

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality



Comfort Iliya¹, Ben Pam Wurim²

¹Ph.D Student, Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Jos, Jos Nigeria

²Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Jos, Jos Nigeria

ABSTRACT: Deviant behaviour, according to studies, is a serious problem for manufacturing and service organisations in developing and emerging nations, and this has also been observed even in academia. The study specifically looked at the role of spirituality as a mediator in the link between informational justice and deviant behaviour among university academics. Data were collected among university academics in Gombe state university and Federal university Kashere, Gombe state Nigeria. Structural Equation Model with Partial Least Square (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the data. The results of the hypotheses reveal that informational justice has no significant negative effect directly on deviance behaviour; spirituality has a significant negative effect on deviance behaviour. Informational justice has a significantly positive effect on spirituality. The non-significance of informational justice direct effect on workplace deviance proves that there is a full mediation effect of spirituality. This implies that, to reduce deviant behaviour among university academics, merely informational justice is not enough, but it should increase spirituality. This study's findings prove that informational justice can significantly reduce deviant behaviour among university academics when mediated by high spirituality.

KEYWORDS: Informational justice, Spirituality, Deviant behaviour, University Academics

INTRODUCTION

Deviant behaviour is also found among academia, according to studies, and is a severe issue for industrial and service firms in developing and emerging countries (Ozturk and Yuksel-Poyraz, 2021; Masquood et al., 2021). Globally, deviant behaviour is apparent in 75% of employees engaging in fraud, vandalism, and absenteeism (Sustiyatik et al., 2019). According to Hollinger and Adams (2010), staff theft was responsible for around 45% of the inventory shortage experienced by U.S. retailers in 2010. In the United States, employee theft, absenteeism, and decreased productivity cost \$300 billion a year. Similarly, a previous study revealed that deliberate disobedience, tardiness at work, and unauthorised use or removal of business property all have prevalence rates of 65%, 40%, and 80%, respectively, in Nigeria (Akikibofori, 2013).

Studies have shown that university academics in Nigeria exhibit deviant behaviour as well. For instance, Nwadiani (2018), Duhu et al. (2021), Onoyese (2019), and Oyeizugbe (2021) claim that plagiarism, sexual abuse, and acting rudely, are widespread among Nigerian university lecturers. Deviant behaviour among university academics is on the rise, according to empirical data as well as reports from Nigerian daily newspapers (Adeoti, Shamsudin, & Mohammed, 2021; Alabi, 2021; Obalade & Mtembu, 2023); these actions have resulted in the dismissal of some lecturers (Sahara Reporter, 2019). Organisations have suffered significant financial and economic losses in situations when there has been a high level of deviance. Such losses are accounted for in cost centres, such as the organization's expense for hiring new employees, loss of knowledge assets that are expensive to copy and replace (Harris, Lavelle, & McMahan, 2018; Rubenstein, Eberly, Lee, and Mitchell, 2018); tarnished reputations, lower productivity (Wurim, 2013; Peter, Okpa, & Okoi, 2020); Saleem and Gapinath (2015).

To address these problems, most Nigerian universities have staff policies and regulations that deal with deviance or misconduct and specify procedures for discipline as well as disciplinary measures for deviant behaviour, such as the keeping of registers at the workplace, the issuing of queries, the setting of committees to address issues of harassment in the workplace, the annual appraisal of academics, and the suspension of academics engaged in unethical behaviour, among others (Obalade & Akeke 2020; Ochentenwu, 2022; Obalade & Mtemba, 2023). Yet deviant behaviour among university academics is on the increase (Fegbenro

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

& Olusupo, 2020). However, these strategies for curbing workplace deviant behaviour may not be effective if the underlying causes of deviant acts exhibited by employees of an organisation are not examined (Robbins and Judge, 2017). Obalade and Mtemba (2023) as well as Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) argued that workplace deviant behaviour may not be the result of an employee being deviant but rather may be the result of the employee trying to avenge themselves by engaging in acts that are detrimental to the organisation. As such, previous research has indicated that efforts should be focused on addressing the root causes of deviance inside the organisation in order to reduce its detrimental impact on the organisation (Ozturk & Poyraz, 2021).

Earlier research had suggested more empirical studies on deviant behaviour using organisational justice (Ozturk & Poyraz, 2021; Gomam et al. 2017). Although previous studies on deviant behaviour have looked into the interplay of organisational justice and deviant behaviour (Akhigbe & Sunday, 2017; Igbe et al., 2017; Fegbero & Olusupo, 2020; Andrade & Ramirez, 2019), Some of the prior literature has explained the relationship with all its dimensions (Gomam et al., 2017; Gull, Qamar, Khan, & Tanvir, 2020; Ozturk & Poyraz, 2021). Yet most of the previous research has studied informational justice and interpersonal justice as a single dimension (interactional justice) of organisational justice (Gull et al., 2020; Ozturk & Poyraz, 2021; Dar & Rahman, 2022; Mohd & Abdul, 2019). However, the scope of this study is limited to informational justice and deviant behaviour. This is because fairness in information is very important to the job of a university lecturer. Yet, there are limited studies that have examined the relationship between informational justice and deviant behaviour (Lee & Abdullah, 2019; Maqsood et al., 2021).

Secondly, none of the previous studies examined the role of spirituality as a mediating variable in the relationship between informational justice and deviant behaviour among university academics; this calls for investigation in this field of study. This is because spirituality has been studied in relation to organisational-related factors, work-related factors, and personal factors (Sulaiman and Bhatti, 2013; Vem et al., 2022; Alias, Rasdi, Ismail, & Samah, 2013), but previous studies have ignored spirituality as a factor that influences employees' behaviours in the workplace, as suggested by Milliman (2018) and Vem et al. (2020). Hence, this study will add to the limited literature on spirituality, as suggested by Goman et al. (2017) and Milliman (2018). Spirituality is seen as values that an individual brings to the workplace and how such values influence both ethical-related and ethically unrelated worker interactions and outcomes. Therefore, based on the findings that suggest consistency, the present study will add to the literature on deviant behaviour as suggested by Goman et al. (2017) and Vem et al. (2022), who have earlier suggested more studies on deviant behaviour. Therefore, introducing spirituality as a mediating variable, in the relationship between informational justice and deviant behaviour had made this study a novel one.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Background

This study is founded on Blue's (1964) social exchange theory and Hirschi's (1969) social control theory, also known as social bond theory. The relationship between informational justice and deviant behaviour is linked to social exchange theory. According to Blau's social exchange theory, the relationship between people is based on reciprocity, trust, honesty, mutual assistance, equality, and mutual benefits. When an employee perceives unfair treatment, he or she develops a sense of distrust. This distrust often leads to negative behaviour, such as counterproductive work behaviour. On the contrary, fair management treatment will make employees feel respected, appreciated, and recognised, which in turn lead to positive responses in the workplace due to fair treatment (Akers & Sellars, 2004). Work relationships in an organisation are viewed by the employee's as one of a social exchange, and employees might engage in unethical acts due to the fact that this kind of social exchange is out of the scope of strict contracts. In other words, when employees perceive informational justice, they prefer to cooperate with supervisors to achieve the success of the organisation.

This study is also supported by social control theory, also known as social bond theory, developed by Hirschi (1969). It is based upon the idea that an individual's basic belief system, values, morals, commitments, and spirituality foster a lawful environment. Individuals who have these beliefs, morals, spirituality, and commitments often have a level of self-control over their actions and are in control of their lives. According to control theory, everyone is propelled towards deviance, but a system of controls works against these motivations to deviate. Hirschi (1969) asserts that individuals are prevented from engaging in deviant behaviour through their ties with social institutions such as family, institutions, and religion, as well as spirituality. As such, the theory posits that crime occurs when such values are weakened or are not well established. Suggesting that individuals will not engage in crime if they think that this will sacrifice their affection, their values, or their respect (Akers & Sellars, 2004). As a result, organisational deviance can be viewed as a possibility for all employees within the organisation, which is abstained only by those who attempt to maintain social bonds, ethical values, and spirituality (Ahmed & Omar, 2014). Hence, spirituality, which serves as an internal motivation, is expected to increase the employee's perception of organisational justice, thereby decreasing deviant behaviour.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

Informational Justice and Deviance Behaviour

Previous studies had elaborated on the three dimensions of organisational justice, namely: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Greenberg, 1987), to include four dimensions: distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice (Colquitt, 2001; Shibaoka et al., 2010). Colquitt (2001) brought a new perspective to interactional justice by suggesting two specific types of interactional justice, namely interpersonal justice and informational justice. Interpersonal justice refers to the degree to which people are treated politely with dignity and respect by their supervisors, while informational justice refers to the candid explanations provided by supervisors that convey information about why such procedures were used in a certain situation (Shibaoka et al., 2010). However, few studies have distinguished if interactional justice is a bi-dimension (Xu, Huang, and Songshan, 2023) or a single-dimension (Gull et al., 2020; Ozturk et al., 2021; Dar & Rahman, 2022; Sastiyatik et al., 2019; Mohd & Abdul, 2019). Thus, in this study, we proposed that there are two dimensions of interactional justice: interpersonal justice and informational justice. However, we chose to study informational justice as an independent variable because fairness in terms of information is an important part of the job of a lecturer. Hence, if academics perceive fairness as arising on the part of the management in the university; the more they reciprocate by exhibiting positive attitudes towards work (Gomam et al., 2017).

Informational justice denotes justice in subordinates being appropriately informed regarding evaluating their superiors and the value attached to employee perceptions of the process (Shibaoka et al., 2010). It provides explanations to employees on why procedures were used in certain ways or why outcomes were achieved in a certain fashion, as well as an effort to justify decisions and procedures (Thomas & Nagalingappa, 2012). It focuses on the amount and quality of the information provided concerning procedures and outcomes (Colquitt, 2001; Greenberg, 1990). In other words, the clarity, adequacy, and sincerity of communications regarding the decision are important antecedents of informational justice. For example, Greenberg (1990) suggests that a detailed and polite explanation of temporary pay cuts could reduce negative behaviour caused by insufficient pay, such as corporate theft and staff turnover. Informational justice has been identified as having a strong effect on the emotional attachment between the employee and the organisation (Greenberg, 1993). In an earlier study, O'Neill et al. (2011) found that informational justice influences employees' deviant behaviour. Likewise, recent studies such as Lee and Abdullah (2019), Dar and Rahman (2022), Maqsood et al. (2021), and Ranto et al. (2022) have found a significant and negative relationship between informational justice and deviant behaviour among emergency service personnel, employees of the hotel and tourism industries, as well as police officers. On this basis, the study proposes that:

H₁: informational justice negative effect on deviant behaviour among university academics.

SPIRITUALITY AND DEVIANCE

Previous studies had suggested a possible link between spirituality and deviant behaviour (Jiang et al., 2017; Li and Cheng, 2018). Spirituality leads to positive behaviour and a deviant-free atmosphere (Adeoti, Shamsudin, & Wan, 2017). Sulaiman and Bhatti (2013) affirm that strong spirituality would help generate positive behaviour and reduce deviant behaviour in an organisation. Ming-Chia (2012) studied manager's motivations to manipulate financial reports to achieve predetermined targets; their results indicate that spirituality is negatively related to the motivations for inappropriate earnings by management. Rego, Cunha, and Saouto (2008) in their study, found a positive relationship between spirituality and attachment and loyalty, and those individuals in organisations who reported higher levels of spirituality were less materialistic and committed. Abdulrahim, Thaheer, Shabudin, Abdul Wahab, and Hashim (2014), in their study exploring the spillover effect of spirituality and workplace deviant behaviour with the objective of examining the relationship between spirituality and workplace deviance behaviour, affirm that the higher the individual employees' daily spirituality experience, the lower the incidence of acting deviantly at the workplace, either towards the organisation or an individual

In the same vein, Asrun, Zain, Salim, and Thoyib (2012) found significant relationships between workplace spirituality, leadership influence, and deviant behaviour, suggesting that higher spirituality would decrease workplace deviant behaviour. Similarly, Robert and Jarret (2011) in their study: Are spiritual people less evil? Found a negative correlation between spirituality and both interpersonal and organisational deviance. In the same vein, Ahmed and Omar (2014), in their study, reducing deviant behaviour through workplace spirituality and job satisfaction, posit that employees who experience spirituality will not engage in deviant behaviour, suggesting that spirituality enhances employee job satisfaction and, in turn, reduces workplace deviant behaviour. Likewise Previous literature had found a significant and negative relationship between spirituality and organisational misbehaviour (Weitz, Vardi, and Seter, 2013); it also shows that spirituality improves work results and reduces deviant behaviour in the workplace (Astruti Maryati and Harsono, 2020) (Prasanna & Madhavaiah, 2017; Ahmad & Omar, 2014; Zhang, 2018; Nwanzu and Babalola, 2021; Adeoti, Shamsudin & Wan, 2017), and can enhance a sense of justice and improved ethical behaviour (Minon, 2017), thereby reducing deviant behaviour (Nwanzu and Babalola, 2021).

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

H₂: Spirituality has a significant negative effect on deviant behaviour

MEDIATION ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY

Research shows that promoting spirituality in organizations leads to increased profits, growth, efficiency, employee security, and a strong sense of organization's values (King & Holmes 2012). Spirituality provides meaning, inner awareness, and lifelong results, aligning with individual life purpose eliminated (Jurkiewickz & Giacolone, 2004). It affects individuals at three levels: individual, group, and organizational (Tayebiniya & Khorasgani, 2018). Individual spirituality instils human values and motivation, improving productivity and teamwork. Group spirituality fosters a sense of community and support, while organizational spirituality promotes harmony with organizational values, ethics, and integrity. This holistic approach can lead to positive personal outcomes (Thakur, Singh, Joelle, & Coelho, 2019).

Empirical evidence has linked organisational justice and spirituality; for example, Sadaghiani, Beikzad, Jafary, and Maleki (2011), in their study examining the effect of individual spirituality on organisational justice, found that spirituality has a significant positive impact on organisational justice. Stressing that employees with more spirituality feel more responsible for doing their job, which brings more fidelity to the company's values, Ahmad and Omar (2014) also linked organisational justice, spirituality, and deviant behaviour; their findings indicate that employees who experience spirituality in the workplace will most likely not engage in workplace deviance, not minding if the organisation is fair or not. As postulated by social control theory, individuals are prevented from engaging in deviant behaviour through their ties with social institutions such as family, institutions, and religion, as well as spirituality (Hirsch, 1969).

Although there is plentiful evidence on the negative link between informational justice perception and workplace deviance, the role of spirituality as a mediating variable in the relationship between informational justice perception and workplace deviance has not received scholarly attention (Gomam et al., 2017). Spirituality in general has been regarded as a mediating mechanism in several studies between organisational justice and organisational silence (Kokalan, 2018), organisational justice and job satisfaction (Ke, Chen, and Zeng, 2020), ethical climate and workplace deviant behaviour (Haldorai, Kim, and Li, 2020), organisational trust and thriving at work (Haldorai, Kim, and i, 2022), and compensation fairness, employee engagement, job involvement, and organisational commitment (Sudiro et al., 2020). We proposed spirituality as a mediator variable between informational justice and deviant behaviour. Spirituality may aid in shaping employee behavioural decisions towards organisational fairness. Hence, this study posits that perceptions of informational justice may not directly lead to deviant behaviour.

H₃: Informational justice has a significant positive effect on spirituality

H₄: Spirituality mediates the effect of informational justice on deviant behaviour

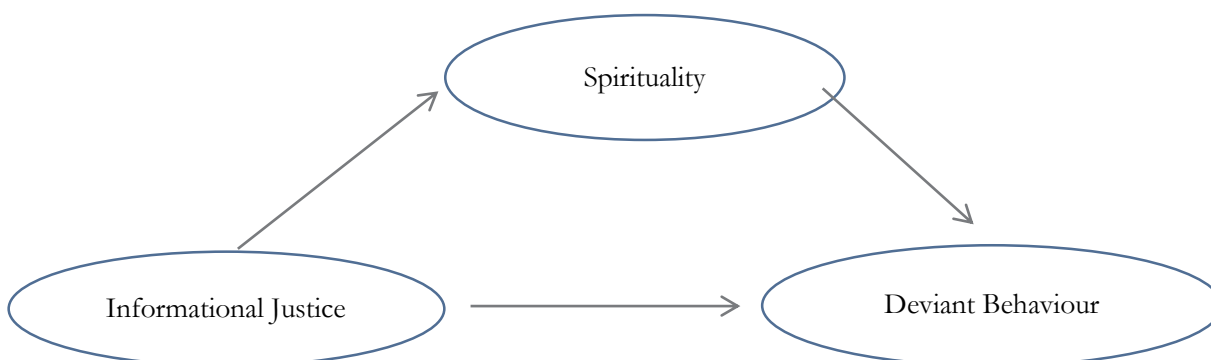


Figure 1: Researchers' Conceptual framework 2023

METHOD

Population and Sample

This study investigates the effects of informational justice on deviant behaviour and the mediating role of spirituality. The respondents were university academics from Federal University Kashere and Gombe State University, Nigeria. The precise population for the study is 1,490 university academics, as obtained from the university system digest of 2019. 302 respondents were selected for the study as the sample size using Krejci and Morgan's (1970) formula for sample size determination. The

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

sampled participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique this was employed because the researchers had predetermined purposes, which were to ensure that different levels of academics were included in the study sample.

To determine the validity of the hypothesised relationships, a survey was conducted to obtain relevant data using the adapted instruments from previous studies. The questionnaire was administered directly with the aid of research assistance. 400 questionnaires were administered in anticipation of a 50% response rate; however, 300 were received and found useful for analysis, suggesting a response rate of 75%. This is consistent with the advice of Nulty (2008), who says that a 70% response rate is adequate for an easy-to-reach population in an on-paper survey. According to descriptive statistics, there were 210 male respondents (70%). The majority of respondents (81) are senior lecturers (27%). The age range is 25–65. Also, 36% of respondents have a PhD, while 50% have an MSc. About 80% of respondents are married. A procedural approach was adopted to minimise systematic error variants among the variables measured. This was done by informing the respondents of the intention and benefits of the study to enhance response accuracy and reduce social desirability bias. This approach, according to Podsakoff et al. (2013), could reduce the effect of the common variance bias associated with a self-response questionnaire.

MEASUREMENT

The research questionnaires consisted of multiple-choice statements using 5-point Likert scales, ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree for organisational justice and spirituality. Whereas deviant behaviour is measured using a seven-point Likert scale, specifically, informational justice was measured using items adapted from Shibaoka et al. (2010). The informational justice scale had five items: spirituality was measured using the Human Spirituality Scale developed by Wheat (1991). The scale has three dimensions, which are larger context (LC), awareness of life (AL), and compassion (CP). Originally, the spirituality scale had 20 items, but we adapted seventeen due to their relevance to the study. Deviant behaviour was measured using 10 items adapted from Bennett and Robinson (2000), as in Gomam et al. (2017). Bennett and Robinson (2000) originally developed two scales, which are a 12-item scale of organisational deviant behaviour (directly harmful to the organisation) and a 7-item scale of interpersonal deviant behaviour (directly harmful to other individuals within the organisation). This study adapted 10 items from the organisational deviance scale because they are in line with the present study.

DATA ANALYSIS

To evaluate the research hypotheses, structural equation modelling technique specifically Smart-PLS software version 3.3.3 was used. In accordance with the suggestion of Aguinis, Edwards, and Bardley (2017), who posits that, to conduct a mediation test, it can be done without the precondition that the relation between the antecedent and the outcome should be significant. Mediation exists when the indirect effect is supported, regardless of the presence or absence of a direct effect (Solimum & Fernandes, 2018). If the direct effect between the independent variable and the dependent variable is significant, there is partial mediation. On the contrary, if non-significant, there is full mediation (Lachowicz, Preacher, & Kelley, 2018).

RESULTS

To conduct the analysis, Partial least squares (PLS) software 3.3.3 was used. PLS comprises two broad evaluations, namely the assessment of the measurement model to evaluate the convergent validity of the constructs and the structural model to test and evaluate the effects (Hair et al. 2017).

MEASUREMENT MODEL

The measurement model assesses the relationships between the measured variables and their respective latent variables. To measure all latent variables and indicators, the results of the measurement are shown in Table 2. The result in Table 2 shows that all variables have a valid indicator with a value of the standardised loading factor greater than 0.50 (Nunally and Bernstein, 1978; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Construct reliability also shows results greater than 0.5 (Nunally and Bernstein, 1978; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Likewise, the AVE of informational justice, spirituality, and deviant behaviour is still greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2014). Thus, it can be concluded that all indicators are able to reflect all the latent variables.

Table 2: Assessment of Convergent validity

Construct	Indicators	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Spirituality second order	AL	0.919	0.966	0.629
	CP	0.954		
	LC	0.932		
Deviant behaviour	DB 1	0.893	0.968	0.749

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

	DB2	0.869		
	DB3	0.873		
	DB4	0.866		
	DB5	0.861		
	DB6	0.883		
	DB7	0.842		
	DB8	0.904		
	DB9	0.778		
	DB10	0.878		
Informational justice	IF1	0.844	0.923	0.704
	IF2	0.857		
	IF3	0.838		
	IF4	0.844		
	IF5	0.814		

Note: Criteria: Factor loading/CR>0.70 (Nunally and Bernstein 1978; Fornell and Larcker,1981) AVE>0.5 (Hair et al. 2011, Hair, et al. (2014)

Discriminant validity was tested to establish that the constructs in the study are dissimilar to each other (Henseler, Ringle, and Sarsted 2014) within the framework, using the Fornell and Larcker criterion. The technique establishes discriminant validity among constructs at a point where the squared AVE is higher than the correlation with other constructs. The result in Table 3 revealed that discriminant validity was established among constructs since the squares of the AVEs, as highlighted diagonally, are greater than correlations within the row and the column (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 3: Assessment of discriminant validity using Fornell-lacker criterion

		1	2	3
1	Deviant behaviour	0.865		
2	Distributive justice	-0.570	0.839	
3	Spirituality	-0.666	0.741	0.947

Note: Diagonal elements highlighted represent the square root of AVE. And the off-diagonal elements are bivariate correlations between constructs.

Evaluation of Structural Model

The analysis of the structural model assessment began with examining the collinearity issue using the VIF. Table 4 illustrates that the VIF values ranged from 2.715, 2.902, and 2.506, respectively, which is less than the 3.33 threshold value (Hair et al., 2022), suggesting that collinearity was not a problem. Subsequently, the significance of the hypotheses was appraised using bootstrapping estimation with 5,000 sub-samples (Hair et al., 2022). The path coefficient reveals that the link between informational justice and deviant behaviour in H1 is negative and insignificant, based on $\beta = -0.040$ (p -value is 0.555), suggesting a negative but insignificant association. The results of H2 reveal $\beta = -0.190$ (p -value is 0.004), indicating that spirituality has a negative and significant relationship with deviant behaviour. The path for H3 reveals $\beta = 0.277$ (p -value is 0.000), suggesting that informational justice relates positively with spirituality as stated in H3. To estimate the proposed mediation effects, this study follows the recommendation of Aguinis, Edwards, and Bradley (2017). As proposed by Aguinis, Edwards, and Bradley (2017), in conducting the mediation test, it can be done without the precondition that the relation between the antecedent and the outcome should be significant. Mediation exists when the indirect effect is supported, regardless of the presence or absence of a direct impact (Solimun & Fernandes, 2018). If the direct effect between the independent variable and the dependent variable is significant, there is partial mediation. Conversely, if non-significant, there is full mediation (Lachowicz, Preacher, & Kelly, 2018). Similarly, R^2 and F^2 were evaluated to determine the coefficient of determination and the substantive significance of structural relationships. The results presented in Table 4 show that the coefficient of determination R^2 which measures the model's predictive power (Hair et al., 2017) of 0.682 (informational justice) and 0.655 (spirituality), is moderate based on the Hair et al. (2014) criterion. Likewise, the f^2 (effect size), which explains the influence of a latent variable on the structural model, was ascertained. Informational justice has a coefficient of 0.007, meaning it has no effect on deviant behaviour (Hair et al., 2014). Spirituality has a coefficient of 0.123, meaning it has a small effect size on deviant behaviour. The informational justice coefficient of 0.083 on spirituality met Hair et al. (2014) criteria for a small effect size. The standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

produced a fit of 0.040, which is less than the acceptable maximum fit index of 0.08 (Henseler et al., 2014). It is therefore considered acceptable and a fit model; see Table 4.

Table 4: Result of Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	p-value	VIF	F ²	R ²	Outcome
H1	IF-----> DB	-0.040	0.068	0.590	0.555	2.715	0.007	0.682	Not Significant
H2	SP-----> DB	-0.190	0.066	2.900	0.004	2.902	0.123	0.655	Significant
H3	IF-----> SP	0.277	0.072	3.844	0.000	2.506	0.083		Significant
GOF	SRMR= 0.040								

IF-Informational Justice, DB-Distributive Justice, SP-Spirituality, SRMR- Standardised Root Mean Square Residual

The result in Table 5 exhibits that spirituality mediates the relationship between informational justice and deviant behaviour ($\beta = -0.053$, p-value is 0.035). Thus, H4 was supported via the Aguinis, Edwards, and Bradley (2017) condition. This implies that, spirituality mediates the relationship between informational justice and deviant behaviour. Furthermore, Preacher and Hayes's (2008) second condition reveals LCI = -0.113 and UCI = -0.018 did not straddle a zero in-between the upper and lower confidence intervals. Meaning that, spirituality mediates the effect of informational justice and deviant behaviour.

Table 5: Assessment of Mediation

Hypothesis	Indirect Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	LCI	UCI	P-Value	Decision
H4	IF→SP→DB	-0.053	0.025	2.113	-0.113	-0.018	0.035	Supported

Significance(t-value > 1.96 and P-value < 0.05*), LCI- lower confidence intervals, UCI- upper confidence intervals

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study looked at the effect of information justice on deviant behaviour among university lecturers as well as the role of spirituality in mediating informational justice and deviant behaviour. The study discovered that university academic perceptions of informational justice have no significant negative effect directly on deviant behaviour. It deduces that to reduce deviant behaviour, merely informational justice is not adequate. However, the current finding is not in line with the previous studies, which concluded that informational justice has a significantly negative and direct effect on deviant behaviour (Lee & Abdullah, 2019; Dar & Rahman, 2022; Maqsood et al., 2021; Ranto et al., 2021). Previous studies have shown that informational justice results have serious consequences for staff effectiveness, such as low employee morale, reduced productivity, quality problems, reduced collaboration, and passive behaviour (Faeq & Ismael, 2022). In particular, the respondents who are the object of this research have a different context from previous studies.

The study establishes a good statistically significant association between spirituality and deviant behaviour hypothesis 2. This clearly shows that the higher the spirituality level among university academics, the less likely it is for the lecturer to engage in deviant behaviour. This finding is in line with the earlier studies of Astruti et al. 2020; Prasanna & Madhavaiah, 2017; Zhang, 2018; Zwanzu & Babalola, 2021, who assert that spirituality improves work results, enhances ethical behaviour, and thereby reduces deviant behaviour.

Furthermore, informational justice has a significant positive effect on spirituality (H3). This research is in line with the study of Minon (2018), who posits that teachers who perceive justice tend to be more spiritual and will find meaning and purpose in their work. This suggests that academics who have higher perceptions of informational justice are higher performers than less satisfied academics due to an increase in spirituality. Hence, tolerance of injustice can make a school system an unwelcome and unsafe learning environment (Minon, 2018). For this reason, university management should improve human resource management practices to encourage employee spirituality.

Lastly, the result of this research shows that the indirect effect of spirituality is a fully mediated variable that contributes better to workplace deviant behaviour. Meaning that, the role of spirituality as a mediator is strongly supported (H4). Hence, this study illustrates that spirituality promotes the link between informational justice and deviant behaviour (Haldorai, Kim, & Li, (2020). The study's findings prove that informational justice can significantly reduce deviant behaviour when mediated by higher spirituality. The non-significant effect of informational justice on deviant behaviour proves that there is a full mediating effect of spirituality.

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

Therefore, deviant behaviour among academics can be reduced through both enhanced spirituality and informational justice. Therefore, decreasing deviant behaviour can be achieved by encouraging spirituality and informational justice.

IMPLICATIONS

The result of the present study has important research, practical, and policy implications for the management of the university. Given the importance of academics in today's emerging world, the results demonstrated that it is necessary for the management of the university to be fair with the academics to build an organisation's ability to address the needs of the academics in the university. In the context of decreasing the issue of deviant behaviour among academics, individual academic spirituality seems likely to improve positive work outcomes. Therefore, if university management wants to decrease deviant behaviour by improving academic perceptions of informational justice, they need to pay more attention to developing policies that encourage academic spirituality.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Despite the contributions of this study, it is not without limitations. First, the study sample is small, which may not be sufficient to draw valid conclusions that are generalizable across university academics. As a result, future research could be based on larger samples, allowing for easier generalization. Furthermore, researchers could attempt to validate the proposed framework by replicating or testing our model in other geographical locations and at other tertiary institutions, such as polytechnics and colleges. Secondly, future research may look into other dimensions of justice that can help curb deviant behaviour among academics.

REFERENCES

- 1) Abdulrahim, A. B., Thaheer, M. S. A., Shabudin, A., Abdulwahab, A. B., & Hashim A. N. (2014). Exploring the split over effect of spirituality and workplace deviant behaviour. *International Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Science*, 2(9),53-62
- 2) Adeoti, O. M., Shamsudin, M. F., & Wan, Y. C. (2017). Effects of occupational stress and workplace spirituality on workplace deviance in academia: A conceptual paper. *Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 5(9), 100-104.
- 3) Aguinis, H., Edwards, J. R., & Bradley, K. J. (2017). Improving our understanding of moderation and mediation in strategic management research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 20(4), 665-685.
- 4) Ahmed, A., & Omar, Z. (2014). Reducing deviant behaviour through workplace spirituality and job satisfaction. *Journal of Asian Social Science*, 10(19), 107-112.
- 5) Akhigbe, J. O., & Sunday, I. P. (2017). Organisational trust and workplace deviant behaviour in higher institutions in rivers state. *International Journal of Management Studies and Research*, 5(10),48-62
- 6) Akikibofori, J. S. (2013). " Workplace deviant behaviour: a case study of intel Nigeria limited". *Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(22), 1-8.
- 7) Akers, R. L. Sellers, C. S. (2004). *Criminological theories: Introduction, evaluation, and education* (4th ed). Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing.
- 8) Alabi, M. (2021, June, 2nd). *Sexual Harassment: almost two years after, UNILAG sacked lecturers indicted in the scandal.* www.premiumtimesng.com...
- 9) Andrede, M. J., & Ramirez, E. (2019). Organisational justice and work-family conflict in Colombian organisations. *European Research Studies Journal*, 12(2), 139-153.
- 10) Astruti, J. R., & Maryati, T., & Harsono, M. (2020). The effect of workplace spirituality on workplace deviant behaviour, and employee performance: The role of job satisfaction. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 7(12),1017-1027.
- 11) Asrun, Z. D., Salim, U., & Thoyib, A. (2012). The influence is Due to workplace spirituality, satisfaction, and deviant behaviour (case study at the government of Kendari). *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*, 2(12), 11978-11983.
- 12) Bennet, R. J., & Robinson S. L. (2000). Development of a measure of workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85(3), 349-360.
- 13) Blau, P. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. New York: Wiley.
- 14) Colquitt, J. A. (2001). On the dimensionality of organisational justice: A construct validation of a measure. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 386-400.
- 15) Dar, N. & Rahman, W. (2022). Interactional justice and deviant behaviour: The mediating role of perceived supervisor support in the hotel industry of KP-Pakistan. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Management, & Innovation (JEMI)*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.52633/jemi.v4i1.121>

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

- 16) Dar, N. & Rahman, W. (2022). Interactional justice and deviant behaviour: The mediating role of perceived supervisor support in the hotel industry of KP-Pakistan. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Management, & Innovation (JEMI)*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.52633/jemi.v4i1.121>
- 17) Duhu, A. H., Girei, A. A. & Wakili, N. J. (2021). Workplace bullying and employee deviant behaviour in selected higher institutions in Adamawa state: A proposed framework. *Journal of Management Science & Entrepreneurship*. 20(7), 334-347
- 18) Faeq, K. D. & Ismael, N. Z. (2022). Analysing the relationships between organisational justice and job performance. *International Journal of Engineering, Business & Management*, 6(5), 14-25.
- 19) Fegbenro, A., & Olusupo O. M. (2020). Quality of life and workplace deviant behaviour with perceived competence as a mediator among university staff. *Nasa gospodarsstvo/our Economy*, 6(2), 15-27.
- 20) Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error." *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50.
- 21) Gomam, G. M., Vem, L. J., & Panshark, G. R. (2017). Tetrad effect of perceived justice dimension on normative commitment, psychological ownership and organizational deviant behaviour: A conceptual framework. *International Journal of Advanced Scientific Research and Development*, 04(04/1), 69-84.
- 22) Greenberg, J. (1987). A taxonomy of organisational justice theories. *Academy of Management Review*, 12, 9-22.
- 23) Greenberg, J. (1990). Employee theft as a reaction to underpayment inequity: the hidden cost of pay cuts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75, 561-568.
- 24) Greenberg, J. (1993). Stealing in the name of justice, information & interpersonal moderators of theft reactions to underpayment inequity. *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, 54, 81-103.
- 25) Gull, S. Qamar, U., Khan, R. S & Tanvir, A. (2020). Organisational justice and workplace Deviance: Evidence from banking sector of Lahore, Pakistan. *Government & Management Review*, 5(2), 125-146.
- 26) Haldorai, K., Kim, W. G., Chang, H. S., & Li, J. J. (2020). Workplace spirituality as a mediator between ethical climate and workplace deviant behaviour. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 86, 102372.
- 27) Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2014). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- 28) Hair, J. F. Hult, M.G. T., Ringle, M. C. Sarstedt, M, & Thiele, K. O. (2017). Mirror, Mirror on the wall: A Comparative Evaluation of composite-based structural equation modelling methods." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* 45(5), 616-32. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-017-0517>.
- 29) Harris, C. M., Lavelle, J. J., & McMahan, G. C. (2018). The effect of internal and external sources of justice on employee turnover intention and organisational citizenship behaviour towards clients and workgroup members. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 31(17), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2018.1441163>
- 30) Henseler, J., Ringle, & Sarstedt, M. (2014). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modelling. *Journal of the Science*, 43(1), 115-135. doi:1007/S11747-0403
- 31) Haldorai, K. Kim, W.G., Chang, H S, & Li, J. J. (2020). Workplace spirituality as a mediator between ethical climate and workplace deviant behaviour. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2019.102373>
- 32) Hair, J. F., Christian, M. R., & Mars, S. (2011). PLS-SEM is indeed a silver bullet. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 19(2), 139-151.
- 33) Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2014). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- 34) Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., Sarstedt, M. & Thiele, K. O. (2017), "Mirror, mirror on the wall: a comparative of evaluation of composite-based structural equation modelling methods", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 45(5), 616-632. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-017-0517>
- 35) Hirsch, T. (1969). *Causes of delinquency*. Erkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN 0765809001.
- 36) Kolodinsky, R. N., Giacalone, R. A., & Jurkiewicz, C. L. (2008). Workplace values and outcomes: exploring personal, organisational and interactive workplace spirituality. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 67(3), 341-349.
- 37) Igbe, J. E., Okpa, J. T., & Aniah, E. A. (2017). Working conditions and deviant behaviour of employees in the University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 22(7). 14-28

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

- 38) Jurkiewicz, L. C., & Giacalone, A. R. (2004). A value framework for measuring the impact of workplace spirituality on organisational performance. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 49(2), 129-142.
- 39) King Jr. J.E. Holmes, I.O. (2012). Spirituality, recruiting, and total wellness: Overcoming Challenges to organisational attraction. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 9(3), 237-253.
- 40) Krijcie, R.V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Table of determining sample size for research activities. *Educational & Psychological Measurement*.
- 41) Kumar, S. (2018). A study of perceived workplace spirituality of school teacher's psychology thought, 11(2), 212-223. doi:10.5964/psych.v11i2.298
- 42) Lachowicz, M. J., Preacher, K. J., & Kelley, K. (2018). A novel measure of effect size for mediation analysis. *Psychological Methods*, 23(2), 244-261.
- 43) Lee, L. W., & Abdullah, M. M. (2019) Organisational justice and deviance among emergency service personnel in Malaysia. *Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, Economics & Finance*, 1, 62-73.
- 44) Li. S., & Chen, Y. (2018). The relationship between psychological contract breach and employee counterproductive work behaviours: the moderating effect of organisational cynicism and work alienation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1273. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01273>
- 45) Maqsood, A., Quyyum, S., & Tariq. S. (2021). moderating role of personality in interactional justice & counterproductive work behaviour in the police office. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Business & Government*, 27(1), 518-549.
- 46) Milliman, J., Gatling, A., & Kim, J. S. (2018). The effect of workplace spirituality on hospitality employee engagement, intention to stay and service delivery. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 35, 5-65.
- 47) Ming-Chia, C. (2012). The influence of workplace spirituality on motivations for earnings management: A study in Taiwan's hospitality industry. *Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism*, 3(1), 1-11.
- 48) Minon, G. C. (2018). Workplace spirituality, workplace ethics, and organisational justice as related to job performance among state university educators. *Journal of Teaching and Education*. 7(1): 407-418
- 49) Mitchell, M. S. & Ambrose, M. L. (2007). Abusive supervisor and workplace deviant a moderating effect of reciprocity beliefs'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(4), 1159-1168. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.4.1159>.
- 50) Mitroff, I. I. (2003). Do not promote religion under the guise of spirituality. *Organization*, 10(2), 375-382.
- 51) Mohd, T. D. & Abdul, M. A. (2019). Organisational justice and workplace deviance behaviour: Psychological capital as a mediator. *American international journal of humanities and social sciences*, 5(2), 35-45
- 52) Nulty, D.D. (2008). The adequacy of response rates to online and paper surveys: what can be done?, *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33(3), 301-304
- 53) Nunally, J. C. & Bernstein, H. I. (1978). *Psychometric theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- 54) Nwadiani, M. (2018). *University education beyond certification in Nigeria: Threats and leadership imperative*. 12th Convocation Ceremony Lecture of the Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria.
- 55) Nwanzu, C. L., & Babalola, S. S. (2021). Effect of workplace spirituality on perceived organisational support and job performance among university administrative employees. *Contemporary management research*, 17(2), 127-155. <https://doi.org/10.7903/cmr.20349>
- 56) Obalade, O. G. & Mtembu, V. (2023). Effect of organisational justice on workplace deviant behaviour. *Independent Research Journal*, 23(1). 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ac.v23il.109>
- 57) Obalade, G. O. & Akeke, N.I. (2020). Job characteristics and deviant behaviour among employees of selected public and private universities in Ondo and Ekiti state, Nigeria. *Acta Universitatis Danubius OEconomica*, 16(1), 7-21.
- 58) Ochetenwu, J. (2020, March 3rd). *MAUTECH Yola dismisses 2 lecturers, and 1 registry staff, for sexual harassment, and fraud*. [daily post.ng>2023/3](https://dailypost.ng/2023/3)
- 59) Ochetenwu, J. (2022, June 20). Adamawa Varsity demotes three professors over misconduct. <https://dailypost.ng>
- 60) Onoyase, A. (2019). Prevalence of sexual harassment of female students of tertiary education in Taraba state, northeast Nigeria: Implications for counselling. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 8(1), 77-83.
- 61) O'Neill, T. A., Lewis, R. J., & Carswell, J. J. (2011). Employee personality, justice perceptions & The prediction of workplace deviance. *Personality & Individual Differences*, 5(5), 595-600. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2011.05.025>
- 62) Onyeizugbe, C., Ndbusi-Okolo, P., & Ikhuenekhemhe, R. O. (2021). Workplace deviant behaviour and performance of tertiary institutions in Edo state Nigeria. *International Journal of Research & Innovation in Social Science*, 5(9), 889-905.

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

- 63) Ozturk, D. & Poyraz, Y. S. (2021). Employees' perceptions of justice & workplace deviance: A moderated mediation of ethical work climate & tasktype. *Turkish Journal of Business Ethics*, 14(2) 270-295.
- 64) Peter E. O., Okpa, J. T., & Okoi, O. N. (2020) Educational support services & teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom state Nigeria. *Journal of Educational System*, 4, 22-29.
- 65) Podsakoff, M. P., Mackenzie, B. S., & Lee, Y. J. (2003). Common method biases in behavioural research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(5), 879-903.
- 66) Prasanna, V & Madhavaiah, C. (2017). Effect of workplace spirituality towards counterproductive behaviour in the automobile manufacturing sector with reference to Tamilnadu district. *International Journal of Academic Research and Development*; 2(6). 375-379, www.academicjournal.com
- 67) Preacher, K. J. & Hayes. F. A. (2008). "Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models." *Behaviour Research Methods* 40(3): 879-91. <https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.40.3.879>.
- 68) Ranto, P. W. D., Tjahjono, K. H., Muafia, U. & Prajogo, w. (2022). The influence of organisational justice on interpersonal and organisational deviance. A conceptual paper. *International Journal of Marketing & Human Resource research*, 3(2), 87-97.
- 69) Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2018). *Essentials of organisational behaviour*. Global Edition. England: Pearson Education Limited.
- 70) Roof, R. A.(2014). The association of individual spirituality on employee engagement: the spirit at work. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 30(3), 585-99.
- 71) Rubenstein, A. L., Eberly, M. B. Lee, T. W. & Mitchell, T. R. (2018). Surveying the forest: a meta-analysis, moderator investigation, and future-orientation discussion of the antecedents of voluntary employee turnover. *Personnel Psychology* 71(1), 23-65. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.1222>.
- 72) Sadaghiani, S. J. (2012). Spirituality at the workplace and its role on organisational justice. *Management Science Letters* 2(1), 391-396
- 73) Saleem, F., & Gapinath, C. (2015). Corporate social responsibility and customer social responsibility and customer behaviour: A developing country perspective. *Lahore Journal of Business*, 4(1), 1-22. <http://doi.org/10.1111/issj.12112>
- 74) Shibaoka, M., Takada, M., Watanabe, M., Kojima, R., Kakinuma, M., Tanaka, K., & Kawakami, N. (2010). Development and validation of the Japanese version of the organisational justice scale. *Industrial Health*, 48, 66-73.
- 75) Solimun, S., & Fernandes, A. A. R. (2018). The mediation effect of customer satisfaction in the relationship between service quality, service orientation, and marketing mix strategy to customer loyalty. *Journal of Management Development*, 37(1), 76-87
- 76) Sudiro, A. Adi, N. A., & Fakhri, I. M. R. (2020). Engaging employee through compensation fairness, job involvement and organisational commitment: The role of employee spirituality. *Management Science Letters*, 11(1), 1499-1508
- 77) Sulaiman, M., & Bhatti, O. K. (2013). Workplace deviance and spirituality in Muslim organisations. *Asian Social Science*, 9(10), 237-246
- 78) Tayebiniya, N. K., & Khorasgani, N. S. (2018). The relationship between workplace spirituality and job performance among staff of Azad Islamic University, Iran. *Humanities and Social Sciences Reviews*, 6(1), 14-19
- 79) Thomas, P., & Nagalingappa, G. (2012). Consequences of perceived organisational justice: an empirical study of white-collar employees. *Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce*, 3(2), 54-63.
- 80) Vem, J. L., Tuamyil, B. R., Ocholi, A. S. (2020). The turnover intention in Nigerian universities: Do Academics' Spirituality and spiritual climate Mater? *African Education Review* 17(6), 65-85, DOI: 10.1080/18146627.2022.2063750.
- 81) Vem, J. L., Petter, C. J., Tali., N. D., Ochigbo, D.A, Sambasivan, M & Nmadu M. T. (2022). Subordinates' silence: the consequence of bullying behaviour and psychological insecurity among policemen. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/2040-8269.htm>
- 82) Weitz, E., Vardi, Y., & Setter, O. (2012). Spirituality and organisational misbehaviour. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 9(3), 255-281.
- 83) Wheat, L. M. (1991). *Development of a scale for the measurement of human spirituality*. (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation). College Park, MD: University of Maryland.
- 84) Wurim, B. P. (2013). Procedural and distributive justice: the judges, the litigants, the process versus productivity and quality of work-life in the organisation. *Journal of Management and Corporate Governance*, 5(2), 40-52.

Reducing Deviant Behaviour among University Academics through Informational Justice and Spirituality

- 85) Xu, G., Huang, Y. & Huang, Songshan, H. (2023). Informational Justice and employee knowledge hiding behaviours: mediated by organisational identification and moderation of justice sensitivity. *Science Direct*. www.cell.com/heliyon.1-11
- 86) Zhang, S. (2018). Workplace spirituality and unethical pro-organisational behaviour. The mediating effect of job satisfaction. *Journal of Business Ethics*. 161 (1) 687-705.



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.