “interact face to face” with persons or engage in those individuals’ specific roles in order to get an understanding (Bryman 2012:399). In having the opportunity to do an internship at *Nadheim* and meeting the employees who work there, I saw that there was a prospect of understanding better the tension they meet in their work by talking with them about their work. Keeping in mind Schutz and other researchers’ reflections, a qualitative approach was the best way for me to proceed in carrying out this project because I had established a connection with the persons who would be studied.

2.2 A Hermeneutical Approach

Hermeneutics in the social sciences is an approach at understanding the actions of persons in their entirety and not just focusing on why persons do things (Bryman 2012:28). Hermeneutics requires that a researcher looks at all the possible meanings of social actions and is attentive to everything that is related to those social actions (Gadamer cited in Nessa 2012:12-13). In order for the hermeneutical approach to be carried out, consideration must be given to the context in which the actions took place (Bryman 2012:560). For this to happen, the context in which the social actions took place must be understood (Bryman 2012:561). Just as well, the process of re-

interpreting the social actions must be repeated so that the researcher can gather new meanings and understandings (Gadamer cited in Nessa 2012:13).

Not only is the context of where the social actions have taken place important, but the awareness that as a researcher, our judgments, and preconceptions may influence the way we understand social actions (Nessa 2012:13). As a human being, it is very difficult not to go into situations without bringing in presumptions. This may also apply to the researcher (Nessa 2012:13). However, Gadamer (cited in Nessa 2012:13) proposes that a hermeneutic approach can help the researcher to immerse themselves completely in the other in order to understand. The researcher can be aware of their own assumptions and be willing to be more open-minded when trying to understand the social phenomena (Nessa 2012:13).

Having the opportunity to be a part of *Nadheim* for eight weeks as an intern has given me a deeper understanding of the context, who they are, and what they do. Without this understanding, it would be difficult to analyze the data I have gathered from interviews there because I would not have a clear picture of the social actions that have taken place, which are so specific to that particular context. The goal is that through concentrating on the context I can try to understand the actions and experiences that are particular to and have occurred at *Nadheim*. Thus, an extensive background chapter describing the context has been included in this project because the social actions at *Nadheim* cannot be understood by themselves but are connected to the setting in which they have occurred. Just as well, while being a student at *Nadheim*, I was able to broaden my perspective of diaconal work in the specific setting of working with persons who sell sex. I was also able to allow myself to think differently about issues that I previously thought could be answered in one way or another but when one is immersed in the context, one sees that answers are not always as explicit as one would like them to be. This project challenged me to keep an open mind while analyzing the data and at the same time to keep the focus on the subject I am researching. Therefore, I decided that a hermeneutical approach is essential in answering the research question.

2.3 The Interview Method

2.3.1 Choosing interviewing as a research method

In pursuance of carrying out a qualitative research project, I needed a method that would match the goal of trying to understand the subjects from their perspective as I interacted with them

‘face to face.’ One way in which one can interact directly with persons and learn more about them is by conversing. Thus, I chose the interview as a method to accomplish this study.

Before deciding exactly what type of interviews I would conduct, I wrote an interview guide. The purpose of an interview guide is for the researcher to have an idea of the types of questions or topics they will pose to their interviewees (Bryman 2012:473). In the interview guide, I incorporated questions that related to tension in the social work done at *Nadheim*, tension related to meeting clients, tension related to working in this particular diaconal organization because of the diaconal aspect, tension related to the work and the employee’s personal beliefs, and tension related to working with other employees at this particular organization. I specifically instated questions related to tension because of what I observed while doing an internship at *Nadheim*. In watching interactions, it appeared that there could be tension among employees because of the differing worldviews they consider in their work. Thus, personal observations were turned into specific and direct questions regarding tension.

As I had finished the interview guide, I pondered more about how it would be best to ask these types of questions. After I considered several options, I decided to do semi-structured interviews because my questions were not so general but had a particular focus (Bryman 2012:472). By doing semi-structured interviews I would be able to keep this focus, yet allow persons to talk about their experiences with a great deal of room and without their experiences being automatically categorized into a specific given answer which is usually found in structured interviews (Bryman 20012:471). A semi-structured interview also allowed for me as the researcher to have the flexibility of changing the order of questions if the interviewee decided to talk about other relevant topics first and to ask additional questions or probe further into topics that I had not originally considered when I wrote the interview guide (Bryman 2012:471).

2.3.2 Conducting the interviews

In considering whom at *Nadheim* I was going to interview, I decided to interview half of the staff working there, including the leader. As previously mentioned in the background information, as of February 2015, *Nadheim* had nine persons fulfilling the role of social workers, a manager, and an assistant manager (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter Nadheim). There are other employees working at *Nadheim* in addition to the above named but they are not in direct contact with clients nor do they work full time with social work. Thus, I chose to interview six employees who work directly with clients more than 20 hours a week, along with the assistant manager, and the manager. Because there is an imbalance at *Nadheim* in the proportion of

female and male employees, there was no consideration given to the gender of informants. Neither was information relating to age taken into consideration in this study. Employees ranged in amount of time since they had begun working a *Nadheim* nevertheless, this was not a deciding factor in the choice of participants. Participants were asked for interviews because they were available, met the criteria of having direct contact with clients and working 20 or more hours a week, or because they were a part of the managing staff. The interviews were conducted during the time that I was an intern at *Nadheim* in the months of September and October 2014. All of the interviews were conducted at *Nadheim's* offices in Oslo.

Additionally for consideration is that during the interview with the manager and assistant manager of *Nadheim* some of the questions in the interview guide were customized to their role as leaders so that a more accurate perspective could be attained. For example, in addition to being asked about the different types of tension faced they were also asked about the tension encountered by employees as they see it from their perspective as leaders at *Nadheim*. Along the same lines, after the first two interviews I changed the interview guide slightly. In conducting these interviews, I saw that some of the questions were unnecessary, redundant, or not clear enough. These changes to the interview guide allowed the interviews to flow more smoothly instead of me halting during the interviews to explain or clarify what was meant.

All of the informants agreed to be interviewed after receiving informed consent. Bryman explains that giving informed consent consists of giving possible study participants all the information needed for them to make a decision on whether or not they will chose to participate in a study (Bryman 2012:712). In my case, all participants were informed verbally about the purpose of the study. They were asked if they wished to participate, told that the interviews would be recorded and transcribed, and that all material related to the informants of the study would be kept in password protected files. Likewise, informants were notified that all that was said in the interviews would be confidential and made anonymous, and that if any direct quotes were to be used they would be contacted for permission and be able to make corrections to what they had said. Just as well, I mentioned the tentative culmination date of the project and that the thesis would be written in English. All of the informants agreed to this consent verbally. Prior to the interviews, most informants received a copy of the interview guide so that they could get an idea of the types of questions that would be asked.

For the purpose of creating ease and comfort for informants, the interviews were conducted in the language that was most natural to them. Seven of the interviews were conducted in

Norwegian and one interview was conducted in Spanish. Naturally, informants responded differently in their interviews. Some had not given so much thought to the topic of tension at *Nadheim* or felt that perhaps the tension they had encountered was minimal. Others felt that the tension was not out of the ordinary, but just something that is a part of the social work profession. However, some employees had experienced many challenges and had more to talk about. The average time of the interviews was 50 minutes and the longest interview was almost an hour and a half in length.

2.4 Managing the Data

2.4.1 Reporting to NSSDS

The *Norwegian Social Science Data Services* approves the kinds of research projects that can be done in Norway. Because of some confusion on my part, I informed the *NSSDS* about the intentions for this project after the interview data was collected. They are aware that I had collected data before contacting them and they received accurate information about the project and the data that I had collected. The project plans were approved and I was able to continue the project once I received their permission.

2.4.2 Translating and transcribing

On the surface, transcribing may be seen just as a practical process of data managing. However, Lambert and Nida (cited in Halai 2007:345) point out that there lies more behind transcribing. What is meant by this is that text is being converted from raw data into analytical data through the process of transcribing and that this process in itself can influence the way the researcher interprets the data (Lapadat and Lindsay cited in Halai 2007:345). Halai (2007:345) goes a step further by adding that things become more complicated if the data one is using is multilingual. As previously mentioned, seven of the interviews for this project were conducted in Norwegian and one was conducted in Spanish. After the interviews were completed, I decided that because this project would be written in English, it would make more sense, be more uniform, and be easier for me as the researcher if the data was also in English and I only had to analyze using one language. For the purpose of saving time, I proceeded to simultaneously translate and transcribe all of the interview recordings into English instead of transcribing everything in its original language and then translating it into English.

Informants had a variety of Norwegian dialects and expressions local to their specific regions. Sometimes, in the process of translation and transcription, things that I understood during the

interview, suddenly became foreign or unintelligible while listening to the recording. Norwegian is not my native language, so I found myself using the dictionary several times to try to capture words or phrases that were spoken too fast. I also had the help of a native Norwegian speaker to determine the meaning of phrases that I did not understand because they were said using Norwegian dialect. On the contrary, since I grew up in a bilingual environment, using both English and Spanish from a young age, I experienced no problems in transcribing the Spanish interview. It was the easiest interview out of all to transcribe.

In addition, as it is common in colloquial speech, persons use pauses, sounds that signify that they are thinking or break off and re-start sentences while they are speaking. Since I am not doing a conversation analysis, then I decided to not transcribe pauses, sounds, break offs or re-starts in order to make the transcribing process move faster.

Nonetheless, it is not so easy to translate and transcribe interviews. Translation involves converting ideas from one culture into another (Torop cited in Halai 2007:345). Ross (2009:5) explains that a translator can be preoccupied with making a contextual or textual translation. A contextual translation is one that is done in a way in which the translation will be understood in the context of the language it has been translated into. A textual translation is just a word for word translation. Ross uses an example from Bassnett to explain the difference between these two types of translations. A person may translate the word 'butter' from one language into another and the word will mean the same thing. However, the ways in which butter is used in the two social contexts behind those languages may differ completely (Bassnett cited in Ross 2009:5). Therefore, Bassnett (cited in Ross 2009:5) concludes that translation is not just about changing things into another language but it involves keeping in mind the different social realities that the speakers of the language one is translating into have. Ironically, though most of the interviews were conducted in Norwegian and then translated into English, the main audience for this project is Norwegian. Keeping all of these things in mind, I have done my best to translate and transcribe the interviews in a contextual way where the essence of the Norwegian text is captured in English. In some very few interviews, expressions were used in Norwegian which have no equivalent translation in English or which have more meaning in Norwegian. These expressions were transcribed into Norwegian and in parentheses their English meaning was written. The beneficial part about having a mainly Norwegian audience for this project is that when quoting informants directly, if needed, interview text can be written using Norwegian words, which will be understood by the main audience, and then explained in parenthesis for those who may read this paper and do not speak Norwegian. Doing this may help prevent what

theorists refer to as ‘remainders’ (Lecercle cited in Ross 2009:10). Remainders in translated pieces are the influence of the translator when they are at a loss for translating words which have no direct meaning in the other language but which they reword anyhow (Ross 2009:10). This may create a visible pattern where it is possible to determine that a certain person has translated a piece according to how they translate certain words. However, in order to also accommodate possible non-Norwegian speaking readers, I have had to re-create meanings in English.

At the same time, I hope that in recording, then translating from one language and context to another, and then presenting the findings to the original context, the data is not lost. Just as well, I hope that the way that I decided to transcribe will allow me to analyze the data in a proper way. It is also useful to keep in mind what Kvale says about transcribing. Kvale (cited in Ross 2009:2) believes that there is no correct way to do this but that the researcher must ask themselves ‘what is the most useful way for my project?’ For me as a researcher, it was best to analyze and present the data in English, thus I will have to keep all of these possible issues in mind.

2.4.3 Coding, categorizing, and analyzing

For me the process of coding and categorizing the data was very much connected to the analysis process. Once the transcribing was complete, I was left with 48 pages of data, which felt quite overwhelming. First, I divided the data into eight different Microsoft Word files according to the eight different informants. Using Bryman’s coding approach, I read through each informant’s responses and started to note things in the margins of the document that were significant (Bryman 2012:576-577). I divided the questions and answers for each informant into cells and coded them with a letter and number. In a new Microsoft Word file, I then made categories that described the patterns I was seeing (Bryman 2012:576-577) and thought about what kinds of themes I could identify.

This data analysis, coding, and categorizing method, which is called thematic analysis, has few rules but sometimes can be a “matrix based method” where data can emerge and be organized according to themes and subthemes (Bryman 2012:579, 717). I started out by organizing the data in a matrix, but afterwards when I had coded all the data, I saw that with so much data, a matrix was going to be too confusing to analyze. Thus, I divided the data according to themes into the different Microsoft Word files. In looking for ways to manage and categorize the large amount of data, I found that thematic analysis was a helpful approach because it was flexible, yet gave me some idea of what to look for in identifying themes. Bryman mentions some of the possible

guidelines I used in identifying themes in the data: “repetition, similarities, differences, and transitions” (Bryman 2012:580).

During this process, I lost a large part of the data that already had been coded because of problems with saving the files. At the moment, it was disastrous because I had to commence the coding process over again and it was time consuming. However, starting over again allowed me to re-read interview data, see categories that I had missed, and find a new way to categorize data that I was not sure about where to place. I once again made new Microsoft Word files according to categories and cut and pasted interview segments that embodied characteristics that could fit in under these categories. At the end of this process, I was left with 13 different Microsoft Word files, which represented 13 different categories. The biggest one of those Microsoft Word files contained 14 pages of interview segments, which related to that specific category. However, after receiving some feedback from professors and fellow students, I understood that in my case, there was just too much data and if I wanted to be able to analyze it, I needed to condense it. After looking at the data again, I then condensed these 13 different categories into three large themes. This is how the categorized data is now organized:

- Tension from above- Organizational
 - *Kirkens Bymisjon*'s symbols and name
 - Former employee devotional
 - Former chapel
- Tension from within- Employees
 - Tension among employees
 - Personal tension within employees
- Tension from below- Clients
 - Interacting with clients

Even though the thematic analysis process can seem as being too vague (Bryman 2012:578), I found that it was a natural part of coding, categorizing and findings themes. It was also practical and time saving to look for themes while I was coding and categorizing.

2.5 Validity, Reliability, Reflexivity/ Confirmability

Bryman points out that since validity and reliability are mostly concerned with quantitative research measurement, researchers have discussed whether these are truly things that must be

taken into consideration in qualitative research (Bryman 2012:389). However, all three aspects—validity, reliability, and reflexivity will be taken into account in this project.

2.5.1 Validity

Theorists Guba and Lincoln (cited in Bryman 2012:390, 392) approach validity in a new way. They suggest that in qualitative research validity is equal to the credibility and the transferability of the research or whether research findings can be applied to other situations.

Guba and Lincoln (cited in Bryman 2012:390) explicate that credibility entails that the research study was completed using ethical methods and that includes submitting research findings back to the social group that was studied so that the researcher can confirm that they got a correct view of that reality. In desiring to work ethically and to obtain accurate findings, it was important to inform persons who participated in this project about the project's purpose and how it will be carried out as mentioned in the interview section of this paper. Likewise, it is of essence to protect the participants' wishes of being anonymous throughout the project and keeping their responses confidential until permission is received to quote informants directly. In order to protect anonymity, all informants' names have been changed to *Informant*. Since there were eight persons interviewed, they have all received a number ranging from one to eight. So for example, a respondent in this project could be referred to as *Informant 5*. In some interviews, informants talked about other employees at *Nadheim* who had a specific role in specific situations and these employee's names have also been changed. There are not too many employees who work at *Nadheim*, so it could be easy for employees who read this project to distinguish who is being talked about in specific situations. For the purpose of studying the tension at *Nadheim* and remaining truthful to the data that was gathered it is unavoidable to completely anonymize to such a degree that employees would not recognize each other. However, it was essential to re-confirm with informants if the collected data presents their views accurately. I would not want employees that were interviewed to feel like they are being singled out if they felt like others could recognize them in specific situations. In a like manner, *Nadheim* works with persons in difficult situations so it would be detrimental to use any confidential information that was reported to me for the sake of completing this project. However, I would not want to invent things or distort the reality in order to protect persons. This is why it was essential for me to check back with informants about how I understood what they said and to what degree they can be anonymized in the project and so that a truthful picture will be provided. If informants do not feel like they can be anonymized enough in certain situations, then these aspects will have to be left out of the project in order to comply ethically. For these

reasons, in the presentation of the data chapter, more detailed information about informants will not be included.

Going back to the second component of validity which Guba and Lincoln (cited in Bryman 2012:390, 392) have referred to as transferability, can the results of this research study be transferred to other social realities? This is difficult to say. Guba and Lincoln (cited in Bryman 2012:392) claim that it is you, the reader, who can judge if these findings can be transferable. However, my job as the researcher is to provide the specifics of the context (Geertz cited in Bryman 2012:392) at *Nadheim* so that a clear picture can be seen. My hope is that other diaconal organizations may be able to benefit from some of the findings that will be specific to this institution and use those findings as a way to think about challenges that pertain to them in their social reality.

2.5.2 Reliability

Guba and Lincoln (cited in Bryman 2012:392) view reliability in qualitative research as dependability. By this they mean how dependable or trustworthy is the research that has been done. They suggest that complete records of every step that has been taken in the research from the beginning to the end is available for peers to audit (Guba and Lincoln cited in Bryman 2012:392). However, this point of view is criticized because there is too much data generated in research studies and it would be too burdensome for a group of peers to review everything (Bryman 2012:392). Nonetheless, I have records of how this research project has been carried out. In addition, throughout this process I have received feedback from my advisor, professors, and classmates. I do not presuppose that they have had the time to review everything I have done, this would be impossible. Nevertheless, their feedback has played an important part in remaining trustworthy in every process of this project. Just as well, it was important to go back to the sources when using direct quotes to check the information so that the data is proved trustworthy.

2.5.3 Reflexivity / confirmability

Bryman (2012:394) makes a point of the fact that in doing social research the researcher is not just gathering data from a social group, but they are also influencing the material that has been gathered. This goes hand in hand with what Guba and Lincoln (cited in Bryman 2012:392) refer to as conformability or the ability of a researcher to not allow personal attitudes to affect the research.

An important part to consider regarding reflexivity can be what possibly occurred when I gathered the data. In the interviews I tried to ask questions that would give informants the chance to reflect on tension they had experienced. However, I hope that the questions were not perceived as leading and did not direct persons to say that something was a challenge during the interview that perhaps was not challenging at the moment they experienced it. For this reason, when in doubt I asked respondents to repeat things and I repeated back to them what I had heard so that I could verify. Likewise, since I was doing an internship at *Nadheim*, informants were aware that I was a diakonia student. Perhaps some informants had certain assumptions of a person who studies diakonia. If these assumptions were taken into the interview setting, persons could have formulated their answers in a certain way. They could have told me what I wanted to hear, kept to themselves their real opinion if they were not comfortable, or answered in a manner that reflected another view based on their assumptions about me even if it was not an accurate portrayal of reality. However, it is impossible for me to say if this occurred or not. I asked for clarifications and dug deeper into issues during the interviews in order to get more accurate accounts. In addition, I tried to be an open minded and reliable student while at *Nadheim* and I hope this would have helped in gaining the trust of informants.

Lastly, all of this connects back to a hermeneutical method of doing research. If I am aware of the assumptions I have brought into this project that may influence the outcome, can push those aside, and be more broad minded, perhaps there will be less chance that I influenced the findings.

3. Background Information on *Nadheim*

In order to better understand the tension that has affected or currently impacts *Nadheim* as a diaconal organization in relation to Christian, non-Christian or other religious values held by the organization, its employees, and clients, it is essential to consider some background information. I have chosen to include some interview data in this section because some of the details that were reported to me by informants are very useful in describing the specific context at *Nadheim*.

3.1 What is *Kirkens Bymisjon*?

As previously stated, *Nadheim* is a diaconal project of *Kirkens Bymisjon* or in English, as it is called, *The Church City Mission*. *Kirkens Bymisjon* first started its work in Oslo in 1855 (*Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss*) under the name *Foreningen for Indre Mission i Christiania*. Later on the name was changed to *Oslo Indremisjon*. However, in 1985 they became *Kirkens Bymisjon* (*Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss Historie*) (Kullerud 2005:13). *Kirkens Bymisjon* describes itself as an “open and inclusive organization.” It has different types of initiatives in 20 of Norway’s cities aimed at helping persons who have distinct kinds of needs (*Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss*).

Kirkens Bymisjon started its work in order to carry out *The Church of Norway’s* mandate of diakonia by taking care of persons (Kullerud 2005:48). The organization had its upbringings in an awakening (*Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss Historie*) or a religious movement particularly associated with *The Lutheran Church* where Christians emphasized man’s sinfulness and God’s greatness (Wikipedia Awakening Religious Movement 2015). For a period of time in 1905, Christians from several different organizations met every night in Oslo and asked God to renew and strengthen their faith (Lundby 1980:107-110). One of the results of these prayer meetings was an urging among the people to assume a heightened degree of social responsibility on behalf of one another (Lundby 1980: 112-114,116). A great number of persons agreed to work in the city among society’s most vulnerable (*Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss*) (Lundby 1980:116). This was one event that greatly influenced the organization.

Over time, *Kirkens Bymisjon* has evolved into a large welfare provider in Norway, yet it is still strongly connected to *The Church of Norway* as a main diaconal arm of the Church (*Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss Historie*). In the *Verdidokument* (document describing organizational values), *Kirkens Bymisjon* explains that the motivation for its work emerges out of a belief in God. This belief in God is what drives its vision of treating persons justly, with respect, and care (*Kirkens Bymisjon* p.3). According to the Christian viewpoint, people are created in God’s image

therefore they are extremely valuable and *Kirkens Bymisjon* embraces this thought as a part of its foundation (Kirkens Bymisjon p.12). Through its work, *Kirkens Bymisjon* wants to show God's love through compassion for people and be a place where hopes are renewed (Kirkens Bymisjon p.20).

Kirkens Bymisjon uses four symbols that serve as a reminder of what its work is based on. It uses the cobblestone as a sign of the realities of the street. The candle is a sign for prayer, hope, and belief. The rose is used as a symbol for both love from God and love from people, with the thorns serving as a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice. Lastly, the cross is used as a Christian symbol of new life, hope, and an expression of God identifying with humanity in suffering and in everyday life (Kirkens Bymisjon p.23).

3.2 What is *Nadheim*?

Nadheim is a center that is run by *Kirkens Bymisjon* for persons (men, women, transgender persons) that have or have had experience in prostitution. Persons that sell or have sold sexual services can receive advice and support and participate in a number of different activities (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter *Nadheim*). *Nadheim*'s self-described main vision is, "a society where all people have real alternatives to prostitution" (*Nadheim* p.6 Årsmelding 2013).

3.3 History of *Nadheim*

Nadheim is the oldest type of social service provider for persons with prostitution experience (*Nadheim Kvinnerenter*). In 1913, Kristine Thorbjørnsen started *Gatemisjonen* or 'the street mission' (Kullerud 2005:19-20) after discovering what was happening in the streets of Oslo (Kullerud 2005:80). This initiative was a street outreach project focusing on rescuing young Norwegian women who had left home and had come to Oslo in search of job opportunities, but ended up working in brothels or selling sex on the street (Kullerud 2005:15, 19-20). This work was a part of *Kirkens Bymisjon* when it used to be called *Oslo Indremisjon*.

One day, a young woman Laura *Nadheim* applied for a job as the assistant to Thorbjørnsen and out of thirty other applicants was accepted (Kullerud 2005:19-20). This position as an assistant eventually led to *Nadheim* taking over the work after Thorbjørnsen's death (Kullerud 2005:15). *Nadheim* had to give everything else up in order to do this work (Kullerud 2005:19-20). She lived and worked at the shelter where the girls stayed after they were rescued. According to Kullerud (2005:22), who has compiled and written about the history of *Kirkens Bymisjon*, the shelter where *Nadheim* lived and worked was always bustling with commotion and people came

in an out at all hours of the day. Nadheim directed the shelter, visited girls who had been sent to jail, spoke to churches and other organizations about the work, was out rescuing girls at night, and during the day was making contact with possible employers so that she could help the rescued girls find a different way of making a living (Kullerud 2005:22, 29-30). Nadheim was out on the street searching for girls for 40 years and an average 250 nights a year (Kullerud 2005:17). According to Kullerud (2005:25, 26), Nadheim did not ask girls about their faith but just helped, even traveling to Copenhagen to rescue Norwegian girls. In 1967, she died as she made her way to visit women at the jail (Kullerud 2005:17).

Before Nadheim's death, Liv Rosmer Fisknes joined the work. She received an internship position at *Oslo Indremisjon* and was assigned to work under the guidance of Nadheim. According to Kullerud (2005:39), "Laura threw her right into the work." After Nadheim died, the work of rescuing girls from the streets of Oslo slowed down. However, the secretary general of *Oslo Indremisjon* at the time, Aage Müller-Nilssen, asked Rosmer if she would consider starting up the street outreach again (Kullerud 2005:41). In 1981, with the help of Erik Sahlberg, Rosmer started a social service center for women with experience in prostitution as a diaconal project of *Oslo Indremisjon* and it was named *Nadheim* (Kullerud 2005:13, 18). Through her work at *Nadheim*, Rosmer wanted to confront *The Church of Norway's* previous view of women involved in prostitution and emphasize that people are important not because of what they do or how they live but because they are persons (Kullerud 2005:56, 61).

3.4 What does *Nadheim* do?

One of *Nadheim's* most crucial tasks is to establish contact with their target group. *Nadheim* accomplishes this by contacting persons who advertise the sale of sexual experiences on the internet, by meeting persons selling sex in Oslo city center (*Nadheim Kvinnesenter*), or by establishing relationships with persons in massage parlors and making them aware of the services *Nadheim* has to offer (Nadheim p.19-20) (Årsmelding 2013). *Nadheim* looks into individuals' distinct needs, presents persons with advice, or points out other initiatives that can help in meeting needs (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter *Nadheim Om Nadheim*). Just as well, *Nadheim* shares their knowledge of prostitution related issues in the national and international political arenas and advocates for issues that directly affect this target group (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter *Nadheim Om Nadheim*). Other specific services that *Nadheim* offers include making available social workers that are trained and prepared to talk about personal issues with clients, educating the target group about sexual health, giving out condoms, and providing assistance with job searching for those who desire to quit working in prostitution. Likewise,

additional services are available to offer help in cases of drug addiction, to provide judicial aid in human trafficking situations, and to give individuals opportunities to participate in Norwegian language courses and social activities (Nadheim Kvinnesenter). *Nadheim* also operates a night café once a week in the city center that is open during the middle of the night for women who are selling sex on the street (Kirkens Bymisjons nattkafe gir et pusterom i natten 2014). Women can relax, get some food, condoms, Bibles, and participate in a small devotional and prayer. The devotional, prayer, and availability of Bibles has been specifically requested by the Nigerian clients.

In addition, *Nadheim* has a “stue,” or living room, which is open daily from 9.00-16.00 everyday and until 21.00 hours on Fridays (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter Nadheim Tilbud og Aktiviteter). Every Friday, *Nadheim* serves dinner at 18.00 hours and persons have an opportunity to drop by, socialize, and participate in activities with others (Nadheim p.21 Årsmelding 2013). Clients can use the living room for a number of activities like napping, reading, and accessing a computer. Likewise, clients can use *Nadheim's* post box as a place to receive personal mail if they do not have a permanent address and also have access to a washing machine (Nadheim Kvinnesenter). Additionally, *Nadheim* has a safe house in Oslo called *Lauras Hus*. Possible victims of human trafficking live in the house and receive social and health services while their situations are being assessed (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter Lauras Hus).

3.5 Who are *Nadheim's* clients?

As mentioned previously, all persons who receive services from *Nadheim* are individuals with experience in prostitution (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter Nadheim). In 2002 and 2003, *Nadheim's* clientele began to change. Instead of only meeting Norwegian women who were involved in prostitution and possibly the drug scene in Oslo (Nadheim Kvinnesenter), *Nadheim* was coming in to contact with women from other parts of the world who had no connections to narcotics. Women from Eastern Europe and the Caribbean entered the street prostitution arena (Nadheim Kvinnesenter). Today it is mostly women from Eastern Europe and Nigeria who work in street prostitution (Nadheim p.10, 11 Årsmelding 2013). Just as well, there are many persons from different parts of the world such as Eastern Europe, Latin America, and East Asia (specifically Thailand) who advertise for sexual services online and or carry these services out in apartments, massage parlors, and hotels throughout Norway (Nadheim Kvinnesenter). In 2013, *Nadheim* had contact with 917 persons from 53 different nationalities and only 70 persons of Norwegian origin. *Nadheim* is now open to men, women, and transgender persons. In 2013, they

established contact with 849 women, 78 men, and 60 transgender persons (Nadheim p.7 Årsmelding 2013).

As mentioned, many of the women working in street prostitution in Norway are from Nigeria (Nadheim p.8 Årsmelding 2013). In her thesis on Nigerian migrants in Stavanger, Nessa indicates globalization as a possible explanation for the rise of Nigerian women in street prostitution. According to theories presented in her research, since the world has become smaller through more effective means of communication and transportation persons have been able to learn more about prosperous living in western countries (Nessa 2012). Upon seeing how westerners live, persons coming from poor and corrupt countries realize that the only opportunity they have to obtain the goods they do not have is to immigrate to Europe (Årsvoll cited in Nessa 2012). Thus, through a number of different ways, persons end up in Norway and because of educational background, language barriers, and immigration status they may not have the resources to find an ordinary job and have to turn to prostitution as a way to make a living. This may help to explain the reason for the large number of non-Norwegians involved in prostitution that *Nadheim* meets.

For the purposes of this study, it is also important to emphasize that since *Nadheim's* clients come from many different parts of the world, they represent a variety of cultures and religions. Religion or moral views play a part in the tension that has risen or occurred at *Nadheim* in recent years, so it is important to look at what clients believe. From the interviews with employees, I gathered information that many clients do not talk about their religious views or moral beliefs with *Nadheim*, while others are more open about what they believe. Social work researchers Furness and Gilligan (2010:2, 3) explain that religion might not be important to all clients of social services, but to some it might be significant in their difficult situations. Religion and moral views may be a large part of what people are and this is crucial to consider when working with persons in vulnerable situations.

While at *Nadheim*, I also learned that many of the Norwegian clients are not religious. These clients however, have their own conceptions about how the Church or Christians are because of their own experiences with *The Church of Norway* and the Lutheran beliefs that are intertwined in the religious cultural background of Norway. Informants 3 and 4 have had experiences where it has been clear to see that some Norwegian clients were not religious because of their opinions

regarding religiosity or Christianity.⁴ The manager at *Nadheim* also confirms this by explaining that it is apparent that not all Norwegian clients at *Nadheim* adhere to a specific faith.⁵ They may be a part of the 1.1 billion people in the world who call themselves humanist, atheist, or agnostic (www.adherents.com cited in Furness and Gilligan 2010:179). The *RAMP Survey* (which stands for Religious and Moral Pluralism), gives more background information about where non-religious Norwegian clients at *Nadheim* might stand in regards to belief. This survey was done in 12 European countries, including Norway, with the purpose of investigating changes in Europe's moral and religious landscape (Botvar 2001:194). According to the *RAMP Survey* in the Nordic countries, traditional Christianity related to the Lutheran Church is weakening (Botvar cited in Heiene 2001:267). There is a large decline in the attendance of church services and people's beliefs are less influenced by doctrines (Heiene 2001:267). Religious or moral beliefs have turned into more private matters in people's lives (Heiene 2001:267) and people's own perceptions are what guide them in regards to the existential (Sundback cited in Heiene 2001:267). However, researcher Hallamaa (cited in Østnor 2001:16, 223) points out that the secularization of society in the Nordic countries is very much characterized by a Lutheran background which still has some influence, even when most people in society consider themselves to be non-religious. In addition, 60 percent of respondents of the *RAMP Survey* said that in their daily life, religious belief has very little to no significance at all (Botvar cited in Heiene 2001:267). Furness and Gilligan (2010:4) note that "non-religious or secular spirituality" can also be important in regards to how people act and respond.

Informants 1 and 3 have had some few experiences with non-Norwegian and non-African clients⁶ who have happened to mention in passing things about blessings or God, which revealed that they had a Christian or Islamic background.⁷ Nonetheless, these experiences do not occur so often and many of these clients from Latin America, Eastern Europe and other places do not bring up the subject of faith so much in their contact with *Nadheim*.

For other clients, faith is a more noticeable aspect. Social researchers mention that for some immigrants religion is essential. It helps them maintain their culture and serves as a mean of socialization (Burrell and Panayi, cited in Herbert et al, cited in Furness and Gillbert 2010:137). *Nadheim* has a lot of contact with Thai clients who work in massage parlors around the city of

⁴ Interviews Informants 3, Nadheim 19.9.14 and Informant 4, Nadheim 01.10.14

⁵ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

⁶ The reason why I refer to non-African clients will be demonstrated on the next page, where I remark in detail about Nigerian clients and their beliefs.

⁷ Interviews Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14 and Informant 1, Nadheim 22.09.14

Oslo. Informants did not say that Thai clients talk with them about their religious faith but *Nadheim's* employees are aware of it when visiting the Thai massage parlors. Often in the massage parlors, there are symbols that point to the Buddhist religion such as statues, the burning of incense, or food which is placed in the room as an offering. Informant 5 said that *Nadheim* employees once were invited to and attended a Buddhist blessing at one of the massage parlors where clients work at.⁸

Lastly, in regards to faith, it is crucial to make a special note of Nigerian clients and what they say in regards to their beliefs when making contact with *Nadheim*. Many Nigerian women *Nadheim* meets believe in Christianity mixed with the native West African religion Voodoo and the traditional practices of Juju (Årsvoll 2009). Voodoo is practiced in Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, and Benin by approximately 30 million persons. The main belief is that spirits and other supernatural elements control the world. Voodoo adherents worship ancestors and different gods that control different spheres of life, society, and the natural world (What is Voodoo? West African Vodun). Juju, also referred to as black magic, is composed of superstitious beliefs common in West Africa. It is often confused with Voodoo, which is similar, but Voodoo and Juju are practiced in different ways. Juju consists of magical spells or small objects worn, carried on the body, or consumed that are used to ward off evil, promote healing, or harm people. Juju rituals are performed by a sorcerer or a witch doctor (Black Magic World 2015, Wikipedia Juju 2015). Nigerian clients are much more open about their Christian beliefs while reflecting very little on their traditional beliefs. Årsvoll, in his thesis about the meaning of religion for Nigerian women in prostitution in Stavanger points out that the Nigerian women he interviewed did not want to talk about their traditional religion. Many said to him that they did not believe in it or that it was only the old people in their communities who believed in that. They made sure to affirm that they were Christians. Nonetheless, their interviews revealed that in the daily things they do, they still very much practice their traditional religion and combine it with Christianity (Årsvoll 2009:70, 71). In addition, many Nigerian women involved in prostitution in Europe have undergone a Juju ceremony before leaving their country as a pact between them and their smugglers pledging to pay back the money that will be paid for their passage to Europe. If the money is not paid back, the ceremony could have a reverse effect and the person who took the oath could be inflicted with bad luck, sickness, or even death (Nessa 2012:42, 43). *Nadheim* employees have heard some of these types of stories but it is not so common that Nigerian clients talk about this just as Årsvoll encountered in his interviews with Nigerian women. However, for example, Informant 4 had a meeting with one Nigerian client

⁸ Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

who shared her struggle with anxiety because of a Juju ceremony she underwent before coming to Norway.⁹ Thus, it is an important factor that lies in the background.

It is also important to point out that that people take their religious beliefs with them into different cultures and settings and practice their beliefs despite other requirements they may have in life (Ammerman cited in Årsvoll 2009:35). This is apparent in the case for many Nigerian women as they bring their mix of beliefs to Norway (Carling, Skilbrei, Tveit, and Brunovskis cited in Årsvoll 2009:35). Along the same lines, Eide (2008:15 citing Magesa) refers to the general importance of religion for most Africans in a book about African perspectives in caring for persons:

Africans make no distinction or separation between the sacred and the secular. African cultures are religious cultures. Religion is far more than ...an approach to life...It is life itself...whatever one thinks, says or does has religious implications.

For many of the Nigerian women, religion may encompass every area of life so it is not out of the ordinary to express their religiosity or religious beliefs while partaking in social services at *Nadheim*, especially if they are experiencing difficult situations in a new country and facing the challenges that come with prostitution. “In difficult situations and crisis belief comes to the surface and people turn back to it” (Mbiti cited in Årsvoll 2009:29).

3.6 Who are *Nadheim*'s employees?

As of February 2015, *Nadheim* had nine persons working as social workers, a manager, an assistant manager, and a few employees involved in administration (Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter *Nadheim* Ansatte). According to *Nadheim*'s 2013 annual report, *Nadheim*'s employees at the time were persons with many different educational backgrounds such as social work, psychology, child welfare, law, family therapy, mental health work, education, music, social anthropology, and theology among other professions. Likewise, during the time spent at *Nadheim* as an intern and through interviews, I learned that the manager of *Nadheim* has a background in diakonia.

Employees at *Nadheim* represent diverse educational backgrounds. However, it can be useful to consider the type of training social workers receive, which may apply in this Norwegian context. Furness and Gilligan (2010:5-7) mention that in the latter decades of the 20th century, social work education did not take into consideration the different moral or religious beliefs that clients

⁹ Interview Informant 4, *Nadheim* 01.10.14

may hold. Just as well, the results of their social work research in Britain proposes that social workers there have not received adequate training in regards to responding to clients who experience religion as being a big part of their lives, nor preparation in responding to issues stemming from clashes between clients' and social workers' personal beliefs (Furness and Gilligan 2010:5-7). Likewise, very little of the social work curriculum in Britain focuses on matters of spirituality or faith (Moss cited in Furness and Gilligan 2010:7, 8). This trend may also be relevant in Norwegian social work education. Informant 3 reported that when they were earning an education in social work here in Norway, there was little talk about dealing with clients who had different religious backgrounds.¹⁰ Informant 3 says, "...often we learned about the negative sides of religion, if we learned something. We had more focus on culture rather than on religion."¹¹ This information can be relevant when looking at the tension employees are faced with.

Regarding employee's beliefs, employees of *Kirkens Bymisjon*, and in this case *Nadheim*, do not have to be professing Christians in order to work in any of the organization's initiatives. However, they do have to be able to comply with *Kirkens Bymisjon's* values (Kirkens Bymisjon Ledige Stillinger Oslo Nadheim Sosial Konsulent 100% engasjement). In an article about diakonia, former secretary general of *Kirkens Bymisjon* Sturla J. Stålsett (cited in Bjørndal 2014:11) mentions that the organization has 1200 employees with many differing worldviews. During the time at *Nadheim*, I discovered that employees have different religious or moral beliefs. These include Christianity practiced in different ways and to different degrees of participation, but mostly linked to a Lutheran background or in relationship to *The Church of Norway*. Other employees have non-religious points of view, or adherence to other religions. However, those whom I interviewed had a Christian background or a self-proclaimed non-religious/ humanist worldview. Furness and Gilligan (2010 citing Bowie) point out that the humanist view focuses on the golden rule: 'treat others as one wants to be treated' and being aware of the consequences of one's actions. Those employees who described themselves as non-religious/ humanist shared that they have a previous knowledge of or a background in the Lutheran tradition. The manager explained that Norwegian employees at *Nadheim* who describe themselves as non-religious may have an uneasy relationship with what they believe and may not want to categorize themselves as being anything.¹² Some of the facts that were discussed

¹⁰ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

¹¹ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

¹² Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

previously regarding the views of Norwegian clients at *Nadheim* may also apply to non-religious employees at *Nadheim*.

Just as employees have different beliefs, they may also have various motivations for wanting to work at a *Kirkens Bymisjon* initiative, even though their beliefs may contrast with the Christian values of the organization. Six out of the eight informants I talked to wanted to work at *Nadheim* because they were interested in the type of work *Kirkens Bymisjon* does in relation to vulnerable persons, prostitution, and promoting human dignity, and not necessarily because of the fact that *Kirkens Bymisjon* is a diaconal organization. Informant 4 explains it in this way:

... it is my view that there is a special group of people who want to work in *Kirkens Bymisjon*. I did not seek a job in *The City Mission* because it was *The City Mission*. I like very well ... their way of working and that they really want to make a difference.¹³

However, one informant was very clear about that their faith, Christian background, and desire to be involved in diaconal work was their primary motivation for applying to a job at *Nadheim*. It is essential to keep in context the motivation of employees who decide to work in a diaconal organization as the tension faced in this work is looked at.

3.7 Rooms and Rituals at *Nadheim*

For the purpose of understanding some of the tension that has taken place at *Nadheim*, some practical background information regarding rooms and rituals will be given. I will refer to things that are, were, or took place at *Nadheim*, such as a candle lighting altar, a chapel, and an employee devotional. This information will provide a clearer picture of the context for the reader.

The first point to keep in mind is the candle lighting altar that is at *Nadheim*. As previously mentioned, *Nadheim* has a “stue” or living room, which is open daily from 9.00-16.00 everyday and until 21.00 hours on Fridays (*Kirkens Bymisjon Virksomheter Nadheim Tilbud og Aktiviteter*). When clients or visitors come to *Nadheim*, they are led to this living room. The living room is arranged much like the living room of a typical house, except it is bigger in order to accommodate more people. There are couches, chairs, coffee tables, and bookshelves full of many reading materials. On one side of the room, there is a long dining table that can accommodate many guests during the weekly dinners. Behind the dining table, in the corner of the room there is a narrow, yet tall, white table that during the interviews *Nadheim* employees

¹³ Interview Informant 4, *Nadheim* 10.01.14

referred to as the altar. On top of the altar, there is a vase with roses and some cobblestones. On top of the cobblestones, there are small tea lights. As mentioned before, these are the symbols that *Kirkens Bymisjon* uses to identify with their Christian values. Under the table, there is a lighter and a basket with new tea lights, which persons can use to light candles or replenish candles that have already burned out. According to Informant 2, a place to light candles is something that all *Kirkens Bymisjon*'s initiatives have.¹⁴

The second thing to consider is the chapel, which no longer exists. As one moves away from the candle lighting area and the dining room table, there is a small hallway with two doorways on each side. One doorway leads into a kitchen. The doorway across from the kitchen leads into a small room. In that room, there are some chairs, a coffee table, some decorations on the wall, and a stand displaying some magazines. Employees refer to this room as the '*samtale rom*' or the conversation room. This room is of significance because informants mentioned that the room had another purpose. Previously, this room used to be a chapel. One of the employees at *Nadheim* that I will refer to as Informant 6 said, "In the conversation room there used to be a chapel. And there hung a giant wooden cross, (there was) an altar, and many icons."¹⁵ This former chapel has also been mentioned in an article about *Nadheim* written by *Diakonhjemmet Høgskole*. The article states, "The door to the chapel – a self appointed room with a household altar and space for eight persons- is always open" (Karlsen 1993:37).

This former chapel is also related to the candle lighting altar that is currently at *Nadheim*. The manager explained, "The chapel has been done away with and then we moved the candle-lighting out to the living room."¹⁶ When the chapel was dismantled, the altar was made smaller and moved into the corner of the living room. So today, the chapel no longer exists, but its remnants can be seen in the common living room area.

The last piece of background information, which will be important to consider, is the employee devotional. Some years ago, the exact time of this is unclear, *Nadheim* had a devotional for its employees that is no longer in effect today. This was a small gathering that took place before the weekly staff meeting. Employees came together to read a text and light a candle in a symbolic way pointing to the Christian values of the organization. Informant 2 described it as such: "In the beginning we followed a Bible reading plan in the gatherings but afterwards it developed

¹⁴ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.2014

¹⁵ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

¹⁶ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

into the reading of a poem chosen by the person who was in charge of the devotional that day.”¹⁷ Informant 6 also indicated this, “[At]¹⁸ those gatherings a small text was read and we lit a candle and then there was another text that was read afterwards.”¹⁹ This former employee devotional, along with all the background information, will be of significance in analyzing the research question.

¹⁷ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

¹⁸ I would just like to point out that in many of the quotes gathered from interviewees brackets like these [] appear. The words inside these brackets were not directly said by informants but they were added in order to help the reader better make sense of what informants were saying.

¹⁹ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

4 Theoretical Framework/ Perspectives

The following section focuses on the theoretical components and perspectives that are useful for this study. Because of the nature of the research question and the specific context from where the data was gathered, I am obliged to consider different types of theories and perspectives from different disciplines. Firstly, I have chosen to focus on theoretical framework related to the nature of human service organizations. This framework highlights the nature of organizations and how employees and clients collaborate so that the outcome will be the provision of welfare services. Theorist Hasenfeld (1992:24) warns that the concepts that have been developed for human service organizations may provide a partial or perhaps even biased view because these theories have come out of the way that human service organizations are viewed. There might be many different ways of looking at human service organizations, depending from what standpoint they are being regarded. However, Hasenfeld (1992:24) also says that these theories have been essential in understanding much about human service organizations. For the theoretical framework, I have chosen to focus on the nature of human service organizations as described by Hasenfeld and the Negotiated Order theory that was developed by Strauss. I provide some background information and explanations related to the theory and then focus on how Hasenfeld connects this theory to the nature of human service organizations framework. This framework and theory focus on the employee and client components found in an organization.

Nonetheless, it is not enough to only focus on the employee and client aspects of human service organizations because the findings are also rooted in a diaconal context. It is also essential to look at what *Nadheim* means when it says that it is a diaconal organization. Therefore, I present the diaconal perspective that *Nadheim/ Kirkens Bymisjon* adheres to and some context information on how diakonia has developed into what it is today in the Scandinavian society. This perspective provides a basis for the diaconal aspect of *Nadheim*, but I do not refer to it explicitly as theory because it is more of a framework around the concept of diakonia, which is necessary to answer the research question.

Lastly, I look at pluralism. The findings are rooted in a context where there are persons of different cultures and religious backgrounds interacting together. Their interactions result in the distribution of welfare services. Thus, it is important to consider the diversity of our context and the significance it will have for our findings. I consider some theoretical framework around the term 'modern pluralism' in the Scandinavian society and see the effects of this in the work of diaconal organizations.

4.1 Human Service Organizations

Before presenting the theories on human service organizations, it is beneficial to look at some background information on what defines a human service organization.

4.1.1 What is a human service organization?

According to *The National Organization for Human Services* in the US, a human service organization is one that:

...meets human needs through an interdisciplinary knowledge base focusing on prevention as well as remediation of problems, and maintaining a commitment to improving the overall quality of life of service populations (NOHS).

This definition could be used to interpret a human service organization as an agency that meets a specific group of clients with specific necessities and provides these clients with social services based on numerous different social disciplines. Hasenfeld (1992:5) explains that a human service organization is specially characterized by their provision of a “transformation process.” With their services, they provide clients a chance to change or ameliorate aspects of their lives. Hasenfeld (1992:3) claims that even though human service organizations exist everywhere in the form of hospitals, care centers for distinct groups in society, schools, or welfare organizations contributing to the betterment of lives, human service organizations are “an enigma.” Hasenfeld (1992:3) describes human service organizations as being puzzling because of the many different sides that exist in the work they perform.

One side of the human service organization is the employee side. Human service organizations rely on employees to produce a service for clients (Hasenfeld 1992:ix). These employees are driven by different motivations and principles for their engagement and execution of the specific type of social service they provide. Some of the factors that drive employees are either internal or external (Hasenfeld 1992:ix). Internal forces come from the organization itself or the employee themselves. Organizational forces include rules and procedures made by the organization that guide the employee in their work. These norms are put in place to protect the relationship between employees and clients, but may inhibit the employee from doing exactly what they view is best for a client (Hasenfeld 1992: ix, 4, 20). Internal forces are also in the form of employee personal motivation for doing social service work. Employees may decide to work in a human service organization because of their own personal values or professional skills and the thought that they can better people’s lives and feel personally rewarded for doing that (Hasenfeld 1992:ix, 4). External forces come from society in the form of what are acceptable

practices in the specific social service field, the government that may mandate specific practices, or those who provide funding for the organization's work who may want to see a more results oriented approach as a basis for providing the organization with more money (Hasenfeld 1992:ix). These motivations and principles can influence the quality of the service that clients receive, and how problems are determined and solved (Hasenfeld 1992: ix).

Another side to the human service organization is the client side. Hasenfeld (1992:5) refers to clients as the 'raw material' of human service organizations. However, he is very clear to point out that by using this term he is not implying that organizations treat clients as objects but that the product which human service organizations work with are people, thus they are the raw material of organizations (Hasenfeld 1992:5). Clients may also be responsible for the results of the services they receive because they can respond to the services being offered and thus influence the outcome of the work (Hasenfeld 1992:ix, 5).

Human service organizations also have a moral side. They do not just provide a service, for example, like care for the elderly, or in *Nadheim's* case, alternatives to persons involved in prostitution. In order to meet their vision, human service organizations have to use moral judgment, hence they are involved in moral work (Hasenfeld 1992:5). Hasenfeld (1992:5) expounds on that since human service organizations work with clients who have values, the organization itself cannot remain partial to their own values. The organization and its clients are not isolated from society, but they are a part of a bigger societal context. Whatever service the organization provides for the client will reflect the organization's views of the social worth of their clients and communicate to the rest of society what the view of these specific persons is (Hasenfeld 1992:5). Along the same lines, the way human service organizations deliver their work also has a moral aspect. Human service organizations have to make moral choices about how to treat clients, which clients will be prioritized, who will have direct contact with the clients, and what and how many resources will be designated to each client. Just as well, they have to decide how much the client can decide for themselves in the provision of services (Hasenfeld 1992:6). Likewise, human service organizations are regularly having to take into consideration 'new moral systems' or new ways of doing things that perhaps in the past were not considered appropriate but now are regarded as completely normal (Hasenfeld 1992:10). The outcome of these moral choices ordains the outcome of the services clients will receive (Hasenfeld 1992:6).

Another aspect that characterizes human service organizations is the relationship between employees and clients. Without this relationship, it would be impossible to deliver the social service. Hasenfeld (1992:17, 18) calls this relationship the ‘primary vehicle’ for the organization to access clients’ background information, determine the clients’ needs, receive approval from clients as to what measures will be taken, provide social services, and assess the outcome of the services provided to clients. In other words, through the employee and client relationship, the human service organization aims to attain clients’ trust so that quality services may be provided (Hasenfeld 1992:18). Hasenfeld (1992:18, 19) refers to this trust as a sort of “impersonal” trust, which is built on those meetings the employees have with the clients and where clients depend on discretion from employees so that their situations will be considered.

4.1.2 Negotiated order theory

Now that some important background information about human service organizations has been reviewed, a theory can be considered. However, as Hasenfeld (1992:39) points out and which I feel is important to indicate in this project, no theory is perfect enough to explain how a human service organization works because each human service organization is unique in its own way. In the case of this project, *Nadheim* has a very special context, as a diaconal organization with particular employees and clients.

The negotiated order theory was developed by Ansel Strauss (Copp 2013). Strauss wanted to study social change in social structures and developed this theory as a response (Copp 2005:525). Strauss assumed that all systems linked to social structures or institutions were established because of negotiation. He meant that in order to get things done in social settings, people negotiate (Copp 2013). Whenever there is uncertainty and lack of clarity, social actors negotiate in order to create stability again (Copp 2005:525). These negotiations uphold social systems together but at the same time allow for the creation of changes and set boundaries for persons in those systems (Copp 2013). Once persons have reached an agreement about doing things differently, these new routines become the new structure that steer negotiations in the future (Copp 2005:525). *The Encyclopedia of Social Theory* (Copp 2005:526) describes it in this way, “today’s stability was achieved through yesterday’s negotiation and exchange.”

However, in order to understand the foundation for this theory, it is essential to look at what is meant by negotiation. According to Strauss (cited in Crumby et al. 1999:294), negotiation is “interaction and strategies used by people.” Negotiation can also be said to be making agreements, making compromises, and finding ways to accommodate different views (Copp

2005:526). Researchers Hall and Spencer (cited in Crumbie et al. 1999:299) suggest that negotiation takes place in special contexts. It happens mostly in activities that “are variable, individualized, publicly performed and involve teamwork.” Likewise, environments that foster equality and individuality or where change is encountered regularly are conducive to negotiation (Hall and Spencer cited in Crumbie et al. 1999:299). Despite this, the theory receives some critique because not all researchers define negotiation in the same way (Copp 2005:526).

Hasenfeld links this theory specifically to human service organizations. With this theory adjoined to his views of human service organizations, his perspective becomes that human service organizations are “a dynamic system in which the nature of the work is evolving and changing” and where it is “staff and clients who participate in the work” (Hasenfeld 1992:30). The service the organization provides to its clients is the basis for comprehending how the organization evolves (Hasenfeld 1992:30). The work evolves because services that are provided alter the way in which future services will be rendered according to what was experienced and what the outcome of those services were (Hasenfeld 1992:30). Likewise, according to Hasenfeld’s view (1992:30), the Negotiated Order theory points out that human service organizations do multifaceted work such as providing information or comforting clients and the work is built on social interactions with the clients. In order for the services to be carried out, the cooperation of employees with different backgrounds, values, and interests is needed (Hasenfeld 1992:30). The Negotiated Order theory is about negotiation. Negotiation and compromise are needed in defining the work, in deciding how the work will be done, in choosing who will do the work, in doing the work, and deciding how the work will be evaluated (Strauss et al. cited in Hasenfeld 1992:30). According to Hasenfeld (1992:30), it is the employees, the clients, and their interests and ideologies that influence the negotiations that will take place in order to accomplish the work.

This theory is applauded by Hasenfeld (1992:30) because it takes into consideration the fact that clients play an important role in human service organizations. Just as well, it was commended, because it acknowledges that it requires negotiation among employees to get the work done. However, some negative aspects of the theory that Hasenfeld (1992:30) points out are that the theory uses concepts that can be too vague such as the concept of ‘negotiated order.’ Likewise, he says that this theory focuses on the micro level of operations in an organization instead of looking at the bigger picture. Even so, in my perspective, I regard the focus of this theory on the micro level of operations in an organization as beneficial because it is more specific and applicable to the work that *Nadheim* is doing.

4.2 Diakonia

4.2.1 Diakonia according to *The Church of Norway*

As previously mentioned, *Nadheim* is a diaconal project of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. Then, what is diakonia? Diakonia has its roots in the Bible. The word is used 34 times in the New Testament (Smith and Thayer 1999). Scholars still debate the meaning of the Greek word but Catholic scholar Collins (cited in Church of England 2007:12) says that the word refers to “being commissioned by God” or sent by God to do some kind of duty. Since *Kirkens Bymisjon* is connected to *The Church of Norway* and describes itself as a diaconal part of the Church (Kirkens Bymisjon Om Oss Historie) then it is essential to look at *The Church of Norway’s* understanding of diakonia. According to *The Church of Norway Plan for Diakonia* (2007:5), diakonia is:

...the caring ministry of the Church. It is the Gospel in action and is expressed through loving your neighbor, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation, and struggling for justice.

The Church of Norway’s interpretation of diakonia and Collin’s definition link back to *Kirkens Bymisjon’s* founding values. *Kirkens Bymisjon* is driven to do God’s mandated task, which in this case is doing social work among the most vulnerable in society, by their belief in God. *The Church of Norway Plan for Diakonia* (2007:5) also says that there lies a special responsibility in doing diakonia to care in instances where nobody else seems to care. This special responsibility to care is the responsibility of every Christian believer and can be expressed in the actions of the local church, or in an institution or organization which adheres to the Christian confession of *The Church of Norway* (Church of Norway National Council 2007:7, 9) such as *Kirkens Bymisjon* does. However, this does not exclude non-Christians from being involved in diakonia. *The Church of Norway* expresses that because sometimes societal needs can be great, it is crucial that all people “of good will” get involved in the task (Church of Norway National Council 2007:11). Thus, according to *The Church of Norway Plan for Diakonia*, even though *Kirkens Bymisjon’s* motivation as an organization for doing diakonia lies in its Christian foundation, it is not necessary for the individuals who work there to have this Christian basis or motivation for doing the work as long as they have “good will.” It is not completely clear as to what exactly *The Church of Norway* means when it says “good will.” However, in looking at the dictionary, goodwill is defined as “having a benevolent interest or concern” (Merriam Webster Dictionary Good Will 2015). Benevolent can also be a synonym for the words compassionate, caring, generous, or philanthropic (Thesaurus.com 2015). Nonetheless, this does not mean that diakonia

is just caring persons doing good work. *The Church of Norway Plan for Diakonia* also points out that doing diakonia is serving God and that God's love for people is revealed through diakonia. Diakonia is "the gospel in action" (Church of Norway National Council 2007:4, 5). Thus, this Christian aspect still remains in the background and does not take into account whether the person who is practicing diakonia is a Christian believer or not.

4.2.2 The origins of diakonia in our context

In order to understand *The Church of Norway's* view of diakonia and merge it with tension faced by employees at *Nadheim* in recent times, it is necessary to look at how diakonia started as a part of the church's work in the Scandinavian society and how it has developed.

The diakonia practiced in Scandinavia today is influenced by several factors. Martin Luther proposed some reformations for the Church in his time. His theology urged that it was the state's responsibility to take care of its people (Angell 2009:33). At that time society was predominantly Christian and the state was acting on behalf of the Church when it took the task of taking care of the vulnerable in society (Angell 2009:33). However, as time went on, the state's agenda changed and it no longer kept its task of taking care of people on behalf of a Christian mandate (Angell 2009:33).

In the late 17th century, a religious movement called Pietism flourished. Pietists saw Christian faith as a tool to control various aspects of life. They felt that part of the Christian faith was to help the vulnerable (Fanuelson 2014:78, 79). As this movement was happening, the world was also undergoing rapid changes. Europe was recovering from previous wars and the industrial revolution swept through bringing poor migrants to the cities in search of work. Workers were exploited, lived in wretched conditions, and had no access to health care. Disease was rampant among the poverty-stricken workers, mortality rates were high, and children were left uncared for (Erling, cited in Christianson n.d.4). The Pietists took this opportunity to turn their faith into action by helping persons in need, and train social workers, nurses, and teachers to tackle these social problems (Fanuelson 2014:79). The foundation of the Pietist's diakonia was their Christian duty to help others (Fanuelson 2014:81). Not only was their goal to help the needy in society but also to 'bring those persons to salvation' or provide for them Christian teaching so they could follow Christian morality as a basis for living their lives (Aadland 2009:93). Diaconal organizations related to health and social services were established in the second half of the 1800s in Norway. They were "pioneering and innovative" in their services (Skjørshammer

2009:99) because they strove to meet the needs that neither the state nor anyone else was taking care of. This is the foundation of diakonia in Norway.

4.2.3 The secularization of diakonia

Nevertheless, diakonia in the Scandinavian society and in other parts of European society has undergone considerable changes since the days of Pietism. Firstly, society changed and became more secular and pluralist (Fanuelson 2014:79). After the 1970s, the Christian religion no longer held a primary role in the Scandinavian society (Aadland 2009:93). Aadland (2009:85) says that today diaconal organizations are a reflection of the pluralism in society. Organizations have become modern, professional, and have more diversity among their staff. Just as well, the European network of diaconal organizations *Eurodiaconia* (2010:5) says that diakonia practiced by institutions is usually carried out in society with diverse people who have needs. German diakonia organization *Diakonisches Werk* (2008:42) adds to this by voicing that diakonia in our day must not regard the “gender, sexual orientation, religion, skin color and ethnic origin” of persons but just be available wherever there are needs. The pluralist aspect encompasses those inside of the diaconal organization and those the diaconal organization is trying to reach. These aspects along with modernization led to a shift in that diaconal organizations had to “tone down” their Christian aspect if they were going to be considered on par professionally with the uprising secular welfare state who values “neutrality and equality” in offering its social services (Aadland 2009:93). Most diaconal organizations are no longer trying to convince people to follow the Christian faith as a part of their work. Researchers Sider and Unruh (cited in Askeland 2012:30) refer to diaconal organizations which have a Christian background yet offer services through a secularized expression as “belief connected” or “belief background” organizations.

Secondly, the secularization of diakonia is related to the secular welfare state developed by the Scandinavian countries (Fanuelson 2014:79). The government has a series of programs to ensure persons have, among many things, access to health care, education, and an economic source during times when persons cannot work such as if they are unemployed, have reached retirement, or are taking care of children. The secular welfare state has replaced religious organizations as the main source that brings welfare services to people (Fanuelson 2014:79). This means that diakonia no longer has the sole responsibility for the welfare of society but that they work in conjunction with the welfare state to provide social services.

Fanuelson (2014:79 citing Merz) refers to the shift in the diaconal situation in Germany, which applies to our context. Since society became more secular and pluralist, there were only a few

persons left in diaconal organizations who had the traditional faith motivation to do social work. In order to survive, diaconal organizations had to employ other professionals who did not have a faith motivation so that the work would continue. Angell (2014:158) indicates that secularization has created a shift in diaconal organizations where employees do not have to have a personal faith to carry out the work but where leaders are expected to have a personal faith since they promote organizational values to the employees. Fanuelsen (2014:80) concludes that the structure of diaconal organizations has changed to be more value-based where Christian values have been turned into more general values that anyone can find easy to accept. Aas (2009:19 citing Løgstrup) points this out in her thesis when she mentions the Danish philosopher Løgstrup and his ideas about the ‘love for neighbor’ aspect. This concept has been coined as specifically Christian and used as a motivation for Christians to engage in helping people. However, Fanuelsen (2014:77 citing Kvalbein) points out that historically love for neighbor has not just been unique to Christians. Groups like the ancient Egyptians and Jews administered help to the poor in a systematic way and that it was an obligation of society to do so. Løgstrup (cited in Aas 2009:19) proposes that this concept of ‘love for neighbor’ can be transferred to a secular environment. Thus, according to the ideas of Fanuelsen and Løgstrup, non-Christians can also have love for their neighbor and use this as a motivation for working in a diaconal organization.

4.2.4 The specialized yet multiple dimensions of institutional diakonia

Even though institutional diakonia is more secular, carried out by persons with different motivations and backgrounds, and done in cooperation with the welfare state, it is still essential to keep in mind that it has its own special identity. The history of diakonia in Scandinavia and the Christian mandate for the practice of it according to the Church gives institutional diakonia a character of its own composed of multiple aspects. Aadland (2009:13) refers to this as the “double identity” of diaconal institutions. They have a Christian foundation for their work but they are carrying out their specialized social services in modern day society.

Just as well, diaconal organizations are involved in various different social disciplines. Diakonia in institutions is carried out through various professions, such as health professions, or as in the case of *Nadheim*, social work (Fanuelsen 2014:76). Individual employees in diaconal organizations may have responsibility for individual tasks, such as administration or social work, creating what Skjørshammer (cited in Aadland 2009:94) refers to as “different rationalities” or different social disciplines that go hand in hand in the organization and provide different perspectives to the work that is done. Nonetheless, diaconal organizations are still open to responding to clients’ concerns relating to the existential, ethical/ moral, and other matters that

provide meaning in life to individuals (Aadland 2009:95). They want to strive to see persons as holistic beings composed of different aspects, such as “psychological, physical, social and spiritual,” and not just focus solely on the social needs (Eurodiaconia 2010:16). Staff in these organizations are made aware of the entity’s Christian basis and how it influences the work (Eurodiaconia 2010:19), but as previously mentioned, are not required to personally confess a Christian belief. However, staff may be required to facilitate the way for clients to gain access to spiritual resources if clients require that (Diakoniches Werk 2008:13). Institutions or organizations involved in diakonia have also concentrated their efforts on certain areas where the social welfare system is lacking. *Kirkens Bymisjon* is a good example of this as they focus their efforts on groups that may not be covered by the welfare system such as paperless persons. Another example is *Nadheim*, which provides services to persons with prostitution experience, many of them who are not citizens of Norway and may have no rights in the welfare state. Aadland also points out that diaconal organizations have also shifted their focus to providing quality (Aadland 2009:93). They strive to provide specialized quality services where perhaps the welfare state can only provide minimal or limited services to specific groups in society. Lastly, diaconal organizations have also taken the task of being prophetic or speaking out against social wrongs. Whereas the welfare state focuses only on providing social services, many leaders of diaconal organizations are also involved in advocating for the rights of the most vulnerable in society (Aadland 2012:11). For example, *Kirkens Bymisjon*’s position that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity leads the organization to be an advocate for and provide services to paperless persons even though the welfare state does not agree with this position.

4.3 Modern Pluralism

The background chapter provided a small glimpse of the diversity of the clients and employees who are a part of the context being analyzed. In section three, it was also possible to see that Christianity has lost its important role in Norwegian society, many Norwegians consider themselves as non-religious, and religion has moved into the private sphere of many people’s lives. Aadland and Skjørshammer (2009:144, 145) point out that in Norwegian society secularism has developed alongside pluralism. The secular welfare state has evolved closely at the same time as religion has evolved (Aadland 2009:86). The two aspects developing together are what sociologists Berger and Luckmann (cited in Aadland 2009:86) refer to as modern pluralism.

4.3.1 What is pluralism?

Before looking at the concept of modern pluralism, it is first essential to see what pluralism is. The *Merriam Webster Dictionary* (2015) defines pluralism as, “a situation in which people of different social classes, religions, races, etc, are together in a society but continue to have their different traditions and interests.” Harvard College (2015) refers to pluralism as “the encounter of commitments.” They propose that persons with differing worldviews are in relationships with one another, are aware of their differences, and bring those distinctions into their interactions with one another (Harvard College 2015). Aadland (2009:87) also points this out as he refers to Berger and Luckmann’s definition of pluralism; “the coexistence of different value systems and fragments of value systems in the same society and thus parallel existence of quite different communities of meaning.” At the time Aadland and Skjørshammer (2009:145) wrote their article, in Oslo, 17 percent of the population was a member of another faith not in relation to *The Church of Norway*. Just as well, they mentioned that every fourth person living in Oslo had in some way an ethnic background that was not considered to be Norwegian (*ibid.* p 145). These figures may perhaps be higher in 2015.

4.3.2 Theory on modern pluralism

Berger and Luckmann (cited in Aadland 2009:86) explain that institutions have had the very important role in society of dispensing stored up knowledge. Berger and Luckmann (cited in Aadland 2009:86) also postulate that people’s actions have been constructed from knowledge that has been sent down and/ or pressure that has been put on by institutions and their desire for compliance from people.

However, in our times and specifically in Scandinavian society things have changed. Since the Lutheran Church has lost its stronghold on society, no longer is there just one prescribed way of living which encompasses every area of life and is handed down from the Church to the people (Aadland 2009:87). Knowledge is divided into different areas of society and people acquire meaning for the different spheres of their life from diverse places, such as the educational system, their employer, the healthcare system etc...(Aadland 2009:87, 89, 90). In the secular state, not one specific religious or moral system has a monopoly on telling people how act. Those religious institutions that offered people a formula for living are now challenged by other bigger institutions (Aadland 2009:87), for example, such as the welfare state, which has a secular or universal view in regards to values. Smaller institutions, such as religious organizations, fail to control or regulate persons’ lives (Aadland 2009:87). Persons have endless choices and can choose to embrace specific moralities or religions in order find their own

specific meaning in life and deal with life's crises. However, these choices are now made in the private sphere of people's lives (Aadland 2009:87, 88) where perhaps bigger institutions such, as the welfare state, do not interfere. In one single society, there may be thousands of different ways people interpret values and morals for their lives, ways that may not relate to one another (Aadland 2009:87). In order that people can co-exist, tolerance has become a value in society. Tolerance entails accepting other's differences and learning to live with those distinctions (Merriam Webster Tolerance 2015). Tolerance does not tell people how to live but it allows for persons with different views to dwell in the same society (Aadland 2009:88).

4.3.3. The effects of modern pluralism in the diaconal context

As previously looked at, diaconal organizations have a responsibility for providing welfare services and often work in conjunction with the welfare state. As also discussed, diaconal organizations have become more secular in order to be able to recruit the necessary professionals required to continue their work. Aadland (2009:89) says that nothing is a given anymore regarding moral beliefs. Diaconal organizations are themselves pluralist because employees and clients come from various different backgrounds or orientations including religious, cultural, and sexual (Aadland 2009:94). Likewise, even those who may profess to have a Christian faith in a diaconal organization may come from a broad spectrum of Christian churches or groups, not specifically pertaining to the Lutheran confession (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:94).

Most diaconal organizations in our modern pluralist context do not want to create a culture where any religious or moral view is made to be more important than the other. Instead as previously discussed, they have turned Christian values into more general values, which can be adopted by all employees (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:102). Likewise, their services are aimed at helping the most vulnerable in society not taking into account their religious or moral worldviews or trying to convince them that they must become Christians. In the way they are working today, diaconal organizations resemble more of the neutrality or universality of the welfare state (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:144), acting from the value of tolerance.

However, when diaconal organizations are taking into account secularization, working in a pluralist society, meeting people with different religious backgrounds who perhaps are not so comfortable with the secularization of Scandinavia, or others who are finding new forms of spirituality, "the picture is complex" (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:145; Aadland 2012:11). The challenge arises when pluralist persons turn for help to diaconal organizations, which have adopted a more secular way of working. Persons may come to diaconal organizations bearing

their own value and moral systems and expect to be met in accordance to them. For example, the welfare state has a responsibility of treating all people equally despite their differences (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:145). In 2008, Pakistani Norwegian writer and doctor Rana (cited in Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:145) referred to Norway as “totalitarian in its tolerance” and that Norway does not respect persons’ “faith commitments and practice.” In this example, the welfare state, by acting with equality and tolerance was not able to accommodate every religious or moral view without remaining impartial. This may illustrate that in order to be tolerant of everyone’s differences, not everything can be tolerated. This is also a challenge, which diaconal organizations deal with in the modern pluralist society. Not only have diaconal organizations adopted more secular ways of working, but also they are striving to act more professionally, and with equality while keeping a set of values as the foundation for what they do. All of this is communicated to their pluralist clients by pluralist staff (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:149). Aadland and Skjørshammer (2008:151) believe that these values must be “open and clear” and have commonalities so that they encompass Christian, secular, and other points of views that can be accepted by everyone in their contact with diaconal organizations. The modern pluralist society will be important to keep in mind during the analysis of the findings.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has focused on theoretical framework that is used in answering the research question for this project. Firstly, the nature of human service organizations, which encompasses diaconal organizations such as *Nadheim*, has been looked at along with the negotiated order theory. This theory explains the way in which negotiations influence the interactions that take place between employees and clients in human service organizations and the outcome of the social work achieved. Secondly, the meaning of diakonia and its development to what it is today has been examined. Lastly, the subject of modern pluralism has been reviewed. Society has become very diverse and it is a challenge for people to interact with one another. This also influences the way diaconal organizations collaborate with individuals in society. These were the three major perspectives discussed in this section.

5 Presentation of Data

This chapter will present tension encountered by employees as reported in the interviews with eight of the staff at *Nadheim*. I have divided the data collected into three main categories: *tension from above*, *tension from within*, and *tension from below*. For the purpose of categorizing, I refer to the organization as the structure that is above and that employees are working under (*tension from above*), the employees as actors within the organization (*tension from within*), and the clients as the people on the ground or in the field which employees are working directly with (*tension from below*). While I do not wish to suggest any type of hierarchy among the organization, employees, or clients, these names provide a useful means to sort data.

5.1 Tension from Above

Three things that were mentioned by informants in this section refer to the tangible expression of the principles of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. Informants talked about the former employee devotional, the former chapel, and the symbols and name of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. Section 3.7 of this thesis provides background information on the former employee devotional, the former chapel, the symbols that represent *Kirkens Bymisjon* as an organization, and the way that symbolic acts like candle lighting are done at *Nadheim*. This background information can serve as framework for understanding the data better.

The manager at *Nadheim* recounted how not every employee feels the same about the way that *Kirkens Bymisjon* bases their diaconal work on a duty given to them by the Church:

...people who work here feel more or less comfortable that we are mandated by the church, that we are a diaconal organization. I think many choose to work here because we do good work rather than that we are a part of the Church's work. But others think that is exactly why I work here because we are also a church actor and have an anchoring in the church's values. So the tension around this is obvious. Since we have toned down the Christian profile it has made it easier for those who don't define themselves as Christian or who are not so happy about that churchly mandate. But the opposite applies to others. It has been more difficult for others. They think we have become less clear or that we don't stand out as much from the other public organizations who don't have a churchly point of view. There is tension in this and it has been historical, there is no doubt... This tension goes several ways. Some say we are too weak [in our clarity], [some say] that we are open to talk about faith, [some say] that we stand out too little from other non-church organizations.²⁰

This statement will be important to keep in mind while looking at the data. In general, informants seemed to take the liberty of defining *Kirkens Bymisjon's* Christian values in their

²⁰ Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

own terms, according to their personal worldview. Many felt that the values could be considered as universal values that anyone can follow. There is no tension in this specific aspect as was previously discussed in the diakonia framework section. As diaconal organizations have become more open to employees of different backgrounds, space has been created so that diaconal values can embrace the motivations of all kinds of persons who want to be actors of good. However, as recounted above, the fact that the different interpretations come together and influence how the Christian values will be expressed has led to some tension in the workplace, differences of opinion and confusion about what *Kirkens Bymisjon* stands for. The following subsections provide more concrete examples of this tension.

5.1.1 *Kirkens Bymisjon* symbols and name

In the interviews with employees the symbols that *Kirkens Bymisjon* uses to identify itself as a diaconal organization with Christian values and the name itself *Kirkens Bymisjon* were a prominent theme.

5.1.1.1 Symbols

Though all informants have agreed to work under the Christian values of *Kirkens Bymisjon*, not every informant had the same viewpoint about how the symbols should be displayed or how prominent they should be at *Nadheim*. I will discuss these disagreements in reference to candle lighting, the display of the cross, and Christian symbols.

5.1.1.1.1 Candle lighting

As outlined in section 3.1, for *Kirkens Bymisjon* the candle serves as a symbol of hope, prayer, and belief (Kirkens Bymisjon p.23). In order for the candle to serve as a symbol of hope, it must be lit, which, according to Informant 2, is done at all of *Kirkens Bymisjon*'s initiatives.²¹ Thus, in this section I chose to connect the candle symbol, with the candle lighting act. Employees at *Nadheim* pointed out that candle lighting was a topic of discussion, with questions of whether it made people feel included, if it should be done, and if so how. Currently, it is carried out on an altar in the living room at *Nadheim*. The altar is located in a corner of the room. In the past, candle lighting was done in the former chapel, which was dismantled. When the chapel was dismantled, the altar was reduced in size and brought out to the common area where most clients are when they come to *Nadheim*. Informant 2 recalled how not every employee felt the same about candle lighting:

²¹ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

We had employees that had problematized candle lighting. [They felt] that it could be offensive to our guests who are not Christian. The issue was presented to the (brukerrådet) client's council who clearly stated that there has to be a candle lighting place because otherwise it would not be *Nadheim*.²²

Nevertheless, when clients voiced that candle lighting was important and it was decided by the staff that candle lighting would stay, employees still had different opinions about how the practice is done or what it communicates. Several employees perceived that the candle lighting area in the living room is a very good solution, "We have seen that after the candle lighting was moved to the living room and the symbols are not so strong, it is more in use every day. It's not so dangerous to stop there and light a candle."²³ Nonetheless, other informants disagreed with this view.

Some informants pointed out that people may not notice the candle lighting area because there are no instructions about what it is and not every client or employee adheres to the Norwegian Lutheran tradition where it has become more common to use candles as a symbol of hope and prayer. Informant 2 expressed their view regarding the situation:

...It has become different after it [the candle lighting] was moved to the living room. And now I experience that guests place their coffee cup there [on the lighting altar]. They don't know what it is...actually recently I said to a person who works here on Friday evenings that this is a candle lighting altar. You don't have to light all the candles. [That person] did not know that and they had been working here for a few years. I find that very interesting. There are many [people] who don't know... I light candles but I often feel frustrated...²⁴

Informant 3 also agreed with the view that the candle lighting area was not discernible at first glance and suggested that perhaps some instructions be made available as to what it is so as not to exclude people:

It is not very clear/ obvious that [at the candle lighting altar] you can pray a prayer or light a candle... I have lit a few [candles] so that people could see that it was ready [for use]. Maybe there could be more of a description that one can light a candle here. Then maybe it could be more open for everybody and not just those who are Christian.²⁵

²² Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

²³ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

²⁴ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

²⁵ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

Informant 1 also had a similar point of view, “I did not know what it was [the candle lighting altar]; it took some days for me to figure it out. Maybe there are some people who don’t know what it is?”²⁶

Likewise, the manager also pointed out that lighting candles is not known to everyone and that the altar is not in frequent use, “For other [clients] it is very foreign to light a candle... I see that it [the candle lighting altar] is used a lot less today by the clients.”²⁷

Informants also mentioned that for those people who know what the altar is for and perhaps want to light a candle; doing so might be difficult because of the lack of privacy to participate in this solemn act. Informant 2 said:

If there are many [people] there [in the living room] it is difficult to do because you have to keep things confidential and if you want to talk about things then you have to go another place and then go out again to light a candle... When I am together with clients and want to light a candle, I ask them. But it is not often that we are alone in the living room.²⁸

Informant 6 did not feel that candle lighting created tension at *Nadheim* but affirmed that privacy was lacking, “Maybe if someone were to think something negative about it, it would be that it is not private. That one does not get that moment for oneself.”²⁹

Candle lighting creates some tension among employees. There are many differences in opinion about the way candle lighting is presented or done. Some staff members perceive that the symbol is not clear enough, thus not in use so often, or perhaps not presented in a way which can include everyone or protect the privacy of clients who may wish to have a quiet moment in prayer.

5.1.1.1.2 The cross and other symbols

It is not just candle lighting that informants described as something that creates or has created tension at *Nadheim*. The use of Christian symbols like the cross can bring out differences in opinion. The manager reported how at one point the cross was removed from the locale so as not to offend employees who were not Christian, “...after half a year or a year the cross was gone,

²⁶ Interview Informant 1, Nadheim 22.09.14

²⁷ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

²⁸ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

²⁹ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

we didn't have it on the wall because many who worked here felt uncomfortable with it"³⁰. Informant 2 felt that the decision to remove the cross was problematic because the symbol of the faith foundation of *Kirkens Bymisjon* was taken away but at the same time Informant 2 wanted to show respect to other employees who have different beliefs:

It creates a dilemma when somebody is very uncomfortable with a cross in the candle lighting area. I think that the cross represents a dimension of hope. Without the cross, there is no hope. There is no resurrection without the empty cross. For me it was like what do I do now. It is so important for me but at the same time I don't want to underestimate employees' right to have it as they have it and will not inflict [my beliefs] on others. It is very difficult.³¹

A small cross now hangs in the corner of the living room at *Nadheim*, after the manager decided that all of *Kirkens Bymisjon's* symbols should be displayed³². However, some employees wonder if the cross and other symbols communicate an erroneous message to non-Norwegian clients about the worldviews of employees at *Nadheim* and the goal of *Nadheim*. Informant 5 felt that Christian symbols at *Kirkens Bymisjon* could be misleading:

The City Mission is well known in Oslo in the work they have done. So I think very few [Norwegians] expect that everyone [employee] is a Christian. But for those who come outside of this, when one does not have that experience to base their knowledge on, when one sees the symbols, it can give other signals... with the symbols we use which are very clearly Christian, I think it invites to such a type of conversation [conversations about faith]. I don't know if the use of symbols says that you can talk with whichever employee about religious matters, if so then we send out wrong signals. This can lead to misunderstandings.³³

Clients from other cultures may not know *Kirkens Bymisjon* as well as the native Norwegian population who are aware about *The Church City Mission's* work and that the organization does not evangelize. According to the Christian organization *Intervarsity* (2015), evangelism is the act of "communicating the good news of Jesus Christ, and inviting response." Many Christian groups are known for the direct proclamation of their beliefs and asking persons to commit to practicing the Christian faith. Likewise, some Christian groups are involved in doing 'mission work' among non-Christians, which like evangelism, involves the "propagation of their faith" (Merriam Webster Dictionary Mission 2015). In secular society, these activities can be considered offensive to those who are not and do not wish to be a part of the Christian faith. Informant 5 also remarked on the fact that *Nadheim* uses a cross symbol on their business

³⁰ Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

³¹ Interview Informant 2, *Nadheim* 06.10.14

³² Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

³³ Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

cards.³⁴ This is the official logo for *Kirkens Bymisjon*. The cards are distributed to possible clients when *Nadheim* is informing about their services while visiting Thai massage parlors. Informant 5 mentioned that this cross symbol could be challenging in gaining the trust of Thai persons.³⁵ As previously mentioned, most Thai clients have a Buddhist worldview. According to Informant 5, possible Thai clients who have received the *Nadheim* business cards have asked if *Nadheim* is a Christian organization because they associate the cross symbol with Christian groups in Thailand who evangelize.³⁶

Informant 7 also wondered if the Christian symbols communicate clearly the work *Nadheim* employees are trying to do. “Do they [clients] think that the symbols we have here are unpleasant to connect to? We try to have discrete symbols but maybe they can be experienced as invading for some [people]?”³⁷ Thus, the display of Christian symbols at *Nadheim* is a topic that brings up differences of opinion.

5.1.1.2 The name *Kirkens Bymisjon*

Just as the symbols that *Kirkens Bymisjon* uses can be perceived as something that creates tension, informants mentioned that the name itself *Kirkens Bymisjon* can be problematic. Informants considered that the name can be confusing in what it communicates about the employees’ worldviews and the goals of the organization to non-Norwegians, persons who do not know the organization so well, or even other organizations who work with persons involved in prostitution. Informant 5 explained:

I think that there is a double communication in the name *Kirkens Bymisjon* because the word ‘mission’ might make people think that it is mission work but it is not, it is diaconal work. ... When I say it in English for example ‘*Church City Mission*’ then it sounds very much like mission activities... The name in itself is contradictory while at the same time it is a very incorporated brand... With that name we have... I think it invites to such a type of conversation [conversations about faith].³⁸

Informant 6 also shared the same point of view and drew attention to the fact that they found themselves explaining to people that *Nadheim* does not do mission work:

Because I know that many people who don’t know much about *Kirkens Bymisjon* think that, if they ask about where I work then I add self that we are not a mission’s

³⁴ Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

³⁵ Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

³⁶ Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

³⁷ Interview Informant 7, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

³⁸ Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

organization. Because I think many have a thought that we evangelize. It is in the name *Kirkens Bymisjon*. It sounds like a missions organization. I think it is a shame that mission is a part of the name because very many think that we are a missions organization... A few of the other actors in the prostitution field think that we are radical Christian social workers. And it is incorrect/misguided.³⁹

5.1.2 Former employee devotional

Informants also mentioned that there was some tension surrounding the former employee devotional, which, according to the manager, was a tradition at *Nadheim*.⁴⁰ Informant 7 explained it as such:

...there was a little tension about this morning meeting we used to have. There were different opinions and different experiences, different needs. And maybe some felt closer to that and more emotionally charged because they had personal beliefs [about having the devotional].⁴¹

Several informants described how they personally experienced the former employee devotional. Informant 6 shared their view about it:

I was a new employee so I felt pressure that I had go to the gatherings. I felt it was uncomfortable... I didn't feel like I could light a candle to God, I could light a candle but not to God.⁴²

Informant 5 also had the impression that it was a challenge to attend this devotional:

I was invited by the manager [to attend] ... if I wished. And at that time there were very many who took part in that candle lighting. I was unsure about whether that was okay or not [to go or not]. But then I saw that Employee Y who has more of a leadership position [at *Nadheim*] didn't go so then I thought it was okay. So I didn't go either. But I was unsure about these things in the beginning... It is foreign to me, strange to invite the religious in during work hours. But at the same time the manager has talked about that there should just not be a Christian approach to the candle lighting, we think that it should be for all. But at the same time I think that there is a Christian approach to it. I think it is okay we don't have candle lighting [ceremony/ devotional for employees] now. I know it has been a process... So there happened a secularizing of it all.⁴³

The manager also felt it was difficult to attend the devotional, not because the content was challenging personally, but because other employees were not at ease:

³⁹ Interview Informant 6, Nadeheim 06.10.14

⁴⁰ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

⁴¹ Interview Informant 7, Nadheim 29.09.14

⁴² Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁴³ Interview Informant 5, Nadeheim 11.11.14

What I experienced when I started working here was that it was uncomfortable [to have the employee devotional] because some of those who worked here felt that it was difficult to be there. I noticed that some were coming late, it wasn't obligatory to be there but at the same time it was a part of the working hours and the others just sat in a room and when this was done then we went to another room and started the staff meeting. So I felt that it was problematic to have a meeting where not everyone felt that they could participate...⁴⁴

Since not every employee felt comfortable attending this devotional, there was a visible disunity among the staff. "Maybe half of those who worked here were not comfortable with that. So we were separated, some went to the chapel and others waited in the kitchen for it to be over. Then it was not a joint gathering."⁴⁵ Because of the discord, Informant 2 chose to stop going to the devotional:

So there were some who wanted to take part and others who didn't want to be a part of it. I experienced that it created division. That some sat there and others were outside. So I chose to say no to it."⁴⁶

In the end, the devotional was stopped so as to end the rift between employees.

5.1.3 Former chapel

The last situation that will be discussed under the category of *tension from above* is the former chapel, which once was at *Nadheim*. For lack of space in the *Nadheim* locale the chapel has now been turned into a meeting room. However, there are different views about whether having the chapel in the past was the correct thing.

Some informants proposed that having a chapel in the locale was too much because it was too religious:

There was a very strong religious expression in there. I experienced it as very excluding. I almost felt that it was uncomfortable to go in there... We had many discussions about the chapel. I was one that said that the expression was so strong that I experienced it as excluding. I never saw any clients who went in there to use it. I think that the threshold was too high to go in a room with such strong symbols just to light a candle.⁴⁷

Others believed that the chapel did not take into account clients with other backgrounds who might not understand what the purpose of the chapel was, "In my opinion it communicated badly

⁴⁴ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

⁴⁵ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁴⁶ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁴⁷ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

to some of our foreign clients. It was a closed room.”⁴⁸

However, other informants saw the chapel as a place where they could go to gather strength and hope for the challenges related to clients’ situations and the work at *Nadheim*:

There was a person from *Diakonhjemmet* who did a questionnaire here about the use of the chapel, how that worked and what the women thought about that. And what came out of that questionnaire was that someone said that I always look in the chapel to see if they have lit a candle because it can mean that it is for me. And there were several who used it. I experienced that many people asked, ‘can you go with me in the chapel?’ [Clients] asked if I could come with them because... some wanted someone to pray for them, other wanted other things. Sometimes we played music. I think it is important to have a place that is quiet, where they experience that they can be themselves and be secure. I think that was an important part of it... I remember one time we got a suicide letter from one of the women. She left it and then she walked out. That was her goodbye letter. The only thing we could do about it was to sit in the chapel and light a candle. We thought about her and prayed for her. I don’t think anyone prayed aloud but then we could go home because we had done that which we could...And it went well. But now we sit in despair and are discouraged because things happen that we don’t want to happen and now we don’t have a mutual basis to light a candle. That I miss a lot. I haven’t really thought about it, that is what I really miss, that fellowship around that, to be able to have that hope together and leave it [the situation] in God’s hand.⁴⁹

In this section, it has thus been shown that not all of *Nadheim*’s employees have the same view about the way the organization has expressed or expresses its Christian values through symbols, through the name *Kirkens Bymisjon*, and by having a chapel in the locale.

5.2 Tension from Within

I have chosen to refer to this section as *tension from within* for two reasons. Firstly, informants singled out some tension, which occurs among *Nadheim* employees interpersonally in their working relationship with colleagues. Secondly, informants pinpointed some tension, which occurs internally in individuals or intrapersonally. Both of these types of tensions are related to the different beliefs or worldviews which employees have, the values of the organization, and what occurs when these individuals and relationships meet at the workplace.

5.2.1 Interpersonal tension among colleagues

In this section, I present several examples that were described to me during interviews about how differing views have or may have the potential for creating uncomfortable situations between co-workers.

⁴⁸ Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

⁴⁹ Interview Informant 2, *Nadheim* 06.10.14

For Informant 2 there has not been any uncertainty in regards to being open about personal beliefs at work. However, there has been tension because of Informant 2's openness about their beliefs. "...there has been some tension with several [employees] in relation to that I am so clear about what I stand for. And when others don't have the same faith it creates an opposition."⁵⁰ Likewise, Informant 2 perceived that when they met clients who wanted to talk about faith or religious beliefs, they also had to take into consideration co-workers who were in listening proximity to where the conversation was being held so as not to offend them:

...it can be hard to have conversations [with clients] when others are listening because I wonder who I should be taking into consideration [clients or co-workers]...it depends on the setting and it depends on who is working that day.... For example on a Friday night if there is talk about believing or not believing [among clients]. How open should I be, what should I say in regards to the others I am working with?⁵¹

At the same time, Informant 2 sensed that while they had to bear in mind what they would say to clients in the presence of co-workers, in spite of this, co-workers still requested the assistance of Informant 2 to talk to clients about topics regarding faith and belief. Nonetheless, Informant 2 postulated that this is something everyone should be able to do. This fact can bring out some differences between Informant 2 and co-workers:

It happens that I am working in the kitchen and then someone says you have to come out because there is a discussion regarding faith. And I think why do they need me? It is fun to talk [about faith] and I think that everyone should be able to talk about this from their own perspective.⁵²

This also happens when Informant 2 is not at work. Co-workers tell clients that they should talk to Informant 2 about their spiritual concerns. Informant 2 has felt some tension in this because they have not had primary contact with the client or because clients may receive an indication that speaking about faith at *Nadheim* is out of the ordinary:

I experience that the threshold becomes difficult when I am not here and then others say, oh you have to talk to Informant 2. But it is not me they have talked to first. Why should they talk to me when perhaps they have had good contact with that other person? It becomes too specialized [these conversations about faith]. I don't want it to be that faith should be so special... Before whoever could have done these conversations. But now it has become something special. I am not so happy about that... It gives a signal that [spiritual topics] are so special that not everybody can talk about it. Maybe they don't

⁵⁰ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁵¹ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁵² Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

say it straight out like this, but that is the signal that is sent out. I see that there are some [co-workers] who are not comfortable talking about faith questions and I respect that.⁵³

Along the same lines, the manager at *Nadheim* also expressed that being a leader in the organization can be difficult in regards to taking consideration for the individual worldviews among of staff members yet at the same time promoting the organization's foundational values. Managers of *Kirkens Bymisjon's* initiatives are expected to be committed to the diaconal values of the organization but the interpretation of these values will always be different according to the leader (Stålsett cited in Aas 2009:46). However, priests and deacons in *Kirkens Bymisjon* should attend to the conservation of the Christian values (Stålsett cited in Aas 2009:46). As a deacon, the manager at *Nadheim* has a specific task in upholding the foundational values, "As a leader I have to say something about the kind of diaconal profile that *Nadheim* should have and the kind of provider we are going to be, even though it can be painful for certain employees."⁵⁴

Working in a specific value based context with persons of differing beliefs can highlight differences in people. Informant 6 gave an example of some interpersonal tension that existed between them and another employee because of a Christian symbol that was at *Nadheim*. Informant 2 described that there used to be a pot, which was made in memory of someone who passed away. This pot was referred to as a 'prayer pot' because one could pull out Bible verses from it or write prayer requests and place them back in the pot. "This pot was very special because people filled it with prayers. When it was full we would take it out to the garden and burn the prayers in the pot."⁵⁵ However, Informant 6 did not think that this symbol was appropriate to have at *Nadheim*:

I felt that the prayer pot was just too much. You never know what it is that it says on the paper that you take out of it. I don't have a sense for that. You took out a paper and then there was a Bible verse on it. So it could have been whatever... Nobody knows what it is that is drawn up. It is not sure that it would be a good verse for a woman that needs support and hope. Employee Q liked it but not me. I used to put it under the candle lighting table, then it was moved up, and then I moved it down again. But now it has been removed.⁵⁶

Though the disagreement ended in the removal of the prayer pot, it is obvious that some tension was present among these employees with differing views. Just as well, it is clear that staff at *Nadheim* experienced that part of their job includes an exchange of interactions where certain

⁵³ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁵⁴ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

⁵⁵ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁵⁶ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

views are given consideration and others are relinquished in order to promote certain values, accomplish work, or meet clients.

5.2.2 Intrapersonal tension

Another aspect that was brought up during interviews was inward tension within individuals due to the collision of personal beliefs, beliefs of co-workers and clients in the workplace, the values of the organization and the work related to persons in difficult situations. All of the tension that has been looked at so far could also be classified as intrapersonal, since all tension causes some sort of personal strife and individual feelings. In the other forms of tension presented, informants have been set on their specific points of view in those particular situations. Nevertheless, the following data is classified as intrapersonal because during the interviews informants referred to occurrences that made them reflect inwardly about their position and/ or actions, which they felt at conflict with themselves.

In the previous section Informant 2 described feeling some tension with co-workers because of the clarity of their personal views. According to what Informant 2 reported, this tension with co-workers may lead to intrapersonal tension. After dealing with differences in views with co-workers, Informant 2 found themselves asking, “How open should I be, what should I say in regards to the others I am working with?”⁵⁷ Informant 2 then explained the effect of such situations where there were differences among co-workers:

...it affects how I can practice it [personal faith]. It influences the naturalness of it because I have to think twice before I say something. It can be okay but it doesn't always turn out okay.⁵⁸

Informant 3 explained that since the nature of the job entails working with persons in difficult situations that have a personal belief, their own private views have been challenged several times:

[Working at *Nadheim*] it challenges my personal faith and it challenges me as a social worker... I think, how will I relate to this? Does it make me a better or a worse social worker because I have a personal faith? And sometimes I wonder if it makes me less open to diversity. I hope not, I don't want to think it does.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁵⁸ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁵⁹ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

Informant 3 also reported that there has been tension in regards to their own religious views connected to sexuality after getting to know clients who sell sex and learning the views of co-workers.

I have another view of sexuality than the others [employees] have. So there was a little tension there and it was challenging, not challenging to my own sexuality but my thoughts about sexuality have changed some.⁶⁰

Informant 6 has also had a similar experience. They had their own views regarding the Christian aspect of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. However, working at *Nadheim* has made them reflect on those views because of the nature of the social worker position at *Kirkens Bymisjon*, which includes facilitating for clients who want more of the religious in the assistance they receive at *Nadheim*. Informant 6 summed up their experience as such, “I am challenged whether it has to do with faith or professional standpoint. I think it is very interesting.”⁶¹

Interestingly, for Informant 5, the personal tension began while applying for a position at *Nadheim*:

I read in the job ad [before becoming an employee at *Nadheim*]... one of the first sentences was something like ‘we represent Jesus on the street’. I had to stop and think a little...Because I am not a Christian I felt that I could not take the [job] position [at *Nadheim*] if I had to compromise myself... But I had to think it over again. That I remember well.⁶²

This uncertainty about being true to themselves continued some time after Informant 5 began working at *Nadheim*. “There was actually a period here, where I didn’t talk about ... my personal religious views. I felt unsure about if that was okay... I didn’t want to make my unbelief a topic.”⁶³

Intrapersonal tension seems to be a part of working at *Nadheim* as employees personal views are challenged in their work environment.

⁶⁰ Interview Informant 3, *Nadheim* 19.09.14

⁶¹ Interview Informant 6, *Nadheim* 06.10.14

⁶² Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

⁶³ Interview Informant 5, *Nadheim* 11.11.14

5.3 Tension from Below

The last section of data deals with *tension from below*. This section contains only two subsections titled *Interacting with Nigerian clients* and *Interacting with Norwegian clients*. The reason for this is that these two groups, while only a subset of the organization's clients, were the only groups mentioned by informants in which they experienced noticeable tension. Before presenting the data dealing with tension regarding employee's interactions with clients, I will present a statement from the manager at *Nadheim* describing one of the aims of *Nadheim's* interactions with clients:

We want to facilitate for persons [clients] who want to talk about existential questions. Some want conversations about faith, others about Christian faith... We want to say that we meet people the way they are in their whole being and I think that is a part of the Church's mission to facilitate, since faith means a lot to people and people connect their life to their faith even though that faith is not my own... people are made of soul and body and for many, not all, faith means a lot. For people in a difficult situation who wish to live with all that they are it is important that we facilitate that... I want clients here to come with what they are concerned with, that they find the most difficult. For many life is composite/complex. For many it is faith that breaks up. For many faith is the hope that holds them up... our foundational idea is to be present for people who have it difficult in prostitution, meet them not just materially but in all ways also regarding their religious views.⁶⁴

Thus, it is apparent that *Nadheim's* intention is to meet clients from the clients' standpoint. Likewise, as discussed in the background section, to some clients the issues involving life and experiences in prostitution are very much interconnected to personal faith. Data in this category will be presented with this perspective.

5.3.1 Interacting with Nigerian clients

The manager at *Nadheim* points out that one big challenge which creates tension in employees is meeting Christian clients such as the Nigerian women who are very overt about their faith. The background chapter laid out the importance, generally speaking, of religion to African persons because it permeates every area of life. *Nadheim* now has a night café once a week for women who sell sex on the street and, as requested by the Nigerian clients, facilitates a short devotional and prayer for the women at the café:

We are challenged because we have many clients who are Christian and very clear about their faith. The night café is an example of this, where we facilitate a devotional... in the night café we have to relate to clients who are more personal about their faith expression.

⁶⁴ Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

So it creates a tension, which I think is fun and interesting and makes us reflect as an organization.⁶⁵

While all informants shared the view that this devotional is meaningful for this specific group of women and that it is important to facilitate this for them, not all felt that they could directly participate in the devotional because of their own personal convictions. Informant 4 shared their personal view about possible tension if they had to be more directly involved in the devotional and prayer at the café:

When it comes to the devotional in the night café, it has come out of a need for those clients whom we wish to reach. I think it is good for them and it means something. I think it would have been hard if there was more of that here at *Nadheim*, if we had to participate and do it.⁶⁶

Informant 5 shared a similar viewpoint:

There is a difference between facilitating and active facilitating. So we can facilitate so that [the Nigerian clients] they have their devotional which is important to them, so that is not a problem. But if I were to read something or lead then I couldn't do it because I wouldn't feel like I was being honest with them. I know Employee X who worked there earlier withdrew [during the devotional] and left it up to Employee U [who felt comfortable doing the devotional].⁶⁷

Another informant had no problems participating in the devotional but sensed that they were not completely at ease because the Nigerian women had a different way of expressing their faith than the informant was used to. This informant was also concerned because even though they believed in prayer, they saw the potential that the Nigerian clients could solely rely on the prayer in the café instead of dealing with difficult life situations:

There is a mix [of feelings about the night cafe]. I think it is good, for me it is good because I feel like I can participate. But sometimes it can be challenging because they [Nigerian clients] are more charismatic than I am in [religious] expression. They also pray about other things than I do. It is Employee U who does the prayer and sometimes they [Employee U] pray that they [the clients] will forgive everyone who has been bad to them and then you start to wonder as a social worker about their life situations [if this is okay]. But they have a special trust in God. It is challenging... That is what I feel in the night café. You can't just pray about it and be done with that. It is allowed to be angry. It is allowed to not forgive before one is done with it. It is challenge and it is hard to know how to talk to the Nigerians about this in a good way.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

⁶⁶ Interview Informant 4, Nadheim 01.10.14

⁶⁷ Interview Informant 5, Nadheim 11.11.14

⁶⁸ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

Along the same lines, prayer in general is mentioned by informants as something that the Nigerian clients rely on but which can bring some frustration to the work that employees at *Nadheim* are trying to do. Both informants who practice the act of prayer in their personal lives and those who do not, shared this point of view. Informants felt that Nigerian clients could resort to only praying instead of cooperating with employees so that some measures could be taken to ameliorate their circumstances:

If I am in a conversation, I can say yes that I can pray about it if they [Nigerian clients] bring it up. I feel secure doing that. But at the same time as a social worker, I am afraid of just saying we can pray about that and then we are done with that. There are some things one must fix self... I find it challenging. You can't just sit there and pray. It is not how it works. There is some tension in that I believe [prayer] is good, and then standing together with someone and being able to use that as a tool but at the same time not forgetting that person and that you have to fill out forms and do things.⁶⁹

Informant 5 also perceived tension regarding prayer in meeting a Nigerian client. A client was in a difficult situation and was going to be sent out of Norway unless she reported to the police some of the events that had occurred to her. This is what Informant 5 described happened:

She was not very interested in talking about her story. When we met I tried to discuss what we were going to do further. She said, 'I just pray for a miracle. I just pray.' And prayer is important for her. And I don't think any of the others who are Christian here would think that it is just enough to pray. It is a little bit tricky to relate to that she is basing everything on that [prayer].⁷⁰

According to Informant 5, things did not go well for this client and she had to leave Norway.⁷¹ Informant 5 recognized and respected this client's relationship to prayer but they saw that this clients' sole reliance on prayer hindered the work and created difficulties for both of them:

I think even if you are Christian there is a reality to relate to in regards to *UDI* [Norwegian Immigration Authorities] and rules and that it is wise to talk about a plan B... I wish I could have gotten into a dialogue with her.⁷²

This tension in regards to interacting with Nigerian clients because of their openness in relation to their Christian faith is also noticeable in other encounters as well. It is common that when the Nigerian women come to *Nadheim*, they talk to employees using religious expressions. Not every staff member felt comfortable in receiving or responding to these expressions and some articulated that. It can be confusing to interpret religious language. Informant 5 conveyed this

⁶⁹ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

⁷⁰ Interview Informant 5, Nadheim 11.11.14

⁷¹ Interview Informant 5, Nadheim 11.11.14

⁷² Interview Informant 5, Nadheim 11.11.14

confusion; “And the Nigerians often say ‘God bless you.’ And I feel like should I say it? Is it blasphemy or is it just a polite thing to say or a way of speaking?⁷³” Informant 6 also shared a similar view and thought carefully about how to handle this challenge:

I remember that when I started working with the Nigerians I would stand by the door and wonder what I would say because often they say ‘God bless you’. I didn’t know what I was going to say. Is it hypocritical if I respond with God bless you? I don’t believe in a God. What does one respond to send them off with something good? So I thought about this a lot. I came to the conclusion that of course I can say God bless you. The most important is that she is left with. And what I mean [when I say ‘God bless you’] is that I wish her well.⁷⁴

It took some time for Informant 4 to get used to the ‘God bless you’ expression but they explained that it can be difficult to accept at first; “Also that with ‘God bless you’ [from the Nigerian clients]. There are many that say that and one cannot say that back to them... People expect that you should be able to receive this.”⁷⁵ According to the informants’ explanations, Nigerian clients may not see a problem in using religious expressions because they may have a perception that everyone who works at *Nadheim* is a Christian or expresses Christianity the way they do.

Likewise, this impression Nigerian clients may have about employees has also aroused tension in some informants. Informant 3 felt that because they express their personal beliefs in a different way than the Nigerians, they are looked down upon, “it is a challenge because I feel that they don’t see me as a Christian because I don’t pray enough. That is my perception.”⁷⁶ Another informant felt discomfort when a client commented on what she thought about people who are not Christian:

I remember one time [a Nigerian client] said that it was so horrible, people who did not believe in God. I didn’t say anything because I thought this is my private matter. I just kind of nodded and said yeah...I felt uncomfortable in a way when she said that because I didn’t say anything against it.⁷⁷

However, sometimes it becomes even more personal when employees are directly questioned about what they personally believe. Informant 4 described that when this happens, the tension becomes more noticeable:

⁷³ Interview Informant 5, Nadheim 11.11.14

⁷⁴ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 29.09.14

⁷⁵ Interview Informant 4, Nadheim 01.10.14

⁷⁶ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

⁷⁷ Interview Informant 5, Nadheim 11.11.14

It can arise as uncomfortable if you are with someone who talks about their faith and asks about personal views. And you have to say no. I don't believe in the same thing.... And when I say that I don't share in that, then there will be a distance between us or a disappointment or such things, which create discomfort.⁷⁸

This distance Informant 4 referred to is not just apparent when employees are questioned about their beliefs, but also when employees are trying to understand Nigerian clients. As discussed in the background chapter, even though Nigerian clients are mostly Christian, they also adhere to traditional beliefs. An example in the background chapter described a Nigerian client at *Nadheim* who explained that they had undergone a Juju ceremony as a pledge to pay back the costs required to come to Norway. Most Nigerian women working in prostitution in Europe have undergone such a pledge (Please Pray for Me 2012:17). Traditional beliefs and ceremonies including black magic are common in the experiences of many of the Nigerian clients. According to Informant 2, the Nigerian women talk little about their belief in black magic or Juju.⁷⁹ However, as in the aforementioned example, it has occurred that clients allude to traditional beliefs while talking with social workers at *Nadheim*. Informant 4 expressed the difficulties of relating to clients with such experiences but that this tension is not completely negative because it can make one a better social worker:

I had one person here from Nigeria and they have that thing about black magic and at the same time they are Christian. I feel like it is very difficult to understand. And in those conversations the angst for black magic was expressed and at the same time the comfort that prayer gives... There are many things that are hard to understand. There was another [Nigerian client] that said that I would never understand. She said 'you people don't understand'... They are so faithful to what they believe. So then I really feel the distance... It is a challenge. One must really be focused and concentrate on the conversation and what the other is trying to say and just be in it in order to try to come further. I experience that I am shaped up [made better] by that tension.⁸⁰

Informant 3 has also experienced tension in having difficulty understanding what Nigerian clients believe because it is so different from their own personal experience:

I was listening to a conversation with a Nigerian woman ... and she was talking with another employee here about voodoo. She talked about that there are some witches and that those witches can change shape and turn into whatever. It is quite remote for us but at the same time I had never seen anyone who had so much anxiety because of that...I thought that with my background I can just sweep away what you said and say that it is foolish... And I see that we don't understand, that it is difficult, and how afraid they are.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Interview Informant 4, Nadheim 01.10.14

⁷⁹ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁸⁰ Interview Informant 4, Nadheim 01.10.14

⁸¹ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

Employees at *Nadheim* are meeting Nigerian clients who have very strong and particular beliefs, which are different from employees' own beliefs. The tension is revealed in the attempt of employees to comprehend their clients views.

5.3.2 Interacting with Norwegian clients

Informants also reported some experiences they had with Norwegian clients who perhaps did not have a strong or particular belief. There can also be some tension in meeting persons who do not have a specific spiritual belief if they have some prejudices about persons who have a belief. Informant 3 recalled what happened when they started working at *Nadheim*:

There was a client who had no religious faith... [The client] told others 'oh they [Informant 3] are so young and a Christian.' It was a Norwegian client saying, 'Oh no! Isn't [Informant 3] a Christian?'⁸²

The way Informant 3 described this situation alludes to the fact that the 'oh no' comment was said by the Norwegian client with a feeling of dread at the possibility that Informant 3 might be a Christian. Informant 3 divulged further about experiences with Norwegian clients:

...there are many who come here and say 'Oh no.' And when we meet them in the street we get the question aren't you Christian? They don't know if they don't come here that it is a normal office. It is the Norwegians who say this.⁸³

Some Norwegian clients also enquired if Informant 4 adhered to the Christian faith:

When you are new here [as an employee] the majority of clients are trying to place you somewhere. So I remember that ... when I was new the Norwegians [clients] sat together... And suddenly someone asked, 'you, are you Christian or are you not?' And everyone's faces looked at me and waited for an answer. That was a special situation.⁸⁴

It seems that there can be tension between employees and clients if clients choose to judge employees or the work of *Nadheim* based on their first impressions or preconceived notions. However, according to the account of informants, these situations with Norwegian clients have occurred when clients are new to *Nadheim*, or when staff members have just begun their employment.

⁸² Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

⁸³ Interview Informant 3, Nadheim 19.09.14

⁸⁴ Interview Informant 4, Nadheim 01.10.14

5.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented data regarding tension that has existed or currently exists at *Nadheim* in regards to employees encountering and relating to the organizational values of *Nadheim*, the different worldviews of employees, and the different beliefs of clients.

The first section of the chapter focused on the informants understanding of what the name *Kirkens Bymisjon* and various symbols of the organization communicate to clients. Informants reported tension in whether symbols should be displayed and how prominent they are at *Nadheim*. This section also looked at the former devotional and chapel, which informants had different opinions about and which created a certain degree of disunity among the staff.

The next part of the chapter concentrated on interpersonal tension among colleagues and intrapersonal tension within individual employees. Informants reported that they had to remain aware and take into account their colleagues worldviews while at work, which was challenging. In addition, not all employees' preferred methods of handling situations was collectively chosen as a solution to occurrences and decisions were executed which not everyone fully agreed with. Other informants mentioned being stretched in their views by things they had experienced at work. Some tension was also described among colleagues regarding employees' different levels of comfort with answering client's questions of faith and different opinions regarding a prayer pot.

The last section addressed informants' interchanges with Nigerian clients who have particular religious beliefs and the fact that those meetings were challenging. Lastly, informants reported on their experiences with Norwegian clients who have no specific religious beliefs, yet assumed that informants held certain beliefs. In both groups, clients behaved in certain ways, which created unease for employees.

6 Discussion

As formerly presented, the purpose of this study is to identify the types of tensions present or past among employees at *Nadheim* because of the difference in religious or worldviews held by *Kirkens Bymisjon*, employees and clients. Three relevant theories or theoretical frameworks were covered in chapter four- the negotiated order theory, diakonia, and modern pluralism. Likewise, in accordance with the reports of the informants who were interviewed for this project, three types of tension were identified- *tension from above*, *tension from within*, and *tension from below*. In this section, I will look at the data in relationship to these theories. Firstly, the nature of human service organizations and negotiation will be discussed in relation to *tension from below* and *tension from within*. Secondly, contrasting perspectives referring to diakonia and tension will be considered. Lastly, all three categories *tension from above*, *tension from within*, and *tension from below* will be examined in relation to modern pluralism.

6.1 The Nature of Human Service Organizations, Negotiation, and Tension

In section 4.1 of this paper, the theoretical framework around the term ‘human service organization,’ was discussed. One aspect that defines human service organizations like *Nadheim* is that they offer tailored services to clients through interaction with employees who are specialized in social disciplines (Hasenfeld 1992). The negotiated order theory deduces that in human service organizations, work is the result of cooperation or negotiation between employees and clients (Hasenfeld 1992). Negotiation can be influenced by the worldviews of employees and clients, which in turn reflects on the outcome of the social services being provided (Hasenfeld 1992). The interview data reveals that *tension from below* and *tension from within* both correspond to the nature of *Nadheim* being a human service organization and the negotiations that take place between employees and clients.

6.1.1 Human service organizations, negotiation, and tension from below

In looking at *tension from below*, which occurred among employees in their interactions with clients, three points are important to take into account. Firstly, *Nadheim* is open to facilitating conversations regarding faith with clients who present a desire. Secondly, is the fact that the clients *Nadheim* meets have distinct worldviews. This is crucial to acknowledge in working with clients who have difficult life situations because people tend to resort to their religious faith in times of hardship (Furness and Gilligan 2010:169). Thirdly, according to Hasenfeld (1992), because human service organizations collaborate so closely with clients who have specific values, clients may influence the type of services they receive through the feedback they offer on

services already received. Even though human service organizations may have specific values, they have to be impartial with clientele in their interactions so that they can remain considerate of clients' views and provide quality services (Hasenfeld 1992). These concepts are noticeable in the interactions between employees and clients at *Nadheim* and suggest to the fact that *Nadheim* considers what is important to their clients. An example of negotiation *from below* or in dealing with clients is the Nigerian women who have specifically requested to have a night café where there is a devotional and prayer of the Christian orientation. *Nadheim* employees have negotiated with clients in order to make this request possible. I would like to point out here that even though *Nadheim* as an organization has a Christian foundation, the manager made it very clear that they are open to talk about what concerns the client, regardless of the religious view. It just happens that Nigerian clients also share some similar Christian values. However, if they did not share these values and had requested another form of religious expression in the café, it would have been evaluated.⁸⁵

Considering this information, there was tension reported by informants during negotiations between employees and clients. Informants recounted that at times it had been difficult to understand Nigerian clients' beliefs such as Christianity mixed with African traditional practices. Likewise, the way Nigerian clients expressed their Christian beliefs was different to what was customary to informants. The manager at *Nadheim* suggested that this kind of tension among employees regarding clients' worldviews is not abnormal:

It is not natural that we as a professional and a diaconal organization should not have tensions like these. We have clients that come from different points of view. To what degree are we going to talk about existential questions related to money, housing, those types of things? I think natural professional tension should be there.⁸⁶

According to the negotiated order theory, negotiations like these where employees and clients collaborate allow for compromise to happen and a certain stability to develop (Copp 2005). Informants presented this ability to collaborate in their willingness to facilitate for the religious expression of Nigerian clients at the night café even though not every informant felt directly comfortable participating in the prayer or devotional or could relate to the way Nigerian clients expressed their faith. A balance was achieved through a situation where the Nigerian clients' wishes were fulfilled and the employees at *Nadheim* implemented measures that clients asked for without having to betray their own personal beliefs. While negotiation has led to a position that both parties can agree with, the negotiated order theory states that this balance may not last

⁸⁵ Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

⁸⁶ Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

forever because future situations will lead to new negotiations in order to reach stability again (Copp 2005). This is a fact of being a human service organization, which always evolves because of the interrelation between employees and clients (Hasenfeld 1992). As employees continue to interact with clients who have specific values, new tensions may arise. The manger of *Nadheim* also alluded to this fact:

To be a diaconal organization in a field where there are big changes makes it so that we must change all the time. It is not like we can just work up to something that will stay the same for the rest of the time *Nadheim* is here. This is natural tension.⁸⁷

Thus, *Tension from below* can be explained as normal tension which is not only particular to employees at *Nadheim* but which would be found at any human service organization because of the interactions between employees and clients. Some informants reported that the experience of tension in interactions with clients was not disadvantageous because, while it occasionally presented challenges, it also helped employees to reflect on the work they do and to expand their knowledge on working with persons who have other life perspectives.

6.1.2 Human service organizations, negotiation, and tension from within

The theoretical framework of the nature of human service organizations is also applicable to the *tension from within* category. As presented earlier *tension from within* is tension experienced by employees interpersonally among colleagues or intrapersonally within individuals because of differences in beliefs and worldviews. One main component of human service organizations are the employees (Hasenfeld 1992). Without employees, the work will not be completed. However, though individuals may represent a human service organization due to their employment in an institution, they also have their own personal motives and ideologies that drove them to do work in the field of social services (Hasenfeld 1992). Some employees may work at *Nadheim* as a way to accomplish professional goals, give something back to society, or because of interest in the field they are working in. Others employees may be motivated by their religious beliefs and the Christian foundational values of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. Regardless the kind of motivation, when employees negotiate the work, the variation in motives underlying the negotiations can create tension and influence the work and services delivered to clients (Hasenfeld 1992).

Some examples of interpersonal have been discussed in the data that was presented where informants gave several explanations. For example, tension arose when an informant was too clear about their beliefs, which were different from those of co-workers. Just as well, tension

⁸⁷ Interview Manager, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

was felt when an informant was working with clients regarding questions of faith yet sensed that they had to control what they said in order to respect the worldviews of colleagues who were in the vicinity. Another reason for interpersonal tension was the opinion that not all employees were comfortable talking about issues of faith with clients, which according to Informant 2 could send clients an unclear message that *Nadheim* is not open to discussing issues of existentiality.⁸⁸ Disagreement also developed over the display of a Christian symbol and there was tension expressed by the manager in fulfilling their task of advising the staff on the types of Christian expression the organization will have even though not all employees may agree. Intrapersonal tension was felt by informants as they pondered about how open they could be in expressing their personal beliefs or worldviews and were challenged to reflect on their own perceptions. However, tension that led to reflection was noted by some as good tension because informants were able to expand their views and learned how to accept differences.

These *tensions from within* reflect back to the issue of negotiation. Tension occurred among employees when negotiation happened. For example, an informant who saw that co-workers felt uncomfortable with their open expression of faith had to negotiate with themselves about how clear they were going to be, thus creating some intrapersonal tension. However, the concept of negotiation cannot completely aid in explaining *tension from within* because as expressed previously in the data section, during negotiation some views are considered while others are dismissed. Questions then remain about how negotiations among employees are made at *Nadheim*. How are decisions executed in regards to which views will be considered and which views will be dismissed? How does *Nadheim* decide when to be open and inclusive of all views and when they need to be clear about *Kirkens Bymisjon's* foundational views? The manager at *Nadheim* commented on the fact that sometimes it is challenging to express Christian views, yet at the same time remain open to all people of different beliefs:

There is a balance between being clear about who we are [as an organization] and not evangelizing and not being invasive in regards to people who have a difficult situation and who have a different faith. It is a balancing act, which is not so easy.⁸⁹

The manager's outlook on negotiations taking place at *Nadheim* is likened to 'a balancing act'. It is clear that at *Nadheim* tension is created by the act of trying to balance or of giving consideration to different views. However, it is unclear as to how these negotiations are determined and the data does not help to explain this because there are no obvious patterns.

⁸⁸ Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

⁸⁹ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

Other questions still remain regarding the negotiation process. Are there other processes such as persuasion, dominance, the desire for harmony, or the act of giving in (Reveley 1999) which are being put under the category of negotiation but which could be related to creating tension? For instance, in the situation about the prayer pot in which the pot was moved and put back again several times and then was finally removed, can this interaction be called negotiation? Likewise, even though there was a resolution with the removal of the pot, was the interpersonal tension resolved? This is just one example of several, but what about after decisions are made at *Nadheim*? Tension can still be present among employees at *Nadheim* because of the lingering differences in opinion. What terms could be used to explain this tension? The lack of answers to these questions can also be attributed to a criticism of the negotiated order theory. The term negotiation can be too vague (Hasenfeld 1992) and just about any interaction could be categorized as negotiation. Just as well, this theory provides little explanation as to what happens after negotiations nor does it help explain tension that remains. In this instance, the theory of negotiated order has proved to be lacking in fully being able to relate to the data and the data has not provided clear structured sequences about how alleged negotiations are made at *Nadheim*.

6.2 Diakonia and Tension

As presented in section 4.2, institutional diakonia has undergone profound changes since the days of the Pietists. This development is attributed to the waning influence of Christianity and the rise of pluralism in Scandinavian society (Fanuelson 2014; Aadland 2009). Moreover, diaconal organizations have had to evolve by becoming more professionalized, inclusive in allowing non-Christian staff to join the work, and dampening the evangelistic or missional aspect that the Pietists saw as a vital role of doing diakonia (Aadland 2009). Nevertheless, the foundational Christian aspect of diakonia still plays a prominent part since doing diakonia is strongly connected to the values and obligations of the Church (Church of Norway National Council 2007). Keeping this framework in mind while taking into account informants experiences reveals two different perspectives regarding diakonia and tension.

6.2.1 Diaconal values and practice are not an agent of tension

As intended by modern day diaconal practices, diakonia in today's institutions allows for the inclusion of employees who do not share a Christian faith. As presented in the theoretical section, modern and professional diaconal institutions like *Kirkens Bymisjon* have shifted to working out of a value-based structure, where Christian values are presented in a way that staff of different backgrounds can consent to working under (Fanuelson 2014:80). This connects back to *The Church of Norway's* stance on diakonia. *The Plan for Diakonia* makes it very clear that

since the needs in society are great, cooperation from people with different worldviews is indispensable. A person's worldview does not matter in whether they can engage in diaconal work but that it only takes a 'good will' (Church of Norway National Council 2007). The Church has made this stance clear in its *Plan for Diakonia*, which *Kirkens Bymisjon* follows. This can be seen in the experiences of informants at *Nadheim* who have different worldviews yet are engaged in diaconal work. All the interviewees expressed that it is not necessary to have a Christian motivation to work at *Nadheim* and that the Christian values that *Kirkens Bymisjon* bases its work on are values which non-Christians can also embrace. Informant 7 indicated this by saying:

I think that which we do is a discipline based on professional social work inside of a value-based framework, which I can stand inside of. I think it can be easy to see these values as humanist values.⁹⁰

Informant 7 expressed a second point, which is that diaconal practice can also be defined as professional work, not necessarily as work relating to Christianity. Fanuelsen (2014:76) conjectures to this in his explanation of the dimensional work of diaconal institutions. Diaconal work is made up of different social disciplines and does not just involve the faith aspect. A large part of the task of diaconal organizations involves the work of professions in the fields of health or social care. Persons are hired to work in diaconal organizations not solely because they adhere to the Christian faith but because they have the necessary skills to accomplish the professional objectives of diakonia. Bjørndal also highlights this point in her article about diakonia, which came out of a discussion among diaconal leaders. One of the leaders present in the discussion was Sturla J. Stålsett, the former secretary general of *Kirkens Bymisjon*. Stålsett expressed that all the employees at *Kirkens Bymisjon* are dedicated to their work but that not all define it as "diaconal praxis" (Bjørndal 2014:11). It is the decision of individual employees to interpret diaconal work according to personal worldviews and to define how they will regard their contribution to the work.

Informant 6 also shared the view that for them the Christian values found at *Nadheim* are not solely Christian but can be interpreted as universal values. Additionally, Informant 6 elaborated on the aspect of 'love for neighbor,' which is a term *The Church of Norway* uses to explain the essence of diakonia:

It is a detail that doesn't matter much to me whether they [*Kirkens Bymisjon*] call [the work] diakonia or social work, or they call it compassion, or love for neighbor. It is just

⁹⁰ Interview Informant 7, *Nadheim* 29.09.14

words... When I think about the Christian values, I think that those Christian values don't need to necessarily be Christian. I think it is almost wrong to call them Christian values. Those things, which are often called Christian values, are often more about the view of humanity; they are universal, no matter if it is regarding this or that belief. It is about taking care of those people one meets. Love for neighbor, for me that is not about believing in God. It is an important part of the work that I personally do in meeting the women I work with here, that I have a lot of love for all people. But I don't place that in some love for neighbor Christian basis or box. Many of the Christian values can be values that one depends on not relating to one being Christian or not.⁹¹

The views expressed by Informant 6 correspond with Fanuelsen's and Løgstrup's postulations. Fanuelsen (2014) and Løgstrup (cited in Aas 2009) posit that 'love for neighbor' is something, which is not exclusive to the Church or Christians. According to this view, anyone can love and care for people without having an underlying Christian motivation. This is the case for some informants at *Nadheim*. They do not have as a personal motivation the same Christian basis as *Kirkens Bymisjon*. However, they do not see this as a hindrance in contributing to the aims of the organization. These factors lead to the conclusion that since employees can interpret diaconal values and praxis in accordance to their worldviews, there is no tension related to these aspects. As the data presented, no tension was found at *Nadheim* among employees because of diaconal values and practice.

6.2.2 The expression of diaconal values as a source for tension

As presented in the background section, *Kirkens Bymisjon* is clear on their motivation for doing work among society's most vulnerable. Their motivation comes from a belief in God (Kirkens Bymisjon p.3). Likewise, the statutes of *Kirkens Bymisjon* state that their goal is to support resolutions which aid them in achieving the diaconal task of *The Church of Norway* (Kirkens Bymisjon cited in Aas 2009:45). However, as previously discussed, employees of *Kirkens Bymisjon* have the freedom to interpret diaconal values and praxis in a way which they can work with and relate to according to their worldviews. Stålsett (cited in Aas 2009:50) stated that possible employees who want to work at *Kirkens Bymisjon* will not be forced to adopt a Christian worldview and that at the same time the work of diakonia will not be restricted by individual employees' interpretations. This infers that it is not a dilemma for *Kirkens Bymisjon* that not all employees agree with the expression of the organization's diaconal values presented in a Christian manner because the organization is firm on their beliefs and they welcome diversity among staff. This is a noble vision but how does it work in praxis? What happens when diaconal values are visibly expressed?

⁹¹ Interview Informant 6, Nadheim 06.10.14

It is clear in the data gathered that tension is caused at *Nadheim* when there is an attempt to articulate diaconal values in the form of Christian expression. For example, as mentioned previously in the section about *tension from within*, when the manager affirmed that their job as a leader includes telling employees about the kind diaconal actor *Nadheim* should be but that this can be unpleasant for some employees. Likewise, the data under the category of *tension from above* presented examples such as the name *Kirkens Bymisjon*, the symbols, the former devotional, and the former chapel which employees had different opinions about and saw in different ways. Informants felt that some of the expressions were too strong or communicated erroneously to clients but others saw that those expressions were an essential and necessary part of the workplace because they corresponded with organizational values. For example, in order to foster unity among employees the former devotional at *Nadheim* has been done away with and other practices like candle lighting have been redefined. However, things like the name *Kirkens Bymisjon* and Christian symbols are factors where some tension still exists in the form of employees' differences in opinions. In trying to accommodate an expression of the organization's Christian basis and employees views, a certain ambivalence still remains about which side should be given consideration. This can lead to the exclusion of individual employees because not every view can be taken into account. Informant 2 expressed their view in relation to this; "I think we can meet people with respect whether they believe, don't believe, or whatever beliefs they have. We can't be everything for everyone because we have some organizational plans."⁹² There remain some questions that could be further studied in additional research. Unfortunately, this project does not provide a clear conclusion on the following questions: Can *Kirkens Bymisjon* remain clear about what they believe yet be inclusive and accommodate the different worldviews of employees? In the long run, how will tension or differing worldviews between employees and the organization affect employees' job satisfaction specially if there is ambivalence about which views or values will be given consideration? Answering these questions could prove beneficial to the future work of the organization and the relationship employees of different backgrounds will have with the organization.

6.3 Modern Pluralism and Tension

This last section will examine *tension from above*, *tension from within*, and *tension from below* as tension under the classification of modern pluralism because these tensions are related to the diversity found in employees' and clients' worldviews. Aadland (2009:97) recognizes that modern pluralism is more common today in diaconal organizations and states that employees and clients in institutions "represent a microcosm of society's diversity." Employees in diaconal

⁹² Interview Informant 2, Nadheim 06.10.14

institutions can have many different cultural backgrounds and associate with a broad range of worldviews from Christian to not believing (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:149). At the same time employees are a part of the task to care for clientele in a way that acknowledges clients own specific beliefs yet arises from the Christian diaconal framework of the organization (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2009:149). Aadland (2012:11) also indicates that this is a noteworthy challenge in diaconal work because the different sides are influencing each other and will affect how the work is carried out. This postulation is similar to the situation at *Nadheim*.

6.3.1 Tension from within and below in relation to modern pluralism

In *tension from within* and *tension from below*, employees at *Nadheim* with differing worldviews experienced tension in their contact with other employees who had alternate beliefs and with clients such as Nigerian or Norwegian, who had their own specific religious or secular perspectives. Some specific examples include an informant who felt tension in cooperating with co-workers who have other worldviews during contact with clients who wanted their own religious views supported. Likewise, tension also arose in contact with Nigerian clients and their reliance solely on prayer, which had sometimes slowed down the work employees tried to do. In addition, one last illustration is tension found when clients assumed that employees have specific religious views and voiced their opinions about those views or responded to employees using specific religious terms they thought employees could comprehend. This kind of tension arises in diversity meeting diversity and in the practicing of tolerance. As was discussed in the theoretical section, tolerance requires that people acknowledge differences they may have and find ways to co-exist (Aadland 2009:88). Finding ways to co-exist among people with so many different views may prove difficult. Perhaps in society at large, persons with differing views may find ways to avoid co-existing by confining themselves to only being with others who think in the same manner they do. Yet at *Nadheim*, the aim is to work for the good of persons no matter their background, thus staying confined to one view is not possible. If diaconal organizations such as *Nadheim* are a representation of a pluralist society which is growing more and more diverse as Aadland postulates, then tension under modern pluralism will not be likely to end. It will be constant as long as different groups are interacting together trying to consider each other's points of views. Likewise, as long as employees are being compelled to reflect on their own personal views and how these views relate to others and affect their competence as co-workers and social workers. The manager of *Nadheim* explained that this tension is something that is common to *Nadheim* because of the people they are meeting:

That which is special here is that in many occasions one will be directly confronted with this [questions related to faith] and clients can ask if you want to go to church with them

or are you Christian? How do they feel [employees at *Nadheim*] that they must answer? In many other situations they wouldn't have to answer [these types of questions/requests]. They have to reflect on whether they will answer. This challenges [employees] here in meeting people who have a faith and are curious about your own faith. So I think it is both interesting and fun, and for some [employees] uncomfortable.⁹³

This tension can be awkward but as some informants reported, has helped them explore new ways of thinking and devise innovative ways of meeting others. As presented in the interview data, employees at *Nadheim* have effectually found ways to acknowledge each other's differences and work together such as in the creation of a devotional and prayer for Nigerian clients or in providing opportunities for clients to talk about existential topics. While this tension may sometimes lead to developments for the good of the work done at *Nadheim*, employees still have a responsibility to continue reflecting on how they as co-workers will continue collaborating despite their contrasting views. Social work researchers Furness and Gilligan (2010:158, 159) assert that it is indispensable for social workers to have continual discussion about their own worldviews and the impact those views may have in all areas of their work. This will aid in addressing tension when it emerges.

6.3.2 Tension from above in relation to modern pluralism

As previously mentioned, *Kirkens Bymisjon* works out of a modern diaconal model. This modern praxis welcomes persons of different backgrounds to be involved in diaconal work. Just as well, in modern diaconal praxis, diaconal values are presented in a way that employees of different backgrounds can accept in accordance to their own personal worldviews. However, in *tension from above*, diverse employees experienced tension when the values of *Kirkens Bymisjon* were expressed at *Nadheim* through the employee devotional, the former chapel, the name of the organization, and symbols. These expressions were different from individual employees' perspectives and it seems that even though practices have been changed to accommodate several points of view, there is still tension about the way these aspects are implemented. This *tension from above* will continue among employees because *Kirkens Bymisjon* expresses in their future plans that they want more staff with multicultural backgrounds in order to reflect the pluralist society and the diverse clients they are meeting. Yet at the same time the organization desires to be clear about their Christian foundation (Kirkens Bymisjon cited in Aas 2009:51). Stålsett acknowledged that there will be tension in abiding with both sides of this task and that being an organization that has "room for everyone is a demanding and revolutionary program" (Kirkens Bymisjon cited in Aas 2009:51, 75).

⁹³ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

As seen in Stålsett's comment, *Kirkens Bymisjon* recognizes that tension related to the expression of their Christian values among employees of different worldviews is a continuous tension. Though there is awareness about *tension from above*, it seems that there is no concrete resolution on how it is or will be handled. Moreover, this tension alludes to several questions some, of which have also been referred to in several ways throughout the discussion but which the research does not answer: How tolerant can *Kirkens Bymisjon* be to the beliefs of employees without dismissing the expression of their own values? Can *Kirkens Bymisjon* be so tolerant of employees and clients values that they become intolerant to their own foundational principles? Just as Christian values can be accepted by employees with different worldviews, can or would *Kirkens Bymisjon* want to find more neutral expressions of their values that employees of different worldviews could accept? Would having a more neutral expression of values diminish tension between employees and the organization yet still provide a clear picture of what *Kirkens Bymisjon* believes? *Tension from above* will be a constant challenge that employees with views different from the organization and that the organization itself will have to reflect on so that more clarity about the values employees should convey when they meet clients can be achieved.

6.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has focused on three areas. Firstly *tension from below* and *tension from within* have been discussed in relation to human service organizations and the negotiated order theory. These tensions are a normal part of the work done at human service organizations because of the interactions between clients and employees with different values. However, the term negotiation proved to be too vague because all types of interactions that took place were categorized as negotiation even if a clear compromise was not reached. Secondly, two contrasting perspectives regarding diakonia and tension were presented. It seems that diaconal values do not create tension among employees because employees can define those values according to their own worldviews. However, the expression of Christian values in the organization has been reported to create tension among employees. Lastly, all three types of tensions from *below*, *within*, and *above* were regarded in relation to modern pluralism. Tension between co-workers and with clients will always be present among employees because society is multicultural and persons with diverse views are interacting and trying to work together. Employees must reflect on this tension so that their work is not affected. Just as well, tension among employees due to the expression of organizational values is and will also be constant as *Kirkens Bymisjon* desires to employ more persons of different backgrounds yet remain faithful to their Christian foundation. It would be advisable for employees and the organization to reflect on what this means for their relationship and the work that they desire to accomplish.

7 Conclusion

This project has investigated employees' experience with tension at *Nadheim* in relation to the worldviews or beliefs of the organization, its employees, and its clients. In order to gather this information, I completed qualitative interviews of six employees at *Nadheim* who are involved in the task of social work, the assistant manager, and the manager of the organization. The aim of the investigation was to answer the following research question: *What kind of tension exists or has occurred among Nadheim employees because of the Christian values held by Kirkens Bymisjon and the Christian, non-religious, or other religious values held by employees and clients?*

The informants' responses have shown that employees at *Nadheim* encountered three types of tension: *tension from above*, *tension from within* and *tension from below*. *Tension from above* was related to the expression of the foundational values of the organization. *Tension from within* was analogous to the interactions of co-workers with differing worldviews and also how these views challenged employees to broaden their personal perceptions. Tension from *below* was tension in the exchanges between employees and clients who held specific worldviews.

These tensions taken into consideration with theoretical framework corresponding to human service organizations, negotiation, diakonia, and modern pluralism resulted in some conclusions. Tensions at *Nadheim* amid co-workers and between employees and clients are tensions that are normal to the nature of human service organizations where different parties who have different backgrounds and motivations are negotiating with one another in order to complete work. The values of diakonia in themselves were not found to be a motivation for tension. However, the Christian expression of these values created some challenges among employees. Moreover, tension from *above*, *within*, and *below* can all be classified as tension proceeding from diverse persons in the modern day pluralist society encountering each other and meeting organizations such as *Kirkens Bymisjon* who want to have 'room for everyone' yet want to be clear about their foundational Christian values. Lastly, not all tension was found to be negative, as employees reported that confronting challenges aided them in expanding their ways of thinking in meeting persons with diverse worldviews.

On the other hand, although this study came to these conclusions, the reflections in this project produced some questions that cannot be answered by this study. The data did not provide enough information on decision-making. Thus, it is unclear as to how decisions are made at *Nadheim*, which influences the kinds of tensions present. Likewise, the theory on negotiation

proved to be too vague. It does not provide an explanation for interactions where there was no negotiation yet decisions were made and tensions still remained. This leaves unanswered whether there could be other ways to explain these situations using alternative terms rather than negotiation.

Kirkens Bymisjon and *Nadheim* are aware that being an organization that wants to be clear about their foundational values, yet allow employees with diverse worldviews to participate in the work is ambitious and laborious. This becomes even more complicated when clients come to the organization bearing their own beliefs and want to be met on their own terms. I have attempted to present the tension that employees have experienced in their efforts to work under this specific framework in an environment of plurality. My hope is that this project can provide insight on the challenges that employees in diaconal organizations are confronting as they work from modern day perspectives. Likewise, I would anticipate more dialogue on how these different aspects related to the organization, employees and clients can better function together, leading to less confusion and ambiguity. I find that the words of the manager at *Nadheim* are very applicable to the situations that were analyzed, “It is a balancing act which is not so easy.”⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Interview Manager, Nadheim 29.09.14

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Interview Guide English

- Name and position
- How long have you worked at Nadheim?
- Did you know about Kirkens Bymisjon/ Nadheim before you started working here?

Nadheim's Christian values

- Did you know about Nadheim's Christian values before you started working there?
- Do you know more about the organization's values since you started to work there?
- What do you think about the way that Nadheim presents itself as a diaconal organization through the Christian symbols on the Kirkens Bymisjons website, other promotional materials, and the Christian symbols in the building?
- Nadheim contacts persons advertising sexual services on the internet and persons selling sex on the street to explain what they offer and see if persons in this target group are interested in Nadheim's services. How does Nadheim present itself to possible clients, does it say that it is a Christian organization?
- Has there been a change in the way these values are expressed since you started working here?
- What do you think about the symbols of Kirkens Bymisjon and about the candle lighting corner that is at Nadheim?

Challenges for Nadheim

- Can Nadheim be all things to all people, to clients and to employees, can they adjust to everyone?
- When there is tension regarding the difference between religious beliefs held by the organization, employees and clients, does it affect the quality of the work?

Conditions for employment

- When you started to work here, did you have to fill out or agree to respecting the organization's Christian values?

The organization's values vs. employees personal values

- Do you feel pressure as an employee to follow these Christian values? Do the values help you or hinder you in your personal faith?

- How does your faith and the organizations faith compare?
- According to Kirkens Bymisjon every employee contributes to diakonia not depending on their individual beliefs. The Church of Norway defines diakonia a “the caring ministry of the Church. It is the Gospel in action and is expressed through loving your neighbor, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation, and struggling for justice.” What do you think about that, that you as an individual that works at Nadheim contributes to the diakonia done at the organization?
- Has working at Nadheim affected your personal beliefs?

Clients’ personal faith

- Do the clients you work with have a Christian faith?
- When possible clients learn about the organization, do they assume that you are a Christian or have you been asked for a Bible or to pray?
- Do you think if a group came asking for non-Christian expression of faith, Nadheim would be open to that?
- Are client’s faith needs met at Nadheim?

Personal beliefs vs. co-workers’ beliefs

- What about your beliefs and that of your co-workers, have you ever had a problem?

Personal beliefs vs. clients’ beliefs

- What about clients that have existential questions, how is it to talk about that?

Appendix 2

Intervjuguide Norsk

Formalia

- Navn, stillingen, oppgaver, hvor lenge har du jobbet på Nadheim?
- Hvorfor ville du jobbe på Nadheim?

Nadheims bakgrunn

- Var du kjent med Nadheims/SKBOs kristne grunnlag når du begynte som ansatt?
- Hva vet du nå om Nadeheims/SKBOs kristne grunnlag/historie/bakgrunn som du ikke visste før?
- Hva synes du om måten som Nadheim presenterer seg selv som en diakonal organisasjon med kristent grunnlag?
- Har det vært en utvikling i det kristne aspekt ved Nadheim siden du begynte å jobbe her?

Betingelse for ansettelse

- Når du ble ansatt ved Nadheim måtte du da samtykke i at du ville arbeide etter organisasjonens kristne verdier?
- Hvilke betingelser legger organisasjonen og lederne for ansettelse?

Spenning i jobben på grunn av organisasjonens verdier

- Føler du press som ansatt til å følge kristne verdier? Gi gjerne eksempler.
- Føler du press som ansatt til å delta i kristne aktiviteter som er en del av arbeidet? Gi gjerne eksempler.
- Hvordan håndterer organisasjonen din personlige tro om den ikke sammenfaller med deres tro?
- Kan du fortelle om noen situasjoner hvor det har vært ubehagelig for deg på grunn av din personlige tro og organisasjonens kristne grunnlag?
- SKBO har noen symboler som de knytter til kristendom som for eks. lystenning. Hva synes du om lystenning som brukere og ansatte kan gjøre på Nadheim?
- SKBO sier at diakonien skjer uavhengig av den ansattes eksplisitte trossyn på grunn av organisasjonens verdier. Hvordan opplever du det å være en ansatt som bidrar til diakoni på Nadheim?
- Kan du forklare om du føler at du er fristilt fra en personlige tro fordi det er organisasjonen som har ansvar for å opprettholde de kristne rammene eller føler du mer press til å tro på noe?

Spenning i jobben på grunn av kristne brukere

- Hvordan er det å jobbe med brukere som påstår at du er kristen eller som spør etter mer kristne tiltak som for eks. bønn, bibler? Hvordan reagerer du?
- Opplever du som ansatte personlige dilemmaer i forbindelse med din tro og brukernes tro?
- Hvordan blir brukernes troen møtt i arbeidet på Nadheim selv om dere har forskjellige tro?

Spenning i jobben på grunn av forholdet med ledelse andre ansatte

- Hva slags spenningen har det vært mellom ansatte og ledelse på grunn av det kristne grunnlaget?
- Hvordan håndterer andre ansatte din personlig tro hvis den ikke sammenfaller med organisasjonens verdier?

Spenning på grunn av kristen tro

- Hvis du har kristen tro, har det vært noe spenning i å jobbe i en diakonal organisasjon med andre som ikke deler din tro/organisasjonens kristne grunnlag?

Spenning og arbeidet

- Hvordan påvirker denne spenningen kvaliteten på arbeidet?
- Hvordan påvirker denne spenningen deg som person med personlig tro?
- Hvordan er det for brukere som ikke har kristen tro? Er det en spenning i arbeidet med dem på grunn av organisasjonens kristne grunnlag?



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Vår dato: 26.01.2015

Vår ref: 41539 / 3 / LT

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 10.01.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

41539	<i>Diakonia and diversity</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>Diakonhjemmet Høgskole AS, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Anne Austad</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Sarai Mathisen</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.06.2015, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

LisTenold

Kontaktperson: Lis Tenold tlf: 55 58 33 77

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

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