



INFLUENCE OF ORGANISATIONAL SPIRITUALITY ON WORKPLACE DEVIANT BEHAVIOURS AMONG POLICE OFFICERS IN KWARA STATE POLICE COMMAND



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Abstract

Police deviant behaviour remains a major challenge to effective policing and public trust in Nigeria, with persistent cases of extortion, abuse of authority, unlawful arrests, and professional misconduct. Although organisational spirituality has been widely acknowledged as a potential ethical resource for improving workplace behaviour, its empirical relevance in Nigerian policing remains underexplored. This study therefore examined the effect of organisational spirituality on deviant work behaviours among police officers in the Kwara State Police Command, with the objective of filling this observable empirical and contextual gap. The study was anchored in Person–Organisation Fit (P–O Fit) Theory and social control theory. A quantitative, cross-sectional survey research design was adopted. Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire administered to 815 police officers, of whom 807 provided valid responses. Organisational spirituality and deviant work behaviours were measured using Likert-scaled items. Descriptive statistics and linear regression analysis were employed to analyse the data at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings showed that officers reported moderate levels of personal and group-based meaning in work, but low levels of leadership-driven organisational spirituality. High prevalence of deviant behaviours such as extortion, verbal abuse, unlawful arrests, intimidation, and misuse of official identity was recorded. Regression results revealed that organisational spirituality had a negative but statistically insignificant effect on deviant work behaviour ($\beta = -0.128$, $p = 0.100$), accounting for only 1.6% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.016$). This indicates that organisational spirituality, in its current form, is a weak predictor of police deviance in the study area. The study concludes that although organisational spirituality holds ethical potential, it remains insufficiently institutionalised to significantly influence police behaviour. It recommends a leadership-driven ethical environment, strengthened accountability mechanisms, and the formal integration of spirituality into police organisational culture.

Keywords: Deviant; Work Behaviour, Organisational Spirituality; Police, Kwara State.

Introduction

Policing is universally recognised as a cornerstone of effective crime management, public safety, and the protection of life and property. As agents of the state, police officers are entrusted with enforcing laws, maintaining order, protecting citizens and their property, and ensuring that justice is administered impartially and fairly. Effective policing is therefore indispensable for maintaining societal stability, preventing and controlling crime, and fostering public trust in the criminal justice system.

However, in Nigeria, including within the Kwara State Police Command, there is growing concern about the prevalence of deviant behaviours and misconduct among police personnel.

Police misconduct within the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) has been extensively documented over many years. Numerous studies and reports describe persistent corruption, abuse of human rights, and other forms of deviance among police personnel. Common offences include extortion, bribery, unlawful arrests, torture, excessive use of force, brutality, and extrajudicial killings (Salihu, 2019; Agbibo, 2015). These behaviours have eroded public trust and undermined the legitimacy of the police as a crime-control institution (Ugwuoke et al., 2025; Ike & Jidong, 2022). Scholars attribute this partly to systemic corruption and inadequate institutional oversight, which create an environment that enables misconduct.

In Kwara State, there is concrete evidence that police deviance is not just a theoretical or national problem but a localised reality. For example, in 2024, there was a widely reported case in which officers of the Kwara State Police Command reportedly killed a man during a dispute over N400,000. Also, in 2020, the Command dismissed six officers for “various forms of misconduct” (Amnesty International, 2020). Additionally, broader studies of policing and crime control in Kwara State highlight repeated allegations of human rights abuses, unlawful arrests, and poor respect for due process under the state command. These cases illustrate that police deviance in Nigeria takes a concrete form at the state level, undermining security, citizens’ trust, and the police’s ability to fulfil their mandate effectively. Furthermore, a local study examining professional conduct and crime control in Kwara State found public dissatisfaction with police performance, highlighting a gap between the ideal role of the police and the reality on the ground (Amin, 2018). The implication is serious: when law enforcers themselves violate laws or ethical standards, public safety, trust, and order are severely undermined.

On the other hand, the concept of organisational spirituality encompassing facets such as meaningful work, sense of community/connectedness among staff, alignment between personal and organizational values, compassion, and transcendence or sense of higher purpose has been proposed as a potential internal mechanism to influence employee attitudes, ethics, and behaviour in organisations (Kumar & Sudarshan, 2022; Moran, 2017). In law enforcement settings, workplace spirituality has been explored as a means to help officers cope with the stresses and moral challenges of policing, potentially reducing misconduct and promoting more humane policing practices (Sudarshan, 2022).

Despite the intuitive appeal of linking organisational spirituality with ethical behaviour among police, there is a notable dearth of empirical research specifically examining how spirituality within police organisations in Nigeria and in Kwara State in particular influence the conducts of police personnel particularly the incidence of deviant behaviours. While studies have documented widespread corruption and misconduct in the Nigerian police apparatus generally (*see* Moran, 2017; Sudarshan, 2022), including in the Kwara Command, the role of internal organisational factors such as spirituality remains largely unexplored. For instance, although some research (such as Moran, 2017; Sudarshan, 2022) elsewhere has considered “workplace spirituality and policing,” and how spirituality may buffer adverse effects like occupational stress or misconduct, such studies are not common in the Nigerian setting.

This gap in the literature is problematic because without understanding internal institutional factors that might influence deviance beyond external oversight, training, and enforcement efforts to reform police behaviour, there is a risk of overlooking potentially powerful levers for change. Moreover, the effects of police deviant behaviour are not purely institutional; they have real impacts on the safety of lives and property, public trust in law enforcement, citizens’

willingness to cooperate with the police, and broader societal stability. When officers engage in corruption, brutality, or other misconduct, crime control deteriorates, injustice may prevail, and the legitimacy of policing institutions is eroded.

Thus, there is a compelling need to empirically investigate whether and how organisational spirituality within the Kwara State Police Command relates to and perhaps mitigates deviant behaviours among police officers. Accordingly, this study fills this gap by systematically examining the influence of organisational spirituality (measured via indicators such as meaningful work, sense of community, value congruence, compassion/transcendence) on deviant behaviours among police officers in Kwara State. Hence, it is hypothesised that organisational spirituality has significant influence on work deviant behaviour of police officers in Kwara State police command.

Conceptual Review

Police Deviant Behaviour

Police deviant behavior is broadly defined as any action or omission by an officer that violates formal laws, departmental rules, or ethical norms of the service (Elijah & Saheed, 2024). It includes both occupational deviance (e.g. violating internal procedures or misusing authority) and outright criminal misconduct. In practice, this spans acts like theft, harassment, and negligence at work as well as corruption and abuse of power. For example, one review notes that police deviance “violates the formal laws, ethical codes, professional standards, or informal social expectations of policing,” thereby undermining institutional integrity and public trust (Popoola, 2019). Even non-criminal misconduct (such as lateness, misuse of equipment, or ignoring orders) falls under this umbrella. The key point is that any abuse of the police role, whether by taking bribes or failing to fulfil duties, erodes the force's legitimacy. Empirical studies consistently identify recurring patterns of police misconduct. One of the most common is corruption and extortion: officers demanding or accepting bribes for routine services (e.g. bail, clearance certificates) or using their position for personal profit (Alemika, 2018). Likewise, brutality and excessive force are frequently documented, including physical assault, torture, and unjustified shootings, often attributed to weak supervision and poor training (Elijah & Saheed, 2024). Relatedly, extrajudicial actions (such as fake encounters or unlawful killings) and abuse of power (unlawful detention or trumped-up charges) have been noted in many settings. Other forms of misconduct include discrimination and intimidation in the field, as well as sexual exploitation of civilians by officers (demanding sexual favors for leniency), which has been reported by human-rights groups (Tromadore, 2016). Even ostensibly minor deviance, such as cyberloafing (using work time for personal activities), negligent absence from duty posts, or chronic absenteeism, undermines police effectiveness (Anderson, 2024). In combination, these behaviors weaken public security and crime control and fundamentally impede the fair delivery of justice.

Organisational Spirituality

Organisational spirituality refers to the extent to which workplaces foster meaning, purpose, interconnectedness, alignment with ethical values, and a sense of higher purpose in employees' professional experiences (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). It reflects an organisational environment in which individuals feel their work is significant, that they belong to a supportive community, and that the organisation's values resonate with their personal moral framework (Milliman et al., 2003). Importantly, organisational spirituality is not the promotion of religion in the workplace;

rather, it is the cultivation of humane values that enhance moral behaviour, compassion, and psychological well-being within the organisational setting (Fry, 2003).

Brief Review of Literature

Organisational spirituality in the workplace has been proposed as one factor that can influence such misconduct among police officers (Jalan & Garg, 2021). This concept refers to creating meaning, shared values, and community at work not in a religious sense, but as an ethical and emotional culture (Jalan & Garg, 2021). When officers perceive their work as meaningful, feel emotionally supported by colleagues, and believe the Force's values align with their own, they tend to exhibit stronger moral commitment and intrinsic motivation. In fact, studies show that workplaces fostering spirituality are associated with higher officer well-being and pro-social attitudes. A spiritually enabling environment gives officers an internal "anchor" of purpose and empathy, helping them manage stress and make humane decisions in difficult situations (Jalan & Garg, 2021). By contrast, in institutions lacking purpose and community, personnel may become alienated or cynical, which can fuel unethical behaviour. While direct research in police settings is limited, the general literature suggests that positive work climates (with meaning and respect) promote citizenship behaviours and self-restraint, whereas negative climates allow disengagement and deviance.

While the Nigerian Police Force does not formally operate a spirituality-based policing model, evidence suggests that elements of organisational spirituality do appear within its institutional structure, especially through informal processes. The most dominant form is a sense of community, evident in the strong fraternity, solidarity, and esprit de corps that exist among officers, especially within units and formations (Onah & Nkwede, 2022). Police personnel often view the Force as a "family" and depend heavily on peer support for emotional resilience in hazardous duties. A second form that manifests in practice is meaningfulness of work, rooted in the perceived honour and societal importance of crime fighting, law enforcement, and protection of citizens (Ibrahim & Adamu, 2020). However, this meaning is sometimes undermined by low institutional morale and poor welfare provisions. A less consistent component is alignment with organisational values; although the Nigerian Police officially advocates values such as integrity and service, scholars note a mismatch between formal value statements and lived organisational culture (Agbibo, 2013). The relative strength of communal solidarity and occupational pride, compared to weak value alignment, partly explains variations in ethical and unethical outcomes among officers.

Theoretical Framework: Person–Organisation Fit (P–O Fit) Theory and Social Control Theory

This study is anchored on the synthesis of person-fit theory and social control theory. Person–Organisation Fit Theory posits that employees' behaviours and attitudes are shaped by the degree of congruence between their personal values and the prevailing values, norms, and philosophy of their organisation (Kristof, 1996). When officers perceive alignment between their personal belief systems and the organisational environment, particularly in terms of meaning, purpose, ethical expectations, interpersonal trust, and compassion, they are more likely to demonstrate organisational commitment and ethical compliance (Chatman, 1989). In the context of organisational spirituality, indicators such as meaningful work, sense of community, inner-life integration, compassion, and a shared moral purpose create a work climate that resonates with the personal values of conscientious officers. When such value congruence exists, police officers in the Kwara State Police Command are more likely to internalise organisational goals, reduce

psychological distress, and show reduced tendencies toward deviant behaviours such as corruption, extortion, absenteeism, brutality, and insubordination.

Conversely, when organisational spirituality is weak—characterised by high stress, moral ambiguity, lack of mutual respect, and a culture of impunity—the mismatch between personal and organisational values produces cognitive dissonance and emotional disengagement (Edwards & Cable, 2009). In such a scenario, officers may rationalise deviant acts as coping strategies or survival mechanisms within a toxic organisational environment. Thus, P–O Fit Theory supports the proposition that high organisational spirituality strengthens value alignment, thereby reducing the likelihood of workplace deviance, whereas a poor spiritual climate fosters value incongruence and heightens the risk of police misconduct. This theoretical lens emphasises the internal motivational mechanisms that link spirituality-induced value congruence to ethical behaviour among police personnel.

Social Control Theory

Social Control Theory, pioneered by Hirschi (1969), argues that deviant behaviour occurs when individuals' bonds to society and social institutions such as attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief are weakened. In police institutions, the presence of strong ethical norms, accountability systems, shared moral convictions, supportive peer relations, and spiritually grounded work communities functions as a form of social control that discourages misconduct. Organizational spirituality reinforces these bonds by fostering meaningful interpersonal connections, shared responsibility, emotional support systems, ethical guidance, and collective identity. Officers embedded in such environments typically feel a moral obligation to uphold the organisation's integrity and avoid acts that may violate professional ethics or harm public trust.

However, when these bonds are weak such as when officers feel alienated, unsupported, disrespected, or morally disconnected from their organisation social controls deteriorate, increasing the likelihood of deviance. Lack of spiritual values in the workplace reduces attachment to the organisation and diminishes moral beliefs that traditionally constrain behaviour, thereby facilitating acts such as bribery, brutality, abuse of power, and dereliction of duty. Through this lens, organisational spirituality serves as an informal control system that promotes self-regulation and ethical conduct without relying exclusively on formal discipline or punitive mechanisms. Therefore, Social Control Theory provides an explanatory framework for how strengthening spiritual and moral bonds within police institutions reduces deviant behaviour and enhances professional conduct.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey research design to investigate the influence of organisational spirituality on deviant behaviours among police officers in the Kwara State Police Command. The survey design was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic collection of numerical data on officers' attitudes, perceptions, and behavioural dispositions, while supporting statistical analysis to objectively examine relationships among variables. Using a cross-sectional approach, data were collected from participants at a single point in time, enabling timely assessment of the nature and extent of organisational spirituality and deviant behaviour within the Command. The study was conducted at the Kwara State Police Command, established in 1967 and comprising three senatorial districts: Kwara Central, Kwara South, and Kwara North. As at the time of data collection, the Command had an estimated

workforce of 3,429 personnel, distributed across 50 divisional headquarters and five area commands. This setting provides a complex and diverse organisational environment suitable for examining variations in workplace spirituality and patterns of deviant behaviour across geographical and operational jurisdictions.

The target population consisted of all police officers serving under the Kwara State Police Command, while officers on temporary attachment or special duties from other states were excluded to prevent population contamination. Using an online sample size calculator at a 95% confidence level, 3% margin of error, and 50% response distribution, a representative sample size of 815 officers was derived from the population of 3,429 personnel. This sample size was considered adequate for generalisability and statistical testing in line with quantitative requirements.

A multistage sampling technique was employed to ensure equitable representation across the Command. First, the Command was stratified by senatorial districts. Within each district, police divisions were purposively selected based on personnel strength. In the second stage, senatorial districts were further stratified by local government areas, and proportional allocation was applied using population figures to determine sample quotas for each area. The third stage involved quota sampling to assign the number of respondents required from each local government area. Finally, convenience sampling was used at the selected divisional headquarters to recruit officers who were available and willing to participate. This structured procedure ensured geographic, rank-based, and organisational diversity among the respondents.

Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised closed-ended items rated on a Likert scale and was structured to capture the major constructs of the study namely: organisational spirituality and police deviant behaviour using different indicators (*See table 3 and 4*). A total of 815 questionnaires were administered across all selected divisions according to their allocated sample quotas.

Table 1. Population and Sample Size for the Study

Local Government	Population	Sample Size
Kwara Central Senatorial District (N = 1, 298) (n = 307)		
Asa	279	66
Ilorin East	298	71
Ilorin South	339	81
Ilorin West	373	89
Kwara North Senatorial District (N = 1, 209) (n = 289)		
Baruten	265	63
Edu	235	56
Pategi	244	58
Kaiama	231	55
Moro	234	57
Kwara North Senatorial District (N = 870) (n = 219)		
Ekiti	147	35
Oke-Ero	118	28
Offa	141	34
Ifelodun	128	30
Irepodun	124	29

Isin	157	37
Oyun	107	26
Total	3,429	815

Source: Authors' Computation, 2025.

Presentation of Result

Descriptive Results on Organisational Spirituality

While there are various dimensions of organisational spirituality, this study focuses on a specific one. This is meaningful work, which is defined as one's experience at work being significant and meaningful beyond material rewards. Descriptive results on organisational spirituality are presented and analysed. This is shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Descriptive Results on Organizational Spirituality

S/N	Statement	SA	A	IDK	D	SD
1	My superiors encourage me to find meaning in my career.	45 (5.58%)	67 (8.30%)	18 (2.23%)	478 (59.23%)	199 (24.66%)
2	In my division/unit/department, I understand how the work we do together makes our lives more meaningful.	218 (27.01%)	313 (38.79%)	23 (2.85%)	208 (25.77%)	45 (5.58%)
3	The work we do in our division/unit/department has a satisfying purpose.	231 (28.62%)	394 (48.82%)	11 (1.36 %)	113 (14.00 %)	58 (7.19 %)
4	My superiors help me design my work so that it has a satisfying purpose.	86 (10.66%)	101 (12.51%)	8 (0.99%)	334 (41.39%)	278 (34.45%)
5	In my division/unit/department, we believe in the value of meaningful work	239 (29.62%)	418 (51.80%)	1 (0.12%)	114 (14.13%)	35 (4.34%)
6	In my division/unit/department, the work we do together brings meaning to our individual careers.	227 (28.13%)	246 (30.48%)	17 (2.11%)	215 (26.64%)	102 (12.64%)
7	I have a good sense of what makes my job meaningful.	279 (34.57%)	389 (48.20%)	14 (1.73%)	74 (9.17%)	51 (6.32%)
8	It is clear to me that my superior's work contributes to their life's meaning.	178 (22.06%)	262 (32.47%)	57 (7.06%)	218 (27.01%)	92 (11.40%)
9	I understand how my work contributes to my life's meaning.	214 (26.52%)	289 (35.81%)	83 (10.29%)	140 (17.35%)	81 (10.04%)
10	I have found a meaningful career in Nigeria Police Force.	189 (23.42%)	192 (23.79%)	208 (25.77%)	131 (16.23%)	87 (10.78%)

11	In my immediate workgroup, we have a shared belief that our work is meaningful.	239 (29.62%)	386 (47.83%)	32 (3.97%)	108 (13.38%)	42 (5.20%)
12	Our collective capacity to engage in work that has a satisfying purpose is critical to my organization's success.	301 (37.30%)	341 (42.26%)	6 (0.74%)	128 (15.86%)	25 (3.10%)
13	My leader seems to know what makes his/her work meaningful.	267 (33.09%)	318 (39.41%)	7 (0.87%)	139 (17.22%)	76 (9.42%)
14	Officers in my organisation generally understand how their work contributes to their life's meaning	148 (18.34%)	245 (30.36%)	11 (1.36%)	269 (33.33%)	134 (16.60%)
15	My duties have a satisfying purpose.	267 (33.09%)	238 (29.49%)	87 (10.78%)	155 (19.21%)	60 (7.43%)

Note: SA=Strongly Agreed; A=Agreed; IDK= I do not know; D=Disagreed; SD= Strongly Disagreed.

The descriptive results from Table 3 show mixed perceptions of organisational spirituality among officers in the Kwara State Police Command. Items assessing whether superiors actively support meaning-making and purpose at work recorded low levels of agreement. For instance, only 13.88% (SA + A) agreed that their superiors encourage them to find meaning in their career, while 83.89% (D + SD) disagreed, indicating a perceived lack of supervisory support for spiritual fulfilment at work. A similar pattern emerged regarding whether superiors help officers design work with a satisfying purpose, with only 23.17% agreeing compared to 75.84% who disagreed. These results suggest that meaningful work is not typically facilitated from the top down through supervisory practices.

However, respondents generally recognised meaning and purpose within their work groups. For example, 65.80% agreed that the work they do collectively makes their lives more meaningful, and 78.42% agreed that their division believes in the value of meaningful work. Similarly, 77.77% indicated that they have a good sense of what makes their job meaningful, and 65.68% acknowledged that their superiors' work contributes to their life's meaning. These results reveal that although organisational support for spirituality may be limited, a sense of meaning appears to emerge informally among officers through shared work experiences and personal interpretation of job purpose.

Despite this, indicators of holistic, organisation-wide spirituality remain inconsistent. While many respondents perceive their duties as meaningful (62.58% SA + A), fewer officers agreed that they have found a meaningful career in the Nigeria Police Force, with agreement at 47.21% and a substantial proportion (25.77%) undecided. Moreover, perceptions that officers broadly understand how their work contributes to life meaning recorded relatively low agreement, with only 48.70% approval and 49.93% disagreement. Overall, the findings indicate that although individual and team-level meaning is present, institutional structures and leadership practices still fall short in cultivating deeper organisational spirituality that reinforces purpose, fulfilment, and shared meaning across all ranks.

Table 4: Deviant Work Behaviours

S/N	Statement	SA	A	IDK	D	SD
1	Absenteeism is increasing among police officers.	44 (5.45%)	61 (7.56%)	108 (13.38%)	421 (52.17%)	173 (21.44%)
2	Lateness is increasing among police officers.	51 (6.32%)	68 (8.43%)	164 (20.32%)	342 (42.38%)	182 (22.55%)
3	Withholding efforts is increasing among police officers.	267 (33.09%)	411 (50.93%)	5 (0.62%)	78 (9.67%)	46 (5.70%)
4	Extorting money from suspects is increasing among police officers.	351 (43.49%)	377 (46.72%)	8 (0.99%)	43 (5.33%)	28 (3.47%)
5	Unlawful arrests of suspects are increasing among police officers.	203 (25.15%)	433 (53.66%)	19 (2.35%)	114 (14.13%)	38 (4.71%)
6	Stealing arms and ammunition and other equipment belonging to the Nigeria Police Force.	78 (9.67%)	116 (14.38%)	56 (6.94%)	313 (38.79%)	244 (30.24%)
7	Verbal abuse targeted at suspects is increasing among police officers.	289 (35.81%)	478 (59.23%)	11 (1.36%)	18 (2.23%)	11 (1.36%)
8	Disobedience to lawful orders from superiors	123 (15.24%)	136 (16.85%)	81 (10.04%)	312 (38.66%)	155 (19.21%)
9	Soliciting and taking alcohol while on duty.	149 (18.46%)	186 (23.05%)	43 (5.33%)	299 (37.05%)	130 (16.11%)
10	Soliciting and taking illegal substance while on duty	112 (13.88%)	174 (21.56%)	49 (6.07%)	317 (39.28%)	155 (19.21%)
11	Seeking to obtain promotion illegally	186 (23.05%)	342 (42.38%)	15 (1.86%)	187 (23.17%)	77 (9.54%)
12	Offering illegal supports to a third party to obtain a license from the Nigeria Police Force	64 (7.93%)	118 (14.62%)	98 (12.14%)	388 (48.08%)	139 (17.22%)
13	Discriminating suspects based on place of origins and other criteria.	297 (36.80%)	374 (46.34%)	54 (6.69%)	56 (6.94%)	26 (3.22%)
14	Intimidating suspects with fire arms and other weapons	302 (37.42%)	387 (47.96%)	12 (1.49%)	74 (9.17%)	32 (3.97%)
15	Operating a liquor shop	14 (1.73%)	73 (9.05%)	186 (23.05%)	311 (38.54%)	223 (27.63%)
16	Seeking sexual pleasure from suspects.	166 (20.57%)	213 (26.39%)	87 (10.78%)	208 (25.77%)	133 (16.48%)
17	Using the Nigeria Police Force identity card to gain undue advantages	317 (39.28%)	416 (51.55%)	9 (1.12%)	29 (3.59%)	36 (4.46%)
18	Deliberately using false evidence or making false testimony against suspects.	241 (29.86%)	412 (51.05%)	18 (2.23%)	91 (11.28%)	45 (5.58%)

Source: Researcher's fieldwork (2025).

The findings from Table 4 reveal varying levels of deviant work behaviours among police officers in the Kwara State Police Command. Absenteeism and lateness were not widely perceived as increasing, as only 12.98% and 14.75% (SA + A) respectively agreed to their prevalence, while the majority disagreed (Absenteeism: 73.61%, Lateness: 64.93%). Similarly, disobedience to lawful orders recorded 32.09% agreement compared to 57.87% disagreement, indicating that insubordination does not appear to be a dominant behavioural problem among the officers.

Conversely, more serious and ethically concerning behaviours received extremely high agreement levels. Withholding efforts, which is a form of counterproductive behaviour, recorded overwhelming affirmation with 84.02% (SA + A) agreeing it is increasing. Even more alarming, extortion of money from suspects (SA + A = 90.21%) and unlawful arrests (SA + A = 78.81%) were widely acknowledged as increasing among officers. High levels of verbal abuse targeted at suspects were also reported, with 95.04% (SA + A) of respondents acknowledging its rise. Similarly, discrimination against suspects (SA + A = 83.14%) and intimidation of suspects using firearms and other weapons (SA + A = 85.38%) were perceived as common practices.

Some deviant behaviours showed moderate levels of prevalence. Seeking sexual pleasure from suspects recorded 46.96% agreement, while soliciting alcohol while on duty had 41.51% agreement, and soliciting illegal substances had 35.44% agreement. Seeking illegal promotion also appeared relatively common, with 65.43% agreement. In contrast, behaviours such as stealing arms and ammunition (SA + A = 24.05%) and operating a liquor shop (SA + A = 10.78%) recorded low agreement levels, indicating that although present, these are less prevalent compared to other forms of misconduct.

The results also revealed a high level of agreement that officers increasingly use their identity cards for undue advantage (90.83%) and deliberately rely on false evidence or testimonies against suspects (80.91%). Taken together, the pattern suggests that nonviolent and violent forms of deviance, especially extortion, intimidation, verbal abuse, discrimination, and misuse of police identity, are highly prevalent, whereas administrative forms of misconduct like absenteeism and lateness appear less common.

Effects of Organisational Spirituality on Deviant Work Behaviours among Police Officers in Kwara State Police Command

To examine the effects of organisational spirituality on deviant work behaviours among police officers in Kwara state, inferential statistics were performed, specifically regression analysis with the aid of SPSS v23. The hypothesis states that organisational spirituality has no significant effect on deviant work behaviours among police officers in the Kwara State Police Command

Table 5: Model summary, ANOVA and Coefficient

Model summary	
Model	1
R	.128
R Square	.016

Adjusted R Square				.010			
Std. error of the estimate				.50164			
R Square Change				.016			
F Change				2.731			
Df 1				1			
Df 2				163			
Sig. F Change				.1000			
Durbin Watson				1.905			
ANOVA							
Model	Sum of squares		Df	Mean square	F	Sig.	
Regression	.687		1	.687	2.731	.100 ^b	
Residual	41.017		163	.252			
Total	41.704		164				
Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficient			95% Confidence interval	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower bound	Upper bound
(Constant)	2.014	.190		10.611	.000	1.639	2.389
Organisational spirituality	.122	.074	-.128	-1.653	.100	.067	1.024

Source: SPSS output (2025).

The regression model ($F(1,163) = 2.731$, $p = .100 > .05$) indicates that organisational spirituality does not significantly predict deviant work behaviour among police officers in Kwara State. Although organisational spirituality shows a negative standardised beta value ($\beta = -.128$), suggesting a tendency toward reducing deviant workplace behaviour, the relationship is statistically insignificant at the 0.05 threshold. Furthermore, the effect size is low ($R^2 = .016$), explaining only 1.6% of the variance in deviant behaviour. The Durbin–Watson value (1.905) suggests no major concerns regarding autocorrelation, indicating model stability.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed a nuanced perception of organisational spirituality among police officers in the Kwara State Police Command. While officers reported moderate to high individual and team-level meaning at work, there was a notable perception that supervisors and organisational leadership inadequately foster meaningful work, as indicated by the low agreement that superiors encouraged meaning-making and helped design work with a satisfying purpose. These results suggest a limited top-down cultivation of spiritual support within the Command.

This finding resonates with studies in the Nigerian settings where supervisory and institutional structures in police organisations have been identified as weak mediators of ethical conduct (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2014; Otu, 2022). Internationally, Fry (2003) and Petchsawang and Duchon (2012) emphasise that organisational spirituality thrives when leadership actively fosters meaningful work, shared values, and compassion. The current findings partially contrast with these perspectives, showing that informal team-level support may compensate for a deficient leadership-driven spiritual environment, but may be insufficient to fully curb unethical tendencies. Critically, this highlights a structural weakness: while officers may find personal or

peer meaning in their duties, institutionalised mechanisms for ethical reinforcement and value alignment remain underdeveloped, potentially undermining long-term integrity.

The descriptive data indicated that deviant behaviours such as extortion, verbal abuse, unlawful arrests, intimidation, and misuse of police identity were highly prevalent, whereas administrative misdemeanours like absenteeism and lateness were comparatively less common. This suggests that Nigerian police deviance is largely concentrated in abuse-of-authority and occupational misconduct, rather than simple work inefficiency. These results are consistent with empirical studies on Nigerian policing, which identify extortion, brutality, and misuse of power as systemic challenges (Ojedokun, 2021; Chukwuma, 2021; Amnesty International, 2020). International research similarly indicates that police misconduct is often rooted in structural, institutional, and cultural factors, including weak accountability mechanisms and a permissive ethical climate (Punch, 2009; Newburn, 2015). However, the current findings diverge slightly from some global contexts where administrative deviance, such as absenteeism, often dominates minor infractions; in Nigeria, the focus of deviance appears concentrated in actions that directly exploit citizens, suggesting a unique contextual pattern where corruption and abuse of authority are the most pressing ethical challenges.

The regression analysis revealed that organisational spirituality had a negative but statistically insignificant effect on police deviant behaviour ($\beta = -.128$, $p = .100$). Although theoretically organisational spirituality is expected to reduce deviant behaviours through value congruence, moral internalisation, and social bonding (Kristof, 1996; Hirschi, 1969; Fry, 2003), the empirical evidence here suggests that its practical influence within the Kwara State Police Command is limited. The model explained only 1.6% of the variance in deviance, indicating that other organisational, structural, or socio-cultural factors likely play a stronger role in shaping officer misconduct.

This finding aligns with prior Nigerian studies suggesting that ethical orientation alone may be insufficient to curb deviance where enforcement, leadership accountability, and institutional oversight are weak (Alemika & Chukwuma, 2014; Tade & Aderinto, 2021). Internationally, the limited effect contrasts with findings from contexts with robust ethical climates and institutional support, where organisational spirituality significantly predicts reductions in unethical behaviour (Petchsawang & Duchon, 2012; Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Critically, this points to a structural limitation: the presence of individual or team-level ethical meaning is not enough to overcome systemic issues such as weak supervision, impunity, and entrenched corruption within the Nigerian police force. Therefore, while spirituality may have potential as a moderating influence, it is insufficient in isolation to mitigate pervasive deviant practices.

The indicate a disjunction between perceived meaning in work and actual behavioural compliance among officers. While officers may personally or collectively find purpose in policing duties, spiritual leadership appear insufficiently robust to enforce adherence to ethical norms. High levels of extortion, intimidation, and abuse reflect structural and cultural limitations that undermine the theoretical protective effect of organisational spirituality. This highlights the critical need for complementary institutional reforms, including enhanced accountability, leadership training, and enforcement of codes of conduct, alongside initiatives to strengthen ethical and spiritual climates.

The present finding, where organisational spirituality yields a negative beta ($\beta = -.128$) but fails to reach statistical significance ($p = .100$), is theoretically coherent yet empirically insufficient

within the P–O Fit framework. The direction of the relationship affirms the theoretical expectation that spiritually enriched organisational environments may create a measure of value congruence that subtly discourages deviance. However, the negligible effect size ($R^2 = .016$) suggests that, in the Kwara State Police Command, the conditions necessary for meaningful P–O Fit may not be sufficiently established. This could reflect what Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) describe as perceived rather than actual fit; officers may acknowledge the existence of a spiritual organisational climate without necessarily identifying with or being behaviourally shaped by it. Furthermore, the paramilitary and bureaucratic structure of the Nigerian police institution may attenuate the value-alignment mechanisms that P–O Fit theory depends upon, as conformity in such organisations is more often driven by hierarchical command than by shared value systems.

Social Control Theory implies that the mere presence of a spiritual organisational climate is insufficient to curb deviance unless it actively strengthens the four bonding elements. In policing organisations, the bond between individual officers and the institution is often shaped more by external mechanisms, disciplinary structures, peer accountability, and legal obligation than by internally cultivated spiritual or moral frameworks. The weak explanatory power of the model ($R^2 = .016$) may therefore indicate that organisational spirituality, as currently operationalised or practised within the Kwara State Police, has not yet translated into the kinds of deep social bonds that Social Control Theory identifies as protective against deviance.

Moreover, Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) extension of control theory through the concept of *self-control* is relevant here. If officers possess low self-control, a persistent trait argued to be largely formed in early socialisation, organisational-level spiritual variables are unlikely to exert sufficient countervailing influence. This would explain why the β coefficient, while in the expected direction, lacks the statistical and practical magnitude to constitute a meaningful predictor.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the effect of organisational spirituality on deviant work behaviours among police officers in the Kwara State Police Command. The findings reveal an individual and team-level meaning, and the prevalence of deviant behaviours. Officers reported moderate personal and team-level experiences of meaning and purpose at work; however, supervisory and organisational structures were largely ineffective in institutionalising ethical norms or fostering a robust spiritual climate. This structural deficiency appears to limit the potential of organisational spirituality to curtail deviant behaviours such as extortion, verbal abuse, intimidation, and unlawful arrests.

The result confirmed that organisational spirituality has a negative but statistically insignificant effect on deviant behaviour. This suggests that, while theoretically capable of promoting ethical behaviour, organisational spirituality alone is insufficient to overcome entrenched structural, cultural, and institutional drivers of misconduct within the Nigerian police. These findings align with prior studies highlighting systemic challenges in policing, including weak accountability, political interference, and limited supervisory oversight. Theoretically, the study reinforces the relevance of Person–Organization Fit Theory and Social Control Theory in understanding police deviance. Person Organization Fit underscores the importance of value congruence between officers and the organisation, which, when absent at the leadership and institutional level, limits the protective effects of organisational spirituality. Social Control Theory suggests that

weakened formal and informal controls within the police organisation facilitate deviance, consistent with the observed prevalence of unethical practices.

Therefore, the study concludes that organisational spirituality has limited practical impact on reducing deviant behaviour in the Kwara State Police Command due to structural, cultural, and supervisory constraints. To enhance ethical conduct and professionalism, spirituality-based initiatives must be integrated with systemic reforms, including leadership development, accountability mechanisms, and institutionalised ethical frameworks. Without such integration, the protective potential of organisational spirituality will remain largely unrealised, and deviant behaviour will continue to undermine public trust, security of lives, and the legitimacy of policing in Nigeria.

Policy Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for policy, organisational practice, and reform within the Kwara State Police Command and the broader Nigerian policing context. First, the study revealed that while individual and team-level perceptions of meaning and purpose exist, organisational leadership has not effectively institutionalised spiritual guidance. This partial presence of organisational spirituality is insufficient to curtail the high prevalence of deviant behaviours, including extortion, intimidation, unlawful arrests, and misuse of police identity. Consequently, policy interventions must go beyond individual-focused ethical programs to systemic reforms that integrate leadership accountability, robust supervision, and institutionalised ethical frameworks.

Specifically, police leadership training should prioritise ethical and spiritual management skills, enabling supervisors to foster meaningful work and align officers' values with organisational norms. Leadership initiatives should include regular mentoring, ethical reflection sessions, and structured recognition of integrity, which have been shown in international studies to enhance compliance and reduce misconduct. In the Nigerian setting, these strategies are particularly relevant given the documented gaps in leadership-led value reinforcement.

Second, the pervasive deviant behaviours identified suggest a critical need for stronger internal accountability and enforcement mechanisms. Policies should strengthen monitoring and reporting systems, enforce clear sanctions for deviance, and integrate technology-enabled oversight to reduce opportunities for extortion, abuse of authority, and corruption. Furthermore, embedding organisational spirituality into formal organisational structures through clear codes of conduct, performance evaluations linked to ethical behaviour, and organisational rituals that reinforce shared purpose can complement enforcement measures to foster a holistic ethical climate.

Third, the results underscore the importance of broader socio-cultural and institutional reforms. Policymakers must therefore integrate police reform with wider governance initiatives that promote accountability, transparency, and citizen engagement, ensuring that ethical expectations are reinforced both internally and externally.

Finally, organisational spirituality programs should be tailored to the operational realities of Nigerian policing, balancing moral and spiritual development with practical strategies to mitigate structural pressures that drive misconduct. Such programs may include workshops on ethical decision-making, reflective practice, stress management, and team-based purpose cultivation.

These interventions, combined with institutional reforms, can create a synergistic effect, reducing deviant behaviours and promoting professionalism, accountability, and public trust.

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