

**SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE AS AN ASPECT OF CRIME CONTROL STRATEGY:  
EVIDENCE FROM SOME SELECTED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENTS**

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**Abstract**

*The focus of this paper was on spiritual intelligence as an aspect of crime control: evidence from some selected law enforcement agents. The researchers adopted the socio-metry method of qualitative research. The study utilized both the primary and secondary method of data collection. Key informants interviews (KII) were conducted with some of the law enforcement agents identified to be spiritually intelligent so as to get the much needed information from them on spiritual intelligence and how it has helped them in carrying out their crime control responsibility. The findings of the paper showed that crime rate has become a huge social problem and government efforts to avert the problems have proven abortive as some of the criminals adopt spiritual means in perpetrating some of these crimes. Hence, the recourse to spiritual intelligence as a policing strategy to curb or control some of these crimes by some law enforcement agents. The findings also revealed that spiritual intelligence is helpful in the control of crime. The paper recommends a mix of physical and spiritual intelligence as panacea to crime problems in Nigeria.*

**Keywords: Spiritual Intelligence, Strategy, Crime Control, Law Enforcement, Agents, Cosmos**

**Introduction**

The issues of crime and its consequences have become a huge social problem the world over. Resulting from this challenge, nations across the globe have become, in the words of Schur (1976) ‘a criminal society.’ This situation, no doubt, calls for concerted and renewed efforts aimed at reducing the reoccurrence of crime, thereby necessitating the adoption of various strategies to achieve this endeavour. Within the law enforcement agencies, Alderson (1979) and Iwarimie-Jaja (2010) have identified such law enforcement strategies as passive, punitive and preventive law enforcement. These have culminated in such policing strategies such as hot spot policing, patrol, community policing, problem-oriented policing, check-point policing, and more recently, intelligence-led policing. The field of intelligence is very broad, and has become very dominant as a means of crime control.

Physical and technological intelligence constitute the aspect of crime control where the state makes a reasonable investment through training of officers and the purchase of both security soft and hardware to facilitate the effort of the law enforcement agents to ensure that they perform optimally in reducing the recurring nature of crime (Lowenthal, 2006; Emmanuel, 2015). In Nigeria, there is a dearth of modern

policing high-tech facilities (such as closed circuit television, telecommunication gadgets, vehicles, computers, forensic laboratories etc) in policing which as a result has made criminal to become emboldened in the victimization of helpless citizens (Abdulkadir, 2004.). Worse still, some criminals have become more fearless in perpetrating certain crimes through their adoption and application of spirituality (mystical power, charm, amulets, among others) in committing crime. Criminals engaged in drug and human trafficking now utilized spiritual intelligence via oath taking and the performance of some rituals in carrying out these crimes (Nwolise, 2015). Armed robbers also fortify themselves with charms and amulets so that nobody is able to catch them, and also for bullet not to penetrate them (Agwanwo, 2015). Cultists also adopt charms to shield themselves from gun-shots. The use of spiritual powers for negative endeavours constitute what Nwolise (2015) described as spiritual threats to security of human beings and nations. It includes acts such as the use of charms, witchcraft, spells and oath taking, ritual rape, ritual kidnapping, ritual murder, secret societies and cultism, among others.

Studies by Melvin and Ayotunde (2011) and Oludayo (2013) examined the use of spiritual elements in the yahoo-yahoo to get the best result from their victim. Alumona (2016) examined the use of spirituality in organizational decision making in Nigeria. This work examines the adoption of spiritual intelligence by some law enforcement agents to combat crimes in Nigeria. This involves a mix of spiritual elements in conventional crime control activities. According to Oludayo (2013:690) spiritual intelligence involves the “procurement and use of mystical, spiritual and supernatural powers” by the law enforcement agents in their crime control activities for the purpose of protecting themselves and controlling crime as well. While not delving into the esoteric dimension of spiritual intelligence or the use of spiritual/supernatural forces, we intend to examine in this paper the factors that predisposed some of these law enforcement agents to the use of SI and then its usefulness in crime control.

#### Literature Review

In the field of intelligence, spiritual intelligence is the most recent aspect of intelligence. Spiritual Intelligence comprises two words - Spiritual and Intelligence. “Spiritual” refers to meaning, values and fundamental purpose of a thing (Zohar and Marshal, 2004). The fundamental purpose of spirituality is that it is the means through which human beings transcend time, culture, needs and resources (Cashwell and Young 2005). Aurobindo (1990) cited in Goswami (2014:13) defined spirituality as “the attempt to know and live the highest self, the divine, the all-embracing unity, and to raise its parts to the divinest possible values.”

Wiggins–Frame (2005) in Leaman (2009:9) saw the word ‘spiritual’ or ‘spirituality’ as embracing “ones beliefs; awareness, value, subjective experience, sense of purpose and mission, and an attempt to reach towards something greater than oneself which may or may not include a deity”. This experience that is expressed both innately and physically shows that unlike other forms of creature on earth, humans alone can be classified as spiritual beings. Geppert, Bogenschutz and Miller (2007:389) opined that “spirituality is a more personal and less formal search for the sacred”. It begins with the self as a means of gaining a huge and greater insight of one’s place, meaning and purpose in the physical realm; with other humans, nature, and possibly with the transcendent. The Fetzer Institute (2003/1999), in Giordano, Longmore, Schroeder and Seffrin, (2008:105) averred that spiritual intelligence or spirituality is concerned with the transcendent, addressing ultimate questions about life’s meaning, with the assumptions that there is more to life than what we see or fully understand.” Therefore, the utilization of the inner self and inner resources is fundamental to the exploration of the invisible in the ultimate quest for final meaning and purpose in life (Rindfleish, 2007; Buekhart and Nagai-Jacobson, 1985 and Leaman, 2009).

Intelligence, in itself, is the mental abilities that enable the adaption, shaping and selection of certain environment (Hashim and Musa, 2014). And for Gardner (1983) intelligence is a set of developed abilities used to solve problems and create products that are valuable within cultural setting or community. The term spiritual intelligence was coined by Zohar in 1997. He conceptualized it as “the intelligence that makes us whole, that gives us integrity” (Zohar 1997:16).

However, this definition by Zohar is seen to be both simple and vague. It does not bring to the fore, the real meaning of SI. Thus, Amram (2007) saw spiritual intelligence is the set of abilities that individuals use to

apply, manifest and embody spiritual resources, values and qualities in ways that enhances their daily functioning and well-being. Vaughan (2002) conceived SI as that aspect of intelligence concerned with the inner life of the mind and spirit and its relationship with to being in the world. Emmons (1999) is of the view that SI is the framework for identifying and organizing skills and abilities needed for adaptive use of spirituality. Then King (2008:18) following Emmons notion of SI as an adaptive mechanism, observed that it is “a set of adaptive mental capacities based on non-material and transcendent aspect of reality, specifically those that contribute to the awareness, integration, and adaptive application of the non-material and transcendent aspect of one’s existence, leading to such outcomes as deep existential reflection, enhancement of meaning, recognition of a transcendent self, and mastery of spiritual state.” The desire to be loved and to be safe in the midst of physical and spiritual uncertainties seem to have pushed many into the utilization of external resources – spiritual intelligence.

Epistemologically, SI draws its existence from other sub-fields such as psychology, neurology, philosophy and religion; and Eastern mysticism and indigenous beliefs system (Vaille, 2007). Spiritual intelligence has had a long practice or existence among various religions and civilization the world over, which enable people to create as well as connect themselves to their cosmology. This intelligence is sustained through values pertaining to beliefs, self and natural resources, such as land, trees, animals, rivers, mountains, among other things, within which these civilizations solve their pressing challenges (Noble, 2001; Vaille, 2007). It is based on this stand that Emmons (2000:164) saw SI as a factor in problem solving for goal attainment. He further identified five features of SI to include: 1), the capacity to transcend the physical and material, 2), the ability to experience heightened state of consciousness, 3), the ability to sanctify everyday experiences, 4), the ability to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems, and 5). the capacity to be virtuous.

Spiritual intelligence is the precursor to an enhanced human capacity. Moonghalia and Marvestib (2015) stated that spiritual intelligence is related to employees’ work ethics that leads to improved productivity. Also, they averred that spiritual intelligence is a variable in locating and reducing the level of insecurities. According to Zukav and Frances (2001:24) spiritual intelligence – “looking inward – is replacing the pursuit of external power – reaching outward to manipulate and control – as the cure for the insecurities at the core of human experience. Instead of rearranging external circumstances in order to make ourselves feel more safe, valuable and loved, we are learning how to look inside ourselves to find the roots of our insecurities and to pull them.” Extrapolating from Zukav and Frances’ (2001) view, spiritual intelligence provides the inner search for certain social problems and equally proffering solutions to it.

Nwolise (2012) in his seminar paper on spiritual dimension to national security argued, and rightly too, that for a holistic national security architecture in Nigeria, the spiritual dimension should be seen as important as the physical aspect. His argument was based on the fact that most manifestation of Nigeria’s security dilemma has spiritual dimensions to it (Nwolise, 2015). This point was corroborated by Salemink (2010) that there is a link between contemporary uncertainties, insecurities and anxieties with physical and non-physical dimensions of insecurities. Vegvari (2017) studied how spirituality could strengthen the resilience of criminal organizations. The study found spirituality as a significant factor in the resilience of some criminal organizations such as the Jewish Organized Crime, the Cosa Nostra, the Vory v Zakone, La Familia Michoacana and Knight Templar Cartel. However, Giordano, Longmore, Schroeder and Seffrin, (2008) in their research on spirituality and desistance from crime concluded that spirituality was significant as well as being insignificant in crime perpetration.

In Nigeria, some of the non-state actors involved in crime control adopt the philosophy of spiritual intelligence as part of their mode of operation with outstanding results. A typical example was the ‘Bakkasi Boys’ in the South-east. The evolution of this group could be traced to the failure of the conventional police to stem the increasing waves of armed banditry at the Onitsha and Aba markets. Through the use of spiritual intelligence in crime control activities by the Bakkasi Boys, calm and normalcy returned to these markets, as armed banditry was reduced to the barest minimum level. Williams (2007) informed that the success of the Bakkasi Boys in reducing crime was based on their adoption of physical and secret intelligence.

According to him, the physical intelligence guaranteed only 20 per cent of their success, while the 80 per cent of their success was made possible by secret/spiritual intelligence.

In a similar vein, Melvin and Ayotunde (2011) and Oludanyo (2013) interrogated the influence of spirituality in the enhancement of victimization by “yahoo yahoo boys” in Western Nigeria. Their studies revealed that the adoption of spirituality by cybercriminals is related to their operational success. These studies further informed that the application of spirituality in their cybercriminal activities helped them to evade the long hand of the law or being caught by the police or the EFCC (Melvin and Ayotunde 2011; Oludayo, 2013).

### **Theoretical framework**

Most of the previous studies on spiritual intelligence adopted the multiple intelligence theory by Gardner in their studies. This study adopts the Ethnomethodology Theory. Ethnomethodology as a sociological theory, gained widespread recognition through Harold Garfinkel’s work, titled ‘Studies in Ethnomethodology’ published in 1967. Ethnomethodology as a theory deals with the methods or ways individuals or groups of people adopt to accomplish their everyday task. The theory consist of a “body of common-sense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act in circumstances in which they find themselves” (Heritage, 1984:4). The central theme of the theory is describing ways and means employed by human beings to give meaning to the social world. We adopted this theory because it provides individuals and, indeed, the law enforcement agents the means or method of effectively enhancing the law enforcement duties through the use of spiritual intelligence - a mix of spiritual element in crime control.

### **Methodology**

The study utilized both the primary and secondary method of data collection. Key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with some of the law enforcement officers identified to be spiritually intelligent. Unstructured interviews were conducted with the respondents so as to get the much needed information from them on spiritual intelligence and how it has helped them in carrying out their crime control responsibility. The secondary source of information was from journals articles, text books, among others. The researcher purposively selected the respondents based on their knowledge of, and application of spiritual intelligence in Rivers State. Thirty five (35) security officers from various law enforcement agencies were purposively selected and interviewed. Included in the interview were men of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), Nigeria Army (NA) and State Security Service (SSS). The selection of thirty five respondents was based on the nature of the independent variable as a unique phenomenon among the law enforcement officers. The researchers adopted the socio-metry method of qualitative research introduced by Timasheff (1967) to reach the sample population. The socio-metry approach is based on the fact that society is made up of cleavages of selective affinity and repulsion. Therefore, on the basis of selective affinity, if one gets someone within a group, one can through him/her reach other members of the group through referrals. Some of those we could not reach face to face, were reached and interviewed through phone calls, partly due to their busy work schedules. The researchers applied the ethics of research hinged on the principle of anonymity and confidentiality. Based on these principles, the names of the respondents are withheld. Responses drawn from the field were presented manually. The fieldwork was carried out between June 2018 and March, 2019.

### **Findings**

The findings with respect to table 1 show that a large proportion of the age bracket, 45-49, had the highest number of respondents (29%), while the age bracket 30-34, had the least respondents (11%). Data on sex show that all the respondents were male, that is, 100%. On marital status, the largest proportions, 80% of the respondents were married, 11%, single, while 9% were widower. Education-wise, only 31% of the respondents were university graduates, 60% were school certificate holders, while 9% had first school leaving certificate. Religion-wise, all the respondents were religious. 54% of them were adherents of African traditional religion, 34% were Christians, while 14% were Muslims.

**Table 1: Distribution of the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	No of Respondents	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
30-34	1	11
35-39	4	17
40-44	9	23
45-49	12	29
50-54	5	14
55 years and above	3	6
Total	35	100
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	35	
Total	35	100
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	28	80
Single	4	11
Widower	3	9
Total	35	100
<b>Religion</b>		
Christianity	11	31
Islam	5	14
Traditional African Rel.	19	54
Total	35	100
<b>Education Qualification</b>		
Primary	3	9
Secondary	21	60
Tertiary	11	31
Total	35	100

***Identifying factors that necessitated the use of spiritual intelligence in crime control by law enforcement agents***

The security agents were asked the factors that predisposed them to adopting the use of spirituality or spiritual intelligence in crime control. Most of the respondents were of the opinion that there is an increase in the rate of crime and violence in the country. Crime such as armed robbery, kidnapping, cultism, ritual killings and oil bunkering, among others forms of crimes are now widespread in the country. A lot of the perpetrators of these crimes have increased their perpetration of these crimes through the use of some spiritual means. This spiritual means often help them to succeed in their operations and equally make it difficult for the law enforcement agents to apprehend them as a result of their use of spiritual powers. The efforts of the crime control agents have been known to yield very minimal results/success due mainly to this factor. The Nigerian crime problem is now very disturbing because of the spiritual dimension to the problem. One of the respondents has this to say:

I decided to use spiritual intelligence as a person because some of the criminals now use amulets, charms/spiritual powers to operate. This has made them to be more hardened in their operations. When you shut them during operations, it does not penetrate because of the spiritual power they use in operation. The only way to deal with this category of criminals is to apply spiritual intelligence that makes me to always be ahead of them so as to easily catch them.

Another respondent said that he opted for spiritual intelligence in policing because of an ugly experience he had, that almost cost him his job. According to him:

We went out for an operation in which a notorious cultist caught by our team and handed over to me in search of other members of the cult group. As a means of having a firm grip of the suspect, I pushed him to a nearby wall. As we were there, he raised his two hands and muttered some words. After a few second, to my uttermost surprise, he disappeared. My colleagues accused me of letting him go and reported me to our boss.

The disappearance of criminals in Nigeria through the aid of spirituality or charms is not recent. The police had reported severally that the then notorious armed robber and kidnapper, Lawrence Anini, popularly called the 'Law' use to disappear before them. As a man behind many crime scenes in the old Bendel state, Nigeria, his invisibility made arresting and prosecuting him difficult (Igiebor, Ilori and Edekpai, 1986). They further noted that in spite of his capacity to disappear, when the time came for his end:

His famed magical mirror which foretold any impending danger failed miserably to perform. Even his vanishing power were put in abeyance by his spiritual protectors who got angry with him for messing up their powers with too many women who are, indeed, one of Anini's proven weaknesses (Igiebor, Ilori and Edekpai, 1986: 16&17).

The police officers who finally arrested Lawrence Anini, after several defeats and the death of many police officers were said to have prepared themselves for the 'battle spiritually' (Igiebor, Ilori and Edekpai, 1986). In Rivers State, there was a very notorious criminal, popularly called *Don Wannu*. *Don Wannu* was responsible for the decimation of many lives, and loss of property at Omoku. With his lieutenants, and armed with sophisticated arms, charms and wearing just red pants during his criminal operations, bullets shot at him could not penetrate or kill him, while they killed hapless citizens at will, including the police and soldiers. A member of the Nigeria Army who escaped death during an operation against *Don Wannu*, reported that "the moment I came out alive, I had to go and fortify myself spiritually. Before embarking on any operation now, I use spiritual intelligence."

#### ***Does the use of spiritual intelligence result in enhanced crime control among law enforcement agents?***

As part of our objective, we tried to find out from the law enforcement agents interviewed whether or not the use of spiritual intelligence is related to the crime control efforts. This search is borne out of the emphasis of respondents on the use of spirituality by criminals in the perpetration of crime, and the need to be ahead of them in some cases. In line with the above question, their responses were quite remarkable. Many of them affirmed that depending on the nature of the crime at stake, that the use of spiritual intelligence often could enhance their crime control efforts. When an operation is to be carried out against cultists who had fortified themselves, if a security officer just goes out without any preparation, the cultists may finish him. But by applying spiritual intelligence, one of the key informants said that:

I sometimes use both physical and spiritual intelligence in crime control. Before going on a critical operation, I go through spiritual inquiry to know more about the operation beforehand so to myself for such an operation because some criminal are very deadly if approached only physically.

Another respondent said:

For some of those who use spiritual means to commit crime, when I go out for operation against them, there are certain steps that I take to ensure that I neutralize their charm so that they do not escape or hurt me.

Another respondent had this to say:

The use of spiritual intelligence helps to reduce some forms of crime. In the force headquarters (State) I shook my colleagues. There was this man who came with some police escorts to negotiate the release of a relative. While there, through the aid of spiritual intelligence, I told some of my colleagues that I perceive that something was wrong somewhere. They said nothing. Because I was very sure of what I meant, I told them to watch out. Right there, I searched the vehicle they came with, but found nothing. I then asked the man to open his briefcase. At this point, he said it was his money and documents that were inside it. I still insisted that I want to see the content of the briefcase. He vehemently refused until I used force. When the briefcase was eventually opened, we

discovered human hand and money inside the briefcase. The man was immediately arrested. The physical intelligence would not make this happen. Well not many security agents use this method.

Also, another security agent responding to the question above had this to say:

The use of spiritual intelligence is quite useful in crime control. I have burst some crime with its aid. Sometime in 2016, we were on patrol when we saw a vehicle conveying a kidnapped victim. The kidnappers had to make their victim to sit in front of the car seat as though nothing had happened. My colleagues asked the criminal to drive pass. But I said 'no,' that there was a criminal in the car. The kidnapped victim was on gun point and could not raise alarm. As we started searching the car, we discovered that they were criminals. The victim was released while the criminals were arrested.

The narrated given above may look doubtful but the Key Informant was very emphatic about the exploits he had made through the use of SI in the area of crime control. However, another respondent in the course of our research stated that he does not use SI in crime control but narrated what he observed being achieved with it when a colleague of his used it to contend with some bank robbers at Omoku in Rivers State. He noted that:

We were posted to secure a bank in Omoku due to the high incidence of criminal violence in the area. One day some armed robbers came to rob the bank. As they came into the bank premises, they started shooting. My colleague who has knowledge of spiritual intelligence started muttering some words after which he engaged the robber in gun battle. At a point, he engaged them one on one as they were shooting, the gun was not penetrating my colleague's body. With time, he killed three of them, while the last person had to escape for his life. At the end of the gun duel, people around began to hail my colleague.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The result of the data from the key informant's interview is very significant as it has shown a relationship between spiritual intelligence and crime control. While it has been acknowledged that spiritual intelligence may not be a conventional strategy in the mainstream policing, it has equally proven to be very useful in the fight against crime based on the findings from the KII.

Specifically, the study revealed that spiritual intelligence has been adopted as a policing strategy with significant results in crime reduction. The finding of this study that spiritual intelligence enhances crime control is in tandem with that of Assi and Ukummi (2018) who found out that spirituality tend to improve coping skills and social support, foster feeling of optimism and hope, promote healthy behaviour, reduce feelings of depression and anxiety. Also, it is in synch with Rani, Abidin and Hamid, (2013) cited in Archana and Rainu (2018) who stated that SI is an important factor in enhancing the performance of workers. Furthermore, Salemink (2010) saw spirituality as a panacea to certain state of insecurity in the following areas (1) mental and physical problems (requiring spiritual healing); (2) economic insecurity and market risk (seeking good fortune); (3) existential uncertainties (ritual performance); (4) running deliberate risks and their management; (5) religious uncertainties and spiritual security. Salemink (2010) averred that spirituality is helpful in attaining human security. The study further showed that most of those who adopt spiritual intelligence in their routine activities, do so not just to enhance their performance in crime control, but also to guarantee their personal security. This may be due to the violent nature of criminals and crime.

### **Conclusion**

On the basis of the findings of this study, one can conclude that there is a nexus between the adoption and application of spirituality by law enforcement agents and their performance in crime control. This is made more expedient because of the adoption and utilization of spiritual powers, charms and the like by some criminals in the perpetration of crime.

Scholars have written on the negative aspects of some divinities and spirit medium in Africa. In the work, however, we explored the positive impacts of spiritual intelligence in the fighting against crime among some selected law enforcement agents in Nigeria. In spite of this emerging scenario, however, the adoption, and application of spiritual intelligence, could be attributed to what Harnischfeger (2006) in Oludayo (2012:690) referred to as the failure of the state in performing its core function in Nigeria, thereby necessitating the “the return of the occult in yet another way”. Or simply put, the use of mystical and spiritual powers to balance the deficits created by inability of the state to provide the high-tech and work environment needed for effective policing. Owing to state failure and the use of spirituality in the perpetration some crimes by some criminals, a mix of physical and spiritual intelligence by the law enforcement agents will help to reduce crime in Nigeria.

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