



Effect of Organizational Culture on Occupational Stress Among Kenya National Police Service Officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County

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ISSN: 2616-8421

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How to cite this article: Aden, H. B., Mugambi, P. & Kirima, L. K. (2025). Effect of Organizational Culture on Occupational Stress Among Kenya National Police Service Officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. *Journal of Human Resource & Leadership*, Vol 9(4) pp. 16-32. <https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t4356>

Abstract

Occupational stress compromises the well-being and performance of Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in high-crime areas like Embakasi East Sub-County and Nairobi County. This study, guided by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, examined the impact of organizational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships on occupational stress, aiming to assess cultural effects, analyse leadership influences, and evaluate relational dynamics. A mixed-methods convergent parallel design was employed, collecting data from 72 officers via structured surveys, analysed using SPSS version 28, and 10 officers via semi-structured interviews, analysed thematically with NVivo. Quantitative findings revealed strong positive correlations between occupational stress and organizational culture ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$), explaining 60.1% of occupational stress variance ($R^2 = 0.601$, $F(3,68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$), with culture as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.646$, $p < 0.01$). Qualitative data complemented these findings, identifying hierarchical rigidity, resource scarcity, authoritarian leadership, lack of feedback, and interpersonal conflicts as key stressors, while supportive debriefings, transformational leadership, and team cohesion mitigated stress. Integrated findings confirmed that rigid culture and unsupportive leadership amplify stress, whereas resources like mentorship and peer support reduce it. Recommendations include mental health programs, transformational leadership training, and team-building initiatives tailored for high-crime stations like Embakasi East. The study contributes to Kenyan policing research, with

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t4356>

future studies recommended to explore longitudinal stress impacts and societal influences on officers' well-being.

Keywords: *Organizational Culture, Job demand, Job resources, Occupational Stress, National Police Services officers.*

1.0 Introduction

Workplace dynamics, encompassing interactions, relationships, and organisational practices, significantly influence employee well-being and performance. These dynamics include organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships, which shape the work environment and impact occupational stress (Banc & Messeghem, 2020). Occupational stress, defined as psychological and physical strain from work-related pressures exceeding coping capacity, is a critical concern in high-pressure occupations like law enforcement (World Health Organization [WHO], 2023). This study examines how workplace dynamics contribute to occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya, focusing on organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships.

Globally, occupational stress in law enforcement is well-documented due to the demanding nature of policing. In the United States, officers face stressors such as traumatic event exposure, shift work, and authoritarian leadership, leading to high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD; 14-19%), depression (>15%), and burnout (Cataline, 2023; Violanti, 2021). Globally, police departments employ strategies to mitigate stress. In the U.S., peer support programs and counselling reduce PTSD symptoms (Perez et al., 2023). Japanese police use stress checks to identify early interventions (Kato & Kondo, 2024).

In Africa, police occupational stress is compounded by resource constraints and bureaucratic structures. South African studies reveal chronic understaffing and inadequate equipment as key stressors contributing to PTSD and burnout among officers (Mabi, 2021). In Nigeria, authoritarian leadership and strenuous conditions lead to psychological distress, reducing job satisfaction (Ndubueze, 2023). These studies underscore the importance of interpersonal relationships and leadership in mitigating stress, aligning with this study's objective to evaluate interpersonal dynamics. The African context highlights unique challenges, such as limited mental health support, which are relevant to the KNPS.

In East Africa, policing faces similar stressors, with regional studies identifying excessive workloads and trauma exposure as significant issues. In Uganda, police officers report stress from public antagonism and resource shortages, impacting performance (Namara & Ssali, 2022). Tanzanian research points to poor communication and hierarchical leadership as stress contributors (Mwakasangula & Mwakilasa, 2023). These regional insights emphasize organisational culture and leadership, directly linking to this study's focus on how these dynamics influence stress in the KNPS.

In Kenya, the KNPS operates under a mandate to maintain law and order, prevent crime, and ensure public safety (National Police Service Act, 2011). However, officers face significant stressors, including inadequate resources, long working hours, and exposure to violence, leading to high stress levels (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023). A study in Kisumu County found that 53.6% of officers reported high stress due to poor management and trauma exposure (Muriuki, 2022). In Nairobi, urban policing challenges, such as high crime rates, exacerbate stress, particularly in Embakasi East Sub-County, a socio-economic hub with five wards facing crime and infrastructure issues (Nairobi City County, 2021). Local studies highlight organisational culture (e.g., rigid norms), leadership (e.g., authoritarian styles), and interpersonal relationships

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t4356>

(e.g., team conflicts) as key stress contributors (Muigai, 2019; Atieno, 2022). These align with the study's objectives to determine the effects of these dynamics on occupational stress.

Workplace dynamics shape occupational stress through complex interactions. Organisational culture, comprising norms and values, influences stress when misaligned with officer needs, leading to low morale and turnover (Nanayakkara et al., 2021). Leadership styles, such as transformational versus authoritarian, affect stress by fostering or hindering support (Eliasson, 2023). Interpersonal relationships, including trust and collaboration, are stress buffers or amplifiers (Bannay et al., 2020). In policing, these dynamics are critical due to high job demands and rigid hierarchies, which can lead to burnout, mental health disorders, and reduced policing effectiveness (Shikuku et al., 2024). In Kenya, KNPS officers face additional stressors like corruption scandals and public distrust, intensifying the need for positive dynamics (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) maintains law and order, ensures public safety, and upholds security governance. However, officers frequently experience high levels of occupational stress, which undermines their mental and physical well-being, job performance, and the effectiveness of policing operations. This stress arises from complex workplace dynamics, including rigid organisational culture, unsupportive leadership styles, and strained interpersonal relationships, which are particularly pronounced in high-pressure urban settings like Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. These dynamics create a challenging work environment characterised by excessive workloads, inadequate resources, and exposure to traumatic incidents, further exacerbating officer stress. In Embakasi East, a socio-economic hub with high crime rates and tense community relations, KNPS officers face unique stressors that amplify occupational stress. The hierarchical structure and stringent protocols limit autonomy, while poor communication and lack of psychological support hinder stress management. Consequently, officers experience burnout, reduced decision-making capacity, and compromised interactions with colleagues and the public, which erode policing effectiveness and public trust. Despite KNPS reforms aimed at improving professionalism and welfare, a critical gap exists in understanding how localised workplace dynamics contribute to occupational stress in Embakasi East. This gap hinders the development of targeted interventions to enhance officer well-being and security service delivery. This study seeks to address this problem by examining how organisational culture influences occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County.

1.2 Objective of the Study

To determine the effect of organisational culture on occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no statistically significant effect of organizational culture on occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County.

2.0 Literature Review

The section presents the empirical review, the theoretical framework that anchors the study objective and the conceptual framework.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, complemented by the Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) model, to examine how workplace dynamics influence

occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. These models were selected over traditional stress theories, such as Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, due to their specific focus on workplace factors and their practical applicability in analysing the high-pressure environment of policing (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The JD-R model is the primary framework due to its comprehensive approach linking job demands and resources to stress outcomes. In contrast, the ERI model provides additional insight into reward-related stressors, particularly relevant in resource-constrained settings like the KNPS.

2.1.1 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

The JD-R model, developed by Demerouti et al. (2001), provides a flexible framework for understanding occupational stress by categorising workplace factors into job demands and resources. Job demands are physical, psychological, or organisational aspects of a job that require sustained effort and can lead to stress if excessive. In the KNPS context, demands include high workloads, exposure to traumatic incidents (e.g., violent crimes in Embakasi East), role ambiguity due to rigid organisational culture, and emotional strain from authoritarian leadership styles (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023). These demands deplete officers' mental and physical resources, contributing to burnout and reduced well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Job resources, conversely, are aspects of the job that reduce demands, facilitate task achievement, or promote growth. These include supportive organisational culture (e.g., mental health programs), transformational leadership encouraging autonomy, and positive interpersonal relationships characterised by trust and collaboration among officers (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). In this study, organisational culture shapes the availability of support systems; leadership styles determine the quality of supervision, and interpersonal relationships influence team cohesion, all acting as resources to buffer stress. The JD-R model posits that an imbalance high demands coupled with low resources leads to occupational stress, while sufficient resources enhance engagement and resilience (Demerouti et al., 2001).

The JD-R model is the anchor for this study because it comprehensively addresses the interplay of workplace dynamics (organisational culture) and occupational stress (dependent variable). Its flexibility allows adaptation to the unique policing context of Embakasi East, where urban crime and resource constraints amplify demands (Nairobi City County, 2021). Applying JD-R, the study explored how specific dynamics (organisational culture) can be optimised to mitigate stress and improve officer performance.

2.1.2 Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) Model

The ERI model, introduced by Siegrist (1996), complements the JD-R model by focusing on the social contract between employees and employers, emphasising fairness in the balance between work efforts and rewards. Efforts include the physical and emotional labour invested in tasks, such as long working hours, high-stakes decision-making, and exposure to danger, all prevalent in KNPS operations. Rewards encompass tangible benefits (e.g., salary, promotions) and intangible benefits (e.g., recognition, job security) (Siegrist, 2012). Stress arises when officers perceive their efforts as disproportionate to rewards, leading to emotional strain, burnout, and health issues.

In the KNPS, organisational culture influences reward perceptions through policies on recognition and career advancement. Leadership styles, particularly authoritarian approaches, may limit rewards by fostering a lack of appreciation, while transformational leadership enhances rewards through encouragement and feedback (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023). When trust and collaboration are strong, interpersonal relationships contribute to intangible rewards,

such as a sense of belonging. The ERI model is particularly relevant in Embakasi East, where resource constraints and high crime rates increase efforts, yet rewards like mental health support or promotions are often inadequate (Atieno, 2022).

The ERI model links to the study's independent variables by highlighting how culture shapes reward perceptions, impacting occupational stress (dependent variable). Its focus on fairness resonates with KNPS officers' experiences of underappreciation in a demanding urban context (Nairobi City County, 2021).

2.1.3 Synthesis and Application

The JD-R and ERI models collectively provide a robust framework for understanding occupational stress in the KNPS. The JD-R model's strength lies in its broad applicability, capturing demands (e.g., rigid culture, authoritarian leadership) and resources (e.g., supportive culture, strong relationships) that drive stress outcomes. It anchors the study by offering a comprehensive lens to analyse workplace dynamics. The ERI model adds depth by addressing fairness and reward-related stressors, which are critical in a resource-scarce setting like Embakasi East. Together, they explain how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships influence stress, guiding the development of targeted interventions, such as cultural reforms to enhance officer well-being and policing effectiveness (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Siegrist, 2012).

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Organisational Culture and Occupational Stress

Organisational culture, defined as the shared norms, values, and support systems within the police force, profoundly influences occupational stress among officers. This subsection examines how organisational culture shapes stress, drawing on global, continental, regional, and local research to elucidate its role as a job demand or resource, as framed by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. In the context of the Kenya National Police Service (KNPS), particularly in Embakasi East Sub-County, organisational culture is critical due to the unique stressors of urban border security, including high crime rates and resource constraints. By determining the effect of organisational culture on stress, this study addresses a key objective, highlighting gaps in localized research and the need for context-specific interventions.

Globally, organisational culture in policing is often characterized by rigid hierarchies, strict protocols, and a stoic ethos that discourages emotional expression, all of which exacerbate occupational stress. A systematic review of European police forces found that 30% of officers experienced burnout linked to unsupportive cultures, with inadequate mental health resources and excessive administrative demands cited as primary stressors (Queirós et al., 2020). In the United States, bureaucratic cultures contribute to elevated PTSD rates, affecting 14-19% of officers, driven by a lack of wellness initiatives and pressure to conform to hierarchical norms (Cataline, 2023). Australian research further indicates that cultures prioritizing operational efficiency over officer well-being increase stress, with 25% of officers reporting chronic fatigue due to limited support systems (Campbell, 2021). These studies underscore how organisational culture acts as a job demand when rigid or unsupportive, depleting officers' psychological resources and leading to burnout.

In Africa, organisational culture presents distinct challenges, compounded by resource scarcity and systemic issues. South African research highlights how chronic understaffing and bureaucratic norms within police culture contribute to occupational stress, with 35% of officers reporting PTSD symptoms due to inadequate psychological support and overwork (Mabi, 2021). In Nigeria, a study of urban police forces found that hierarchical cultures prioritize

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t4356>

compliance over innovation and increase stress by limiting autonomy, with 42% of officers experiencing high stress levels linked to rigid reporting structures (Ndubueze, 2023). These findings align with the JD-R model, where unsupportive cultural norms function as demands, draining officers' resilience and exacerbating mental health challenges in resource-constrained environments.

Regionally, East African studies reveal similar patterns, with organisational culture significantly influencing stress in urban policing contexts. In Uganda, inflexible cultural norms, such as strict adherence to chain-of-command protocols, hinder effective stress management, particularly in cities where officers face public hostility and high crime rates. A study reported that 38% of Ugandan officers cited a lack of mental health support as a primary stressor, compounded by cultural expectations of stoicism (Namara & Ssali, 2022). Tanzanian research echoes these findings, noting that bureaucratic cultures in urban police forces restrict officers' ability to seek support, with 30% reporting burnout due to limited wellness programmes (Mwakasangula & Mwakilasa, 2023). These regional insights highlight the need for supportive cultural reforms to mitigate stress, particularly in high-pressure urban settings akin to Embakasi East.

In Kenya, the KNPS's organisational culture is marked by stringent hierarchies, limited mental health resources, and a focus on operational discipline, all of which amplify occupational stress. A study in Kisumu County found that 53.6% of KNPS officers experienced high stress levels, attributing this to rigid norms that discourage emotional expression and insufficient access to counselling services (Muriuki, 2022). In Nairobi, research indicates that hierarchical structures and inadequate wellness programmes contribute to burnout, with 48% of officers reporting stress-related health issues, such as anxiety and hypertension (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023). These findings suggest that KNPS culture often acts as a job demand, increasing stress by limiting officers' autonomy and support, consistent with the JD-R model's framework.

In Embakasi East Sub-County, a socio-economic hub with significant border security challenges, the organisational culture's impact on stress is particularly pronounced. The sub-county's high crime rates, including robbery and gang activity, combined with resource constraints, such as understaffed police stations and outdated equipment, create a high-demand environment (Nairobi City County, 2021). Officers operate under intense pressure, exacerbated by a culture that prioritizes operational outcomes over well-being. For instance, the lack of formalized mental health programmes within the KNPS leaves officers vulnerable to chronic stress, with anecdotal evidence suggesting low uptake of informal support due to stigma (Atieno, 2022). Despite these challenges, localized research on how organisational culture influences stress in Embakasi East remains scarce, representing a critical gap. Existing studies focus on broader Kenyan contexts, overlooking the unique dynamics of urban border security areas where cultural norms interact with external stressors like community tensions and resource scarcity.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) illustrates how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships shape occupational stress among KNPS officers.

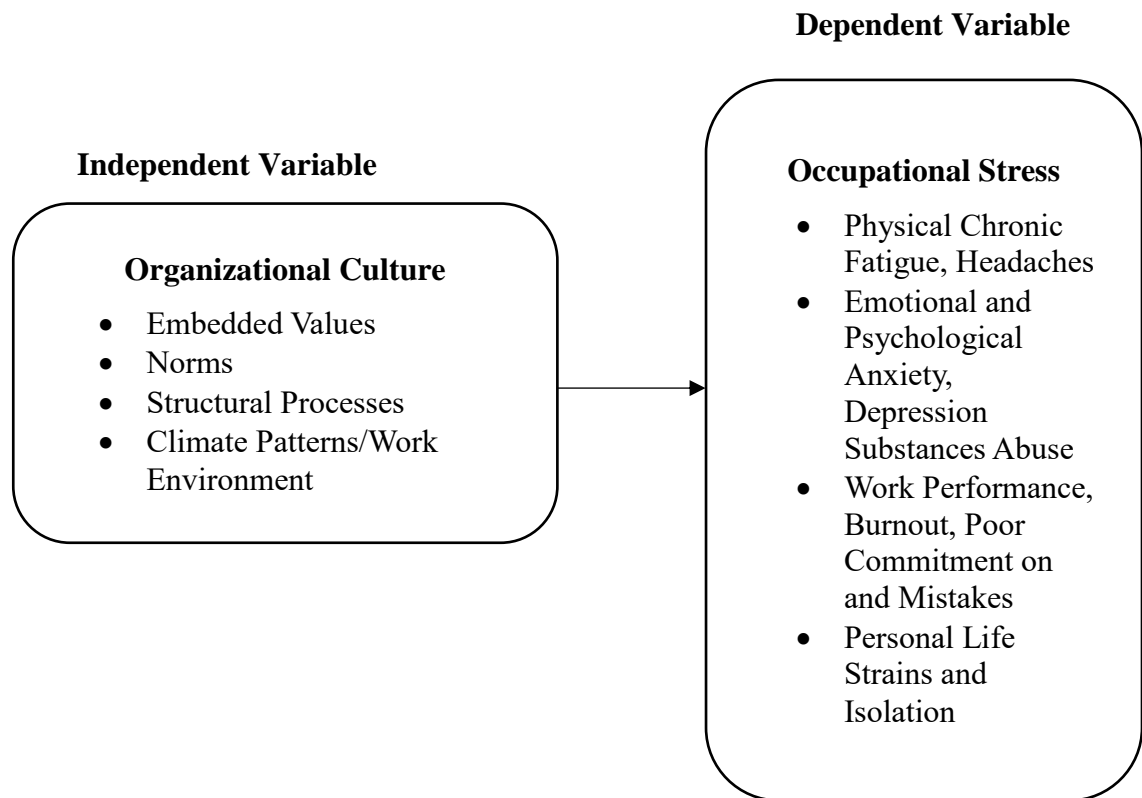


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Modified from Demerouti et al. (2001) and Siegrist (1996).

3.0 Research Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-methods convergent parallel design to investigate the effect of workplace dynamics, organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships on occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. This design was selected to integrate quantitative and qualitative data concurrently, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining statistical analysis with contextual insights, aligning with the study's objectives: to measure the effect of organisational culture, analyse the influence of leadership styles, and assess the impact of interpersonal relationships. The convergent parallel approach was essential in testing statistical relationships between variables while exploring officers' lived experiences in the high-crime, resource-constrained context of Embakasi East, where operational demands and stressors are pronounced. The design supported the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Muriithi & Wachira, 2023). It frames organisational culture and leadership styles as potential job demands, increasing stress, and interpersonal relationships as resources mitigating it, necessitating empirical and experiential data to address the research problem fully.

The target population comprised approximately 300 Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers stationed across nine police facilities in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County, based on 2024 staffing records. This population included officers of diverse ranks (constables, corporals, sergeants, inspectors) and roles within departments such as Traffic, Regular Police, Administration Police, and Criminal Investigations Department, encompassing male and

female officers. This diversity represented varied experiences with organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships, aligning with the study's objectives to determine culture's effect, assess leadership styles, and evaluate interpersonal relationships on occupational stress.

Embakasi East was selected due to its urban border security challenges, including high crime rates, gang violence, resource constraints, and community tensions, which intensify workplace dynamics and stress (Nairobi City County, 2021). The population's heterogeneity across station sizes and crime exposure supported the mixed-methods convergent parallel design, enabling robust quantitative data from questionnaires and rich qualitative insights from interviews. This focus addressed the literature gap on workplace conditions in border-adjacent urban policing, ensuring the population was suitable for studying stress in a high-pressure context (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023).

The study's sample size was determined to ensure reliable and representative findings on workplace dynamics, organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affecting occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County. For the quantitative component, Yamane's formula was applied to the target population of ~300 officers, using a 0.05 error margin (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021):

$$(\chi^2(4, N = 72) = 5.67, p = 0.23)$$

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)} \dots\dots\dots 1$$

Where ($N = 300$), ($e = 0.05$):

$$n = \frac{300}{1 + 300(0.0025)} = 120$$

A sample of 120 officers was calculated to account for a 10% attrition rate (e.g., non-responses). This size supported a robust analysis of constructs across ranks in Embakasi East's high-crime, resource-constrained border security context (Nairobi City County, 2021).

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Organizational Culture on Occupational Stress

This section addresses the study's first objective, which explores participants' perceptions of the clarity of reporting lines within their organization. The findings reveal that 57 respondents (72.2%) rated the clarity of reporting lines as poor, while 12 respondents (16.7%) considered it average, and only three respondents (4.1%) rated it as good. These results are depicted in Figure 2.

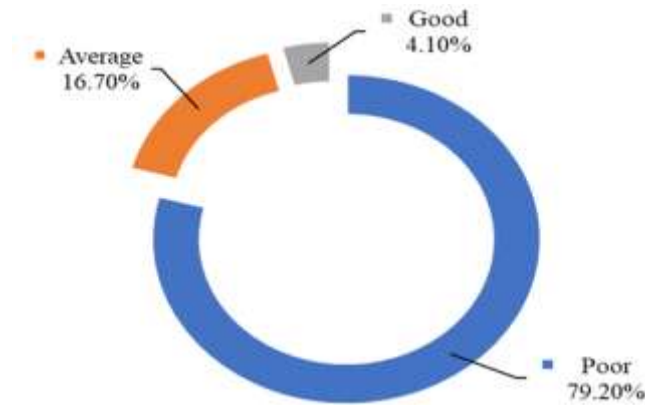


Figure 2: Reporting Lines

The study also investigated how well the workload is distributed among team members. The findings indicate that 43 respondents (59.7%) reported receiving feedback from their superiors rarely, 17 respondents (23.6%) considered the feedback to be average, and 12 respondents (16.7%) rated the feedback as good. These results are illustrated in Figure 3.

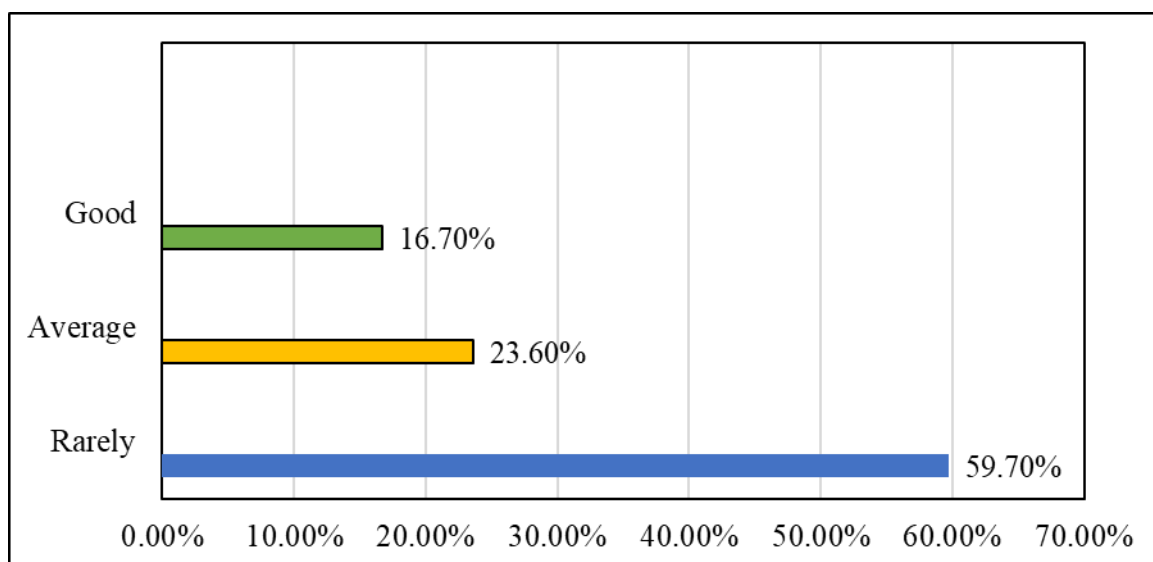


Figure 3: Frequency of Feedback from Superiors

The study also assessed the participants' perceptions of the approachability of their superiors. The results revealed that 39 respondents (54.2%) rated the approachability of their superiors as low, 21 respondents (29.2%) considered it moderate, and 12 respondents (18.6%) found it to be high. Furthermore, the study analysed participants' levels of agreement with various statements related to workplace dynamics and occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service, specifically in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. The "agree" results were determined by averaging responses of "strongly agree" and "agree," while the "disagree" results were calculated by averaging responses of "strongly disagree" and "disagree." As shown in Table 4.2, with a composite mean of 4.2, the findings indicate that respondents generally agree that workplace dynamics significantly contribute to occupational stress in the Kenya National Police Service.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis on Organizational Culture to Occupational Stress

Constructs	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Mean	Std Dev
There was a lack of support from management, which increased my stress levels.	6(8.4%)	9(12.5%)	57(79.2%)	4.42	1.123
The work environment is overly demanding, leading to higher stress levels.	3(4.2%)	7(9.7%)	62(86.1%)	4.46	.879
Open communication within organisations helps reduce my stress.	5(7%)	9(15.5%)	58(80.6%)	4.51	1.007
The organization lacks sufficient mental resources, contributing to stress.	63(87.5%)	6(8.3%)	3(4.2%)	4.64	.861
Unrealistic expectations set by the organization contribute to my stress.	4(5.6%)	10(13.9%)	58(80.6%)	4.50	.979
The organization's culture recognizes and rewards good performance, reducing stress.	62(86.1%)	7(9.7%)	3(4.2%)	4.60	.883
Composite Mean				4.52	.955

N- Frequency; % - Percentage; Brackets represent %

The study's results for the six statements assessed were as follows: For the statement, "There is a lack of support from management, which increased my stress levels," six respondents (8.4%) agreed, nine (12.5%) were neutral, and fifty-seven (79.2%) disagreed, with a mean of 4.42 and a standard deviation of 1.123. This indicates that most respondents disagreed with the statement. Similarly, for "The work environment is overly demanding, leading to higher stress levels," three respondents (4.2%) agreed, seven (9.7%) were neutral, and sixty-two (86.1%) disagreed, resulting in a mean of 4.46 and a standard deviation of 0.879, suggesting disagreement with the statement.

Regarding "Open communication within the organization helps in reducing my stress," five respondents (7%) agreed, nine (15.5%) were neutral, and fifty-eight (80.6%) disagreed, with a mean of 4.51 and a standard deviation of 1.007, showing that the majority did not agree. In contrast, the statement "The organization lacks sufficient mental health resources, contributing to stress" had sixty-three respondents (87.5%) agreeing, six (8.3%) being neutral, and three (4.2%) disagreeing, with a mean of 4.64 and a standard deviation of 0.861, indicating strong agreement.

For "Unrealistic expectations set by the organization contribute to my stress," four respondents (5.6%) agreed, ten (13.9%) were neutral, and fifty-eight (80.6%) disagreed, with a mean of 4.5 and a standard deviation of 0.979, showing that most did not agree. Lastly, for "The organization's culture recognizes and rewards good performance, reducing stress," sixty-two respondents (86.1%) agreed, seven (9.7%) were neutral, and three (4.2%) disagreed, with a mean of 4.60 and a standard deviation of 0.883, indicating a general agreement with the statement. Overall, the findings revealed that the majority of the respondents agreed with the statements on organizational culture, with an average/composite mean of 4.52, approving that the statements constitute occupational stress among the KNPS. A standard deviation of 0.955 indicated low variability in respondents' approval of the statements.

The composite mean score for organizational culture was 4.52 (SD = 0.65), indicating strong agreement that organisational culture contributes significantly to occupational stress. Mean scores ranked individual items, and agreement on rankings was assessed to identify key stressors.

Ranking of Organizational Culture Items

Table 2 presents the ranking of organisational culture items by mean score among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, evaluating the perceived impact of cultural factors on occupational stress. The descriptive statistics, derived from survey responses, identified key cultural stressors, directly addressing the study's objective of examining organisational culture. The findings highlighted how cultural dynamics contributed to stress within the context of workplace dynamics.

Table 2: Ranking of Organizational Culture Items by Mean Score

Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
Lack of adequate mental health support	4.78	0.52	1
Insufficient resources for effective policing	4.65	0.61	2
Poor communication channels	4.42	0.73	3
Rigid organisational norms	4.30	0.68	4
Limited opportunities for professional growth	4.25	0.70	5
Inadequate peer recognition	4.20	0.74	6

The analysis revealed that “lack of adequate mental health support” ranked highest (M = 4.78, SD = 0.52) among organisational culture items contributing to occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, followed by “insufficient resources for effective policing” (M = 4.65, SD = 0.61) and “poor communication channels” (M = 4.42, SD = 0.73). Lower-ranked items included “rigid organisational norms” (M = 4.30, SD = 0.68), “limited opportunities for professional growth” (M = 4.25, SD = 0.70), and “inadequate peer recognition” (M = 4.20, SD = 0.74). The high mean score for mental health support underscored its critical role as a stressor in the high-crime, resource-scarce urban border security context, where officers faced intense operational pressures. The finding implied that organisational culture deficiencies, particularly mental health support, significantly influenced occupational stress among KNPS officers.

Statistical Test Results for Agreement

Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance (W) was used to assess respondents' agreement on ranking organisational culture items based on converting Likert scores to rank per respondent. Table 3 reports the statistical test results for agreement on ranking organisational culture items among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, assessing the consistency of perceptions regarding cultural stressors. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance evaluated the level of agreement among respondents, directly addressing the study's objective of examining organisational culture. The findings highlighted the uniformity of officers' views on cultural factors contributing to occupational stress.

Table 3: Statistical Test Results for Agreement on Organizational Culture Items

Test Statistic	Value
N	72
Kendall's W	0.70
Chi-Square	151.20
df	11
Asymp. Sig.	0.001

Note: Kendall's coefficient of concordance.

The analysis revealed a Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance of ($W = 0.70$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a high level of agreement among 72 KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County on ranking organisational culture items contributing to occupational stress. The significant chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 151.20$, $df = 11$, $p < 0.001$) confirmed that officers consistently perceived certain cultural factors, such as lack of adequate mental health support (ranked highest in Table 4.9), as primary stressors in the high-crime, resource-constrained urban border security context. This high agreement suggested a shared perception among officers, regardless of demographic differences, that organisational culture deficiencies were critical drivers of stress. The finding implied that the collective perception of organisational culture deficiencies significantly shaped occupational stress among KNPS officers.

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was employed to assess the strength and direction of linear relationships between the study variables using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The results, presented in Table 4, revealed significant positive correlations. Organisational culture exhibited a strong positive correlation with occupational stress ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that cultural deficiencies were associated with higher stress levels.

Table 4: Partial Correlation Matrix

Variables		Occupational Stress
Organizational Structure	Correlation	.691**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000
	N	72

****.** *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Having established the strength of associations between variables, the next step involved regression analysis to examine predictive effects

4.3 Regression Analysis

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the effect of organisational culture on occupational stress. The model summary, presented in Table 6, indicated that organisational culture explained 60.1% (0.601) of the variance in occupational stress ($\beta = 0.315$, $p < 0.01$). The regression coefficients (Table 5) showed that organisational culture ($\beta = 0.352$, $p < 0.01$) significantly predicted occupational stress. The regression equation was:

Occupational Stress = $2.173 + 0.646 \times \text{Organisational Culture}$ The ANOVA results confirmed the model's goodness of fit ($F(3,68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$).

These results aligned with Afulani et al. (2021), who found that workplace dynamics predicted stress in Kenyan high-risk occupations. Conversely, a study by Mutua (2023) in Kenyan NGOs reported a lower predictive power of organisational culture on stress.

Table 5 present the results of simple linear regression on the effect of organisational culture on occupational stress.

Table 5: Model Summary Output

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.624	0.601	.596	5.64823

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisational Structures

Table 6: ANOVA Output

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	35.169	2	17.585	52.336	0.000 ^b
Residual	23.485	70	0.336		
Total	58.654	72			

a. Dependent Variable: Occupational Stress in the Kenya National Police Service

Table 7: Regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	2.173	1.519	3.514	.000
Organizational Culture	0.646	0.169	.492	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Occupational Distress in the Kenya National Police Service

Hypothesis Testing

The study tested the hypothesis derived from the research objective at a significant level of 0.05. The hypotheses were: H01 (Null): There is no significant relationship between organisational culture and occupational stress; H1 (Alternative): There is a significant positive relationship. The correlation and regression analyses provided evidence to reject all null hypotheses. For H01, the correlation ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$) and regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.646$, $p < 0.01$) confirmed a significant positive relationship; hence, the alternative hypotheses were accepted.

Thematic analysis, conducted using NVivo software with inter-coder reliability of kappa = 0.85, identified three themes: (1) Hierarchical Rigidity as a Stress Driver, (2) Resource Scarcity Exacerbating Pressure, and (3) Supportive Practices as Stress Buffers.

Theme 1: Hierarchical Rigidity as a Stress Driver

Officers frequently described the KNPS's hierarchical culture as a significant stressor, particularly in Embakasi East's high-crime environment. One constable shared,

"The strict chain of command means we can't question orders, even when they're unrealistic, like patrolling understaffed areas."

This rigidity limited autonomy, increasing psychological strain. Another officer noted, *"We're expected to stay tough and silent, which makes it hard to admit we're struggling."*

This theme aligns with the JD-R model, where rigid cultural norms act as job demands, depleting officers' mental resources.

Theme 2: Resource Scarcity Exacerbating Pressure

The lack of mental health resources and operational tools was a recurring concern. An inspector remarked,

“We have no counsellors here, and after violent incidents, we’re just told to move on.” Officers also highlighted outdated equipment and understaffing: *“With only one patrol vehicle for a large ward, we’re stretched thin, and the stress builds up.”* This theme reflects the JD-R model’s concept of insufficient resources, intensifying job demands in a high-crime context like Embakasi East.

Theme 3: Supportive Practices as Stress Buffers

Despite challenges, officers identified rare supportive cultural practices that mitigated stress. A sergeant stated,

“When our commander organizes debriefings after major incidents, it helps us process what happened.”

Another officer appreciated recognition:

“Getting commended for good work, even verbally, makes me feel valued and less overwhelmed.”

These practices, though infrequent, acted as job resources, fostering resilience and reducing stress.

The quantitative findings showed a strong positive correlation between organizational culture and occupational stress ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$), with organizational culture as the strongest predictor in the regression model ($\beta = 0.646$, $p < 0.01$). Descriptive statistics indicated strong agreement on culture’s influence (mean = 4.52, SD = 0.955). The qualitative themes provide depth to these results, explaining *why* organisational culture drives stress.

5.0 Conclusion

The findings demonstrated that organisational culture, leadership styles and interpersonal relationships explained 60.1% of the variance in occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County ($R^2 = 0.601$, $F(3, 68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$), informed targeted recommendations for policy and practice. These recommendations address the significant effects of organisational culture ($r = 0.617$) ($\beta = 0.646$, $p < 0.01$) on stress, aiming to foster a supportive work environment in the high-crime context of Embakasi East. The findings reveal systemic issues contributing to occupational stress, particularly the organisational culture’s dominant role ($\beta = 0.492$, $p < 0.01$), driven by hierarchical rigidity and lack of mental health resources (mean = 4.52). These highlight the need for policy interventions to address these gaps.

6.0 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

The KNPS and the Ministry of Interior should enact evidence-based policies to mitigate occupational stress by improving organisational culture. Specific policies in relation to organisational culture should mandate establishing mental health support programs, such as bi-weekly counselling sessions, and ensure resource allocation for high-crime stations like Embakasi East, where officers reported cultural deficiencies (mean = 4.52, SD = 0.955). The KNPS should form a national task force, funded by the Ministry, to conduct annual assessments of cultural practices, focusing on enhancing communication channels (e.g., regular briefings) and recognition systems (e.g., performance-based awards).

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