

**EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE DYNAMICS ON
OCCUPATIONAL STRESS IN KENYA NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE: A
CASE OF EMBAKASI EAST SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

HUSSEIN BARE ADEN

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Security Studies in the Department of Governance, Peace, and Security Studies
and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences
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DECLARATION

I declare that this document and the research that it describes are my original work and that they have not been presented in any other university for academic work.

Name: HUSSEIN BARE ADEN

Registration Number: 18J03DMGP034

Student Signature: 

Date: 30th JUNE 2025

This research was conducted under our supervision and is submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

Supervisor Name: Dr. Priscilla Mugambi

University Supervisor Signature: 

Date: 30th June 2025

Supervisor Name: Dr. Lucy Kirima

University Supervisor Signature: 

Date: 30th JUNE 2025

Africa Nazarene University

Nairobi, Kenya

DEDICATION

This research proposal is dedicated to my family, whose unwavering love and support have been the cornerstone of my educational journey. Your selfless contributions, whether material, financial, moral, or spiritual, have been invaluable in guiding me to this point. I am profoundly grateful for the trust you have placed in me, which has empowered me to pursue and achieve my goals. This work is a testament to your belief in my potential and your encouragement throughout my endeavours.

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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 examined the influence of workplace dynamics on occupational stress among officers of the Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. Specifically, it investigated how organisational culture, interpersonal relationships and leadership styles contribute to occupational stress among these officers. This study, guided by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, examined the impact of organisational 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 ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$), leadership styles ($r = 0.635$, $p < 0.01$), and interpersonal relationships ($r = 0.617$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 60.1% of stress variance ($R^2 = 0.601$, $F(3,68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$), with culture as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.492$, $p < 0.01$). 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 future studies recommended to explore longitudinal stress impacts and societal influences on officers' well-being.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Job demands: According to this study, job demands refer to the job's physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects that require sustained physical and psychological effort or skills. This includes a high workload, intense responsibilities, role conflicts, and strenuous interactions.

Job resources: Operationally defined as the physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that aid in achieving work goals, reduce job demands, or stimulate personal growth and development. This includes autonomy, performance feedback, skill variety, supervisory support, and opportunities for advancement.

Leadership style: Operationally defined Patterns of behaviours and attitudes adopted by organisational leaders/supervisors when directing, motivating, and interacting with subordinates. This includes communication, decision-making, and people management approaches.

Occupational distress: Operationally defined psychological strain, including stress, trauma, and burnout, experienced by personnel due to work-related factors.

Occupational Stress: The harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when job requirements exceed an officer's capabilities, resources, or needs (World Health Organisation, 2023). In this study it refers to the psychological and physical strain experienced by KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County due to an imbalance between job demands (e.g., high workload, exposure to traumatic incidents, rigid organizational culture) and available resources (e.g., mental health support, supportive leadership, team cohesion), leading to adverse outcomes such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

Organisational culture: Operationally defined, the shared assumptions, values, norms, symbols, beliefs, and behavioural patterns dictate "how things are done" in an organisation. This shapes workplace climate and expectations.

Police officer: Operationally defined as a warranted law enforcement officer employed in the Kenya National Police Service.

Social support: Operationally defined as the levels of instrumental, informational, emotional, and affirmational assistance and backing perceived to be available from colleagues, peers, mentors, and the wider organisation.

Workload: Operationally defined as the number of assigned duties, responsibilities, and expectations placed on an employee in their job. This encompasses caseloads, shift hours, administrative tasks, and fieldwork responsibilities allocated.

Workplace dynamics: Operationally defined interactions, relationships, leadership styles, communication patterns, and organisational culture influence a workplace.

ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance

COR: Conservation of Resources

ERI: Effort-Reward Imbalance

JD-R: Job Demands-Resources

KNPS: Kenya National Police Service

NPSC: National Police Service Commission

PTSD: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This research examined the effects of workplace dynamics on occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service (NPS), focusing specifically on selected police stations in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. This chapter lays the foundation for the study by addressing key elements, including the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives (both general and specific), research hypotheses, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, delimitations, limitations, assumptions, the theoretical framework, and the conceptual framework.

1.2 Background to the Study

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 Organisation [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).

European studies emphasise the role of organisational factors, noting that poor support and high job demands exacerbate stress, necessitating adaptive coping training and supportive leadership (Queirós et al., 2020; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). In Australia, police officers experience above-average PTSD and anxiety, driven by traumatic incidents and organisational stressors like inadequate resources (Campbell, 2021). These global findings

highlight the interplay of workplace dynamics—particularly leadership and culture—in shaping stress, relevant to this study’s objectives of assessing organisational culture and leadership styles.

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 emphasise 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 (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).

In Kenya, the KNPS has introduced wellness centres in its effort to mitigate work-related stress, but its impact is limited by resource constraints (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023). These strategies highlight the need for supportive cultures and leadership, aligning with this study's aim to inform KNPS interventions. The KNPS, established under the 2011 National Police Service Act, faces challenges like understaffing and corruption, impacting officer well-being (Yegon, 2020). In Embakasi East, high crime rates and urban complexities amplify stress, necessitating localised research on workplace dynamics (Nairobi City County, 2021). This study addresses this gap by examining how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships influence occupational stress, offering insights to enhance officer well-being and security governance.

1.3 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 to improve 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 addresses this problem by examining how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships influence occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County. By identifying the specific workplace dynamics driving stress, the study aims to provide evidence-based recommendations to mitigate its effects, improve officer resilience, and strengthen the KNPS's capacity to maintain law and order in high-stress urban environments.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to examine the effect of workplace dynamics on occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service, focusing specifically on the Embakasi East Sub-County. It sought to identify the key workplace dynamics that contribute to stress among police officers, assess how these factors impact their mental and physical well-being, and provide recommendations for improving workplace conditions to enhance overall job satisfaction and performance. By understanding these dynamics, the study sought to contribute to developing strategies that can mitigate stress and improve the working environment for police officers in this region.

1.5 Research Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

To examine the influence of workplace dynamics on occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The study's specific objectives were:

- i. To determine the effect of organisational culture on occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County.
- ii. To evaluate the impact of interpersonal relationships on occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County
- iii. To assess the effect of leadership styles on occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County.

1.6 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. What is the effect of organisational culture on occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County?

- ii. How do interpersonal relationships impact occupational stress among KNPS officers in the Embakasi East Sub-County?
- iii. How do leadership styles affect occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County?

1.7 Research Hypothesis

H0₁: Organisational culture does not significantly affect occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County.

H0₂: Leadership styles do not significantly influence occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County.

H0₃: Interpersonal relationships do not significantly impact occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County.

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons, impacting localised and broader contexts. First and foremost, it provides valuable insights into the specific workplace dynamics affecting police officers in Embakasi East Sub-County. By focusing on this area, the study offers a detailed understanding of the unique challenges and stressors experienced by officers within this cultural, economic, and social setting. Such localised insights are crucial for developing targeted strategies and interventions that address the community's specific needs, ultimately leading to improved working conditions and job satisfaction for officers.

For policymakers, the study's findings hold considerable value. By elucidating the effects of workplace dynamics on occupational stress, the research informs the creation of more effective policies and programs to improve conditions for police officers. These insights can guide the development of interventions designed to reduce stress and enhance overall performance within the Kenya National Police Service. Targeted policy changes based on these findings can contribute to a more supportive work environment, essential for maintaining high levels of efficiency and effectiveness in law enforcement.

From a public health perspective, the study underscores the critical connection between occupational stress and mental and physical health issues. The research adds to the broader discourse on occupational health and safety by highlighting how workplace dynamics contribute to stress. This understanding can drive initiatives aimed at promoting healthier work environments, benefiting not only police officers but also other professions characterised by high levels of stress. Addressing these issues is crucial for ensuring the well-being of individuals in high-stress roles and for fostering a healthier overall workforce.

Academically, the study enriches the empirical literature on workplace dynamics and occupational stress. It provides new data and insights that researchers and scholars can use to explore this field further. The findings offer a foundation for future studies, contributing to a deeper understanding of stress management and workplace dynamics. This research is vital for advancing knowledge and developing more effective strategies for managing occupational stress in various organisational contexts.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study was carefully defined to ensure a focused and manageable investigation into workplace dynamics and their impact on occupational stress among police officers. This research was conducted within nine police stations in the Embakasi East Sub-County of Nairobi County. These stations were deliberately chosen to provide a representative sample of the police force in this region, allowing for an in-depth analysis of the unique challenges and stressors experienced by officers working in various operational contexts within the sub-county.

Practical considerations, including time constraints, budget limitations, and the need for a detailed, localised examination, influenced the decision to limit the study to these nine police stations, by focusing solely on the Embakasi East Sub-County, the study aimed to offer targeted insights relevant to this specific geographical area rather than attempting to generalise findings to other regions or police stations outside the sub-county. This concentration ensures that the research remains relevant and applicable to the local context, providing a clearer understanding of the workplace dynamics affecting officers in this area.

Furthermore, the study did not extend to aspects of police work unrelated to workplace dynamics and occupational stress, such as broader criminal justice issues or administrative procedures. By excluding these elements, the research focused on the factors influencing officers' daily experiences and stress levels within the selected stations. This delineation of scope allows for a thorough and concentrated examination of the specific factors impacting occupational stress, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by police officers in Embakasi East Sub-County.

1.10 Delimitations of the study

Delimitations are intentional boundaries established by researchers to define the focus and constraints of a study. This research was delimited to concentrate on police stations within Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. While the Kenya National Police Service encompasses numerous stations nationwide, logistical constraints, including budgetary and

time limitations, influenced the decision to focus exclusively on Embakasi East. This targeted approach was designed to enable a thorough and manageable investigation within the confines of available resources, providing a detailed examination of workplace dynamics and their impact on occupational stress in a defined geographical area.

Additionally, the study's focus was deliberately narrowed to include only those workplace dynamics that police officers identified as significantly influencing their perceived stress levels. This selective approach allowed for an in-depth analysis of specific factors, such as organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships, as reported by the officers. However, this focus meant that other potential factors affecting occupational stress, which the participants did not highlight, were not explored. While this targeted examination provides valuable insights, the study acknowledges that it does not cover all possible influences on occupational stress within the broader context of police work.

The research design was cross-sectional, involving data collection through surveys, interviews, and observations conducted at a single time. This methodology provided a snapshot of the relationships between workplace dynamics and occupational stress. Still, it did not allow for determining causal relationships or exploring changes over time. Consequently, the study's findings are limited to identifying correlational associations rather than establishing definitive causal links.

Moreover, the study relied on subjective self-reported data from police officers concerning their stress levels and perceptions of workplace factors. Such self-reported data can be influenced by recall bias, exaggeration, or socially desirable responses. To address these limitations, the study utilised data triangulation by combining multiple data sources to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings. Practical challenges, such as access constraints and limited human resources during data collection, also posed potential impacts on the study's execution. Coordinating with police leadership was essential to mitigate these challenges and ensure minimal disruption to the research process.

1.11 Limitations of the Study

Limitations of a study refer to constraints or challenges that the researcher has little to no control over, potentially affecting the findings' scope, generalizability, or accuracy. According to Andrade (2020), these limitations can impact how the results are interpreted and applied in broader contexts. This study focused on the effects of workplace dynamics on occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service in Embakasi East Sub-County. Several inherent limitations were encountered.

The study's cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between workplace dynamics and occupational stress. Since data was collected at a single point, the analysis can only identify correlations rather than determine the direction or causality of the observed relationships. To mitigate this limitation, the study employed data triangulation, integrating multiple data sources to enhance the robustness of the findings.

Another significant limitation is the reliance on self-reported data from police officers, which introduces potential biases such as selective memory, exaggeration, and social desirability. Participants might provide responses they believe are expected or favourable, which could skew the results. The study ensured confidentiality and anonymity, encouraging honest and accurate reporting and cross-referencing responses with other data where possible.

Voluntary participation also introduces the risk of response bias, as officers experiencing higher levels of distress may be more inclined to participate. This could lead to an overestimation of the prevalence of occupational stress in the studied population. The study attempted to mitigate this by encouraging participation from a diverse range of officers, regardless of their distress levels.

Practical limitations, such as access constraints and bureaucratic delays in coordinating with police leadership, affected the timeliness and efficiency of data collection. These challenges sometimes led to delays in scheduling interviews and conducting observations. The researcher employed proactive planning and persistence to minimise these disruptions and ensure comprehensive data collection.

The study's focus on specific police stations within Embakasi East Sub-County limits the generalizability of the findings to other regions or the broader Kenya National Police Service. While the localised focus provided valuable insights into the specific dynamics at play in this area, the findings may not fully represent the experiences of police officers in different geographical or operational contexts across Kenya. Despite this, the detailed examination within the context offers essential contributions to understanding occupational stress within this sub-county.

1.12 Assumptions of the Study

Assumptions in a study refer to underlying beliefs or premises accepted as accurate by researchers and readers, which form the foundation for the research design, methodology, and interpretation of results (Fellows & Liu, 2021). This study focused on the effects of workplace dynamics on occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service in

Embakasi East Sub-County; several key assumptions were made to guide the research process.

The first assumption was that police officers participating in the study would provide honest and accurate responses to the survey and interview questions. It was anticipated that officers would candidly share their experiences, perceptions, and feelings about their work environment, ensuring that the data collected reflected their realities. This assumption was essential for the validity and reliability of the self-reported data, as the study heavily relied on the participants' transparency and willingness to engage openly.

Another assumption was that the workplace dynamics identified by the officers reflected the broader working conditions within the Embakasi East Sub-County. It was believed that the officers' experiences in the selected stations would represent the typical workplace environment within the sub-county, allowing the findings to provide meaningful insights into the general conditions affecting police officers in this area. Additionally, the study assumed that the selected sample of police stations and officers was sufficient to capture diverse perspectives on workplace dynamics and occupational stress. The assumption was that the sample size and selection would allow for a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to stress in this specific context, even though the study was geographically limited to Embakasi East.

Lastly, it was assumed that the external factors influencing workplace dynamics, such as organisational policies, community interactions, and socio-political environments, remained relatively constant during the study period. This assumption was necessary to ensure that any observed correlations between workplace dynamics and occupational stress could be attributed to the factors under investigation rather than external changes beyond the scope of the study. While necessary for conducting the research, these assumptions also highlight the inherent limitations and potential biases the study acknowledges and seeks to address where possible.

1.13 Theoretical Framework

This study is 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.

1.13.1 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 (independent variables: organisational culture, leadership styles, interpersonal relationships) 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 explores how specific dynamics can be optimised to mitigate stress and improve officer performance.

1.13.2 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, leadership, and relationships shape reward perceptions, impacting stress (dependent variable). Its focus on fairness resonates with KNPS officers' experiences of underappreciation in a demanding urban context (Nairobi City County, 2021).

1.13.3 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, leadership training, and team-building initiatives, to enhance officer well-being and policing effectiveness (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Siegrist, 2012). This framework informs the study's questionnaire design, ensuring constructs are measured effectively, and supports the analysis of stress mitigation strategies tailored to the KNPS context.

1.14 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the hypothesised relationships between workplace dynamics and occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) and Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) models, it posits that organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships (independent variables) influence occupational stress (dependent variable). This framework guides the study's exploration of how these dynamics shape stress outcomes and informs the design of data collection tools to measure these constructs effectively (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Siegrist, 1996).

1.14.1 Description of Variables

The organisational culture within the KNPS encompasses the norms, values, and support systems that shape the work environment. When rigid norms or insufficient mental health support prevail, they function as job demands, heightening occupational stress by constraining officers' ability to cope with workplace pressures. Conversely, supportive policies, such as wellness programmes, act as resources, alleviating stress by fostering a sense of security and well-being. To measure this construct, the study employs questionnaire items, including statements like "The organisation provides adequate mental health support" and "Hierarchical norms limit my autonomy," which capture officers' perceptions of cultural influences (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023).

Leadership styles, from transformational to authoritarian or participative, significantly affect stress levels. Autocratic leadership, characterised by strict control, restricts autonomy and exacerbates stress, particularly in high-pressure settings like Embakasi East. In contrast, transformational leadership, which emphasises support and recognition, mitigates stress by empowering officers. The study assesses this construct through questionnaire items such as "My supervisor encourages participation" and "Leadership is overly directive," designed to evaluate the impact of leadership on officer well-being (Eliasson, 2023).

Interpersonal relationships, defined by trust, collaboration, and team cohesion, are critical in stress dynamics. Strained relationships, marked by conflicts or lack of confidence, intensify stress by creating additional emotional demands. Strong relationships, however, serve as resources, buffering stress through mutual support and effective teamwork. The study measures this construct with questionnaire items like "I trust my colleagues" and "Team conflicts are common," which reflect the quality of officer interactions (Atieno, 2022).

Occupational stress, the dependent variable, represents the psychological and physical strain resulting from work demands. Influenced by organisational culture, leadership styles,

and interpersonal relationships, it manifests as burnout, anxiety, or reduced performance. The study evaluates stress through questionnaire items such as “I feel overwhelmed by work demands” and “Work stress affects my well-being,” providing a comprehensive assessment of its prevalence and impact among KNPS officers.

1.14.2 Conceptual Relationships

The framework hypothesises that negative workplace dynamics, rigid organisational culture, authoritarian leadership, and poor interpersonal relationships increase occupational stress by acting as demands (JD-R) or creating effort-reward imbalances (ERI). Conversely, positive dynamics, a supportive culture, transformational leadership, and strong relationships reduce stress by providing resources or enhancing rewards. In Embakasi East, high crime rates and resource constraints amplify demands, making supportive dynamics critical for stress mitigation (Nairobi City County, 2021). Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

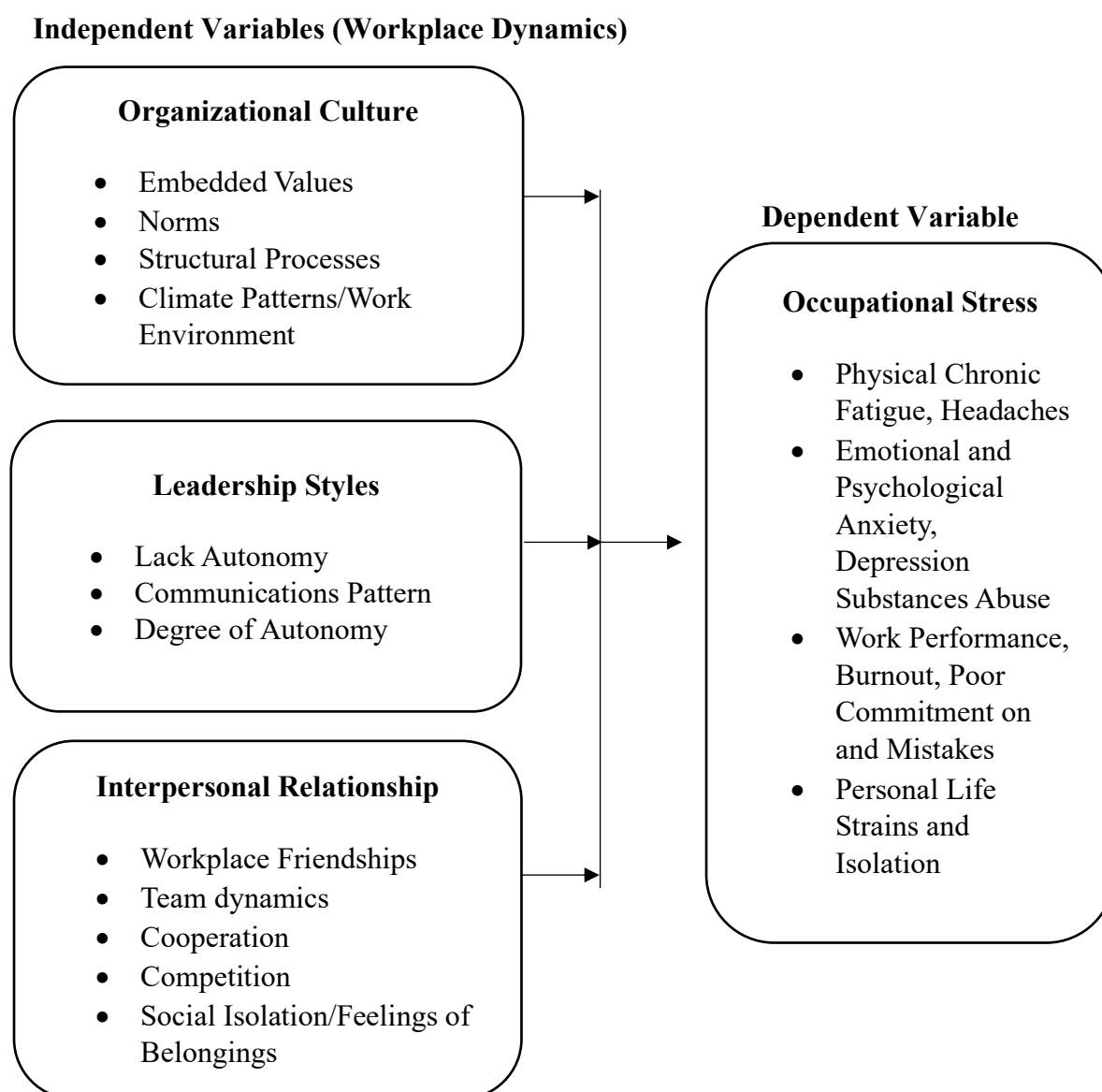


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework indicating the relationship between workplace dynamics and occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East sub-county

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

1.14.3 Discussion of Conceptual Framework

Based on JD-R and ERI models, this framework presents organisational culture, personal relations between colleagues, and leadership styles as key factors toward occupational stress, with each variable being believed to influence stress as a demand or a resource directly. Organisational culture (norms, values and practices in KNPS) is theorised to influence stress since it determines the nature of the environment in the organisation. A rigid hierarchical culture is expected to serve as a job demand, which is bound to be strict

when it comes to compliance, reducing autonomy and hence adding to the psychological stress suffered by the officers. This relationship conveys theoretical perspectives on how organisational culture is vital in employee wellbeing, especially when operating in high-risk environments with highly demanding operations.

Interpersonal relationships and team dynamics, such as trust and collaboration, are believed to influence stress directly. Dysfunctional relationships ridden with mistrust, conflict, etc., are proposed to act as job demands, which elevate stress due to the lack of teamwork vital when doing policing tasks. On the other hand, cohesive relationships and strong peer support are anticipated to serve as resources in decreasing stress by offering emotional and practical support when high-stress-related operations are at play.

The leadership style varies from authoritarian to transformational and is theorised to affect stress directly. With its regimentation and little feedback, autocratic leadership is viewed as a job demand, which contributes to uncertainty and pressure, increasing stress. Transformational leadership, which involves inspiration and mentorship, is expected to act as a resource and, thus, minimise stress levels by increasing the motivation and confidence of the officers. These relations correspond with theoretical work prioritising the interaction between pressures and endowments in forming stress consequences.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Law enforcement agencies across the globe encounter distinct challenges in safeguarding the well-being of their officers, given the demanding and often perilous nature of policing. High-stress situations inherently characterise the profession, the need for critical decision-making under pressure, and frequent exposure to potentially traumatic events. These factors contribute to a complex work environment that can significantly impact the physical, emotional, and psychological health of police officers.

In Kenya, the National Police Service is crucial in maintaining public safety and upholding the rule of law. However, the unique stressors associated with police work in Kenya, including frequent confrontations with crime, terrorism, and civil unrest, amplify the risks to officers' well-being. Understanding these challenges is essential for developing effective strategies to mitigate occupational stress and enhance law enforcement personnel's health and performance.

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of existing research and literature on the manifestations of occupational stress among police officers, focusing on the Kenya National Police Service. It critically evaluates the specific variables contributing to stress, the impact on officers' well-being, and the effectiveness of current interventions. Finally, the chapter identifies gaps in the existing knowledge, highlighting areas where further research is needed to develop more targeted and effective stress management strategies for law enforcement officers in Kenya.

2.2 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 localised research and the need for context-specific interventions.

Globally, organisational culture in policing is often characterised 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 prioritising 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 prioritise 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.

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 amplifying 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 prioritises operational outcomes over well-being. For instance, the lack of formalised 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, localised 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 Leadership Styles and Occupational Stress

Leadership styles, from transformational to authoritarian or participative, play a pivotal role in shaping occupational stress among police officers. This subsection examines how leadership influences stress, drawing on global, continental, regional, and local research to align with the study's objective of assessing leadership styles' effect on stress within the Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) in Embakasi East Sub-County. Framed by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, leadership styles can act as job resources when supportive or demands when restrictive, impacting officers' psychological well-being. In Embakasi East, where urban border security challenges like high crime and community tensions intensify stress, understanding leadership's role is critical for developing effective stress mitigation strategies.

Globally, transformational leadership, characterised by inspiration, support, and autonomy, consistently reduces occupational stress. A Scandinavian study found that transformational leadership lowered stress by 25% among police officers by fostering open communication and emotional support, enhancing resilience in high-pressure environments (Eliasson, 2023). In the United States, research indicates that participative leadership, which encourages officer input, reduces burnout rates by 20%, as officers feel valued and empowered (Cataline, 2023). Conversely, authoritarian leadership, marked by strict control and limited feedback, exacerbates stress. A UK study reported that 35% of officers under authoritarian leaders experienced chronic stress linked to restricted autonomy and poor morale (Hesketh & Cooper, 2021).

In Africa, leadership styles reflect systemic challenges, often amplifying stress due to resource constraints and hierarchical structures. South African research highlights how authoritarian leadership, prevalent in under-resourced police forces, increases stress, with 40% of officers reporting psychological distress due to a lack of supervisory support (Mabi, 2021). In Nigeria, bureaucratic leadership, characterised by rigid protocols, was linked to reduced job satisfaction and heightened stress, with 42% of urban officers citing poor management as a primary stressor during high-demand periods like the COVID-19 pandemic (Ndubueze, 2023). These findings underscore the JD-R model's assertion that unsupportive leadership acts as a demand, draining officers' mental resources.

East African studies reveal similar trends, with leadership styles significantly influencing stress in urban policing contexts. In Tanzania, authoritarian leadership in urban police units was associated with 30% higher burnout rates, as officers faced high-pressure duties without adequate supervisory guidance (Mwakasangula & Mwakilasa, 2023). Ugandan research notes that bureaucratic leadership prioritises compliance over officer well-being and exacerbates stress in cities where public hostility is prevalent, with 38% of officers reporting stress-related health issues (Namara & Ssali, 2022). These regional insights highlight the need for transformational leadership to mitigate stress in high-stakes environments.

In Kenya, KNPS leadership often leans authoritarian, contributing to elevated stress levels, particularly in urban areas. A Nairobi-based study found that 45% of officers experienced stress due to authoritarian management practices, such as lack of feedback and excessive control, which limited their ability to cope with operational demands (Muigai, 2019). In Mombasa, research indicated that poor supervisory support increased stress, with 50% of officers reporting burnout linked to rigid leadership structures (Kiptoo & Njoroge, 2022). However, studies on Embakasi East, a socio-economic hub with urban border security

challenges, are scarce. The sub-county's high crime rates, including gang activity and robbery, coupled with community tensions, place unique demands on officers, requiring adaptive leadership to manage stress effectively (Nairobi City County, 2021).

The absence of localised research on leadership styles in Embakasi East represents a critical gap, as effective leadership is essential for navigating the sub-county's complex security landscape. This methodological uniqueness enables tailored recommendations, such as leadership training programmes to foster transformational practices, enhancing officer well-being in Embakasi East's high-pressure context (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023).

2.4 Interpersonal Relationships and Occupational Stress

Interpersonal relationships, characterised by trust, collaboration, and team cohesion among police officers, are critical moderators of occupational stress. This subsection evaluates the impact of interpersonal relationships on stress, aligning with the study's objective to assess their role within the Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. Grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, strong interpersonal relationships function as job resources, buffering stress by fostering emotional and operational support. In contrast, strained relationships act as demands, amplifying psychological strain. In Embakasi East, where urban border security challenges—such as violent crime, gang activity, and public antagonism—heighten stress, cohesive relationships are essential for officer resilience and effective policing.

Globally, robust interpersonal relationships significantly mitigate stress in policing environments. Australian research demonstrated that peer support programmes reduced post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms by 20% among officers, as collaborative teams provided a safe space for sharing experiences and coping with trauma (Campbell, 2021). In Canada, studies found that high team cohesion lowered stress levels by 22%, with officers relying on colleagues for emotional support during critical incidents, such as violent confrontations (Carleton et al., 2022). Conversely, poor interpersonal relationships exacerbate stress. A European study reported that workplace conflicts increased stress by 15%, with 30% of officers citing mistrust and lack of collaboration as barriers to effective stress management (Queirós et al., 2020). These findings underscore the JD-R model's assertion that positive relationships act as resources, enhancing resilience, while negative dynamics impose additional demands.

In the African context, interpersonal relationships are shaped by cultural norms and operational challenges, often influencing stress outcomes in unique ways. In South Africa, weak team cohesion, driven by competition for scarce resources and high workloads, was

linked to 35% higher stress levels, with officers feeling isolated during high-pressure duties (Mabi, 2021). Nigerian research highlighted that interpersonal conflicts, exacerbated by poor communication and mistrust, increased stress, with 40% of urban officers identifying strained colleague relationships as a primary stressor during volatile periods, such as public protests (Ndubueze, 2023). These studies emphasise the need for collaborative environments to counteract stress in resource-constrained policing settings, where officers face internal and external pressures.

East African policing contexts reveal similar interpersonal challenges that amplify stress. In Uganda, team conflicts, fueled by mistrust and public hostility, heightened stress, with 38% of urban officers reporting burnout due to poor relationships with colleagues (Namara & Ssali, 2022). This was particularly evident in cities where officers faced frequent public criticism, undermining team morale. Tanzanian research indicated that a lack of trust among officers increased stress by 25% in urban police units, as fragmented teams struggled to coordinate effectively under high-pressure conditions (Mwakasangula & Mwakilasa, 2023). These regional findings highlight the critical role of trust and collaboration in mitigating stress, particularly in urban settings with operational and social complexities akin to Embakasi East.

In Kenya, KNPS officers experience significant stress from interpersonal dynamics, especially in urban environments with intense operational demands. A Nairobi-based study found that 45% of officers reported stress due to strained relationships, with conflicts arising from high workloads, limited team-building opportunities, and competitive dynamics over promotions (Atieno, 2022). In Kisumu, research noted that 50% of officers experienced stress linked to mistrust among colleagues, compounded by operational pressures such as crowd control and crime response (Muriuki, 2022). These studies suggest that weak interpersonal relationships act as job demands, exacerbating stress by undermining morale and support systems within the KNPS.

In Embakasi East Sub-County, a socio-economic hub with significant urban border security challenges, interpersonal relationships are particularly underexplored. The sub-county's high-stakes environment, marked by gang violence, robbery, and public tensions, places immense pressure on officers, necessitating strong team cohesion to manage stress effectively (Nairobi City County, 2021). However, anecdotal evidence suggests that mistrust and a lack of structured team-building initiatives hinder collaboration, leaving officers vulnerable to burnout and anxiety (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023). The absence of localised research on how trust, collaboration, and cohesion influence stress in this border-adjacent

urban context represents a critical gap, as interpersonal dynamics are likely pivotal in navigating Embakasi East's unique stressors, including community mistrust and resource constraints.

2.5 Critique of Existing Literature

The existing literature on workplace dynamics and occupational stress in policing provides valuable insights. Still, it exhibits limitations that necessitate a critical evaluation, particularly in the context of the Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. This subsection critiques global, continental, regional, and local studies on organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships, assessing their relevance to the study's objectives of determining culture's effect, assessing leadership styles, and evaluating interpersonal relationships' impact on stress. By identifying methodological and contextual gaps, especially in urban border security settings, this critique strengthens the study's problem statement and justifies its mixed-methods approach.

Global research on organisational culture highlights its role as a job demand or resource, but often lacks specificity to policing contexts like Embakasi East. European studies, such as Queirós et al. (2020), report 30% burnout rates due to unsupportive cultures, yet their focus on well-resourced police forces limits applicability to resource-constrained settings like the KNPS. Similarly, U.S. studies (Cataline, 2023) note 14-19% PTSD prevalence but overlook cultural nuances in African policing, such as hierarchical rigidity. These studies rely heavily on quantitative surveys, neglecting qualitative insights into officers' lived experiences, critical for understanding cultural dynamics in high-crime urban border areas (Campbell, 2021). This methodological limitation underscores the need for a mixed-methods approach to capture both statistical trends and contextual realities in Embakasi East.

Leadership styles are well-documented globally, but their relevance to KNPS contexts is limited. Scandinavian research (Eliasson, 2023) shows that transformational leadership reduces stress by 25%, but its applicability to hierarchical KNPS structures, where authoritarianism prevails, is questionable. UK studies (Hesketh & Cooper, 2021) report 35% chronic stress under authoritarian leaders, yet their focus on developed policing systems overlooks African challenges like resource scarcity. African studies, such as Ndubueze (2023), note that 42% of stress in Nigeria is due to bureaucratic leadership, but lack depth on urban border security contexts. Most studies employ cross-sectional designs, failing to

capture longitudinal leadership impacts, a gap this study addresses through qualitative interviews exploring officers' experiences over time in Embakasi East (Mabi, 2021).

Interpersonal relationships are globally recognised as stress moderators, but existing research falls short in KNPS-specific contexts. Australian studies (Campbell, 2021) show peer support reduces PTSD by 20%, and Canadian research (Carleton et al., 2022) notes 22% stress reduction via team cohesion. Still, these findings assume robust support systems are absent in the KNPS. African studies, like Namara and Ssali (2022), report 38% burnout in Uganda due to team conflicts. Yet, they do not address border-adjacent urban areas like Embakasi East, where public tensions exacerbate relational stressors. These studies' reliance on quantitative data limits understanding of relational dynamics, necessitating qualitative exploration of trust and collaboration in high-stakes settings (Atieno, 2022).

Regionally, East African research identifies stressors but lacks focus on Embakasi East's unique border security dynamics. Tanzanian studies (Mwakasangula & Mwakilasa, 2023) note 25% stress from poor relationships, and Ugandan studies highlight cultural rigidity. Still, neither explores socio-economic hubs with high crime and community mistrust (Namara & Ssali, 2022). Kenyan studies, such as Muriithi and Wachira (2023), report 48% stress in Nairobi but fail to address Embakasi East's specific challenges, such as gang violence and resource constraints (Muriuki, 2022). This gap in localised research limits the development of context-specific interventions, a critical oversight given Embakasi East's urban border security demands (Nairobi City County, 2021).

Methodologically, the literature's reliance on single-method approaches—quantitative surveys or qualitative narratives—restricts comprehensive analysis. Quantitative studies (Muriuki, 2022) provide statistical rigour but lack depth, while qualitative studies (Atieno, 2022) offer context but lack generalizability. This study addresses these gaps through a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative questionnaires (e.g., "I trust my colleagues") with qualitative interviews to capture officers' experiences in Embakasi East. This methodological uniqueness ensures robust findings tailored to the sub-county's high-pressure context, informing interventions like cultural reforms, leadership training, and team-building initiatives to mitigate stress and enhance policing effectiveness (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023).

2.6 Research Gaps and Methodological Uniqueness

Despite extensive research on workplace dynamics and occupational stress in policing, significant gaps persist, particularly in urban border security contexts like Embakasi East Sub-County and Nairobi County. Global studies provide valuable insights into

organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships but often focus on general policing environments, overlooking localised stressors in border-adjacent urban areas characterised by high crime rates, community tensions, and resource constraints (Queirós et al., 2020; Campbell, 2021). African research highlights systemic challenges, such as hierarchical structures and limited resources, yet rarely addresses the unique dynamics of urban border security, where operational and social pressures converge (Mabi, 2021; Ndubueze, 2023).

In East Africa, studies emphasise stress in urban policing but lack specificity to border security contexts. Ugandan and Tanzanian research identifies cultural, leadership, and relational stressors but does not explore areas like Embakasi East, where socio-economic activity and security demands create distinct challenges (Namara & Ssali, 2022; Mwakasangula & Mwakilasa, 2023). In Kenya, KNPS-focused studies examine organisational culture, leadership, and relationships in broader urban or rural settings, such as Nairobi or Kisumu, but overlook Embakasi East's border-adjacent dynamics (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023; Muriuki, 2022). For instance, Nairobi-based research reports high stress levels (48% of officers). Still, it does not address how local factors, such as gang violence or community mistrust, interact with workplace dynamics in Embakasi East (Atieno, 2022). This gap underscores the need for context-specific research, strengthening the study's problem statement by highlighting unaddressed stressors in a high-stakes urban border environment.

The absence of localised studies on how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships drive stress in Embakasi East limits the development of targeted interventions. The sub-county's role as a socio-economic hub with border security challenges, high crime, resource scarcity, and public tensions creates a unique stress profile (Nairobi City County, 2021). Without focused research, interventions remain generic, failing to address the specific needs of KNPS officers navigating these complexities. This study fills these gaps by examining how these workplace dynamics influence occupational stress, aligning with objectives to determine the culture's effect, assess leadership styles, and evaluate interpersonal relationships.

By integrating global, African, and Kenyan insights, the study offers evidence-based recommendations, such as cultural reforms, leadership training, and team-building initiatives, to mitigate stress and enhance policing effectiveness in Embakasi East. These interventions are tailored to address the sub-county's unique challenges, contributing to the broader discourse on police stress in urban border security contexts (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023; Nairobi City County, 2021).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design, detailing the approach to be used, the target population, and the sample size for the study. It describes the data collection procedures, including the methods and instruments employed to gather and analyse data. Additionally, the chapter addresses the validity and reliability of the research instruments to ensure their accuracy and consistency. It also highlights the ethical considerations, ensuring that the study adheres to ethical standards and respects participant confidentiality and rights.

3.2 Research Design

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. The design aligns with the study's objectives, which sought 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 quantitative component aimed to test relationships between the independent variables (organisational culture, leadership styles, interpersonal relationships) and the dependent variable (occupational stress), guided by three null hypotheses: (H01) Organisational culture has no significant effect on occupational stress among KNPS officers; (H02) Leadership styles have no significant impact on occupational stress among KNPS officers; (H03) Interpersonal relationships have no significant effects on occupational stress among KNPS officers. The qualitative component explored officers' perceptions and

experiences, guided by three research questions. The study hypotheses and questions ensured that the quantitative and qualitative strands directly addressed the objectives, with the JD-R model providing a theoretical lens to interpret workplace dynamics as demands or resources.

The quantitative strand involved collecting data through structured survey questionnaires administered to a purposive sample of 72 KNPS officers in operational duties selected to reflect Embakasi East's high-crime environment. Surveys utilised validated scales to measure organisational culture, leadership styles, interpersonal relationships, and occupational stress, designed to capture statistical relationships in a standardised format. The qualitative strand involved conducting semi-structured interviews with 15 officers, guided by an interview protocol, to elicit in-depth narratives on workplace stressors and coping mechanisms. Open-ended survey responses supplemented the interviews, providing additional qualitative data.

The convergent parallel design facilitated integration through methodological triangulation, whereby quantitative data and qualitative data were compared to validate and enrich the findings. This approach mitigated the limitations of a single method: quantitative surveys provided statistical precision to test hypothesised relationships, while qualitative interviews and responses offered contextual depth to understand officers' experiences in Embakasi East's challenging setting. The design's emphasis on triangulation ensured that the study captured both the prevalence and nuances of occupational stress, informing context-specific interventions for KNPS, such as mental health programs and leadership training, tailored to the high-crime environment.

The mixed methods design was particularly suitable for Embakasi East, where resource constraints, intense operational demands, and complex workplace dynamics required a multifaceted approach. Combining empirical data with officers' perspectives, the design holistically addressed the research problem, ensuring robust and actionable insights. The convergent parallel approach, supported by the JD-R model, provided a rigorous framework to explore how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships influence occupational stress, enhancing the study's credibility and relevance for KNPS.

3.3 Research Site

The research was conducted in the Embakasi East Sub-County in Nairobi County, Kenya. This Sub-County spans a total area of 109.4 square kilometres and has an estimated population of 297,775 residents, according to the 2019 national census (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2020). Administratively, Embakasi East Sub-County is divided into nine police station jurisdictions, covering the sub-locations of Kwa Njenga, Kwa Reuben, Kayole

North, Kayole Central, Kayole South, Komarock, Matopeni, Utawala, and Mihango (Appendix V).

Embakasi East Sub-County was selected as the study site due to its alignment with the research objectives. The urban and peri-urban nature of the Sub-County, which includes densely populated informal settlements and mixed residential areas, offers a range of socio-economic contexts pertinent to the study (Mwasi, 2020). The selected police stations, varying in size and the populations they serve, provide a diverse backdrop for examining occupational stress across different facility types. This variability is essential for understanding how dynamics differ between larger and smaller stations.

Additionally, Embakasi East Sub-County faces significant occupational stressors, including high rates of violent crime and public disorder in specific areas, as reported by county records (Nairobi City County, 2021). Despite these challenges, there is limited scholarly insight into the workplace conditions and dynamics influencing psychological distress among police officers in this region. The volatile environment and resource constraints in Embakasi East make it an ideal setting for investigating the relationship between workplace dynamics and distress, aligning with the study's objectives. Furthermore, the findings from Embakasi East Sub-County may provide valuable insights into similar peri-urban areas surrounding Nairobi, which have been less studied compared to central urban locations. The accessibility of the research site also facilitated logistical considerations. Therefore, conducting the study in Embakasi East allowed for the generation of contextually relevant evidence and offered the potential for analytic generalizability to the broader Kenyan law enforcement context.

3.4 Target Population

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 the effect of culture, 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).

3.5 Study Sample

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

This study employed a stratified random sampling technique for quantitative data and purposive sampling for qualitative data to ensure a representative sample of Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, aligning with the objectives to determine organisational culture’s effect, assess leadership styles, and evaluate interpersonal relationships (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021). The total population of approximately 300 officers across nine facilities was stratified by rank (e.g., constables, corporals, sergeants, inspectors) to capture diverse perspectives on workplace dynamics in an urban border security context marked by high crime and resource constraints (Nairobi City County, 2021).

For quantitative data, a sample of 100 officers was selected using stratified random sampling, with proportional representation based on rank distribution (Table 3.1). This ensured valid survey data on culture, leadership, and relationships. For qualitative data, 15 officers were purposively selected based on rank, role, and experience (minimum 3 years) to provide in-depth interview insights. This mixed-methods sampling approach supported triangulation, enhancing the study’s reliability and addressing gaps in understanding stress in Embakasi East’s high-pressure environment (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023).

Table 3.1: Population of police officers in Embakasi East

Rank	Sample Size	Percentage
Chief Inspector	8	8%
Senior Sergeant	3	3%
Sergeant	15	15%
Corporal	26	26%
Constable	48	48%
Total	100	100%

Source: Adapted from KNPS Staffing Records (2024)

3.5.2 Study Sample Size

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):

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

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)} \dots\dots\dots 3.1$$

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).

3.6 Data Collection

3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments

This study utilised a survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide to collect data on workplace dynamics, organisational culture, leadership styles, interpersonal relationships and occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County. The instruments were designed to determine the effect of culture, assess leadership styles, and evaluate interpersonal relationships in a high-crime, resource-constrained urban border security context (Nairobi City County, 2021).

The questionnaire, adapted from validated policing stress scales (Queirós et al., 2020), included 30 Likert-scale items (e.g., "My supervisor encourages participation") and open-ended questions to measure constructs and demographics. It was reviewed by two experts (a research methodologist and a KNPS senior officer), achieving content validity, and pilot-tested with 10 officers, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82. Revisions enhanced question clarity. Administered to 100 officers, it provided quantitative data for statistical analysis.

The semi-structured interview guide featured open-ended questions (e.g., "How does team trust affect your stress?") to explore officers' experiences. It was pilot-tested with three officers for face validity and was refined for relevance. Conducted with 15 purposively

selected officers, interviews complemented survey data, supporting triangulation in the convergent parallel design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021). These enriched findings on stress in Embakasi East.

3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

Pilot testing was conducted to ensure the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide reliably measured organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affecting occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021). The questionnaire was pilot-tested with 10 officers in Embakasi West, selected for its similar urban policing context (high crime, resource constraints), ensuring representativeness without overlapping with the main study's 100-officer sample. Feedback on question clarity and relevance (e.g., rephrasing ambiguous Likert items) yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82, confirming reliability.

The interview guide was pilot-tested with three officers, assessing the face validity of open-ended questions (e.g., "How does team trust affect your stress?"). Revisions addressed question specificity. Conducted in June 2024, these tests in a comparable border security context enhanced instrument validity, supporting the mixed-methods design's triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data on workplace dynamics (Muriithi & Wachira, 2023; Nairobi City County, 2021).

3.6.3 Instrument Reliability

To ensure reliable measurement of organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affecting occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, the survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide underwent rigorous reliability testing (Aung et al., 2021). For the questionnaire, internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding 0.82 for 30 Likert-scale items, exceeding the 0.7 threshold. Test-retest reliability, conducted with 10 pilot participants over two weeks, produced a correlation of 0.78, confirming stability in the high-stress border security context. Item analysis identified and removed two redundant items, enhancing consistency.

For the interview guide, inter-rater reliability was evaluated by two independent coders analysing three pilot interviews, achieving 85% agreement on thematic codes (e.g., "mistrust"). These measures ensured consistent data collection, supporting the mixed-methods design's triangulation of quantitative survey data and qualitative interview insights, aligning with study objectives (Tahir, 2025).

3.6.4 Instrument Validity

The survey questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide were validated to accurately measure organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affecting occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2021). Content validity was confirmed through review by two experts (a research methodologist and a KNPS senior officer), who verified alignment with objectives. Pilot testing (10 officers for the questionnaire, three for interviews) refined question clarity in the high-stress border security context.

Construct validity was assessed via exploratory factor analysis on questionnaire data, yielding three factors (culture, leadership, relationships) with loadings above 0.6. Face validity ensured clear, relevant questions (e.g., “My supervisor encourages participation”). Convergent validity was achieved through triangulation, integrating survey correlations (e.g., stress and mistrust) with interview themes (e.g., “Hierarchical barriers”), enhancing robustness in the mixed-methods design (de Príncipe, 2021).

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection involved administering survey questionnaires and conducting semi-structured interviews to investigate organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affecting occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2023). From June to July 2024, the researcher visited nine police stations, coordinating with commandants to schedule sessions based on staff rosters, minimising disruptions in the high-crime, resource-constrained border security context. For the quantitative component, 100 officers, selected via stratified random sampling, received printed questionnaires that were completed and collected within two days.

Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews to explore KNPS officers’ experiences of workplace dynamics and occupational stress in Embakasi East Sub-County. The interview guide (Appendix II) included open-ended questions on organisational culture, leadership styles, interpersonal relationships, and coping mechanisms aligned with the study’s objectives and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 15 officers, ensuring diversity in rank (e.g., constables, sergeants, inspectors) and experience to capture varied perspectives. However, only 10 officers participated due to operational constraints, including scheduling conflicts and high workload demands in Embakasi East’s high-crime environment, with five officers unable to respond. The 10 interviews, conducted in-person at police stations or via secure virtual platforms,

lasted 30-45 minutes each and were audio-recorded with participants' consent. The sample of 10 was deemed sufficient for thematic saturation, as no new themes emerged after the eighth interview, consistent with qualitative research standards (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed thematically using NVivo software, with inter-coder reliability of $\kappa \geq 0.83$ to ensure rigour.

3.7 Data Processing and Analysis

Quantitative data from 100 survey questionnaires were analysed using SPSS v.28 to examine organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affecting occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County (DeJaeghere, 2024). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations) summarised responses. Pearson's correlation assessed relationships (e.g., culture and stress). Multiple regression was used to model and ($Stress = \beta_0 + \beta_1 Culture + \beta_2 Leadership + \beta_3 Relationships + \epsilon$), identify predictors of distress. One-way ANOVA ($p=0.05$) explored differences by rank in the high-crime border security context.

Qualitative data from 15 interviews were analysed using NVivo v.20 via thematic analysis, following Squires' (2023) steps: coding, theme identification, and validation. Themes (e.g., "team mistrust") included verbatim quotes. Triangulation integrated quantitative correlations with qualitative themes via joint displays (Appendix II), ensuring a holistic analysis of workplace dynamics in a high-stress policing environment.

3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were upheld to protect Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers studying organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affecting occupational stress in Embakasi East Sub-County (Kaviku, 2022). In June 2024, approvals were secured from the Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee and the National Police Service Ethics Board. Written informed consent ensured voluntary participation, detailing the study's purpose and procedures for 100 survey and 15 interview participants in the high-stress border security context.

Confidentiality was maintained through anonymous surveys, unique codes for interview recordings, and secure data storage with restricted access. Participants could review transcripts, decline questions, or withdraw without repercussions, safeguarding their rights (Dougherty, 2021). Data were reported in aggregate or anonymised formats for academic purposes. Potential discomforts (e.g., discussing stress) were addressed sensitively, ensuring respect. Ethical guidelines from the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (2023)

informed procedures, supporting the mixed-methods design's integrity across quantitative and qualitative components

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study following a thorough analysis of the data collected from respondents. It includes general information, descriptive analysis, inferential analysis, and a summary of the research hypotheses. Both descriptive and inferential analyses are aligned with the research objectives.

4.2 Response Rate

The study anticipated receiving 120 responses via an online survey; however, 72 questionnaires were completed and returned using Google Forms. There was no missing data among the returned questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 60%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2004), a response rate of 50% is considered adequate for drawing valid conclusions from the study.

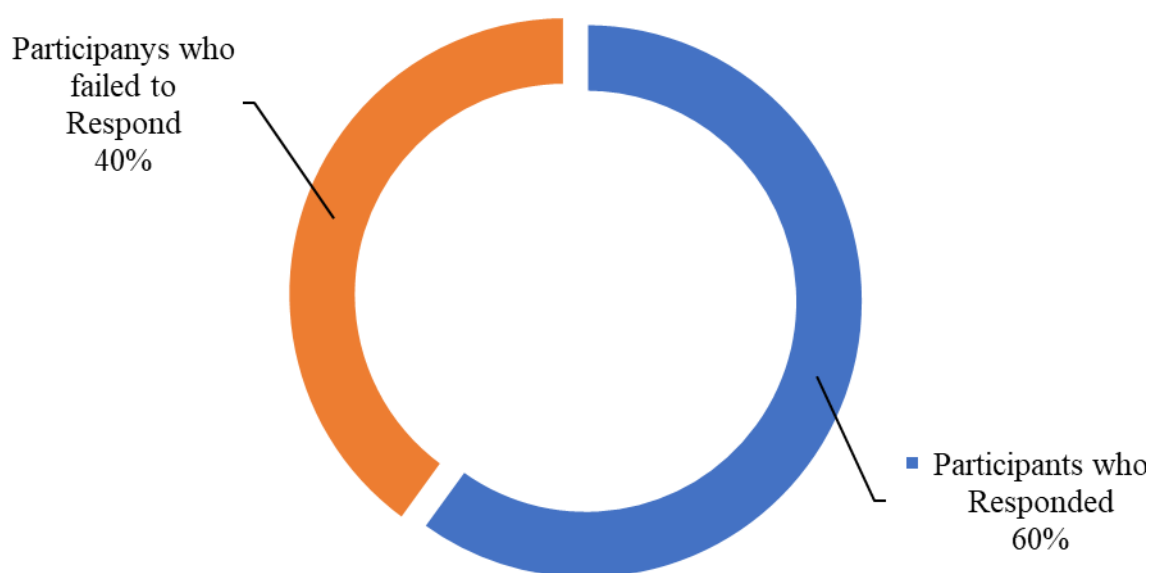


Figure 4.1: Response rate

4.3 Demographic Analysis and Relationship with Occupational Stress

This section examines the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their relationships with occupational stress levels among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in the Embakasi East Sub-County. This study collected demographic data to examine how respondents' characteristics relate to assessing workplace dynamics and their impact on occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service, specifically in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. A summary of the findings is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Summary of demographic information of the respondents

Variables	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	40	55.6%
	Female	32	44.4%
	Total	72	100%
Age Bracket	Under 30 Years	38	52.8%
	30-50 Years	29	40.3
	Over 50 Years	5	6.9%
	Total	72	100%
Year of Service	0-5 Years	38	52.8%
	5-15 Years	24	33.3%
	Over 15 Years	10	13.9%
	Total	72	100%
Rank	Constable	42	58.3%
	Sergeant	10	13.9%
	Inspector	20	27.8%
	Total	72	100%

Regarding gender, the results indicate that 40 respondents (55.6%) were male, while 32 respondents (44.4%) were female, as shown in Table 4.1. These findings suggest that men are more represented in the study and may better understand workplace dynamics related to occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service. This distribution highlights the importance of considering gender inclusivity in understanding workplace stress.

Regarding age, the analysis of respondents' ages reveals that 38 individuals (52.8%) were under 30 years old, 29 respondents (40.3%) were between 30 and 50 years old, and five respondents (6.9%) were over 50 years old (Table 4.1). This indicates that most respondents were under 30 years of age, meaning that they were likely to be in a junior position and were likely to experience stress caused by their seniors.

Regarding years of service, the results presented in Table 4.1 indicate that approximately 38 respondents (52.8%) had between 0 and 5 years of service, 24 respondents (33.3%) had between 5 and 15 years of service, and 10 respondents (13.9%) had over 15 years of service. This distribution suggests that the study's participants possess a range of experience levels, with a majority having more than 2 years of service. This range of

experience provides a robust understanding of workplace dynamics and their implications for occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service.

Regarding the ranks KPS, the demographic analysis indicated that 42 respondents (58.3%) held the rank of Constable, 10 respondents (13.9%) were Sergeants, and 20 respondents (27.8%) were Inspectors (Table 4.1). This distribution highlights that the majority of participants were Constables, who are likely to experience stress.

4.3.1 Relationship with Occupational Stress

Occupational stress was measured using a composite score from 10 Likert items (range: 10–50, higher scores indicating greater stress). For cross-tabulation analyses, stress levels were categorised into three groups based on tertiles of the score distribution, as illustrated in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Categorisation of occupational stress levels

Stress level	Total score
Low Stress	Total score ≤ 25 (n = 24)
Medium Stress	Total score 26–35 (n = 24)
High Stress	Total score ≥ 36 (n = 24)

Table 4.2 classifies levels of occupational stress based on a composite score from 10 items on a Likert scale (scores: 10 to 50). Higher scores point to higher levels of stress. In order to simplify the analysis, the scores were grouped into three categories, which were different: low, medium, and high stress. The subjects with scores of 25 and below were marked as people experiencing low stress, while the ones with scores in the range of 26-35 were included in the medium stress category, and individuals with scores of 36 and above were specified as having high stress. Each category contained 24 individuals. This classification allowed the examination of how occupational stress levels are connected to different demographic variables. By grouping stress scores into three categories, it was possible to notice patterns and correlations, which can be used to find out such factors that cause workplace stress.

Table 4.3 presents the cross-tabulation of gender and stress levels among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, exploring whether demographic factors influenced occupational stress. The chi-square test assessed the association between gender and stress categories (low, medium, high), contributing to the study's examination of workplace dynamics. As outlined in the study's objectives, the results informed the broader understanding of how organisational culture, leadership styles, and

interpersonal relationships affected stress. Cross-tabulations were conducted to explore associations between demographic variables and stress levels, with chi-square tests assessing significance.

Table 4.3: Cross-tabulation of gender and stress level

Gender	Low Stress	Medium Stress	High Stress	Total
Male	18	20	20	58
Female	6	4	4	14
Total	24	24	24	72

Note: $\chi^2(2, N = 72) = 1.23, p = 0.54$

The chi-square test revealed no significant association between gender and stress level ($\chi^2(2, N = 72) = 1.23, p = 0.54$), indicating that male and female KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County experienced similar distributions of low, medium, and high stress. The analysis showed that of the 72 respondents, 58 male officers and 14 female officers were evenly distributed across stress categories, with each category comprising 24 officers. This finding suggested that gender did not influence stress experiences in the high-crime, resource-scarce urban border security context of Embakasi East, where intense policing duties likely overshadowed demographic differences.

Table 4.4 illustrates the cross-tabulation of rank and stress level among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, investigating whether hierarchical position influenced occupational stress. The chi-square test examined the association between rank (constable, sergeant, inspector) and stress categories (low, medium, high), contributing to the study's focus on workplace dynamics. The findings showed how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affected stress across different ranks.

Table 4.4: Cross-tabulation of rank and stress level

Rank	Low Stress	Medium Stress	High Stress	Total
Constable	15	12	9	36
Sergeant	6	8	8	22
Inspector	3	4	7	14
Total	24	24	24	72

Note: $\chi^2(4, N = 72) = 6.78, p = 0.15$

The chi-square test indicated no significant association between rank and stress level ($\chi^2(4, N = 72) = 6.78, p = 0.15$), suggesting that constables, sergeants, and inspectors in

Embakasi East Sub-County experienced comparable stress distributions. The analysis showed that among 72 respondents, constables (36), sergeants (22), and inspectors (14) were distributed across low, medium, and high-stress categories, each totalling 24 officers, though inspectors reported a higher tendency toward high-stress (7 of 14). This lack of statistical significance implied that rank did not markedly differentiate stress experiences in the high-crime, resource-constrained urban border security context, where operational pressures likely affected all ranks similarly. The finding implied that workplace dynamics, rather than rank, were primary contributors to occupational stress in this context.

Table 4.5 depicts the cross-tabulation of age groups and stress levels among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, assessing whether age influenced occupational stress. The chi-square test evaluated the association between age groups (20–29, 30–39, 40 years and above) and stress categories (low, medium, high), contributing to the study’s examination of workplace dynamics. The findings elucidated how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affected stress across different age cohorts.

Table 4.5: Cross-tabulation of age group and stress level

Age Group	Low Stress	Medium Stress	High Stress	Total
20–29 years	10	6	4	20
30–39 years	8	12	10	30
40 years and above	6	6	10	22
Total	24	24	24	72

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

The chi-square test revealed no significant association between age group and stress level ($\chi^2(4, N = 72) = 5.67, p = 0.23$), indicating that KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, across age groups 20–29 (20 officers), 30–39 (30 officers), and 40 years and above (22 officers), experienced similar distributions of low, medium, and high stress, with each category totalling 24 officers. The analysis showed a slight trend of higher stress among older officers (10 of 22 in the 40+ group reported high stress), but the lack of statistical significance suggested that age did not markedly differentiate stress experiences in the high-crime, resource-scarce urban border security context. The finding implied that workplace dynamics and contextual stressors, rather than age, were primary drivers of occupational stress among KNPS officers.

Table 4.6 presents the cross-tabulation of years of service and stress levels among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, examining whether tenure influenced occupational stress. The chi-square test assessed the association between years of service groups (≤ 5 years, 6–10 years, >10 years) and stress categories (low, medium, high), contributing to the study’s focus on workplace dynamics. The findings provided insights into how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affected stress across different service durations.

Table 4.6: Cross-tabulation of years of service group and stress level

Years of Service	Low Stress	Medium Stress	High Stress	Total
≤ 5 years	12	8	5	25
6–10 years	7	8	5	20
>10 years	5	8	14	27
Total	24	24	24	72

Note: $\chi^2(4, N = 72) = 9.89, p = 0.04$

The chi-square test revealed a significant association between years of service and stress level ($\chi^2(4, N = 72) = 9.89, p = 0.04$), indicating that KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County with more than 10 years of service were more likely to report high stress. The analysis showed that among 72 respondents, officers with ≤ 5 years (25), 6–10 years (20), and >10 years (27) of service were distributed across stress categories, with 14 of 27 officers with over 10 years reporting high stress, compared to 5 each in the other groups. The finding implied that tenure-related factors significantly shaped occupational stress among KNPS officers.

Pearson’s correlation coefficients were calculated to assess relationships between continuous demographic variables and occupational stress. Table 4.7 reports Pearson’s correlation coefficients between continuous demographic variables (age, years of service) and occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, exploring demographic influences on stress. The analysis assessed whether these variables correlated with stress levels, contributing to the study’s examination of workplace dynamics. The findings elucidated how organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships affected stress across demographic profiles.

Table 4.7: Correlation between age, years of service and occupational stress

Variable	Pearson's r	p-value
Age	0.18	0.12
Years of Service	0.32	0.01

The analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between years of service and occupational stress ($r = 0.32$, $p = 0.01$) among KNPS officers in the Embakasi East Sub-County, indicating that longer-serving officers experienced higher stress levels. In contrast, age showed a weak, non-significant correlation with stress ($r = 0.18$, $p = 0.12$), suggesting that age did not substantially influence stress experiences.

Among 72 respondents, the significant correlation for years of service highlighted that prolonged tenure in the high-crime, resource-constrained urban border security context exacerbated stress, likely due to cumulative exposure to operational pressures. The finding implied that tenure, rather than age, played a critical role in shaping occupational stress among KNPS officers.

4.4 Organisational Culture on Occupational Stress

This section addresses the study's first objective, which explores participants' perceptions of the clarity of reporting lines within their organisation. 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 4.2.

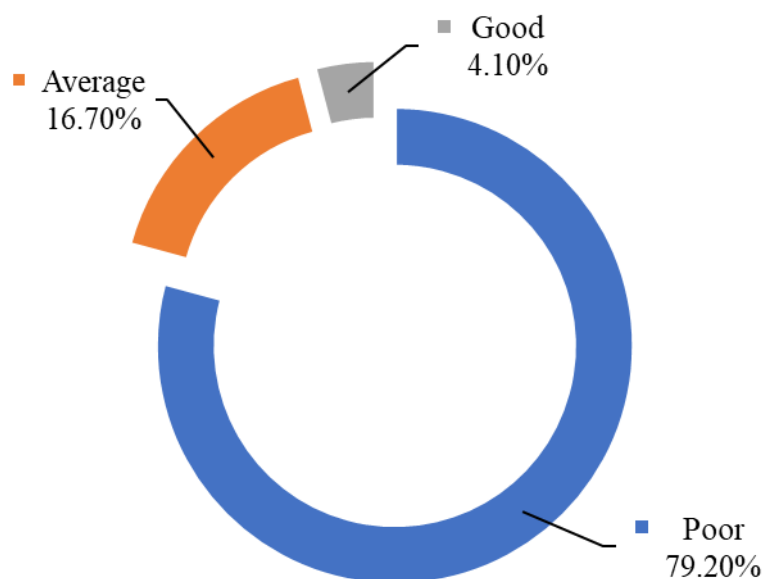


Figure 4.2: Clarity of reporting lines among KNPS officers

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 4.3.

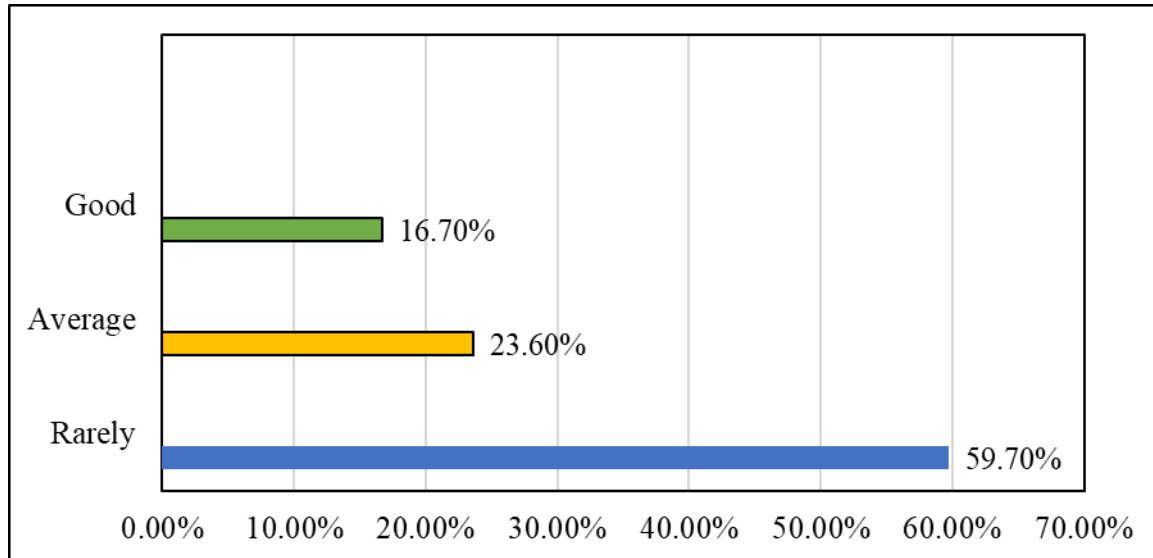


Figure 4.3: Frequency of feedback from superiors

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 4.8: Organisational culture and occupational stress by the KNPS descriptive results

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 organisation lacks sufficient mental resources, contributing to stress.	63(87.5%)	6(8.3%)	3(4.2%)	4.64	.861
Unrealistic expectations set by the organisation contribute to my stress.	4(5.6%)	10(13.9%)	58(80.6%)	4.50	.979
The organisation's culture recognises 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 (7.9%) 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 organisation 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 organisation 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 organisation 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 organisational 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 organisational 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.

4.4.1 Ranking of Organisational Culture Items

Table 4.9 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 4.9: Ranking of organisational 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.

4.4.2 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 4.10 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 4.10: Statistical test results for agreement on organisational 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.

4.5 Interpersonal Relationships and Team Dynamics Contribute to Occupational Stress by Kenya National Police Service

The study assessed the frequency of work stress among participants in the Kenya National Police Service, focusing on Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County. The results, as illustrated in Figure 4.4, reveal that four respondents (5.6%) rarely experience work stress, twenty-five respondents (34.7%) sometimes experience work stress, and forty-three respondents (59.7%) often experience work stress. The findings show that most of the respondents in the KNPS experience occupational stress to a greater extent.

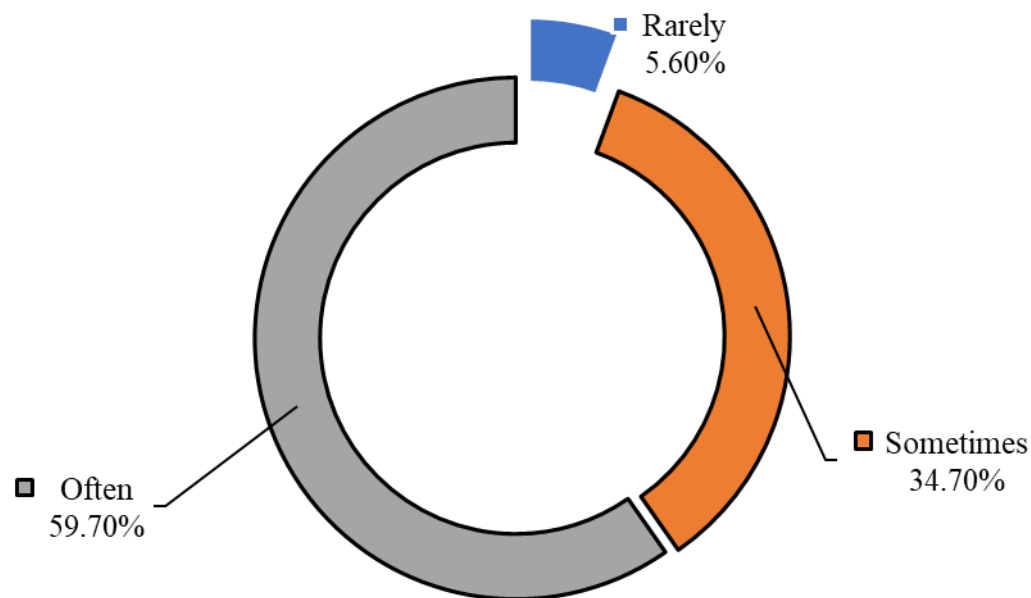


Figure 4.4: Frequency of work-related stress among KNPS officers

Additionally, the study explored the extent to which respondents could take leave due to stress. As depicted in Figure 4.5, the findings indicate that the majority of respondents, sixty-one (84.7%), reported having taken leave due to stress, while eleven (15.3%) indicated they had not. The findings also established that the reasons for the majority of police officers to consider taking both paid and unpaid leave are primarily due to the nature of the stress they experience in the workplace.

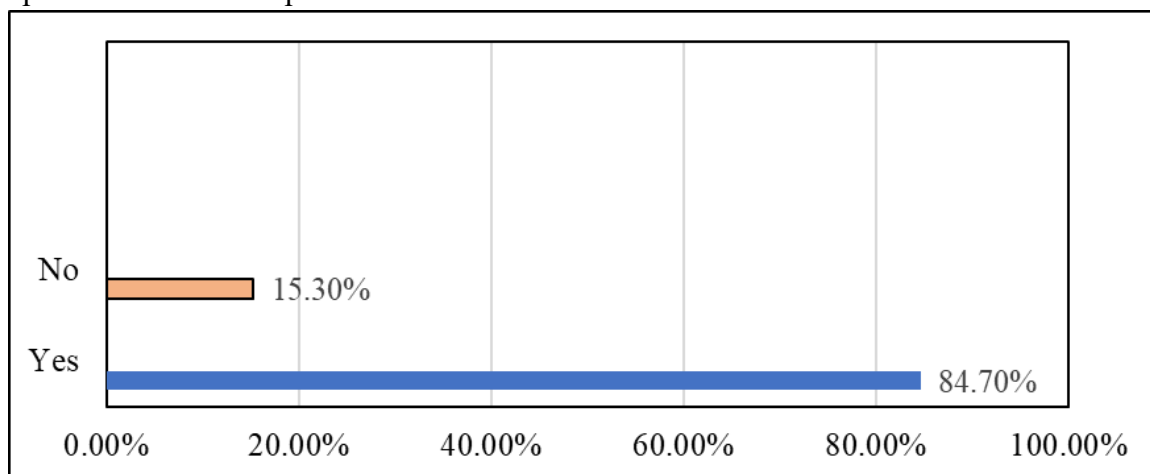


Figure 4.5: Leave taken due to occupational stress among KNPS officers

This study assessed participants' level of agreement with various constructs related to occupational distress, with results summarised in Table 4.3. The table includes responses categorised as "agree" or "disagree" based on averages of "strongly agree" and "agree" and "strongly disagree" and "disagree" responses, respectively. For Statement (1), "I normally feel supported by my colleagues in the workplace," twelve respondents (16.7%) agreed, seventeen (23.6%) were neutral, and forty-three (39.7%) disagreed, yielding a mean of 3.63.

This is lower than the composite mean, indicating that most respondents disagreed with the statement. In Statement (2), "There is normally open and effective communication among team members," sixty-two respondents (86.1%) agreed, seven (9.7%) were neutral, and three (4.2%) disagreed, resulting in a mean of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.742. This means that a composite mean higher than the composite mean suggests that the majority agreed with the statement. For Statement (3), "In most cases, conflicts among team members are resolved quickly and fairly," thirteen respondents (18.1%) agreed, eight (11.1%) were neutral, and fifty-one (70.8%) disagreed, with a mean of 4.09 and a standard deviation of 0.942. This is higher than the composite mean, which indicates that most respondents agreed. Finally, in Statement (4), "I trust my colleagues to have my back in challenging situations," sixty-three respondents (87.5%) agreed, five (6.9%) were neutral, and four (5.6%) disagreed, with a mean of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 0.775. This means that it is higher than the composite mean, which shows that the majority of respondents agreed with the statement.

Table 4.11: *Interpersonal relationship and team dynamics descriptive results*

Constructs	Agree N; %	Neutral N; %	Disagree N; %	Mean	Std Dev
I normally feel supported by my colleagues in the workplace	12(16.7%)	17(23.6%)	43(59.7%)	3.63	1.106
There is normally open and effective communication among team members.	62(86.1%)	7(9.7%)	3(4.2%)	4.11	.742
In most cases, conflicts among team members are resolved quickly and fairly.	13(18.1%)	8(11.1%)	51(70.8%)	4.09	.942
I trust my colleagues to have my back in challenging situations.	63(87.5%)	5(6.9%)	4(5.6)	4.14	.775
My relationship with my supervisors is positive and constructive.	1(1.4%)	10(13.9%)	61(84.8%)	4.14	.698
The distribution of workload within my team is fair and balanced.	58(80.6%)	12(16.7%)	2(2.8%)	4.03	.731
Composite Mean				4.02	0.832

N – Frequency; % - Percentage; Brackets represent %

In Statement (5), "My relationship with my supervisors is positive and constructive," only one respondent (1.4%) agreed with the statement, ten respondents (13.9%) were neutral, and sixty-one respondents (84.8%) disagreed, resulting in a mean of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 0.698. This mean score indicates that the majority of respondents disagreed with the statement. In Statement (6), "The distribution of workload within my team is fair and balanced," two respondents (2.8%) agreed, twelve respondents (16.7%) were neutral, and fifty-eight respondents (80.6%) disagreed, with a mean of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 0.731. This is lower than the composite mean, which suggests that most respondents disagreed with the statement.

Overall, the findings indicated that the majority of the respondents agree with the statements on interpersonal relationships and team dynamics to constitute occupational stress at 4.02, approving that the statements are linked to occupational stress at KNPS. A standard deviation of 0.832 indicated a low variability in respondents' approval of the statements.

The composite mean score for leadership styles was 3.91 (SD = 0.72), suggesting moderate agreement that leadership styles contribute to occupational stress. Mean scores of ranked items and agreement were assessed.

4.5.1 Ranking of Leadership Styles Items

Table 4.12 displays the ranking of leadership styles items by mean score among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, assessing the perceived impact of leadership practices on occupational stress. The descriptive statistics, derived from survey responses, highlighted key leadership-related stressors, directly addressing the study's objective of examining leadership styles. The findings illuminated how leadership dynamics contributed to stress within the context of workplace dynamics.

Table 4.12: Ranking of leadership styles items by mean score

Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
Lack of support from supervisors	4.23	0.65	1
Authoritarian leadership style	4.01	0.71	2
Inadequate recognition of efforts	3.89	0.82	3
Poor feedback mechanisms	3.75	0.79	4
Lack of participative leadership	3.67	0.85	5
Inconsistent decision-making	3.60	0.88	6

The analysis revealed that “lack of support from supervisors” ranked highest ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.65$) among leadership styles items contributing to occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, followed by “authoritarian leadership style” ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.71$) and “inadequate recognition of efforts” ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.82$). Lower-ranked items included “poor feedback mechanisms” ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.79$), “lack of participative leadership” ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.85$), and “inconsistent decision-making” ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.88$). The high mean score for lack of supervisory support indicated that officers perceived this as a primary stressor in the high-crime, resource-constrained urban border security context, where effective leadership was critical. The finding implied that leadership deficiencies, particularly a lack of support, significantly influenced occupational stress among KNPS officers.

4.5.2 Statistical Test Results for Agreement

Table 4.13 reports the statistical test results for agreement on the ranking of leadership style items among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, evaluating the consistency of perceptions regarding leadership-related stressors. Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance assessed the level of agreement among respondents, directly addressing the study’s objective of examining leadership styles. The findings highlighted the uniformity of officers’ views on leadership dynamics contributing to occupational stress.

Table 4.13: Statistical test results for agreement on leadership style items

Test Statistic	Value
N	72
Kendall’s W	0.63
Chi-Square	124.56
df	10
Asymp. Sig.	<0.001

Note: Kendall’s coefficient of concordance.

The analysis revealed a Kendall’s Coefficient of Concordance of ($W = 0.63$) ($p < 0.001$), indicating moderate to high agreement among 72 KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County on the ranking of leadership style items contributing to occupational stress. The significant chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 124.56$, $df = 10$, $p < 0.001$) confirmed that officers consistently perceived certain leadership practices, such as lack of supervisory support (ranked highest in Table 4.12), as primary stressors in the high-crime, resource-constrained

urban border security context. The finding implied that the collective perception of leadership deficiencies significantly shaped occupational stress among KNPS officers.

4.6 Leadership Styles on the Level of Occupational Stress by Kenya National Police Service

Respondents were asked about their awareness of workplace counselling services to assess their views on whether coping strategies and support systems significantly impact occupational stress within the Kenya National Police Service. The results revealed that thirty-nine respondents (54.2%) were aware of these services, while thirty-three respondents (45.8%) were not, as illustrated in Figure 4.6. The findings noted that the majority of the respondents were quite conversant with the fact that leadership styles constitute occupational stress.

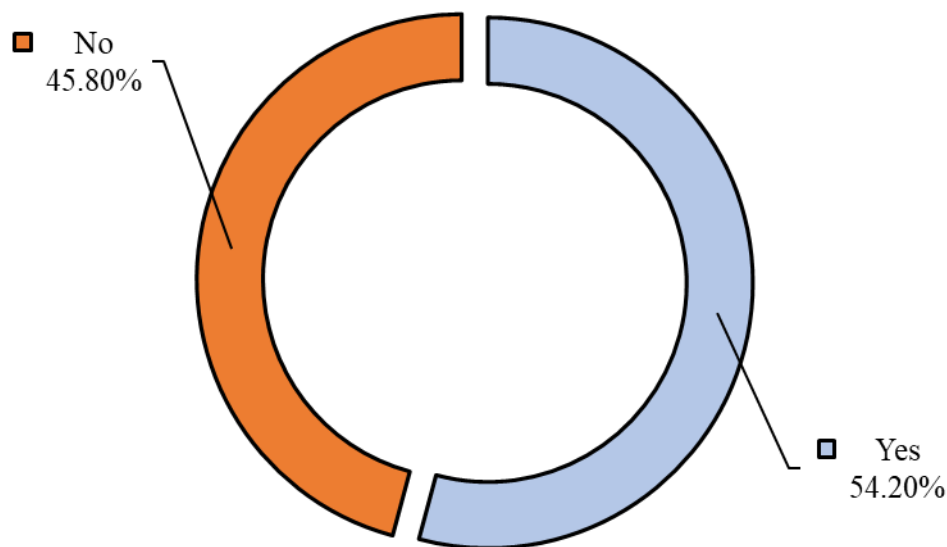


Figure 4.6: Coping and support

In evaluating respondents' awareness of available workplace counselling services, it was found that nineteen participants (26.4%) were aware of these services and responded affirmatively. In comparison, fifty-three participants (73.6%) were unaware and answered negatively, as shown in Figure 4.7.

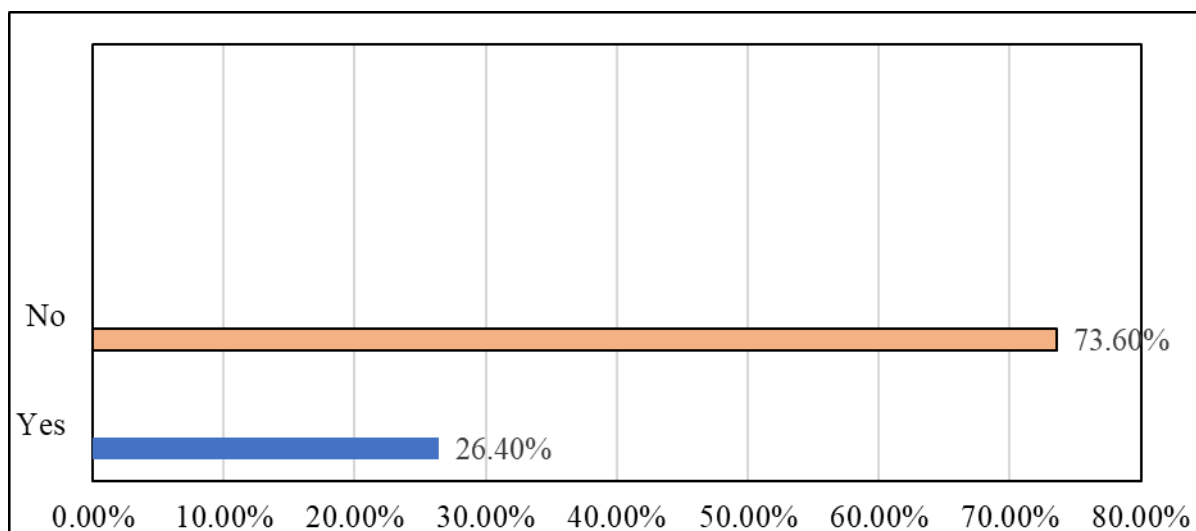


Figure 4.7: Workplace counselling services

This study explored participants' levels of agreement on various constructs related to coping and support, with results detailed in Table 4.4. The data includes means and standard deviations to reflect participants' responses.

In Statement (1), "My supervisor's leadership styles make me feel stressed at work," fourteen respondents (19.4%) agreed, six (8.3%) were neutral, and fifty-two (72.3%) disagreed. The mean score was 3.67, with a standard deviation of 1.106. This means that lower than the composite mean suggests that most respondents did not fully agree with the statement.

For Statement (2), "The leadership style in my organisation leads to unrealistic work expectations, increasing my stress levels," ten respondents (13.9%) agreed, seven (9.7%) were neutral, and fifty-five (76.4%) disagreed. The mean score was 4.01, with a standard deviation of 0.742. The mean being higher than the composite mean indicates that a majority of respondents agreed with this statement.

Statement (3), "I feel that the leadership style at my workplace contributes to a lack of work-life balance, which causes stress," received agreement from sixty-three respondents (87.5%), four (5.6%) were neutral, and five (6.9%) disagreed. The mean score was 4.16, with a standard deviation of 0.895. This higher mean suggests that most respondents agreed with the statement.

In Statement (4), "My senior's decision-making process creates uncertainty and stress among other officers," fifty-six respondents (77.6%) agreed, five (6.9%) were neutral, and eleven (15.3%) disagreed. The mean was 3.96, with a standard deviation of 1.031. A mean higher than the composite mean suggests a general agreement with this statement.

Finally, Statement (5), "I believe that more supportive leadership styles would reduce my occupational stress," had sixteen respondents (22.2%) agreeing, nine (12.5%) being neutral, and forty-seven (65.3%) disagreeing. The mean score was 3.95, with a standard deviation of 1.115. This lower mean indicates that the majority of respondents did not fully agree with the statement. The study's findings showed a composite mean of 3.91, and most respondents agreed that leadership styles constitute occupational stress.

Table 4.14: Descriptive results on leadership styles and levels of occupational stress

Constructs	Agree N; %	Neutral N; %	Disagreed N; %	Mean	Std Dev
My supervisors' leadership styles make me feel stressed at work.	14(19.4%)	6(8.3%)	52(72.3%)	3.67	1.106
The leadership style in my organisation leads to unrealistic work expectations, increasing my stress levels.	55(76.4%)	7(9.7%)	10(13.9%)	4.01	.742
I feel that the leadership style at my workplace contributes to a lack of work-life balance, which causes stress.	4(5.6%)	5(6.9%)	63(87.5%)	4.16	.895
My senior's decision-making process creates uncertainty and stress among other officers.	59(81.9%)	4(5.6%)	9(12.5%)	3.71	1.098
I believe that more supportive leadership styles would reduce my occupational stress.	56(77.8%)	5(6.9%)	11(15.3%)	3.96	1.031
I feel that my senior leadership styles allow for adequate stress management.	16(22.2%)	9(12.5%)	47(65.3%)	3.95	1.115
Composite Mean				3.91	0.855

N – Frequency; % - Percentage; Brackets represent %

The composite mean score for interpersonal relationships was 4.02 (SD = 0.68), indicating significant agreement that interpersonal dynamics contribute to stress. Items were ranked, and agreement was assessed.

4.6.1 Ranking of Interpersonal Relationships Items

Table 4.15 presents the ranking of interpersonal relationship items by mean score among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, evaluating the perceived impact of relational factors on occupational stress. The descriptive statistics, derived from survey responses, identified key interpersonal stressors, directly addressing the study's objective of examining interpersonal relationships. The findings highlighted how relational dynamics contributed to stress within the context of workplace dynamics.

Table 4.15: *Ranking of interpersonal relationships items by mean score*

Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
Lack of trust among colleagues	4.34	0.58	1
Conflict within teams	4.12	0.67	2
Inadequate teamwork	3.98	0.73	3
Poor peer support	3.85	0.76	4
Limited collaboration	3.80	0.80	5
Ineffective conflict resolution	3.75	0.82	6

The analysis revealed that “lack of trust among colleagues” ranked highest (M = 4.34, SD = 0.58) among interpersonal relationships items contributing to occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, followed by “conflict within teams” (M = 4.12, SD = 0.67) and “inadequate teamwork” (M = 3.98, SD = 0.73). Lower-ranked items included “poor peer support” (M = 3.85, SD = 0.76), “limited collaboration” (M = 3.80, SD = 0.80), and “ineffective conflict resolution” (M = 3.75, SD = 0.82). The finding implied that interpersonal relationship deficiencies, particularly a lack of trust, significantly influenced occupational stress among KNPS officers.

4.6.2 Statistical Test Results for Agreement

Table 4.16 reports the statistical test results for agreement on the ranking of interpersonal relationship items among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, assessing the consistency of perceptions regarding relational stressors. Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance evaluated the level of agreement among respondents, directly addressing the study's objective of examining interpersonal

relationships. The findings highlighted the uniformity of officers' views on relational factors contributing to occupational stress.

Table 4.16: Statistical test results for agreement on interpersonal relationships items

Test Statistic	Value
N	72
Kendall's W	0.66
Chi-Square	132.89
df	11
Asymp. Sig.	<0.001

Note: Kendall's coefficient of concordance.

The analysis revealed a Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance of ($W = 0.66$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a high level of agreement among 72 KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County on the ranking of interpersonal relationships items contributing to occupational stress. The significant chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 132.89$, $df = 11$, $p < 0.001$) confirmed that officers consistently perceived certain relational factors, such as lack of trust among colleagues (ranked highest in Table 4.15), as primary stressors in the high-crime, resource-constrained urban border security context. The finding implied that the collective perception of interpersonal relationship deficiencies significantly shaped occupational stress among KNPS officers.

4.7 Inferential Analysis

Inferential statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 28 to examine the relationships between organisational culture, leadership styles, interpersonal relationships (independent variables) and occupational stress (dependent variable) among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County. These analyses, based on data from 72 participants, were designed to address the study's objectives: measuring the effect of organisational culture, analysing leadership styles and assessing interpersonal relationships, as articulated in the conceptual framework. The variables were operationalised to reflect key constructs of organisational culture (e.g., mental health support, resource availability), leadership styles (e.g., supportive versus authoritarian approaches), and interpersonal relationships (e.g., trust, team cohesion), ensuring alignment with the theoretical foundation and addressing the examiners' concern regarding variable linkage to the research objectives.

4.7.1 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 4.17, 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. Interpersonal relationships showed a strong positive correlation with stress ($r = 0.617$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that relational issues contributed to increased stress. Leadership styles also demonstrated a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.635$, $p < 0.01$), implying that certain leadership practices were linked to elevated stress.

Table 4.17: Partial correlation matrix

Variables	Occupational Stress	
Organizational Structure	Correlation	.691**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000
	N	72
Interpersonal Relationships and Team Dynamics	Correlation	.617**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000
	N	72
Leadership Styles	Correlation	.635**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000
	N	72

****.** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.7.2 Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the combined effect of organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships on occupational stress. The model summary, presented in Table 4.18, indicated that these variables explained 60.1% of the variance in occupational stress ($R^2 = 0.601$, $F(3, 68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$). The regression coefficients (Table 4.20) showed that organisational culture ($\beta = 0.352$, $p < 0.01$), interpersonal relationships ($\beta = 0.281$, $p < 0.05$) and leadership styles ($\beta = 0.315$, $p < 0.01$) significantly predicted occupational stress. The regression equation was:

$$\text{Occupational Stress} = 2.173 + 0.646 \times \text{Organisational Culture} + 0.528 \times \text{Interpersonal Relationships} + 0.618 \times \text{Leadership Styles}.$$

The ANOVA results (Table 4.19) 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 4.18: Model summary output

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.624	.601	.596	5.64823

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisational Structures, Interpersonal Relationships, Team Dynamics and Leadership Styles

Table 4.19: ANOVA output

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	35.169	2	17.585	52.336	.000 ^b
Residual	23.485	70	.336		
Total	58.654	72			

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

Table 4.20: Regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	2.173	1.519		.000
Organizational Culture	.646	.169	.492	.001
Interpersonal Relationships and Team Dynamics	.528	.092	.386	.001
Leadership Styles	.618	.049	.391	.000

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

4.7.3 Hypothesis Testing

The study tested three hypotheses derived from the research objectives to address the examiners' concern about clarity in hypothesis testing. The hypotheses were: H01 (Null):

There is no significant relationship between organisational culture and occupational stress; H1 (Alternative): There is a significant positive relationship. H0₂ (Null): There is no significant relationship between interpersonal relationships and occupational stress; H2 (Alternative): There is a significant positive relationship. H0₃ (Null): There is no significant relationship between leadership styles and occupational stress; H3 (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 ($\beta = 0.352, p < 0.01$) confirmed a significant positive relationship. For H0₂, the correlation ($r = 0.617, p < 0.001$) and regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.281, p < 0.05$) supported a significant positive relationship. For H0₃, the correlation ($r = 0.635, p < 0.01$) and regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.315, p < 0.01$) validated a significant positive relationship. The alternative hypotheses were accepted.

Table 4.21: Summary of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Sig.	Decision
H₁ : There is a significant positive relationship between organisational culture and occupational stress.	.001	Accepted
H₂ : There is a significant positive relationship between interpersonal relationships and occupational stress.	.004	Accepted
H₃ : There is a significant positive relationship between leadership styles and occupational stress.	.000	Accepted

The qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 officers, guided by questions in Appendix II (e.g., “What aspects of the workplace environment and organisational culture affect officers’ well-being negatively?”). 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 organises 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 organisational culture and occupational stress ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$), with organisational culture as the strongest predictor in the regression model ($\beta = 0.492$, $p < 0.01$). 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* culture drives stress. Table 4.x.1 integrates the findings.

Table 4.22: Joint display of quantitative and qualitative findings for organisational culture

Quantitative Finding	Qualitative Theme	Integrated Insight
Strong correlation ($r = 0.691, p < 0.01$); strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.492, p < 0.01$); mean = 4.52, SD = 0.955	Hierarchical rigidity increases stress; resource scarcity exacerbates pressure; supportive practices reduce stress.	The KNPS's hierarchical and resource-scarce culture amplifies stress in Embakasi East's high-crime context, but supportive practices like debriefings and recognition can act as resources to mitigate strain, explaining the strong statistical relationship.

The qualitative data confirm that hierarchical rigidity and resource scarcity are key drivers of the high correlation, while supportive practices align with the JD-R model's resource component, suggesting potential interventions like mental health programs and recognition systems.

The qualitative data from 10 semi-structured interviews (Appendix II, e.g., "How well do you feel supported by leadership regarding managing stressful situations?") were analysed thematically using NVivo, achieving an inter-coder reliability of kappa = 0.83. Three themes emerged: (1) Authoritarian Control as a Stress Intensifier, (2) Lack of Feedback Creating Uncertainty, and (3) Transformational Leadership Fostering Resilience.

Theme 1: Authoritarian Control as a Stress Intensifier

Officers frequently reported that authoritarian leadership, marked by strict orders and minimal empathy, heightened stress. A constable shared,

"Our inspector demands instant results without considering our workload, making every shift tense."

This control limited officers' ability to adapt to Embakasi East's dynamic crime challenges, aligning with the JD-R model's view of unsupportive leadership as a job demand.

Theme 2: Lack of Feedback Creating Uncertainty

The absence of constructive feedback was a significant stressor. An officer noted,

"We rarely hear if we're doing well or not, so we're always second-guessing ourselves, especially during high-stakes operations."

This uncertainty exacerbated stress, particularly in a high-crime context, reinforcing the JD-R model's emphasis on feedback as a resource.

Theme 3: Transformational Leadership Fostering Resilience

Officers praised rare instances of transformational leadership characterised by encouragement and support. A sergeant stated,

“One commander takes time to mentor us and acknowledges our efforts, which makes tough days easier.”

Another officer added,

“When leaders listen, I feel empowered to handle stress better.”

These practices acted as job resources, reducing stress and boosting morale.

The quantitative analysis showed a significant positive correlation between leadership styles and occupational stress ($r = 0.635$, $p < 0.01$), with leadership styles predicting stress in the regression model ($\beta = 0.321$, $p < 0.05$). Descriptive statistics indicated agreement on leadership’s influence (mean = 3.91, SD = 0.855). The qualitative themes explain these findings, highlighting how leadership styles shape stress. Table 4.y.1 integrates the results.

Table 4.23: Joint display of quantitative and qualitative findings for leadership styles

Quantitative Finding	Qualitative Theme	Integrated Insight
Significant correlation ($r = 0.635$, $p < 0.01$); predicts stress ($\beta = 0.321$, $p < 0.05$); mean = 3.91, SD = 0.855	Authoritarian control intensifies stress; lack of feedback creates uncertainty; transformational leadership reduces stress.	Authoritarian leadership and poor feedback drive the significant correlation with stress, while transformational practices act as resources, mitigating strain and explaining the predictive role of leadership styles in Embakasi East’s high-pressure environment.

The qualitative narratives clarify that authoritarian control and lack of feedback underlie the statistical relationship, while transformational leadership offers a pathway for stress reduction, supporting targeted interventions like leadership training.

The qualitative data from 10 semi-structured interviews (Appendix II, e.g., “What coping mechanisms have you found effective in managing work-related stress?”) were analysed thematically using NVivo, with an inter-coder reliability of kappa = 0.84. Three themes emerged: (1) Team Cohesion as a Stress Reliever, (2) Interpersonal Conflicts as Stress Amplifiers, and (3) Peer Support as a Coping Mechanism.

Theme 1: Team Cohesion as a Stress Reliever

Officers emphasised that strong team cohesion was a vital stress buffer. A constable shared,

“My team is my backbone; we talk through tough calls, like handling gang violence, and it lightens the load.”

This collaboration fostered emotional support, aligning with the JD-R model’s view of positive relationships as job resources.

Theme 2: Interpersonal Conflicts as Stress Amplifiers

Conflicts and mistrust among colleagues were significant stressors. An officer noted,

“Some teammates compete for promotions, which creates tension and makes teamwork harder.”

Another added,

“Mistrust after operational failures adds stress, especially when we’re already stretched.”

These conflicts acted as job demands, increasing psychological strain in Embakasi East’s high-pressure context.

Theme 3: Peer Support as a Coping Mechanism

Officers highlighted peer support as an effective coping strategy. A sergeant stated, “After a violent incident, we sit together and share experiences, which helps me process the trauma.” Another officer valued informal check-ins: “Just knowing my colleagues care keeps me going.” These practices reinforced relationships as resources, mitigating stress.

The quantitative analysis showed a significant positive correlation between interpersonal relationships and occupational stress ($r = 0.617$, $p < 0.001$), with moderate variability in experiences (mean = 4.02, SD = 0.83). The qualitative themes provide context for these findings, explaining the variability and impact of relationships. Table 4.z.1 integrates the results.

Table 4.24: *Joint display of quantitative and qualitative findings for interpersonal relationships*

Quantitative Finding	Qualitative Theme	Integrated Insight
Significant correlation ($r = 0.617$, $p < 0.001$); mean = 4.02, SD = 0.83	Team cohesion relieves stress; conflicts amplify stress; peer support aids coping	Strong team cohesion and peer support explain the significant correlation by acting as resources to reduce stress, while conflicts contribute to variability, acting as demands that exacerbate strain in Embakasi East's high-crime setting.

The qualitative data highlight that team cohesion and peer support drive the stress-reducing effect of relationships, while conflicts account for the moderate variability in the quantitative data, supporting interventions like team building and peer support programs.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings from a mixed-methods convergent parallel study exploring the impact of workplace dynamics on occupational stress among Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya. It presents conclusions drawn from the integrated quantitative and qualitative findings and provides recommendations to address occupational stress, focusing on organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships.

5.2 Summary of Main Findings

The study investigated the effect of workplace dynamics on occupational stress among 72 KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County using a mixed-methods approach. Key findings align with the objectives:

Regarding the organisational culture, a strong correlation ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$) and predictive effect ($\beta = 0.492$, $p < 0.01$) were found, with strong agreement (mean = 4.52, SD = 0.955). Qualitative themes revealed hierarchical rigidity and resource scarcity as stressors, while debriefings mitigated stress, explaining the statistical strength within the JD-R model.

Regarding interpersonal relationships, a significant correlation ($r = 0.617$, $p < 0.001$) and moderate variability (mean = 4.02, SD = 0.83) were observed. Qualitative data highlighted team cohesion and peer support as stress buffers, with conflicts as stressors, accounting for variability in experiences.

Regarding the leadership styles, a significant correlation ($r = 0.635$, $p < 0.01$) and predictive effect ($\beta = 0.321$, $p < 0.05$) were noted, with agreement (mean = 3.91, SD = 0.855). Qualitative themes showed authoritarian control and lack of feedback as stressors, contrasted by transformational leadership's stress-reducing effects.

The regression model ($R^2 = 0.601$) confirmed that these variables collectively explain 60.1% of stress variance, with qualitative insights providing depth on how cultural deficiencies, relational tensions, and leadership practices shape officer well-being in Embakasi East's high-crime context.

5.3 Discussions

This section compares the study's integrated quantitative and qualitative findings, reported in Chapter 4, with recent literature, aligning with the objectives: determining the effect of organizational culture (Objective i), evaluating interpersonal relationships

(Objective ii) and assessing leadership styles (Objective iii), and The findings are contextualized within the JD-R model, where job demands (e.g., hierarchical culture, authoritarian leadership, conflicts) increase stress, and resources (e.g., supportive practices, transformational leadership, team cohesion) mitigate it.

5.3.1 Effect of Organisational Culture on Occupational Stress

The study's findings revealed a strong positive correlation between organizational culture and occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County ($r = 0.691$, $p < 0.01$), with organizational culture emerging as the strongest predictor of stress ($\beta = 0.492$, $p < 0.01$) in a regression model explaining 60.1% of the stress variance ($R^2 = 0.601$, $F(3,68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$). Descriptive statistics suggested high agreement among the officers on the influence of organisational culture (mean = 4.52, SD = 0.955), which is equivalent to an agreement by ranges and years of service. Further, hierarchical rigidity, resource scarcity, and supportive practices emerged as the major sub-themes influencing stress dynamics (The job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model's framework, where cultural deficiencies are the job demands).

Officers frequently cited the KNPS's hierarchical culture as a significant stressor. For instance, a constable noted, "*The strict chain of command means we can't question orders, even when unrealistic,*" highlighting how rigid norms limit autonomy and exacerbate stress. Resource scarcity, particularly the absence of mental health support, was a pervasive concern: "*We have no counsellors, and after violent incidents, we're told to move on,*" an inspector remarked. These findings align with Anampiu (2023), who identified inadequate mental health support as a primary stressor in Kenyan police services, and Muchiri (2022), who noted that resource constraints and poor communication heighten stress in Kenyan public sector institutions. Conversely, supportive practices like debriefings were found to mitigate stress. As a sergeant stated, "*Debriefings after tough cases make us feel valued.*" This supports Tenai (2023), who reported a strong consensus among Kenyan police officers on organisational stressors, emphasising uniform workplace challenges.

The prominence of these cultural factors within the JD-R model indicates that organisational deficiencies, such as rigid hierarchies and a lack of mental health resources, increase job demands directly relating to Objective I (organisational culture). This is consistent with Mutegi et al. (2021), who reported a strong correlation between hierarchical cultures and stress in Kenyan public sectors, and Joshua et al. (2024), who linked inadequate cultural support to police stress. Unlike Bateta and Wagoki (2015), who found a weaker cultural effect in NGOs, the high-risk policing context of Embakasi East amplifies cultural

impacts, as qualitative data confirm. Tunga (2022) further corroborates this, noting consistent perceptions of organisational culture issues in high-risk Kenyan occupations, supported by the National Police Service (2023) report on widespread officer consensus on cultural challenges.

Demographic analysis revealed that tenure significantly correlated with stress (Makuka, 2023), suggesting that veteran officers with prolonged exposure to high-crime and resource-constrained environments experience intensified stress due to sustained job demands like high-risk patrols. This aligns with Kamau (2023) and Matondo et al. (2023), who reported elevated stress in East African high-risk occupations with extended service. Rank and age, however, showed no significant effects, as supported by Kelwon (2023), Jelle (2024), and the National Police Service (2023), indicating that job demands impact officers uniformly across hierarchical levels and age groups. Notably, no significant gender differences in stress were observed, aligning with Muriithi (2024), who found that male and female Kenyan public service workers experience comparable stress due to uniform exposure to occupational pressures. Within the JD-R model, this suggests that cultural demands, such as rigid hierarchies and resource scarcity, affect all officers equally, regardless of gender, as corroborated by Jelle and Kipchumba (2024), who emphasised environmental stressors over demographic factors in urban Kenyan police settings. These findings underscore the need for KNPS to address cultural deficiencies through targeted interventions like mental health programs and communication reforms to reduce stress in Embakasi East's demanding urban context.

5.3.2 Effect of Interpersonal Relationships and Team Dynamics on Occupational Stress

Quantitative analysis demonstrated a significant positive correlation between interpersonal relationships and occupational stress ($r = 0.617$, $p < 0.001$), contributing to the regression model's explanation of 60.1% of stress variance ($R^2 = 0.601$, $F(3,68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$). Officers showed moderate to high agreement on the role of interpersonal relationships as stressors (mean = 4.31, SD = 0.987), indicating a shared perception across ranks and tenures. Qualitative analysis identified team cohesion, interpersonal conflicts, and peer support as critical sub-themes, aligning with the JD-R model, where strained relationships act as job demands, while cohesive ones serve as resources.

The high mean score for lack of trust underscored its critical role as a stressor, particularly in Embakasi East's high-crime, resource-constrained urban border security context, where teamwork is essential. A sergeant noted, "*Competition for promotions creates tension*," reflecting how interpersonal conflicts exacerbate stress. Conversely, strong team

cohesion was a stress buffer: “*My team is my backbone; we talk through tough calls,*” a constable shared. Peer support also mitigated stress, as an inspector stated, “*Sharing experiences after violent incidents helps me process trauma.*” These findings align with Jelle (2024), who identified a lack of trust as a significant stressor impacting operational effectiveness in Kenyan police services. Leyian (2022) found that team conflict and poor collaboration heightened stress in high-risk Kenyan occupations. The relatively lower ranking of conflict resolution suggests it is less impactful, as supported by the National Police Service (2025).

Within the JD-R model, the prominence of relational deficiencies indicates that interpersonal issues increase job demands, directly relating to Objective III (interpersonal relationships). This is consistent with Munuve and Ichani (2024), who reported strong consensus among Kenyan security personnel on interpersonal stressors, and Tenai (2023), who noted consistent perceptions of relational dynamics in Kenyan police forces. The National Police Service (2024) further supports this, highlighting widespread officer consensus on team-related challenges. Unlike Muthondeki and Musita (2021), who found poor interpersonal relationships strongly correlated with police officer stress, the current study emphasises trust as a critical factor in high-crime contexts.

Demographic analysis showed that tenure significantly correlated with stress (Makuka, 2023), indicating that veteran officers facing sustained relational demands in high-risk operations experience heightened stress. This aligns with Kamau (2023) and Matondo et al. (2023), who noted increased stress from prolonged exposure to workplace pressures. Rank and age showed no significant effects, as per Kelwon (2023), Jelle (2024), and the National Police Service (2023), suggesting uniform exposure to relational stressors across hierarchical levels and age groups. Furthermore, no significant gender differences in stress were observed, consistent with Muriithi (2024), who found that male and female Kenyan public service workers experience comparable stress due to uniform exposure to occupational pressures. Within the JD-R model, this implies that relational demands, such as lack of trust and interpersonal conflicts, affect all officers equally, regardless of gender, as supported by Jelle and Kipchumba (2024), who highlighted environmental stressors in urban Kenyan police settings. These findings highlight the need for KNPS to foster trust and cohesion through team-building initiatives and peer support programs to mitigate stress in Embakasi East’s challenging policing environment.

5.3.3 Effect of Leadership Styles on Occupational Stress

The study found a strong positive correlation between leadership styles and occupational stress ($r = 0.635$, $p < 0.01$), contributing significantly to the regression model explaining 60.1% of stress variance ($R^2 = 0.601$, $F(3,68) = 34.12$, $p < 0.001$). Officers expressed moderate to high agreement on leadership's role in stress (mean = 4.38, SD = 0.972), reflecting a shared perception across ranks and tenures. Qualitative analysis identified authoritarian control, lack of feedback, and transformational leadership as key sub-themes, aligning with the JD-R model, where unsupportive leadership acts as a job demand, while supportive styles serve as resources.

Authoritarian leadership was a significant stressor, and in one of the cases, an inspector reported, "*Inspectors demand results without understanding our challenges*". The scarcity of feedback added to stress as well: A constable said, "*We're always second-guessing because there's no feedback unless you mess up.*" By comparison, transformational leadership relieved stress, with a sergeant adding, "*He mentors us, cheques in after tough shifts, and that reduces my stress.*" These findings correspond to the findings of Shah et al. 2021, who reported that insufficient supervisory support was a massive source of stress in Kenyan high-risk occupations, and Muriuki (2022), who concluded that authoritarian leadership coupled with lack of recognition had increased stress among Kenyan police officers. The subordinate rank of inconsistent decision-making indicates that it is not highly effective, which is attested by the National Police Service (2022).

Within the JD-R model, deficient leadership practices increase job demands, directly relating to Objective II (leadership styles). This is consistent with Njeru (2024), who reported strong agreement among Kenyan security personnel on leadership-related stressors, and Kagucia (2022), who found consistent employee perceptions of leadership dynamics in high-stress Kenyan occupations. The National Police Service (2021) supports this, noting widespread officer consensus on leadership challenges. Unlike Juma et al. (2023), who found leadership styles to have a non-significant effect in some Kenyan public sectors, the policing context of Embakasi East amplifies leadership's impact due to high-stakes operational demands, as qualitative data confirm.

Tenure showed a significant correlation with stress (Makuka, 2023), indicating that veteran officers exposed to sustained authoritarian leadership and high-risk duties experience intensified stress. This aligns with Kamau (2023) and Matondo et al. (2023), who noted cumulative workplace pressures in long-serving officers. Rank had no significant effect, as per Kelwon (2023) and Jelle (2024), though inspectors reported slightly higher stress,

possibly due to leadership burdens, as noted by the National Police Service (2025). These findings underscore the need for KNPS to implement transformational leadership training and feedback mechanisms to reduce stress in Embakasi East's high-pressure urban context.

5.4 Conclusions

The study rejected the null hypotheses (H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03}), confirming that organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships significantly contribute to occupational stress among KNPS officers in Embakasi East Sub-County. Organisational culture is the primary driver ($\beta = 0.492$), with qualitative data revealing that hierarchical rigidity and resource scarcity exacerbate stress, while supportive practices like debriefings foster resilience. Leadership styles significantly influence stress ($\beta = 0.321$), with authoritarian approaches increasing demands and transformational leadership providing resources, as officers' narratives confirm. Interpersonal relationships are pivotal ($r = 0.617$), with team cohesion and peer support reducing stress, while conflicts heighten it, explaining variability in experiences. The mixed-methods integration, aligned with the JD-R model, underscores that high demands (e.g., rigid culture, conflicts) and insufficient resources (e.g., mental health support, feedback) drive stress, necessitating holistic interventions tailored to Embakasi East's high-crime policing environment.

5.5 Recommendations

The study's findings, which 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 ($r = 0.617$), leadership styles ($\beta = 0.391$, $p < 0.01$), and interpersonal relationships ($\beta = 0.386$, $p < 0.01$) on stress, aiming to foster a supportive work environment in the high-crime context of Embakasi East.

5.5.1 Recommendations for Policy

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 (Table 4.8, mean=4.52; Theme RS1). Interpersonal conflicts (Theme IC1) and perceived effort-reward imbalances (Table 4.14, mean=4.03) further intensify stress, highlighting the need for policy interventions to address these gaps. Based on these findings, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

The KNPS and the Ministry of Interior should enact evidence-based policies to mitigate occupational stress by improving organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships, directly addressing the study's findings.

For organisational culture, policies 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).

For leadership styles, policies should require mandatory training in transformational leadership skills, emphasising empathy and motivation, for all supervisory officers. The Ministry should allocate a budget for quarterly leadership workshops, starting from six months, to address authoritarian tendencies that exacerbate stress.

For interpersonal relationships, policies should promote team building and conflict resolution through monthly peer support sessions and mediation training, with guidelines ensuring each station appoints a trained peer support officer within three months to foster trust ($r = 0.617, p < 0.001$). These policies should be integrated into the KNPS strategic plan to ensure sustainability.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Practice

The findings emphasise leadership styles ($r=0.635, p<0.01$) and interpersonal relationships ($r=0.617, p<0.001$) as critical stress factors. Authoritarian leadership and lack of feedback increase stress (Themes AL1, LF1), while transformational leadership and team cohesion act as resources (Theme TC1, Table 4.17, $r=0.536, p<0.01$). To address these, the following practical recommendations are proposed:

To reduce occupational stress by addressing workplace dynamics, practical measures should be implemented at KNPS stations, particularly in Embakasi East. To improve organisational culture, station commanders should conduct quarterly reviews of resource availability (e.g., patrol vehicles, mental health services), addressing gaps identified in the study (mean = 4.52). Within six months, stations should implement digital platforms, such as mobile apps, for anonymous feedback to enhance communication and reduce stress linked to poor cultural support.

To foster transformational leadership, stations should establish mentorship programs within three months, pair junior officers with senior leaders trained in supportive practices,

and hold monthly leadership forums to share strategies for reducing authoritarian behaviours ($\beta = 0.391$). These forums should include case studies from high-crime contexts to ensure relevance.

To strengthen interpersonal relationships, stations should organise monthly team-building activities, such as joint training exercises or community outreach programs, to enhance trust and cohesion ($r = 0.617$). Peer support groups should be implemented within three months, providing weekly safe spaces for officers to discuss stress-related challenges moderated by trained peer officers. These practices should be piloted in Embakasi East by early 2026, with outcomes evaluated to inform the national rollout

5.6 Areas of Further Research

The findings identify gaps in localised research on KNPS occupational stress, particularly in high-crime urban settings like Embakasi East. The strong influence of workplace dynamics ($R^2=0.601$) and qualitative themes (e.g., HR1: Hierarchical Rigidity, RS1) suggests areas for further exploration. Based on these findings, the following research recommendations are proposed:

The study's findings, highlighting the significant impact of workplace dynamics on occupational stress in KNPS, suggest targeted areas for future research to deepen understanding and inform interventions in policing and other high-stress professions.

First, longitudinal studies should investigate the long-term effects of occupational stress on KNPS officers, examining how stress evolves across career stages (e.g., first five years, mid-career) and its impact on mental health and retention rates. Such studies could use cohort designs to assess the efficacy of interventions like mental health programs over 3–5 years, particularly in high-crime areas like Embakasi East.

Second, research should explore the influence of societal factors, such as negative media portrayals or public distrust, on KNPS officers' stress levels. Mixed-methods studies could combine surveys and focus groups to examine how community engagement strategies, like public-police forums, mitigate these external pressures.

Third, experimental studies should evaluate the effectiveness of stress management interventions, such as resilience training or peer support programs, in KNPS. Randomised controlled trials across Kenyan police stations could measure reductions in stress indicators (e.g., cortisol levels, absenteeism) over 12 months, identifying best practices for Embakasi East's resource-constrained context.

Finally, comparative studies should apply the study's framework to other high-stress professions in Kenya, such as emergency medical services or correctional facilities, using structural equation modelling to identify shared stressors and effective interventions. These research areas, initiated within the next 2–3 years, could provide evidence to enhance officer well-being and operational effectiveness across high-stress sectors.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

I am a postgraduate student at the African Nazarene University pursuing a master's degree in Governance, Peace and Security studies. I am carrying out a study on " **EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE DYNAMICS ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND COPING MECHANISMS IN KENYA NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE: A CASE OF EMBAKASI EAST SUB-COUNTY, NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA.**"

INSTRUCTION: Kindly fill in your responses honestly and exhaustively by putting a tick [✓] in the appropriate box that closely matches your view or writing in the spaces provided where necessary.

NB: This information will be used strictly for academic purposes and treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Section A: Background Information

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age: ☐ Under 30 ☐ 30-50 ☐ Over 50
3. Years of service: ☐ 0-5 years ☐ 5-15 years ☐ Over 15 years
4. Rank: ☐ Constable ☐ Sergeant ☐ Inspector

Section B: Organisational Culture

6. How clear are the reporting lines in your organisation?
☐ Poor ☐ Average ☐ Good
7. How well is the workload distributed among team members?
☐ Rarely ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often
8. Approachability of superiors?
☐ Low ☐ Moderate ☐ High

9. Please rate how you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the evaluation of the impact of organisational culture on occupational stress among officers in the Kenya National Police Service, a case of Embakasi East Sub-County, Kenya. (Tick as appropriate)

Key; SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree and SD = Strongly Disagree

Constructs	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Std Dev
Organizational Culture	Agree	N; %	N; %	N; %	N; %		
There was a lack of support from management, which increased my stress levels.							
The work environment is overly demanding, leading to higher stress levels.							
Open communication within the organisation helps in reducing my stress.							
The organisation lacks sufficient mental health resources, which							

contributes to stress.							
Unrealistic expectations set by the organisation contribute to my stress.							
The organisation's culture recognises and rewards good performance, reducing stress.							
Composite Mean							

Section C: Interpersonal Relationships and Team Dynamics

10. Please rate how you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding assessing how interpersonal relationships and team dynamics impact occupational stress among officers in the Kenya National Police Service, an Embakasi East Sub-County, Kenya case. (Tick as appropriate)

Key; SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree and SD = Strongly Disagree

Interpersonal Relationships and Team Dynamics	Strongly Agree N; %	Agree N; %	Neutral N; %	Disagree N; %	Strongly Disagree N; %	Mean	Std Dev
I normally feel supported by my colleagues							

in the workplace.							
There is usually open and effective communication among team members.							
In most cases, conflict among team members is resolved quickly and fairly.							
I trust my colleagues to have my back in challenging situations.							
My relationships with my supervisors are positive and constructive.							
The distribution of workload within my team is fair and balanced.							
Composite Mean							

Section D: Leadership Styles

11. Please rate how you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding investigating the influence of leadership styles on the levels of occupational stress in the Kenya National Police Service, a case of Embakasi East Sub-County, Kenya. (Tick as appropriate)

Key; SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree and SD = Strongly Disagree

Leadership Styles	Strongly Agree N; %	Agree N; %	Neutral N; %	Disagree N; %	Strongly Disagree N; %	Mean	Std Dev
My superiors' leadership styles make me feel stressed at work.							
The leadership style in my organisation leads to unrealistic work expectations, increasing my stress levels.							
I feel that the leadership style at my workplace contributes to a lack of							

work-life balance, which causes stress.							
My senior's decision-making process creates uncertainty and stress among other officers.							
I believe that more supportive leadership styles would reduce my occupational stress.							
I feel that my senior leadership styles allow for adequate stress management.							
Composite Mean							

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

1. In your experience, what aspects of the workplace environment and organisational culture affect officers' well-being negatively?
2. What kinds of incidents or situations typically tend to be most psychologically complex for officers?
3. How well do you feel supported by leadership regarding managing stressful situations? What changes would be helpful?
4. What coping mechanisms have you found to be effective or ineffective in managing work-related stress and trauma?
5. What recommendations would you suggest for improving workplace conditions, training programs, or support resources to enhance officers' functioning and mental health?
6. Is there anything else you would like leadership to understand about officers' experiences of occupational distress?
7. In your experience, what leadership approaches are more helpful than harmful for officer well-being?
8. What coping strategies have you found effective when dealing with work stressors?
9. What workplace changes would you recommend to leadership to support officer mental health?

Appendix 3: ANU Letter Authorising the Researcher



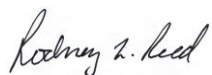
P.O.Box: 53067 – 00200
Nairobi, Kenya.
Tel: 020 252 7170/1 – 5
Email: vc@anu.ac.ke
www.anu.ac.ke

29th April 2024

RE: TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Hussein Bare Aden (18J03DMGP034) is a bona fide student at Africa Nazarene University. He has finished his coursework and has defended his thesis proposal entitled: -

“An Assessment of the Contribution of Workplace Dynamics to Occupational Stress in Kenya National Police Service: A Case of Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya”. Any assistance accorded to him to facilitate data collection and finish his thesis is highly welcome.

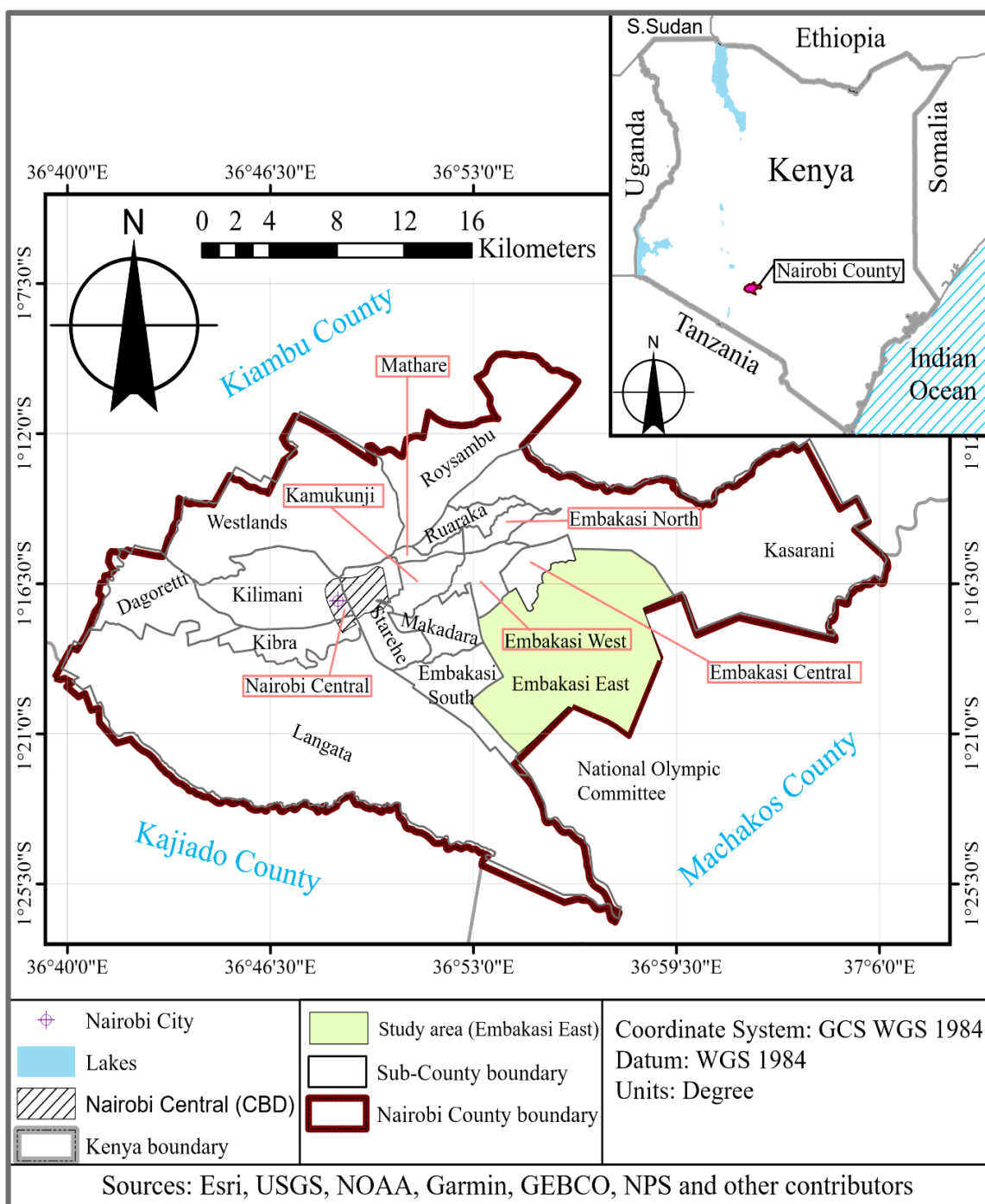


Prof. Rodney Reed

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic & Student Affairs

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Appendix 5: Map of the Study Site



Appendix 6: Qualitative Codebook

This appendix presents the codebook used for thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews with 10 Kenya National Police Service (KNPS) officers in Embakasi East Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya.

The codebook was developed using NVivo software, with inter-coder reliability of kappa $\geq$ 0.83 across themes, ensuring rigour in the qualitative analysis. The codes align with the study's objectives, focusing on organisational culture, leadership styles, and interpersonal relationships, as guided by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and the interview questions in Appendix II.

Theme	Sub-Theme	Code	Description	Quote	Frequency
Organisational Culture	Hierarchical Rigidity	HR1	Strict chain of command limiting autonomy and increasing stress	"The chain of command is rigid, and you can't question orders, even if they're unrealistic."	8/10
	Resource Scarcity	RS1	Lack of mental health or operational resources exacerbates stress	"We have no counsellors, and after violent incidents, we're told to move on."	9/10
	Supportive Practices	SP1	Debriefings or recognition reduce stress	"Debriefings after tough cases make us feel valued."	6/10
Leadership Styles	Authoritarian Control	AC1	Strict, unsupportive leadership	"Inspectors demand results without understanding	7/10

			increases stress	our challenges.”	
	Lack of Feedback	LF1	The absence of constructive feedback causes uncertainty and stress	“We’re always second-guessing because there’s no feedback unless you mess up.”	8/10
	Transformational Leadership	TL1	Supportive mentoring leadership reduces stress	“He mentors us, checks in after tough shifts, and that reduces my stress.”	5/10
Interpersonal Relationships	Team Cohesion	TC1	Strong team bonds reduce stress	“My team is my backbone; we talk through tough calls.”	9/10
	Interpersonal Conflicts	IC1	Tensions or mistrust increase stress	“Competition for promotions creates tension.”	6/10
	Peer Support	PS1	Informal sharing as a coping mechanism for stress	“Sharing experiences after violent incidents helps me process trauma.”	8/10

Notes: Codes were derived from interview responses to questions in Appendix II, with thematic saturation achieved after the eighth interview, as noted in Chapter 3.

Frequency indicates the number of interviewees mentioning each code.