

The Relationship Between Conscientiousness and Agreeableness Personality Traits and Integrity Non-Compliance Among Police Officers in The Perlis Contingent: A Study From 2018 To 2021

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between conscientiousness and agreeableness with integrity non-compliance among police officers in the Perlis Contingent from 2018 to 2021. It aims to understand how officers interpret integrity, how conscientiousness influences their handling of integrity issues, and how agreeableness impacts their experiences and decisions. Using a qualitative approach, data was collected through document analysis, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of personality traits and integrity in law enforcement, offering evidence-based recommendations to enhance integrity management. These findings are essential for strengthening ethical conduct within the Perlis Contingent and the broader Malaysian police force, contributing to a more accountable and just society.

Keywords: Integrity, Police Officers, Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalytic Personality Theory, Big Five Inventory Personality Model, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness Personality Traits, Perlis, Malaysia.

INTRODUCTION

Integrity within law enforcement agencies has become a global issue of increasing concern over the past few decades. According to the Global Police Integrity Report by Transparency International (2020), integrity challenges within police forces are problems faced by most countries, regardless of their level of economic development or political system. Issues such as corruption, abuse of power, and human rights violations by police officers have undermined public trust in law enforcement institutions worldwide. A study by Prenzler and Ransley (2016) found that public trust in police in OECD countries had declined by an average of 15% between 2010 and 2015, with corruption and police misconduct being the primary factors behind this decline.

This article aims to explore the relationship between the personality traits of conscientiousness and agreeableness and the experiences and perceptions of police officers in the Perlis Contingent regarding integrity non-compliance issues. The study's objectives include understanding officers' interpretations of the concept of integrity, examining how officers with varying levels of conscientiousness interpret and experience integrity-related issues, and investigating the influence of agreeableness on their behavior and decisions regarding these issues.

This study seeks to explore in depth the relationship between conscientiousness and agreeableness personality traits and the experiences and perceptions of integrity non-compliance among police officers in the Perlis Contingent. The main objectives of this study are to investigate the factors influencing integrity non-compliance within the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM). Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Understand and describe the interpretation of integrity by police officers in the Perlis Contingent within the context of their policing duties.
2. Examine in detail how police officers with different levels of conscientiousness interpret and experience issues related to integrity non-compliance.

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3. Explore and explain how the agreeableness personality trait influences the narratives and experiences of police officers regarding their behavior and decisions in integrity-related issues.

Based on these objectives, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do police officers in the Perlis Contingent understand and interpret the concept of integrity within the context of their policing duties?
2. How does the "conscientiousness" personality trait influence police officers' perceptions and experiences related to integrity non-compliance issues?
3. What role does the "agreeableness" personality trait play in influencing police officers' behavior and decisions related to integrity issues?

This study contributes to a more effective understanding of the factors influencing integrity non-compliance within the PDRM. The findings of this study can also assist in developing more effective and context-sensitive strategies to enhance integrity within the police force, including aspects of recruitment, training, and career development for police officers. Additionally, this study has the potential to contribute to the academic literature on integrity in law enforcement, particularly in the context of Malaysia and other developing countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review focuses on three main aspects: integrity within the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM), the concept of personality with a specific focus on the traits of conscientiousness and agreeableness, and the relationship between personality and non-compliance with integrity in the context of law enforcement. This approach allows for a holistic understanding of the issues being studied, beginning with a broader perspective on integrity within public service and narrowing down to specific personality traits that may influence integrity-related behavior among police officers.

The study by Megat Ayop and Abd. Halim (2016) emphasizes that integrity within the PDRM is critical not only for the organization's image but also for the effectiveness of law enforcement. They found that police officers with high levels of integrity are more likely to perform their duties fairly and transparently, thus increasing public trust in the police force. This aligns with the views of Jamiah et al. (2007), who assert that integrity is the foundation of professionalism in public service, including the PDRM.

However, field realities indicate that the PDRM still faces significant challenges in cultivating integrity. Statistics from the Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission (EAIC) show that the PDRM recorded the highest number of complaints compared to other enforcement agencies. Between 2011 and 2018, 1,919 out of 2,640 complaints of misconduct received by the EAIC involved PDRM officers (Sinar Harian, May 7, 2019). These figures reflect the scale of the challenges faced by the PDRM in efforts to enhance organizational integrity.

Barker and Carter (1994) explain that the opportunity structures and rule-breaking techniques present within police organizations can contribute to misconduct. They outline the socialization processes in police organizations that can lead to the formation of informal norms that may conflict with the official values of organizational integrity. This suggests that efforts to enhance integrity must focus not only on individuals but also on the organizational culture as a whole.

Laila (2020), in her study, found that the nature of the work is a major factor contributing to disciplinary violations by police officers. The diverse, challenging, and dangerous nature of policing duties can cause police officers to experience stress, frustration, and conflicts that may undermine their integrity. This is supported by other studies, such as those by Zukauskas et al. (2001), Kop and Euwema (2002), and Brunetto and Farr-Wharton (2003), which show a relationship between work stress and unethical behavior among police officers.

In conclusion, the issue of integrity within the PDRM is complex and multidimensional, involving individual, organizational, and systemic factors. While various efforts have been made to enhance integrity, challenges remain, necessitating a more comprehensive and integrated approach. This study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of this issue, particularly from the perspective of police officers' personality traits.

In the context of research on integrity within organizations, particularly in law enforcement institutions like the PDRM, the personality perspective offers a unique and valuable viewpoint. Two personality traits that frequently receive attention in studies related to integrity and ethical behavior in the workplace are conscientiousness and agreeableness. These two traits are part of the "Big Five" personality model introduced by Costa and McCrae (1992), which has gained widespread recognition in the field of psychology.

Conscientiousness refers to an individual's tendency to be organized, responsible, and achievement-oriented. Paul (2014) emphasizes that this trait is crucial for success in various occupational fields, covering a wide range of job complexities, training, and experiences. In the context of the PDRM, police officers with high levels of conscientiousness may be more inclined to adhere to standard operating procedures, perform their duties meticulously, and maintain integrity in challenging situations.

A study by Organ and Lingl (1995) found that individuals with high levels of conscientiousness are more likely to commit to and efficiently complete assigned tasks. This is consistent with the findings of Reynolds et al. (2000), which show that conscientiousness significantly contributes to employee motivation across various countries, including Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, New Zealand, Russia, and Sweden. In the context of the PDRM, this trait may play a crucial role in ensuring that police officers perform their duties with dedication and integrity, even in challenging circumstances.

Agreeableness refers to an individual's tendency to be cooperative, considerate, and harmonious in interpersonal relationships. McCrae and Costa (1991) explain that this trait is associated with happiness and positive interpersonal relationships. In the context of the PDRM, police officers with high levels of agreeableness may be more likely to collaborate with colleagues, interact positively with the community, and avoid unnecessary conflicts.

Hergenhahn and Olson (1999) argue that these two traits enable individuals to interact and socialize more effectively. This is important in the context of the PDRM, where police officers must interact with various segments of society and colleagues in carrying out their duties. However, the interaction between these two traits and environmental and organizational factors must be considered to fully understand how they influence integrity-related behavior.

Previous studies have shown a positive relationship between conscientiousness and agreeableness and ethical behavior in the workplace. For instance, a study by Kalshoven, Den Hartog, and De Hoogh (2011) found that both traits have a positive relationship with ethical leadership. However, most of these studies were conducted in general organizational contexts, and few have focused specifically on the context of law enforcement, such as the PDRM.

In the context of the PDRM, a study by Muzaffar Syah (2016) on integrity among Malaysian police officers highlighted the importance of personality factors, although it did not specifically focus on the traits of conscientiousness and agreeableness. He found that personality traits such as moral courage and inner strength play an important role in maintaining integrity in challenging situations. This indicates the potential for further investigation into how specific traits like conscientiousness and agreeableness operate within the PDRM.

In the context of conscientiousness, a study by Ones and Viswesvaran (1998) found that this trait is negatively related to unethical behavior in the workplace. This means that individuals with high levels of conscientiousness are less likely to engage in behavior that violates integrity. In the context of the PDRM, this may mean that police officers with high levels of conscientiousness are more likely to adhere to standard operating procedures and avoid behavior that violates their professional ethics.

However, a study by Ashton and Lee (2008) suggests that the relationship between conscientiousness and ethical behavior may be more complex. They found that although conscientiousness is generally associated with more ethical behavior, in some cases, individuals with extremely high levels of conscientiousness may be too rigid in adhering to rules, potentially overlooking broader ethical considerations. In the context of the PDRM, this may mean that police officers who are overly focused on adhering to procedures may neglect the need to act flexibly and ethically in complex situations.

Meanwhile, a study by Judge, LePine, and Rich (2006) showed a positive relationship between agreeableness and organizational citizenship behavior, which is often associated with integrity. However, Graziano and Eisenberg (1997) suggest that individuals with high levels of agreeableness may be more easily influenced by social pressure, which in some cases can lead to behavior that violates integrity if it becomes the norm within a group.

A study by Treviño and Nelson (2017) emphasizes the importance of considering situational and organizational factors in understanding the relationship between personality and ethical behavior. They suggest that while personality traits play an important role, their influence is often moderated by factors such as organizational culture, reward systems, and ethical leadership.

In conclusion, the relationship between personality and non-compliance with integrity within the PDRM context is complex and multifaceted. While traits like conscientiousness and agreeableness may play important roles, their influence must be understood in the context of broader organizational, situational, and cultural factors. Qualitative studies like the one proposed in this research have the potential to contribute to a more effective and contextual understanding of how personality interacts with other factors to influence integrity among police officers in Malaysia.

A qualitative approach also allows researchers to explore the issue of integrity within the PDRM from the perspective of the study participants themselves, enabling a more meaningful understanding of how police officers interpret, experience, and respond to ethical challenges in their work (Patton, 2015). This is important because integrity-related behavior often involves complex decision-making processes that may be influenced by various contextual factors that may not be fully captured through a quantitative approach.

This study also has significant practical implications. Police integrity is fundamental to public trust and the effectiveness of law enforcement (Dunham & Alpert, 2015). By understanding the factors contributing to unethical behavior, the PDRM can take proactive steps to address this issue, thereby enhancing public trust and strengthening organizational legitimacy. The qualitative approach, with its ability to generate rich and in-depth descriptions of phenomena (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), can provide valuable insights to help achieve these practical goals.

Finally, this study is also important from a theoretical development perspective. While the "Big Five" personality model has been widely used in organizational research, its application in the context of law enforcement remains underexplored. This study has the potential to contribute to a more sophisticated theoretical understanding of how personality traits operate in this unique organizational context, paving the way for further research in this field. The qualitative approach, with its ability to explore how individuals understand and make sense of their experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018), can provide a deeper understanding of the dynamic and context-dependent nature of personality and integrity in the workplace.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study aims to explore the relationship between personality and non-compliance with integrity among police officers at the Perlis Contingent Police Headquarters (IPK Perlis). Specifically, the study will focus on two primary personality traits, conscientiousness and agreeableness, and how these traits may influence the integrity-related behavior of police officers. Conscientiousness refers to qualities such as reliability, responsibility, and achievement orientation, while agreeableness refers to the tendency to cooperate, be considerate, and maintain interpersonal harmony (McCrae & Costa, 1987).

The next phase involves data collection through in-depth interviews and document analysis. Interviews will be conducted with police officers from various ranks and departments at the Perlis Contingent Police Headquarters, including the Director of the Integrity and Standard Compliance Department, Deputy Director of the Integrity and Standard Compliance Department, Perlis State Police Chief, Psychology Officers, Religious Affairs Officers, lower-ranking police officers, and officers who have faced disciplinary actions for integrity violations. This will allow for the exploration of diverse and rich perspectives on this issue. Document analysis will involve the examination of related documents, such as disciplinary reports and codes of ethics, to provide context and supporting details for the interview data.

The collected data will then be analyzed using a thematic analysis approach, which involves coding and identifying recurring and significant themes and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach allows themes to emerge inductively from the data, ensuring that the study's findings are rooted in the actual experiences and perspectives of the participants.

This approach is necessary because the research questions require an in-depth exploration of the participants' perspectives, experiences, and meanings, which are best achieved through qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews (Patton, 2015). The study's scope is also limited to the specific context of IPK Perlis, making an intensive and contextual case study approach more suitable than a broader and general quantitative approach (Yin, 2014). Moreover, the lack of existing research on this topic in the context of the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) makes a qualitative, exploratory, and inductive approach more appropriate (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Therefore, the choice of research design ultimately involves a trade-off between depth and breadth, flexibility and control, and description and causal inference. In the current study, priority is given to depth, flexibility, and rich description, given the complex and underexplored nature of the phenomenon being studied and the need to understand it from the participants' perspectives.

In terms of implementation, this study will adopt a case study design, which involves an in-depth exploration of a specific and bounded phenomenon in its real-life context (Yin, 2014). Case studies are appropriate when the researcher has little control over the events being studied and when the focus is on contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts (Yin, 2014). In this case, the "case" being studied is the phenomenon of non-compliance with integrity within the context of IPK Perlis, and the unit of analysis is the individual police officer.

This study will involve the collection of both primary and secondary data. Primary data refers to data collected directly by the researcher for the specific purpose of the study, while secondary data refers to data that has been collected by others for different purposes but is used by the researcher for the current study (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016). The use of both types of data is important to gain a comprehensive understanding and triangulation of the phenomenon being studied.

The interviews will be conducted in a semi-structured format, guided by an interview protocol developed based on the literature review and research objectives, but flexible enough to allow the exploration of emerging themes and issues during the interviews (Patton, 2015). This allows the researcher to maintain the focus of the interviews while providing room for participants' unique views and experiences to emerge. The interviews are expected to last between 60 to 90 minutes and will be conducted in a suitable and comfortable location for the participants, such as their offices or a meeting room. All interviews will be audio-recorded (with participants' consent) and then transcribed verbatim for analysis.

In addition to interviews, primary data will also be collected through direct observation by the researcher, based on his experience as a police officer and registered counselor within the PDRM. Observation allows the researcher to record the natural behavior and interactions of participants in their real environments, providing rich contextual data to complement the interview data (Patton, 2015). In this study, the observations will focus on interactions and dynamics related to integrity issues in the work environment of IPK Perlis, such as meetings, training sessions, and disciplinary proceedings. The observations will be recorded in detailed field notes, which will be digitized and organized for analysis.

In conclusion, the framework for ensuring the validity and reliability outlined here reflects the study's commitment to rigorous, ethical, and credible research. While no approach is perfect, the use of multiple triangulation techniques, along with reflective and transparent practices, can help ensure that the findings of this study accurately represent the reality of the phenomenon being studied and can withstand scrutiny and rigorous criticism. This is important not only for academic integrity but also for the potential findings to inform practice and policy within the PDRM and the broader law enforcement community.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study's document analysis examined various official records, policies, and communications within PDRM Perlis to gain insights into integrity issues and their relationship with personality traits. This analysis serves as a crucial foundation for understanding the institutional context of integrity and provides documentary evidence of how conscientiousness and agreeableness might affect integrity-related behavior. This section is organized to first explore the formal understanding and communication of integrity within the organization, followed by an examination of records that may indicate links between conscientiousness, agreeableness, and integrity issues. It then identifies patterns and trends in integrity violations before explicitly connecting findings to each research question. This comprehensive approach enables a thorough exploration of documentary evidence that complements and provides context for the qualitative data obtained from interviews, providing a stronger basis for addressing the research objectives of the study.

Official statistics from the Integrity and Compliance Department (JIPS) of PDRM Perlis show a decrease in integrity violation cases from 2018 to 2020. In 2018, there were 32 reported cases of integrity violations, which decreased to 24 cases in 2019 and further to 18 cases in 2020 (JIPS PDRM Perlis, 2021). This trend suggests an increase in awareness and adherence to integrity policies within the contingent. Training plays a significant role in shaping officers' understanding and interpretation of integrity within PDRM Perlis. The contingent uses various training materials and guidelines to instill integrity principles among its officers.

The PDRM Basic Training Handbook, used in the initial training for all police recruits including those in Perlis, allocates a significant section to ethics and integrity. Module 3 in this manual, titled "Professional Ethics and Integrity," covers topics such as the definition of integrity, its importance in law enforcement, and case studies on integrity violations (PDRM Training Division, 2018). This basic training sets the foundation for officers' understanding of integrity throughout their careers.

In 2019, PDRM introduced the "Islamic Understanding and Moral Education Module," which was implemented across the contingent, including Perlis. This module aims to strengthen the moral and ethical foundation of police officers, with a specific focus on integrity within the context of religious and moral values (Utusan Malaysia, 2019). The introduction of this module reflects the organization's recognition of the role of personal beliefs and values in shaping integrity.

The Perlis contingent has also developed local-specific training materials to address particular integrity challenges in the region. For instance, in 2020, a specialized training module titled "Border Integrity" was introduced, focusing on the unique ethical challenges of Perlis as a border state (PDRM Perlis, 2020). This module includes case studies of integrity violations related to cross-border activities and provides guidelines for maintaining integrity in these complex situations.

Regarding ongoing professional development, PDRM Perlis conducts regular integrity workshops and seminars. In 2021, the contingent organized a series of monthly "Integrity Dialog Sessions" where officers discussed real ethical dilemmas and their resolutions (Annual Report PDRM Perlis, 2021). These sessions aim to address the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application of integrity principles.

The effectiveness of these training materials and guidelines is reflected in the annual Integrity Assessment results conducted by JIPS. In 2020, PDRM Perlis showed an improvement in its integrity score, rising from 7.2 in 2019 to 7.8 out of 10 (JIPS PDRM Perlis, 2021). This improvement suggests that training efforts positively impact officers' understanding and application of integrity principles.

The Perlis contingent uses multiple channels for internal communication about integrity. Daily briefings, occurring at the start of each shift, often include reminders about integrity and ethical behavior. According to a survey conducted by the PDRM Perlis Human Resources Department in 2020, 85% of officers reported that integrity was mentioned at least once during daily briefings in the previous month (PDRM Perlis Human Resources Survey, 2020).

The Perlis contingent also uses digital platforms for integrity-related communication. In 2019, PDRM Perlis launched an internal mobile application named "Integriti@Perlis," which provides daily integrity tips, allows

officers to report integrity violations anonymously, and offers a platform for discussing ethical dilemmas. As of 2021, 92% of Perlis police officers had downloaded and actively used the app (Annual Report PDRM Perlis, 2021).

Integrity newsletters remain another important component of internal communication. The “Perlis Integrity Bulletin” is published monthly and distributed to all officers. This bulletin features case studies of integrity violations, updates on integrity initiatives, and articles on ethical decision-making. Analysis of the bulletin from 2018 to 2021 shows an increased focus on practical, scenario-based discussions of integrity, shifting from purely theoretical discussions (Perlis Integrity Bulletin Content Analysis, 2018-2021).

The Perlis contingent has also implemented a “Integrity Champion” program, where officers demonstrating outstanding integrity are recognized and highlighted through internal communication channels. In 2020, 12 officers were named “Integrity Champions,” and their stories were shared through various internal channels (PDRM Perlis, 2020). This program aims to provide examples of real integrity practices and inspire other officers.

In conclusion, the understanding and interpretation of integrity within PDRM Perlis are shaped by a complex interaction between official definitions and policies, training materials and guidelines, and internal communication. While there is a clear institutional emphasis on integrity, as reflected in various initiatives and communications, the practical application and individual interpretations of these principles by officers in their daily duties may vary. This potential gap between institutional definitions and individual interpretations is a key area explored to address research questions about how police officers in the Perlis Contingent understand and interpret the concept of integrity within the context of their law enforcement duties.

The relationship between conscientiousness and integrity issues among police officers in the Perlis Contingent is a critical area explored to understand its influence on integrity-related behavior. This section examines how conscientiousness, a key personality trait characterized by organization, diligence, and reliability, intersects with integrity issues in the context of law enforcement duties in Perlis.

Analysis of disciplinary records from 2018 to 2021 reveals significant trends in the types of integrity violations committed by officers in Perlis. According to the Annual Report of JIPS PDRM Perlis (2021), out of a total of 87 recorded integrity violation cases during this period, 42% related to absenteeism, tardiness, or failure to complete assigned tasks. These types of violations are often associated with low conscientiousness, reflecting a lack of organization, punctuality, and reliability. For example, a notable case in 2019 involved an officer who failed to accurately record seized drugs, leading to inconsistencies in evidence that jeopardized a major drug trafficking case. Follow-up investigations revealed that the officer had a history of minor procedural violations, suggesting a pattern of low conscientiousness (PDRM Perlis Internal Affairs Report, 2019).

Other significant categories of incidents related to time management and reliability. JIPS reports indicate that 22% of integrity violations involved officers arriving late for duty, failing to attend court as scheduled, or not responding to calls promptly. These incidents not only reflect individual officers’ conscientiousness but also have broader implications for public trust and law enforcement effectiveness.

A 2020 case highlighted in the Annual Report of PDRM Perlis describes an incident where repeated delays by an officer led to a delay in responding to a domestic violence call, resulting in severe consequences for the victim. This case prompted a departmental review of shift management and accountability mechanisms (Annual Report PDRM Perlis, 2020).

An examination of interpersonal conflict reports, community feedback, and team performance evaluations provides valuable insights into the role of agreeableness in influencing police officers’ behavior and decisions related to integrity within the Perlis Contingent. While agreeableness generally appears to contribute positively to integrity-related behavior, particularly in public interactions and team dynamics, its influence is complex and context-dependent. These findings underscore the importance of considering personality traits such as agreeableness in recruitment strategies, training, and team composition aimed at fostering integrity within law enforcement agencies.

However, the nature of violations has also evolved over time. In 2018, the most common type of violation related to abuse of power (38% of cases), followed by corruption (25%) and procedural violations (22%) (JIPS PDRM Perlis, 2018). By 2021, procedural violations had become the most prominent (39%), with abuse of power falling to second place (28%) and corruption to third (17%) (JIPS PDRM Perlis, 2021).

The significant role of agreeableness in shaping integrity-related behavior, particularly in interpersonal contexts, aligns with research linking this trait to ethical leadership, cooperation, and positive relationships in various settings (Graziano & Tobin, 2017; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). This study further confirms the value of agreeableness in building trust and positive community relationships as well as fostering effective team dynamics.

The study highlights the complex interplay between individual personality traits and the situational and organizational context in which officers operate. The findings underscore the importance of ethical leadership and supportive organizational culture in fostering and maintaining integrity, as well as the need for a holistic and systemic approach to integrity management that addresses the various influences shaping officers' behavior.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Through the systematic investigation and analysis conducted in the previous chapters, several key findings have emerged. These findings collectively shed light on the original research questions and offer significant theoretical, methodological, and practical implications. This chapter aims to synthesize these main conclusions, acknowledge the limitations of the study, and provide recommendations for future research as well as potential applications in relevant real-world settings.

The discussion in this chapter is organized as follows. First, the main conclusions drawn from the research findings are presented, highlighting how they address the original research questions and objectives. Next, the limitations of the study are acknowledged, discussing factors that may have influenced or constrained the research. Based on these conclusions and limitations, recommendations for future research are provided, identifying opportunities to expand or refine the current work. Finally, where relevant, recommendations for practice are offered, explaining how the findings and implications of the study can be utilized by relevant stakeholders such as practitioners, organizations, or policymakers.

CONCLUSIONS

The comprehensive investigation into the relationship between personality traits and integrity violations among police officers in the Perlis Contingent has yielded valuable insights with significant implications for understanding and managing this critical issue within the context of Malaysian policing. By employing a multi-method approach that combines document analysis, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and personal observations, this study has provided a rich, context-based perspective on the complex dynamics shaping ethical behavior within the Perlis police force.

The core significance of this study lies in its contribution to a deeper understanding of police integrity as a multidimensional construct. The findings reveal that for police officers in Perlis, integrity encompasses a holistic set of values and behaviors, including honesty, impartiality, consistency, adherence to regulations, and commitment to public service (Jamiah et al., 2007; Megat Ayop & Abd. Halim, 2016). This nuanced understanding challenges simplistic views of integrity and underscores the need for more sophisticated and context-sensitive approaches to its conceptualization and management.

The importance of this study extends beyond the individual level, as it also emphasizes the critical role of organizational factors in shaping and sustaining integrity within the policing context. The findings consistently highlight the significant role of ethical leadership, supportive organizational culture, and comprehensive integrity management systems in reinforcing a culture of accountability, transparency, and ethical behavior (Karimu & Iddrisu, 2021; Wolfe et al., 2021). This systemic perspective challenges the notion of integrity as solely an individual responsibility and underscores the need for a holistic and integrated approach to addressing this issue (PROACT Africa, 2021).

One key implication of this study is the recognition that while individual personality traits play a crucial role in shaping integrity-related behavior, they do not operate in isolation. The findings emphasize the complex interaction between these personal characteristics and broader organizational and contextual factors that influence officers' decisions and actions (Treviño & Nelson, 2017; Tett & Burnett, 2003). This understanding is critical for developing interventions and policies that can effectively address the multidimensional nature of integrity challenges in the policing sector.

Furthermore, the conclusions of this study provide valuable guidance for policymakers and law enforcement leaders in Malaysia, highlighting the need for a coherent national police integrity framework that can align and support the efforts of individual police contingents (Aguinis et al., 2021). This may involve establishing dedicated oversight bodies, developing comprehensive integrity management guidelines, and integrating integrity-oriented criteria into national recruitment and promotion standards.

In conclusion, this comprehensive investigation into the relationship between personality traits and integrity violations among police officers in the Perlis Contingent has made a significant contribution to our understanding of this critical issue. By providing a rich, context-based perspective that illuminates the complex multi-level dynamics, this study has laid the groundwork for more effective and evidence-based approaches to managing integrity in the policing sector. As the Perlis Contingent and the broader Malaysian law enforcement system continue to address the evolving challenges of maintaining ethical behavior, the insights and recommendations derived from this research will undoubtedly play a crucial role in supporting their efforts to build a more trustworthy, accountable, and responsive police force that serves as a cornerstone of a just, fair, and prosperous society.

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