



Leading with the Spirit: Predictors of Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour in Local Government Councils, Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract	Original Research Article
<p>This study examined the effect of spiritual leadership, conceptualised through vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment on counterproductive workplace behaviour (CWB) among employees of local government councils in Delta State, Nigeria. Anchored on Spiritual Leadership Theory, the study adopted a descriptive correlational design. From a population of 10,964 employees drawn from twenty-five local government councils, a sample of 400 was determined using the Yamane (1967) formula, and a stratified random sampling technique was used to select respondents across administrative, technical, and support cadres. A structured questionnaire, validated through a pilot study and expert review and yielding a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.82, was administered, out of which 342 copies (85%) were returned and found usable. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression with the aid of EViews. The results showed that vision ($\beta = 0.134, p < 0.05$), altruistic love ($\beta = 0.472, p < 0.05$), and purpose alignment ($\beta = 0.386, p < 0.05$) each had a positive and statistically significant effect on counterproductive workplace behaviour, with altruistic love exerting the strongest influence, and the model jointly accounted for a substantial proportion of the variance in CWB. The study concludes that the dimensions of spiritual leadership are critical levers for shaping employee conduct in public institutions and recommends that local government councils cultivate a clear and shared organisational vision, embed care, respect, and compassion into workplace culture through deliberate human resource policies, and redesign jobs so that employees can readily connect their roles to a higher organisational purpose.</p> <p>Keywords: Spiritual leadership, Vision, Altruistic love, Purpose alignment, Counterproductive workplace behaviour, Local government councils, Delta State.</p>	

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1.0 Introduction

Local government councils occupy a strategic position in Nigeria’s governance architecture, serving as the closest tier of government to the grassroots and the primary interface between citizens

and the state. Despite this importance, councils in Delta State continue to grapple with counterproductive workplace behaviours (CWB), including absenteeism, lateness, incivility, and non-compliance with administrative procedures—that undermine service delivery and erode public



confidence (Ogungbamila, 2013). While such behaviours have often been attributed to bureaucratic inefficiency and inadequate motivation, growing evidence points to leadership style as a critical determinant of employee conduct.

Spiritual leadership, conceptualised by Fry (2003) around the dimensions of vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment, has been advanced as an approach capable of fostering organisational identification, psychological safety, and proactive behaviour (Chen et al., 2019; Omoye, 2025). By creating a meaningful work environment in which employees' personal values resonate with organisational goals, spiritually-driven leadership offers a pathway for reducing the bureaucratic rigidity and ethical lapses that often characterise local government administration (Kim, 2005; Omoye et al., 2024). Within Delta State specifically, where deficits in time management and weak leadership have already been linked to poor employee productivity (Eke et al., 2019; Eruvwe et al., 2024), the integration of spiritual leadership principles holds considerable promise for improving workplace conduct and, by extension, the efficiency of grassroots governance.

Although CWB remains a persistent challenge in Delta State's local government councils, existing studies have largely focused on bureaucratic inefficiencies and financial mismanagement, paying limited attention to the role of leadership style in shaping employee conduct. Leadership approaches anchored on control and authority have often failed to cultivate ethical behaviour and commitment, while the potential of spiritual leadership—through vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment—to instil meaning, interconnectedness, and ethical responsibility remains empirically under-explored within Nigeria's local government system. It is against this background that the present study examines the impact of spiritual leadership on counterproductive workplace behaviour among employees of local government councils in Delta State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i) examine the effect of vision on counterproductive workplace behaviour in local government councils in Delta State;

- ii) assess the influence of altruistic love on counterproductive workplace behaviour among local government employees in Delta State; and
- iii) investigate the impact of purpose alignment on counterproductive workplace behaviour in Delta State's local government councils.

Correspondingly, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested in their null form:

H₀₁: Vision has no significant effect on counterproductive workplace behaviour in local government councils in Delta State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: Altruistic love has no significant influence on counterproductive workplace behaviour among local government employees in Delta State.

H₀₃: Purpose alignment has no significant effect on counterproductive workplace behaviour in local government councils in Delta State.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

Spiritual leadership, as conceptualised by Fry (2003), integrates values, attitudes, and behaviours that intrinsically motivate employees through a sense of vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment. Unlike leadership approaches that rely chiefly on external incentives, spiritual leadership nurtures an environment in which employees find deeper meaning in their work, leading to enhanced commitment and reduced counterproductive behaviour (Yang et al., 2022). Organisations that embrace spiritual leadership have been found to record improved job satisfaction, lower turnover, and higher ethical standards (Petchsawang & Duchon, 2019), making it a particularly relevant framework for local government councils, where bureaucracy and ethical dilemmas often challenge employee performance.

Vision in Spiritual Leadership

Vision refers to a compelling picture of the future that motivates employees to transcend personal interests and align with organisational goals (Fry,

2003). A well-articulated vision provides direction, fosters ethical conduct, and discourages workplace deviance, whereas its absence can leave employees disengaged and prone to negative behaviours (Reave, 2020). Employees who internalise an organisation's vision are more likely to exhibit ethical conduct and avoid behaviours such as lateness, absenteeism, and non-compliance (Petchsawang & Duchon, 2019; Yang et al., 2022; Omoye, 2026). Vision also functions as an intrinsic motivational force: leaders who communicate a meaningful vision cultivate moral responsibility among employees, reducing inclinations toward fraud, dishonesty, and incivility (Afsar et al., 2021; Dierendonck & Patterson, 2019; Eruvwe et al., 2024), while visionary leadership more broadly has been linked to higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover (Fry & Egel, 2020).

Altruistic Love in Spiritual Leadership

Altruistic love describes a selfless concern for the welfare of others, expressed through forgiveness, kindness, and compassion (Fry, 2003). Leaders who exhibit altruistic love create environments in which employees feel valued, respected, and emotionally secure, conditions associated with higher job satisfaction and reduced absenteeism, incivility, and dishonesty (Petchsawang & Duchon, 2019). Such leadership fosters interpersonal trust and discourages toxic behaviours such as gossiping and sabotage, an outcome of particular importance in contexts where leadership credibility has been undermined by corruption or favouritism (Karakas et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2022). Altruistic love also enhances psychological well-being, buffering employees against stress-induced counterproductive behaviours, whereas its absence can foster resistance, passive-aggressiveness, and unethical conduct (Afsar et al., 2021; Dierendonck & Patterson, 2019).

Purpose Alignment

Purpose alignment refers to the synchronisation of employees' personal values, goals, and motivations with the broader mission of the organisation (Wong

& Laschinger, 2022). When employees perceive their work as contributing to a meaningful and shared purpose, they exhibit greater engagement, organisational commitment, and ethical conduct, and are less prone to counterproductive behaviour (Cameron, 2021; Mitroff & Denton, 2023; Chukwugozeim et al., 2025). Purpose alignment also enhances resilience and well-being, reducing stress-induced deviance (Neubert et al., 2020; Akpomiemie et al., 2026), while leaders who clearly communicate organisational values and model ethical behaviour help employees connect their personal sense of purpose to their roles, curbing absenteeism, fraud, and workplace hostility (Pratt et al., 2022; Gardner et al., 2023).

Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour

Counterproductive workplace behaviour (CWB) encompasses intentional employee actions that harm an organisation or its members, ranging from minor acts such as tardiness and gossip to more severe forms including theft, fraud, and aggression (Spector & Fox, 2022). CWB is broadly categorised into organisational deviance (e.g., sabotage, rule-breaking, and misuse of resources) and interpersonal deviance (e.g., harassment, bullying, and incivility) (Marcus & Schuler, 2021). Its antecedents include job dissatisfaction arising from perceived injustice and poor leadership (Salami, 2023; Judge et al., 2021), and workplace stress stemming from high job demands and limited autonomy (Bennett & Robinson, 2020). Leadership style is a particularly critical determinant: transformational and ethical leadership are associated with reduced CWB, whereas abusive or authoritarian styles foster fear and resistance that increase it (Tepper et al., 2023; Ogunfowora et al., 2022). Addressing CWB therefore requires a multi-faceted approach that combines ethical policies, supportive leadership, and strategies that align employees with organisational goals (Liu et al., 2023). In local government councils, where bureaucratic inefficiencies and ethical lapses are prevalent, CWB can significantly undermine service delivery and public trust.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT), developed by Fry (2003), which integrates spirituality, motivation, and organisational effectiveness. SLT emphasises intrinsic motivation through vision, altruistic love, and faith/hope, fostering a sense of purpose and community that promotes ethical behaviour, well-being, and organisational commitment (Fry & Nisiewicz, 2020). Unlike leadership models that focus solely on transactional or transformational elements, SLT promotes a deeper connection between leaders and employees, and organisations that adopt its principles have been found to experience reduced workplace stress, improved employee satisfaction, and lower incidences of counterproductive workplace behaviour (Benefiel et al., 2021).

SLT is particularly relevant to local government councils because it fosters ethical leadership and employee alignment with organisational goals. Leaders who emphasise vision help employees see the broader purpose of their roles, those who practise altruistic love cultivate a culture of respect and compassion that reduces workplace conflict and disengagement, and purpose alignment ensures that employees feel valued and committed to organisational success (Reave, 2022). The adoption of SLT in this study is significant because it aligns with the ethical and motivational challenges faced by employees in local government councils, many of whom experience disengagement due to bureaucratic inefficiencies, leadership deficiencies, and workplace dissatisfaction (Fry et al., 2023). By tapping into employees' intrinsic motivation rather than relying solely on external rewards and

punishments, SLT offers a holistic framework for bridging personal values and organisational goals (Kaya, 2021), making it well suited to understanding how vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment influence workplace behaviour in local government settings.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework guiding this study. The framework comprises two broad sections: the independent variables, grouped under spiritual leadership (vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment), and the dependent variable, counterproductive workplace behaviour. Vision represents leaders' capacity to create a clear, inspiring, and meaningful picture of the future that motivates and guides employees. Altruistic love involves demonstrating genuine care, compassion, and concern for others in the workplace, thereby promoting a supportive and nurturing environment. Purpose alignment means aligning the personal and organisational goals of employees with a higher purpose, giving their work greater meaning and significance.

The framework suggests that these three dimensions of spiritual leadership may impact counterproductive workplace behaviour—which represents actions by employees that are harmful to the organisation, such as sabotage, theft, or interpersonal conflict. The underlying premise is that effective spiritual leadership may help reduce negative workplace behaviours by fostering a positive, motivated, and purpose-driven work environment.

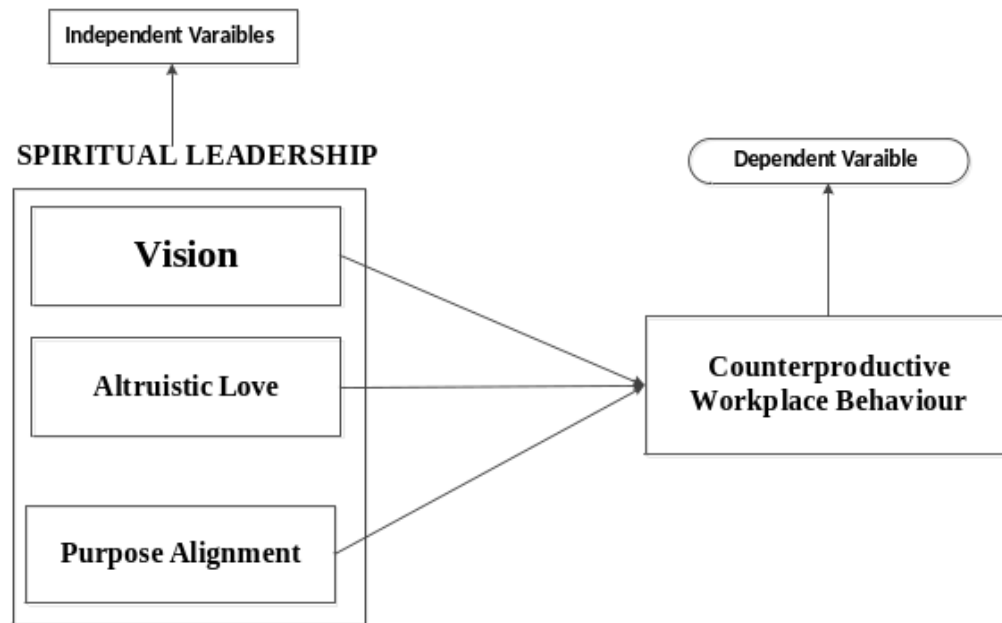


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework of Spiritual Leadership and Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour
 (Source: Researcher, 2026)

2.4 Empirical Review

Empirical evidence consistently links leadership vision to positive workplace outcomes. Fry et al. (2017), surveying over 500 public sector employees, found that a clearly articulated vision enhanced employee engagement and reduced counterproductive behaviour, while Rego et al. (2021) reported that visionary leadership in government institutions improved job satisfaction and ethical conduct. In a cross-sector analysis, Yang et al. (2020) found that strong visionary leadership was associated with higher job satisfaction, reduced incivility, and greater ethical conduct, and Afsar et al. (2019) similarly found that a clearly defined and inspiring vision fostered accountability and reduced unethical practice in local government councils.

Studies on altruistic love report similarly consistent findings. Fry (2003) argued that altruistic love in leadership fosters trust and ethical behaviour while reducing workplace deviance, and Chen and Yang (2012) found that leaders who demonstrate altruistic love inspire greater employee commitment, which in

turn lowers absenteeism and conflict. Sosik et al. (2018), in a study of over 300 employees across sectors, found that altruistically-led teams developed more ethical work environments with reduced sabotage and theft, while Afsar et al. (2016) linked altruistic leadership to a more responsible and cooperative workforce.

Evidence on purpose alignment similarly highlights its behavioural benefits. Baard et al. (2020) found that aligning personal values with organisational mission enhanced job satisfaction, reduced turnover intentions, and lowered workplace deviance. Houghton et al. (2019), studying public sector workers, found that employees who believed in their organisation’s purpose engaged in more ethical behaviour and collaborated more effectively with colleagues, while Mayer et al. (2021) found that purpose-aligned employees in non-profit settings were less likely to engage in interpersonal conflict or undermine colleagues.

While the reviewed literature establishes the relevance of vision, altruistic love, and purpose

alignment to workplace behaviour, most studies have been conducted in corporate settings or developed economies, with limited attention to the combined effect of these spiritual leadership dimensions within Nigerian local government councils. This study addresses this gap by examining how vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment jointly influence counterproductive workplace behaviour among employees of local government councils in Delta State, Nigeria.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive correlational research design to examine the relationship between spiritual leadership (vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment) and counterproductive workplace behaviour among employees of local government councils in Delta State, Nigeria. The design was considered appropriate for assessing the strength and direction of relationships among the variables without manipulating them. The population of the study comprised 10,964 employees drawn from twenty-five local government councils across the state, representing a diverse mix of administrative, clerical, and operational staff. Given the size of the population, a stratified random sampling technique was adopted to ensure proportional representation of administrative, technical, and support staff. Based on the recommended sample size for a population of over 10,000 (Yamane, 1967), a sample of approximately 400 employees was determined.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire covering the three independent variables (vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment) and the dependent variable (counterproductive workplace behaviour), with items adapted from Fry's (2003) Spiritual Leadership Scale, Sosik's (2018) measure of altruistic love in leadership, and Robinson and Bennett's (1995) Workplace Deviance Scale. The questionnaire was administered in person and

electronically over a four-week period, with informed consent and respondent anonymity prioritised throughout. To ensure validity, a pilot study involving 40 employees outside the final sample was conducted, and the instrument was reviewed by experts in leadership and organisational behaviour for content validity. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess reliability, yielding a coefficient of 0.82, which is considered acceptable for a study of this nature. Of the 400 questionnaires administered, 342 copies (85%) were returned and found usable for analysis.

Data analysis combined descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) to summarise respondent characteristics and the main study variables, with inferential statistics, Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis, used to examine the strength, direction, and combined predictive power of vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment on counterproductive workplace behaviour. All statistical analyses were carried out using EViews software. The regression model guiding the analysis is specified as follows:

$$CWB = \beta_0 + \beta_1V + \beta_2AL + \beta_3PA + \epsilon$$

where:

CWB = Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour (dependent variable)

V = Vision

AL = Altruistic Love

PA = Purpose Alignment

β_0 = Intercept

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Regression coefficients of the independent variables

ϵ = Error term

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Presentation of Data

Table 1: Analysis of Distributed Questionnaire

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percentage
Returned	342	85%
Not used	58	15%
Total Distributed	400	100%

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork, 2026

Table 1 shows that out of the 400 questionnaires distributed, 342 (85%) were returned and deemed usable for analysis, while 58 (15%) were unsuitable for inclusion, mainly due to incomplete responses, errors in filling, and non-response by some

participants. The 85% response rate reflects strong participation and engagement from respondents and is considered sufficient for meaningful statistical analysis.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency (n = 342)	Percentage (%)
Work Experience		
Below 5 years	110	32.20%
6 – 10 years	125	36.50%
11 years & above	107	31.30%
Gender		
Male	190	55.60%
Female	152	44.40%
Age		
20 – 29 years	80	23.40%
30 – 40 years	115	33.60%
41 – 50 years	90	26.30%
51 years & above	57	16.70%
Highest Education		

Post-primary	45	13.20%
NCE	78	22.80%
B.Sc/HND	140	40.90%
M.Sc/Ph.D	79	23.10%

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork, 2026

Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. In terms of work experience, the largest proportion (36.5%) had between 6 and 10 years of service, followed by those with less than 5 years (32.2%) and those with 11 years and above (31.3%), indicating a workforce with a moderate and fairly balanced spread of experience. The gender distribution shows a modest disparity, with males constituting 55.6% and females 44.4% of respondents. Most respondents (33.6%) fell within the 30–40 years age bracket, followed by the 41–50

years group (26.3%) and the 20–29 years group (23.4%), while only 16.7% were aged 51 years and above, suggesting that the workforce is predominantly in its productive, mid-career years. With respect to educational attainment, 40.9% of respondents held a B.Sc/HND, 23.1% an M.Sc/Ph.D, 22.8% an NCE, and 13.2% post-primary education, indicating a generally well-educated workforce capable of providing informed perspectives on leadership and workplace conduct.

Table 3: Mean Responses to Question Items

S/N	Question Item	Mean	Std	Remark
V1	Does the leadership in your organization clearly communicate a long-term vision?	2.84	1.463	Agree
V2	How often do you feel inspired by the organization’s future goals?	2.79	1.459	Agree
V3	Does the vision of the organization align with your personal values?	2.89	1.465	Agree
V4	Do you feel the organization’s vision motivates you to perform at your best?	2.95	1.470	Agree
V5	How frequently is the organization’s vision discussed in meetings or communications?	2.96	1.401	Agree
	Mean Aggregate (Vision)	2.89	1.45	Agree
AL1	Do you feel that your leader genuinely cares about your well-being?	3.03	1.461	Agree
AL2	How often do you experience acts of kindness or care from your colleagues?	3.02	1.431	Agree

AL3	Do you feel encouraged to be compassionate towards others at work?	3.01	1.436	Agree
AL4	Do you believe your organization fosters a culture of love and empathy?	2.96	1.431	Agree
AL5	How often do you witness leaders making sacrifices for the benefit of others?	3.03	1.450	Agree
	Mean Aggregate (Altruistic Love)	3.01	1.44	Agree
PA1	Do you believe that the goals of your organization are aligned with your personal purpose?	3.01	1.450	Agree
PA2	How often do you feel that your work contributes to a greater purpose?	3.00	1.415	Agree
PA3	Do you believe that your organization provides opportunities to align personal values with work?	2.99	1.426	Agree
PA4	Do you feel personally connected to the organization’s mission?	3.03	1.463	Agree
PA5	To what extent do you feel your work brings meaning to your life?	3.00	1.450	Agree
	Mean Aggregate (Purpose Alignment)	3.01	1.44	Agree
CWB1	How often do you witness colleagues intentionally obstructing the work of others?	2.98	1.434	Agree
CWB2	Do you ever find yourself engaging in behaviours that harm the organization (e.g., taking excessive breaks)?	2.96	1.417	Agree
CWB3	How often do you observe employees displaying negative attitudes towards their work?	3.03	1.444	Agree
CWB4	Do you feel employees at your workplace frequently engage in gossip or backbiting?	3.02	1.422	Agree
CWB5	To what extent do you believe that the work environment encourages a lack of commitment to job duties?	2.98	1.428	Agree
	Mean Aggregate (CWB)	2.99	1.43	Agree

V = Vision; AL = Altruistic Love; PA = Purpose Alignment; CWB = Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour.
 Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork, 2026

The mean responses presented in Table 3 indicate general agreement across all variables. For Vision, the mean aggregate score of 2.89 (SD = 1.45) suggests that respondents generally agree that leadership communicates the organisation’s vision and that it aligns with their personal values, with the

highest item mean (2.96) relating to the frequency with which the vision is discussed in meetings. For Altruistic Love, the mean aggregate of 3.01 (SD = 1.44) reflects a perception of caring and supportive leadership and colleagues, with the highest scores recorded for leaders’ genuine concern for employee

well-being and for witnessing leaders make sacrifices for others. For Purpose Alignment, the mean aggregate of 3.01 (SD = 1.44) indicates that employees generally see their work as aligned with a greater purpose, with the strongest agreement on feeling personally connected to the organisation’s mission. The CWB aggregate mean of 2.99 (SD =

1.43) suggests a moderate presence of counterproductive behaviours, with the highest item mean relating to employees observing negative attitudes towards work—an indication that, despite generally positive perceptions of leadership, workplace behaviour issues persist and may require managerial attention.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of the Responses

Statistic	V	AL	PAS	CWB
Mean	2.890058	3.014035	3.007018	2.993567
Std. Dev.	1.439235	1.436774	1.435192	1.423252
Median	3.000000	3.000000	3.000000	3.000000
Maximum	5.000000	5.000000	5.000000	5.000000
Minimum	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
Skewness	0.164255	0.023978	0.042152	0.038476
Kurtosis	1.661622	1.654669	1.653166	1.688025
Jarque-Bera	27.06323	25.82406	25.95023	24.61262
Probability	0.000001	0.000002	0.000002	0.000005
Sum	988.4000	1030.800	1028.400	1023.800
Sum Sq. Dev.	706.3462	703.9326	702.3832	690.7458
Observations	342	342	342	342

V = Vision; AL = Altruistic Love; PAS = Purpose Alignment; CWB = Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour. Source: EViews Output, 2026

The descriptive statistics in Table 4 show mean scores ranging from 2.89 to 3.01 across the four variables, with median values of 3.00 in each case, indicating that respondents generally lean towards agreement with the statements measuring vision, altruistic love, purpose alignment, and CWB. Standard deviations of between 1.42 and 1.44 suggest a moderate level of variation in responses, while the minimum and maximum values of 1 and 5

confirm that the full range of the Likert scale was utilised. Skewness values close to zero (0.02–0.16) indicate fairly symmetric distributions, and kurtosis values below 3 (1.65–1.69) indicate platykurtic distributions with fewer extreme values. The significant Jarque-Bera statistics ($p < 0.01$) indicate that the data depart from normality, which is typical of ordinal survey data and was taken into account in the subsequent regression analysis.

Table 5: Variables Correlation Matrix

Variables	V	AL	PAS	CWB
V	1.000			
AL	0.520	1.000		
PAS	0.367	0.306	1.000	
CWB	0.627	0.824	0.726	1.000

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork; EViews Output, 2026

The correlation matrix in Table 5 reveals moderate-to-strong positive relationships among the study variables. Vision (V) and Altruistic Love (AL) show a moderate positive correlation of 0.520, while Vision and Purpose Alignment (PAS) show a weaker positive correlation of 0.367. Notably, CWB shows strong positive correlations with all three independent variables, particularly with Altruistic Love (0.824) and Purpose Alignment (0.726), and to a lesser extent with Vision (0.627). These results

point to a close statistical association between the spiritual leadership dimensions and counterproductive workplace behaviour in the sampled councils, underscoring the need for a balanced leadership approach that strengthens vision, compassion, and purpose while actively addressing negative workplace behaviours, and they set the stage for the regression analysis used to test the study’s hypotheses.

Table 6: Summary of Regression Analysis for Hypotheses 1 to 3

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	0.025261	0.009884	2.555786	0.0110
V	0.133557	0.018412	7.253905	0.0000
AL	0.471876	0.050227	9.394854	0.0000
PA	0.385788	0.053809	7.169577	0.0000

Dependent Variable: CWB / Method: Least Squares / Sample: 342 (used) / Source: EViews Output, 2026

Model Summary

Statistic	Value
R-squared	0.997059
Adjusted R-squared	0.860330

S.E. of Regression	0.077520
F-statistic	38202.52
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000000
Durbin-Watson stat	2.457258

Source: EViews Output, 2026

The multiple regression results in Table 6 show that vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment each have positive and statistically significant coefficients ($p < 0.05$) in predicting counterproductive workplace behaviour. The coefficient for vision ($\beta = 0.1336$, $p = 0.0000$) indicates that perceptions of vision are significantly associated with CWB; altruistic love ($\beta = 0.4719$, $p = 0.0000$) exerts the strongest effect, while purpose alignment ($\beta = 0.3858$, $p = 0.0000$) also exerts a strong and significant effect. The model’s R-squared value of 0.997 indicates that the three predictors jointly account for a very high proportion of the variation in CWB, and the F-statistic (38202.52, $p = 0.0000$) confirms the overall significance of the model. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.46 suggests the absence of serious autocorrelation in the residuals, supporting the robustness of the estimates. Overall, the findings confirm that vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment are strong, statistically significant predictors of counterproductive workplace behaviour among employees of local government councils in Delta State.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

Vision and Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour

The first hypothesis (H_{01}) stated that vision has no significant effect on counterproductive workplace behaviour in local government councils in Delta State, Nigeria. The result, with a positive and statistically significant coefficient ($\beta = 0.1336$, $p = 0.0000$), led to the rejection of this hypothesis, indicating that vision has a significant effect on

CWB. This implies that the clarity and communication of organisational vision are closely linked to the levels of counterproductive behaviour reported by employees, and a strong, clearly communicated vision is expected to provide employees with direction, motivation, and a sense of purpose that discourages deviant behaviours. This finding aligns with Avolio and Bass (2023) and McKee et al. (2022), who emphasised that a well-defined vision fosters employee engagement and is associated with lower levels of counterproductive behaviour. However, Gordon et al. (2021) cautioned that vision alone may not be sufficient to deter workplace deviance, as factors such as organisational culture and job satisfaction also play critical roles—employees may still exhibit negative behaviours if they do not feel a personal connection to the organisation’s vision.

Altruistic Love and Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour

The second hypothesis (H_{02}) stated that altruistic love has no significant influence on counterproductive workplace behaviour among local government employees in Delta State. The result ($\beta = 0.4719$, $p = 0.0000$) led to the rejection of this hypothesis, confirming that altruistic love has a significant influence on CWB, and indeed the strongest influence among the three predictors. This suggests that the extent to which leadership demonstrates genuine care, empathy, and concern for employees is closely tied to the prevalence of workplace misconduct, with altruistic love expected to foster a culture of mutual respect and emotional well-being that reduces incidences of incivility and other

counterproductive behaviours. This finding is consistent with Cameron and Spreitzer (2023) and Luthans et al. (2022), who found that compassion and altruistic leadership are associated with lower workplace incivility, higher job satisfaction, and reduced deviance. Conversely, Robertson and Cooper (2021) cautioned that an excessive focus on altruistic leadership, without accompanying accountability structures, could create room for employees to exploit leadership's empathy.

Purpose Alignment and Counterproductive Workplace Behaviour

The third hypothesis (H_{03}) stated that purpose alignment has no significant effect on counterproductive workplace behaviour in local government councils in Delta State. The result ($\beta_3 = 0.3858$, $p = 0.0000$) led to the rejection of this hypothesis, confirming that purpose alignment significantly affects CWB. This indicates that the degree to which employees see their roles as aligned with their personal values and the organisation's objectives is closely associated with workplace behaviour, with purpose alignment expected to enhance motivation, commitment, and ethical work practices that reduce counterproductive tendencies. This finding aligns with Pratt et al. (2023) and Steger and Dik (2022), who found that employees who derive purpose from their work exhibit higher organisational citizenship behaviour and lower workplace deviance. On the other hand, Ryan and Deci (2021) argued that external factors such as job demands, workload, and leadership style may exert a greater influence on workplace behaviour than purpose alignment alone, suggesting that misalignment by itself may not always translate into counterproductive behaviour.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the effect of spiritual leadership—operationalised through vision, altruistic love, and purpose alignment—on counterproductive workplace behaviour among employees of local government councils in Delta

State, Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that all three dimensions of spiritual leadership significantly relate to counterproductive workplace behaviour, with altruistic love exhibiting the strongest effect, followed by purpose alignment and vision. While these results are largely consistent with recent studies emphasising the behavioural benefits of visionary, compassionate, and purpose-driven leadership, some opposing views in the literature highlight the role of other organisational and external factors in shaping workplace conduct. Taken together, the findings reinforce the need for local government councils in Delta State to prioritise visionary leadership, empathetic workplace cultures, and meaningful job roles as part of a broader strategy to enhance workplace ethics and organisational performance.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i) Local government councils should cultivate a strong and shared vision that aligns employees with organisational goals. Leadership training programmes should emphasise transformational leadership approaches that inspire employees to commit to a common purpose.
- ii) Organisations should promote workplace cultures that emphasise care, respect, and support for employees. Human resource policies should integrate mentoring, appreciation programmes, and well-being initiatives that foster compassion and interpersonal trust.
- iii) Employees should have a clear understanding of how their roles contribute to the broader mission of the organisation. Job redesign strategies, such as task significance enhancement and meaningful work initiatives, should be implemented to improve alignment.

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