

Research Article

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FOSTERING POLICE PERFORMANCE THROUGH CREATIVE LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE INNOVATION: THE MODERATING INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEE LEARNING

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the impact of creative leadership and service innovation on police performance, with employee learning as a moderator, within the context of Punjab Police, Pakistan.

Methodology: A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed, collecting data from 338 police officers across various ranks using a combination of convenience and quota sampling. Hypotheses were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 4.0.

Findings: Creative leadership ($\beta=0.330$, $p<0.001$) and service innovation ($\beta=0.367$, $p<0.001$) significantly enhance police performance. Employee learning demonstrates a significant positive moderating effect ($\beta=0.304$, $p<0.001$), strengthening the relationship between service innovation and police performance.

Originality/Value: This study provides empirical evidence for the integration of creative leadership and service innovation in police reform efforts, a relatively unexplored area in South Asian law enforcement contexts. The findings offer practical insights for police administrators seeking to enhance organizational effectiveness through innovation and continuous learning.

Keywords: Creative Leadership, Service Innovation, Police Performance, Employee Learning, Service Innovation Theory

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Introduction

Understanding policing has historically relied on a comprehensive understanding of the political framework. In the 1800s, political machines dominated urban governance, exerting control over public safety and all municipal services (Walker, 1977; Fridell & Wycoff, 2004; Stucky, 2003). Contemporary research has focused on how police organizations evolve through tactics, structures, or procedures that promote favourable transformation and innovation (Bond & Gabriele, 2018; Willis & Mastrofski, 2011; Bond & Braga, 2015). Reformers aimed to alter municipal administration and decrease the power of the machines at the beginning of the 20th century. The objective of this reform was to strengthen the democratic nature of the government and, most importantly, ensure its accountability to all people. Since then, municipal administrations have undergone almost continuous development (Greene, 2000).

Several scholars have proposed that understanding and recognizing the structural, procedural, and cultural factors that promote innovation, change, and successful outcomes would make law enforcement more inclined to embrace new tactics (Alnuaimi & Abdulhabib, 2023). Some research studies focus exclusively on the challenges law enforcement agencies face in adjusting to top-down reforms and externally initiated organizational transformation initiatives (Guyot, 1979; Police, 2001; Bayley, 2014). Public sector developments have gained greater recognition from professionals and researchers (Osborne & Brown, 2011), due to their substantial contribution to enhancing problem-solving abilities and delivering high-quality services (Damanpour & Schneider, 2009; Alfin et al., 2019).

The Punjab Police, serving Pakistan's most populous province with over 110 million citizens, faces mounting challenges including rising crime rates, public trust deficits, and operational inefficiencies. Recent statistics indicate that crime rates in Punjab increased by 12% between 2018-2022, while conviction rates for major offenses remained below 40% (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2022). Pakistan's police-to-population ratio stands at approximately 1:550, significantly below the UN-recommended standard of 1:450 (United Nations, 2020). Public trust in police remains critically low, with only 32% of citizens expressing confidence in law enforcement effectiveness (Gallup Pakistan, 2022).

Current police performance metrics reveal concerning trends: response times average 45 minutes in urban areas, compared with the recommended 10 minutes; investigation completion rates are below 60%; and conviction rates are particularly low for serious offenses. These performance gaps necessitate urgent organizational transformation and innovation. Police administrators often struggle with limited budgets and seek additional resources to support effective crime prevention, as public safety and crime prevention are typically the top objectives of police and governments (Gorman & Ruggiero, 2008).

Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus regarding the interpretation of innovation within these agencies, leading to limited progress in fostering innovation and implementing it effectively. Moreover, there is limited knowledge about how to enhance innovation capability across the entire system. Given these complexities, police agencies must prioritize innovation. Academic research on innovation and its impact on policing has produced conflicting perspectives on policing innovations (Asif et al., 2018).

Despite the recognized importance of innovation in public sector organizations (Osborne & Brown, 2011), limited empirical research exists examining how creative leadership and service innovation specifically influence police performance in developing countries, particularly Pakistan. While studies have explored innovation in Western policing contexts (Willis & Mastrofski, 2011; Bond & Braga, 2015), the applicability of these findings to South Asian law enforcement institutions remains unexplored.

The current study focuses on the mechanisms by which police organizations transform, with a specific emphasis on the processes or frameworks that enable effective change and innovation within these organizations (Frydl & Skogan, 2004). In this research, we assume that police officers with higher affective commitment to the organization possess qualities such as organizational identity, a strong sense of belonging, and an emotional connection (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Individuals who are predisposed to seek, experience, and provide greater internal service are more likely to be engaged at work.

Creative leadership is critical in Punjab Police because traditional hierarchical structures have historically impeded innovation and adaptive response to emerging security challenges. Service innovation is essential to modernize outdated policing methods and leverage technology for more efficient crime prevention. Employee learning becomes particularly important given the rapidly evolving nature of crime, requiring officers to continuously update their knowledge and skills.

The police system in Pakistan has been greatly influenced by its past colonial heritage, resulting in considerable changes throughout the years. The impact of the British on the structure and functioning of law enforcement in the nation is still evident today, owing to their establishment of a centralized police regime during their colonial era. After gaining independence, Pakistan adopted this cultural legacy and adjusted it to its own socio-cultural context. However, over time, complaints about police misconduct, abuse of power, and a lack of accountability have emerged as important issues, eventually undermining the public's trust in law enforcement bodies (United Nations, 1990; Zakir et al., 2023b).

Furthermore, Punjab, the most populous province with a population of 103 million, has the highest crime rate of all provinces. The police agency in Punjab is underperforming, leading to a steady increase in crime rates. Furthermore, given Punjab's status as the most populous province in the country, accounting for 60% of the population, it is crucial for Punjab to make a significant contribution to the national economy. It is particularly important given the recent, momentous foreign direct investment (FDI) of 46 billion dollars through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The CPEC is anticipated to enhance trade and economic collaboration between China and Pakistan (Tiezzi, 2014; Laeeq et al., 2016), yet the economy is experiencing a slowdown due to rising crime rates (Jabbar & Mohsin, 2014). The research aims to provide a thorough understanding of the current state of law enforcement in the country by examining its origins, current issues, and recent initiatives, while considering the role of creative leadership and employee learning.

The paper aims:

- to analyse the development of service innovation of police in Pakistan and its impact on police performance
- Identifying primary obstacles that obstruct police performance and inhibit efficient law enforcement

- Assessing the efficacy of current police reform efforts implemented by leaders who practice creative leadership.
- Evaluating the influence of creative leadership and employee learning methods on enhancing police conduct and public image.
- Offering suggestions for possible strategies to bolster police reforms and improve ultimate performance.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: The literature review provides a comprehensive theoretical overview and a theoretical framework that leads to hypothesis development. The research methodology explains sampling design and analytical procedures. The data analysis section presents the empirical findings and the statistical analysis. The discussion covers the implications of the findings for theory and practice. The conclusion section summarizes key contributions, limitations, and directions for future research.

Literature Review

Service Innovation Theory

Service innovation is the process of developing and implementing ideas that are entirely novel and aims to strengthen public services by enhancing productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness (Amabile, 1997; Walker, 2005). However, the strength of service innovation can be affected or enhanced by various factors, which include employee learning and creative leadership. Public sector organizations, such as police departments, that are striving to enhance their effectiveness and better serve their communities are highly appreciative of advances in service innovation.

The ability to foster innovative thinking and to provoke the development of novel ideas falls under creative leadership, which plays a vital role in driving and navigating service innovation in the police department (Houtgraaf et al., 2023). There is always a higher chance of development when employees are given opportunities and exposure to polish their efforts and knowledge, thereby contributing to the ultimate success of the organization and serving the community they belong to more adequately (Awang et al., 2020). By incorporating a service innovation theory perspective, service innovation, creative leadership, and employee learning, this study will provide valuable insights and better explore the relationships among these variables and their impact on police performance.

Fostering service innovation within a police department is built on one key factor: creative leadership. Creative leadership is the ability to generate novel ideas for the betterment of the department by providing knowledge and support to employees within their boundaries and reducing the hurdles they face in doing so. Keeping this aspect of the study in view will help identify how creative leadership provides training and skills to employees, empowering them to generate and utilize these novel ideas, which ultimately enhance the quality of work and efficiency and effectiveness for the police.

The existing literature on service innovation can be broadly categorized into four main parts: newness, type of change, degree of change, and means of contingency (Majidi et al., 2023; Witell et al., 2016; Noerlina et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2020). Service innovation in the context of degree of change can range from conglomerate to progressivism. In addition, service innovation is categorized as the type of change, classified into product, process and business

model innovation. Another perspective on the newness of service innovation can be accessed in terms of the firm, industry or market, while the means of provision split into two parts: technological or non-technological.

The in-depth understanding of service innovation has significantly evolved over time, from a traditional product-innovation perspective to a multidimensional concept. It is now recognized as a complex idea with different aspects and involves functions within and outside the organization (Carlborg et al., 2013). Additionally, in Indian context there has been highlighted the economic research where technological innovations take into account service innovation (Dutta & Sarma, 2020).

Service Innovation and Police Performance

Research on police innovation has produced conflicting findings. While studies in Western police departments found positive relationships between service innovation and performance (Smith & Jones, 2017; Bond & Braga, 2015), investigations in developing country contexts reported mixed results, suggesting that institutional factors moderate these relationships. This contradiction underscores the need for context-specific investigation. A study found that police supervisors can be classified into four primary supervisory styles: participative, achievement-oriented, directive, and laissez-faire (Ramshaw, 2012; Deosaran, 2002; Anderson & Giles, 2005). Researchers also discovered that police supervisors who tend to foster rigid guidelines for their subordinates and closely evaluate them tend to enforce a strict, compliance-oriented culture among police officers. On the other hand, supervisors who are participative and encourage their officers to take initiative in a collaborative decision-making process result in greater job satisfaction and engagement with their community among their teams (Calabrese et al., 2018).

Within the Pakistani context, research on police innovation remains nascent. Laeeq et al. (2016) examined training and technological advancements within the Punjab Police and found significant gaps in their implementation. More recently, Nawab et al. (2019) documented community-oriented policing reforms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, highlighting the critical role of leadership in their adoption. These studies suggest that while reform initiatives exist, their effectiveness depends heavily on organizational culture and leadership support. Unlike in developed countries, where police innovation is often resource-driven, Pakistani police face unique challenges, including limited resources, political interference, and historical colonial structures (Zakir et al., 2023a). This context requires creative leadership that can navigate institutional constraints while fostering innovation.

Hypothesis 1 (H₁): Service innovation positively influences police performance.

Creative Leadership and Police Performance

Scholars have provided extensive research on creative leadership in the context of organizational management and psychology. Creative leadership refers to leaders' ability to foster an environment that encourages and nurtures innovation and creativity within their organizations (Tsai, 2012). Creative leadership becomes a critical component in the 21st century for organizations' success and survival, as innovation appears to be a vital component of organizations' competitiveness. Different scholars have discussed various frameworks and relevant theories, including the investment theory of creativity, the system theory of creativity,

and the componential theory of creativity, all of which have provided significant implications for the understanding of creativity and leadership (Basadur, 2004). Besides this, investment theory of creativity hypothesizes that the creative individuals are those who are disposed to "spend less and gain high" in the domain of clues, deposits that they can rectify and develop the ideas that are seems undervalued at beginning and expected to be valuable in future (Wang & Wang, 2022). Finally, another important theory, the "systems theory of creativity," emphasizes the significance of the broader cultural, social, and organizational context in supporting and shaping creative endeavors (Woodman et al., 1993).

International research demonstrates that creative leadership enables police organizations to adapt to digital transformation (Houtgraaf et al., 2023). Similarly, research in US and UK settings shows that innovation adoption requires both leadership support and organizational learning capabilities (Willis & Mastrofski, 2011; Bond & Braga, 2015). A growing body of Pakistani research has examined police performance challenges. Laeeq et al. (2016) found significant gaps between training provision and operational application in Punjab Police. Nawab et al. (2019) documented community policing reforms in KPK, highlighting that leadership commitment and officer learning were critical success factors. Zakir et al. (2023b) examined police accountability mechanisms and found that organizational culture significantly influenced reform adoption.

Hypothesis 2 (H₂): Creative leadership positively and significantly enhances police performance.

Moderating Role of Employee Learning on SI and PP

Organizations are striving to stay competitive and seek ways to enhance continuous performance improvement in an ever-changing market. One key avenue for this purpose is service innovation and employee learning, which ultimately enhance the organization's ability to meet the challenges of customer or public satisfaction (Amabile, 1997). The police service is crucial to the public, so they have no exception of any kind. So, relationship of service innovation and police performance is complex and may be affected by many other factors. Creative leadership is one such factor considered a key driver of service innovation in police performance and or other public or private sectors (Walker, 2005). A growing body of research has provided the support that learning of employees provides significance extension in this regard (Waples & Friedrich, 2011).

Organizational learning theory (Bezuijen et al., 2010; Panagiotakopoulos, 2013) provides the foundation for understanding how employee learning moderates' innovation-performance relationships. When employees continuously acquire and apply new knowledge, they become better equipped to implement and benefit from innovative practices.

Drawing on these theoretical support perspectives, this study proposed that service innovation enhances police performance, and that employee learning moderates the link between the two.

Hypothesis 3 (H₃): Employee learning positively moderates the relationship between service innovation and police performance.

Research Questions

Based on the literature review and identified research gaps, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. Does creative leadership significantly influence police performance in Punjab Police?
2. Does service innovation significantly enhance police performance in Punjab Police?
3. Does employee learning moderate the relationship between service innovation and police performance?

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Foundation

This study is grounded in three interrelated theoretical perspectives:

Service Innovation Theory (Amabile, 1997; Walker, 2005) posits that organizations achieve competitive advantage by developing and implementing novel ideas that enhance efficiency and effectiveness. This theory supports the hypothesized relationship between service innovation and police performance (H₁).

Creative Leadership Theory (Basadur, 2004; Ye et al., 2022) suggests that leaders who foster innovation, encourage risk-taking, and create supportive environments are better positioned to drive organizational transformation. This theory supports the hypothesized relationship between creative leadership and police performance (H₂).

Organizational Learning Theory (Bezuijen et al., 2010; Panagiotakopoulos, 2013) provides the foundation for understanding how employee learning moderates' innovation-performance relationships. This theory supports the hypothesized moderating effect of employee learning (H₃). Figure 1 shows the theoretical model.

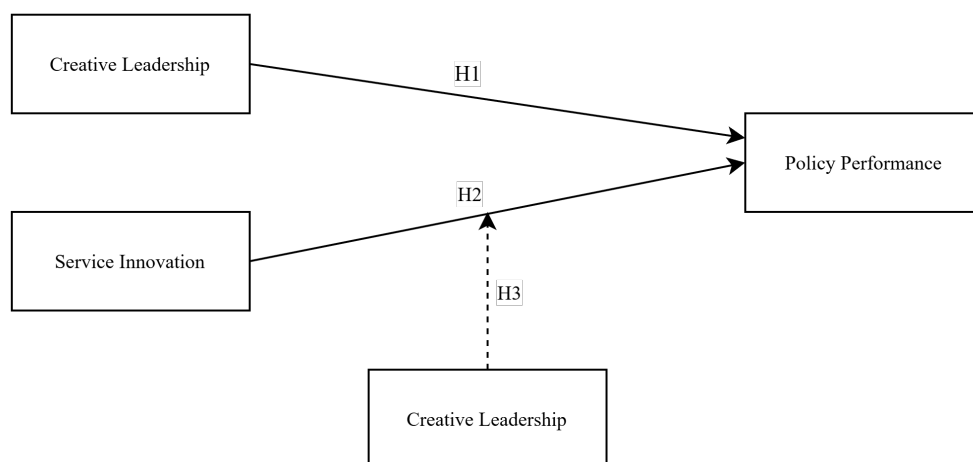


Figure-1
Theoretical Model

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional research design, appropriate for examining relationships between variables at a single point in time (Hair et al., 2019). The design follows a descriptive-analytical approach, with data collected via structured questionnaires that measure four latent constructs.

Data Collection Method

This study is choosing the police department of Punjab Pakistan as it considers the great force of country to ensure security and safety of the nation. As stated, the police department of every country is the primary authority responsible for law enforcement and the safety of citizens (MacNamara, 1950). This study is concerned with targeting respondents from different ranks, such as constable, head constable, DIG, and above, of the police department who are willing to participate readily. So, convenience sampling technique is used to collect responses from the respondents. Mostly, this method is chosen when researchers don't have the resources or time to collect data (Etikan et al., 2016). Furthermore, by using the convenience sampling technique, we may face issues of bias, as data may be collected from a large number of people who are readily available from a single source within the Punjab police. So, we use quota sampling in addition to convenience sampling to improve the representativeness of the population to some extent. This study employs a combination of convenience and quota sampling (Etikan et al., 2016). Convenience sampling was necessary due to:

1. Access constraints within the hierarchical police structure requiring formal permissions
2. Time limitations for data collection across Punjab's vast geographical area
3. Practical considerations of respondent availability during duty hours

Quota sampling was applied to enhance representativeness by ensuring proportional inclusion of:

1. Different ranks (Constable to DIG+)
2. Geographical regions (Northern, Central, Southern Punjab)
3. Gender representation

This multi-stage approach follows established practice in organizational research where full random sampling is infeasible (Hair et al., 2019), while improving representativeness beyond simple convenience sampling. Keeping in mind the ranks and geographical regions of Punjab, table 1 and table 2 show the division into quotas.

Table 1
Ranks division

Rank	Percentage	n
Constables	40%	135
Head Constable	20%	68
Inspectors	15%	51
DSPs	10%	34
SPs	10%	34
DIG and Above	5%	16
Total	100%	338

Table 2
Geographical regions

Region	Percentage	n
Northern Punjab	30%	101
Central Punjab	40%	135
Southern Punjab	30%	102
Total	100%	338

Sample Size

This study is going for advance technique structure equation modeling SEM which is considering highly appreciating and useable method (Ringle et al., 2015). The standard size for structural equation modeling is 300, but given a response rate of 68% reported in a previous study (Laeq et al., 2016), we divide the total of 420 questionnaires, leaving a margin of 24 questions. First, we collect a small sample of 40 responses to test the scale's reliability in our study setting. This pilot study yields positive, reliable results that are helpful for moving forward. We received 359 responses out of 420, for a 85% response rate, which was the best response rate as expected. However, after further evaluation, response 21 was found to be missing, reducing the total to 338 responses, which were used for further analysis.

Instrumentation and Measures

The variables were measured specifically against relevant scale items from previous studies, adjusted to the study setting in the context of Pakistan, as a pilot study was also conducted to assess scale validity and reliability. Five-point Likert scale is used to record the responses for that particular answer ranging from "Strongly Disagree" as 1 to "Strongly Agree" as 5.

The study uses validated scales from previous research, selected for their established psychometric properties. While scales from 2010-2011 (Chen et al., 2011; Bezuijen et al., 2010) and recent scales (Alosani et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2022) are employed, all scales underwent pilot testing to ensure contextual relevance and reliability. This combination allows comparison with established findings while incorporating contemporary measurement approaches.

Common Method Bias

Collecting data in a single short can cause biases, and to avoid these biases, some procedural and statistical tests are applied (Podsakoff et al., 2012). It is suggested that it should be less than 50% of the value. Results show 39.692% out of 50%, which is below the threshold for no collinearity, so we can proceed with this model. Another method to find multi collinearity is also adopted which is VIF.

Data Analysis Techniques

Basic SPSS and Smart PLS used for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) alongside the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFAs) in this research data collected through survey-based questionnaires in a single short. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was selected as the primary analytical technique for several reasons:

1. The research model involves complex relationships with both direct and moderated effects
2. The sample size of 338 exceeds the recommended minimum of 300 for PLS-SEM (Reinartz et al., 2009)
3. PLS-SEM accommodates both formative and reflective measurement models
4. The technique is robust for prediction-oriented research (Sarstedt et al., 2021)

Results & Discussion

Demographic Profile

In this part, we present the results of the collected data and their interpretation. As mentioned earlier, SPSS and Smart PLS were used to analyse the data, based on 338 responses out of 359 received, of which 21 were detected as outliers. One reason to use PLS-SEM is that the sample size recommended by Reinartz et al. (2009) exceeds 100, ensuring an adequate data set for running Smart-PLS. Total questionnaires we distributed was 420, 359 responses we get with response rate of 85%. 338 responses collected for missing values through SPSS. Table 3 demonstrates the demographic profiles.

Table 3

Demographic Representation

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	255	75.4
Female	83	24.6
Education		
High School	38	11.2
College degree	133	39.3
Graduation	104	30.8
Masters	38	11.2
PhD	25	7.4
Rank		
Constable/Head Constable	91	26.9
ASI/SI/IP	108	32.0
DSP/SP/ASP/SSP	98	29.0
DIG & above	41	12.1
Experience		
0 to 5 Years	62	19.0
6 to 10 years	172	50.9
More than 10 years	104	30.1

Source: Authors' Own Resource

Model Fitness Test

Before moving towards the structural model or measurement model an initial test is run to check the model's fitness. As Table 4 shows, the calculated values are under acceptable ratio.

According to Hu and Bentler (1998) the value of standardized root mean squared SRMR value should be lesser than 0.08. As our SRMR value is 0.038 which is lesser than threshold value, the model is good to go further. Moreover, it is mentioned by another author Bentler (1990) for NFI value of model fit should greater than 0.8, so our results also linear with this threshold value and we can go further with this model.

Table 4
Model Fitness:

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.038	0.039
d_ ULS	0.404	0.423
d_ G	0.514	0.513
Chi-square	960.175	952.375
NFI	0.892	0.893

Source: Authors' Own Resource

Rotated Component Matrix or Factor Loading

In Table 5, primarily findings for construct validity and reliability are measured according to Hair (2009): all items load in their respective columns, with values higher than 0.70. The values of outer loads corresponding to our results are above 0.70 and range from 0.816 to 0.946, indicating an acceptable and perfect range, so we can rely on these items. As due to a factor-loading issue, some items of service innovation and police performance were removed from the model because they loaded below the threshold value and may affect the validity of the results, we deleted those items that showed loadings below 0.70.

Convergent Validity

VIF is another method to confirm the collinearity issue among constructs as it mentioned by previous author the value of VIF must not surpass the value 5 which is maximum threshold (Hair et al., 2019). As Table 3 shows all values are under the acceptance ranging from (1.114 to 2.045<5) so we can rely on these values. Further as Chronbach Alpha surpass the threshold value 0.8 (0.938-0.967>0.8) (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Results also shows that composite reliability CR should exceed 0.8 and average variance extracted AVE should exceed 0.5 all are under acceptance range (Khalique et al., 2021; Henseler et al., 2015). As empirical evidence shows that all values observed are under the accepted threshold range, so it is proven that the results are reliable.

Table 5
Composite Reliability

Construct Variable	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho-A	VIF	CR	(AVE)
Service Innovation (SI)		0.938	0.942	1.273	0.953	0.802
SI1	0.879					
SI2	0.901					
SI3	0.889					
SI4	0.917					
SI5	0.893					
Creative Leadership (CL)		0.941	0.942	1.114	0.955	0.810

CL1	0.871					
CL2	0.923					
CL3	0.889					
CL4	0.908					
CL5	0.907					
Employee Learning (EL)		0.967	0.967	1.524	0.973	0.858
EL1	0.880					
EL2	0.908					
EL3	0.931					
EL4	0.946					
EL5	0.946					
EL6	0.945					
Police Performance (PP)		0.951	0.955	2.045	0.960	0.775
PP1	0.816					
PP2	0.899					
PP3	0.923					
PP4	0.905					
PP5	0.901					
PP6	0.875					
PP7	0.840					

Source: Authors' Own Resource

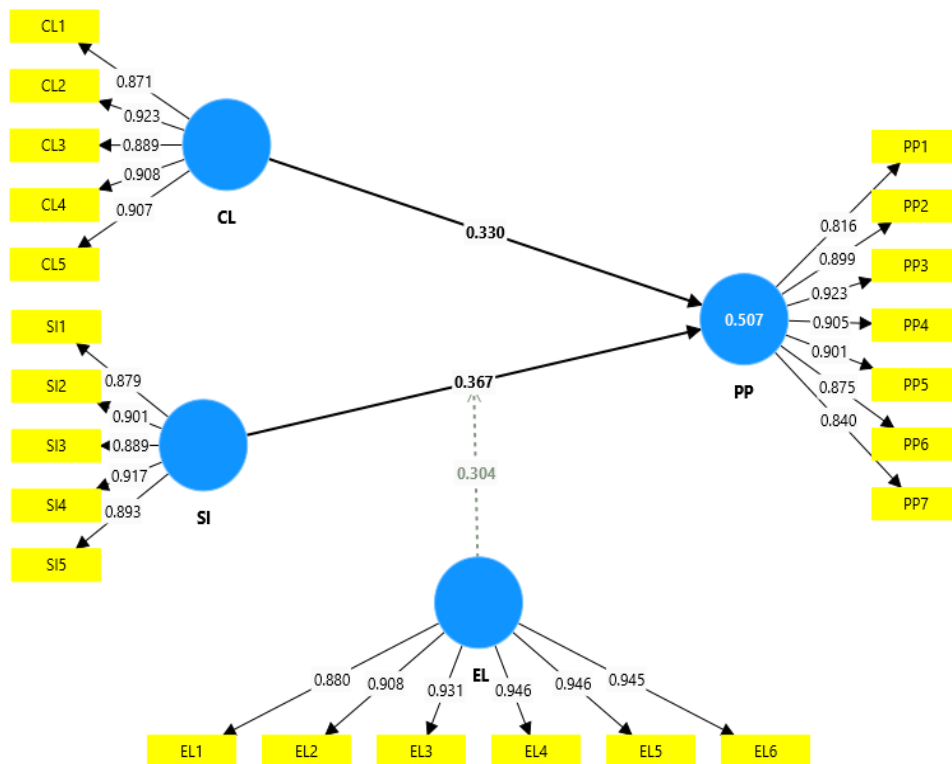


Figure 2: Figure 2 displays the measurement model with standardized factor loadings for all observed variables. All loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming adequate convergent validity for all constructs (Creative Leadership, Service Innovation, Employee Learning, and Police Performance). The model demonstrates acceptable fit indices (SRMR = 0.038, NFI = 0.892).

Discriminant Validity Check

For discriminant validity analysis two methods mainly adopt one is Heterotrait-Monotrait HTMT and other is Fornell and Larcker criterion method (Khalique et al., 2020). Discriminant validity normally is used to check the dissimilarity between the each employed construct. Table 6 has observed the values of HTMT model shows the acceptance range as suggested by Sarstedt et al. (2021) and Chin (1998).

Predictive Relevance and Coefficients of Determination

Study also examine coefficients of determination (R²), effect size (f²) and predictive relevance. Effect size should check if the exogenous variables cast a significant impact on endogenous factors (Götz et al., 2009). It suggested by Cohen (2013) small size (0.02-0.15), for medium size (0.15-0.35) and for large size (>0.35). R² value supporting the predictive relevance ability threshold. And the value of Q² greater than 0 shows the significance of the model (Sarstedt et al., 2021). So, these values support our results.

Table 6
Measurement of Discriminant Validity with HTMT

	CL	EL	PP	SI	EL x SI
Creative Leadership					
Employee Learning	0.720				
Police Performance	0.851	0.886			
Service Innovation	0.818	0.806	0.854		
EL x SI	0.837	0.876	0.801	0.828	

Source: Authors' Own Resource

Table 7:
Discriminant Validity Fornell and Larcker

	CL	EL	PP	SI	EL x SI
Creative Leadership					
Employee Learning	0.700				
Police Performance	0.551	0.486			
Service Innovation	0.418	0.406	0.540		
EL x SI	0.317	0.376	0.101	0.218	

Source: Authors' Own Resource

Hypotheses Testing

After testing the model's reliability and discriminant validity, hypothesized path coefficients were tested using path modeling in PLS-SEM. The values of bootstrapping and path coefficients demonstrate the direct hypotheses linking between variables. Table 7.7 show values as:

Interpretation:

- *H₁: Creative leadership ($\beta=0.330$, $t=6.677$, $p<0.001$) positively and significantly impacts police performance*

- H_2 : Service innovation ($\beta=0.367$, $t=6.655$, $p<0.001$) positively and significantly impacts police performance
- H_3 : Employee learning ($\beta=0.304$, $t=6.629$, $p<0.001$) positively and significantly moderates between service innovation and police performance

Findings Summary: All hypotheses are accepted.

Measurement Model Assessment

Interdependence of variables is evaluated with SEM by Smart-PLS by first analyzing the factor loadings and thereafter confirming the reliability and composite reliability as mentioned above in Table 5 ensuring the convergent validity. Then discriminant validity is ensured by presenting HTMT matrix and Fornell and Larcker criteria mentioned in Table 6 and Table 7. It ensures that convergent validity and discriminant validity is ensured. Then structural model assessment is observed by using bootstrapping (Hair Jr et al., 2021). To ensure the significance of path coefficients PLS used on 5000 bootstrapping sample and 300 iterations. Values of R^2 , Q^2 mentioned in Table 8 confirms the model fitness.

Table 8:
Coefficients of Determination and Predictive Relevance

Constructs	R^2	Q^2	f^2
Police Performance (PP)	0.380	0.256	0.109

Source: Authors' Own Source

Discussion

The core concern of our study is to analyze the established relationship between creative leadership, service innovation and police performance. We also analyze the moderating effect of employee learning to check the influence caused by this in Punjab Pakistan. As police are responsible for law enforcement and maintaining discipline within the country, without a police force there will be no safety everywhere (Zakir et al., 2023a).

Hypothesis 1: Creative Leadership and Police Performance

Findings of our study reveal that creative leadership positively and significantly relates to police performance which means H_1 is accepted. This shows that creative leadership proves to be a strong and distinct supportive element of police department as it ensures the innovative advancements within the department.

Our study showing findings consistent with previous study which is not particularly measures creative leadership with police performance while finds it significant (Al-Karaawi & Amir, 2021). Police leadership is also previously remain the debate between many scholars in different ways (Roberts et al., 2016). The result suggests that leaders who foster innovation, encourage creative problem-solving, and provide supportive environments enable their officers to perform more effectively.

The findings support creative leadership theory (Basadur, 2004; Ye et al., 2022) and extend it to the Pakistani policing context. Traditional hierarchical structures in Pakistani police have

historically impeded innovation; however, this research demonstrates that leaders who think out of the box and are adaptive to change can effectively transform their organizations.

Hypothesis 2: Service Innovation and Police Performance

Service innovation showing positively and significantly relates to police performance. These results are consistent with previous studies (Al Saadi & Al Mahasina, 2021; Alnuaimi & Abdulhabib, 2023), this study as well finds service innovation positively in enhancing police performance but the different thing is they studied moderating effect of creative leadership in spite we take it as a particular independent variable and cause directly influence in police performance. Which proves the acceptance of our second hypotheses.

Consistent with H2, service innovation positively influences police performance. This finding corroborates research by Alnuaimi and Abdulhabib (2023) and extends service innovation theory to law enforcement organizations. The result indicates that adopting new processes, technologies, and service delivery methods improves police effectiveness.

Findings analysis that all results are significant supporting the positive role of service innovation in police performance within Pakistan Punjab police. It supports the existence of actively adopting service innovation within police department. This shows the ultimate growth and positive law enforcement within particular services of police department where creative leadership shows significant as well.

Hypothesis 3: Employee Learning as Moderator

Moderating variable employee learning also proves to cast influential role in service innovation and police performance. Which persistently shows that employee learning acts as a leading role in creating service innovation in the police department. Our findings are consistent with previous studies that also finds employee learning a supportive crucial role in enhancing police performance (Filstad & Gottschalk, 2013). The findings of results are found significantly prove to the acceptance of our third moderating variable hypotheses as well.

The significant moderating effect of employee learning (H3) suggests that the positive impact of service innovation on police performance is amplified when officers engage in continuous learning. This supports theoretical propositions (Bezuijen et al., 2010; Panagiotakopoulos, 2013) and provides evidence that learning capability is a critical enabler of innovation success in police organizations.

A study proves that on the job trainings for the learning of employees that are not predetermined or planned and held randomly are more effective rather than the off job trainings which are preplanned with some defined outcomes and objectives held on other than workplace, it is cost friendly for the department as well. And it proves that on job trainings can help employees better and immediately translate the knowledge into their job task (Panagiotakopoulos, 2013). Another study narrates that employee learning is effective and been focused in the early years of their employment but as the employees becomes productive and experienced in their job tasks it seems diminish in their training and development which is not effective for service innovation (Coetzer, 2007).

Unexplained Variance

While the model explains 38% of the variance in police performance, a significant portion (62%) remains unexplained. This suggests that additional factors influence police performance beyond the variables examined. Future research should explore other potential determinants including organizational culture, resource allocation, community engagement, and political factors. The moderate explanatory power also indicates that while creative leadership and service innovation are important, they are not sufficient in isolation to explain police performance outcomes.

Integration of Findings

It reveals that leadership prevails in the police department of Punjab and shows the positive role of police leaders in developing innovative ways in police department. Employee learning of police shows the active behavior towards service innovation developed for the betterment of society prevailing with the support of police. Results shows all hypotheses are positively and significantly accepted and proves our hypothesized predictions valid.

Different studies examine different perspectives in measuring police performance previously (Swid, 2014) studied multiple leadership style rather than one in boosting police performance. Most of the studies analyze transformational leadership to increase the PP (Swid, 2014; Indrayanto et al., 2014), studied transactional in addition with transformational leadership style (F. Vito et al., 2014), in American context also studied ideal leadership behaviors to mitigate the challenges facing to police department (Andreescu & Vito, 2010).

Table 9
Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Decision
H1: CL → PP	0.330	0.332	0.049	6.677	0.000	0.234	0.426	Supported
H2: SI → PP	0.367	0.371	0.055	6.655	0.000	0.259	0.475	Supported
H3: EL x SI → PP	0.304	0.302	0.046	6.629	0.000	0.214	0.394	Supported

Source: Authors' Own Work

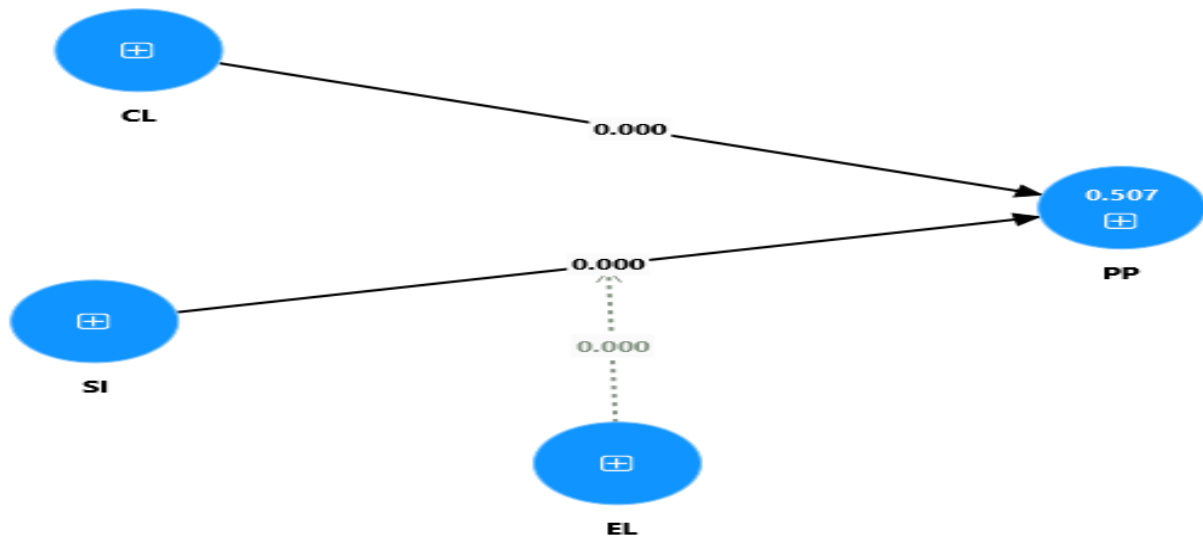


Figure 3

Structural Model with Path Coefficients: Figure 3 presents the structural model with standardized path coefficients (β). The model shows significant positive relationships: Creative Leadership \rightarrow Police Performance ($\beta = 0.330, p < 0.001$), Service Innovation \rightarrow Police Performance ($\beta = 0.367, p < 0.001$), and Employee Learning moderating Service Innovation \rightarrow Police Performance ($\beta = 0.304, p < 0.001$). The model explains 38% of the variance in Police Performance ($R^2 = 0.380$).

Source: Authors' Own Work

Conclusion

In this study, we investigate the impact of creative leadership and service innovation on police performance, with employee learning as a moderating factor, in the context of Pakistan. The findings of the study underscores the importance of creative leadership and service innovation within the law enforcement of the country's public sectors particularly in police. Especially this foster the influence of within the field where traditional practices prevail that is police force. The results of this study emphasize the critical role that creative leadership and service innovation play in enhancing police performance. By fostering an environment where leadership is adaptive and forward-thinking, police departments can significantly enhance community engagement and improve operational effectiveness. Moreover, the study's findings reveal a moderating role for employee learning, showing that continuous learning opportunities amplify the positive effect of innovation when employees are highly determined to adopt change and learn enthusiastically. A study proves that on the job trainings for the learning of employees that are not predetermined or planned and held randomly are more effective rather than the off job trainings which are replanned with some defined outcomes and objectives held on other than workplace, it is cost friendly for the department as well. And it proves that on job trainings can help employees better and immediately translate the knowledge into their job task (Panagiotakopoulos, 2013). Another study reports that employee learning is effective and has been focused in the early years of their employment, but as employees become productive and experienced in their job tasks, it seems to diminish in their training and development, which is not effective for service innovation (Coetzer, 2007). Although creative leadership is also necessary for improving police performance, it encourages advancement and betterment in the services of the public sector police department, as leaders who set high goals

play a pivotal role in enforcing them (Bezuijen et al., 2010). Furthermore, another study's findings show that employees' direct participation in training and positive attitudes significantly increase their performance and learning in both types of training, i.e., formal and informal training. They also suggest that effective participation and devotion for work is the essential need of organization (Inanc et al., 2015).

Moreover, in recent years, police have changed their role from conventional policing to safeguarding national dignity, fighting terrorism, improving law enforcement, and gaining the trust of their nation (Nawab et al., 2019). A previous study find that effective service in police department has defined some ways of how political values of country effects the police performance as across the wide range of agencies noticeable is community policing (Schaefer Morabito, 2008). Findings of our study provides a significant positive relationship between service innovation and police performance. Service innovation enables the police department to more effectively evaluate contemporary challenges by introducing new approaches, technologies, and processes. Police services face great enforcement to translate their previous tradition bound towards services based on evidence, research oriented and delivery models of service. Introducing change in the form of police innovation results due to pressure facing from external bodies and the creative leaders of police find it significant to develop innovations in their services in crises management more reactively. Police leaders play effective roles in driving service innovation and supporting change within the department, and they lead employees to be work-oriented and make the necessary efforts to translate these innovations into practice.

Theoretical Contributions

This research study provides significant contributions to the theoretical perspective on police performance. By integrating concepts with the dynamics of employee learning from the perspective of creative leadership and service innovation, the study provides a more comprehensive framework for analyzing performance outcomes in the police department. This study bridges gap in the literature by offering empirical evidences in the relationship of these variables. It argues that these variables are not only contributing in the private sector but are equally important in the public sector, where the dynamics of creative leadership and service innovation are crucial components in shaping performance outcomes.

This study contributes to service innovation and creative leadership within the police department, thereby providing variation to the existing theories. Traditionally, response times, community satisfaction, and crime rates have been evaluated from the perspective of the police department. This study, besides these, focuses on the innovative perspective and creative leadership in the police department, and its findings prove their importance. Creative leadership provides the study with a new perspective, distinct from traditional concerns that emphasize authority and hierarchy, while focusing on adaptability, vision, and problem-solving. Findings suggest that these leadership styles are particularly effective in the policing context, where innovation and flexibility are increasingly necessary. Findings also suggest that employee learning enhances the relationship between service innovation and police performance.

Practical Contributions

This study provide implications for practitioners by suggesting that police department should enforce creative leadership and service innovation as a key enforcement for their development. Investing in creative leadership results in a culture of proactive problem solving and

adaptability as well as cultivating service innovation results into effective and efficient policing. To implement strategic innovation and respond to dynamic challenges in the work environment requires active learning of the officers in response of innovations in the department and it becomes possible when continuous professional development programs introduced through training of employees so that they remain prepared that is why employee learning cannot be overstated.

By introducing service innovation significantly improves police performance, by integrating these innovations police forces can effectively respond to law enforcement challenges such as terrorism, complex social issues and cybercrimes. Findings suggest that creative leadership should be prioritized at all level of police because leaders who thinks out of the box are adaptive to change and better equipped to inspire their teams and foster innovation within the department. In addition, a well informed and continuously learning workforce positively adapt or adopt change and demands of innovative police force. Furthermore, police departments should make collaborations with other departments like academic institutions to share resources, co-develop innovative solutions and exchange ideas to common challenges. Such collaborations results across different authorities lead to adoption of best practices and develop more effective policing strategies.

Policy recommendations

Policy makers in the police department should always develop frameworks that encourage innovation and advancement, such as pilot programs, funding for new technologies, stronger research, and cross-departmental collaborations. For the professional development of police leaders there should be introduce leadership training programs that emphasis strategic thinking and creativity. Moreover, there should be a learning environment within police department that encourages creative learning where police officers supported and encouraged in their pursuit of further education and training. Innovative supportive policies can guide police forces to improve their overall effective performance and stay ahead from emerging challenges. Policies should also improve the role of creative leadership and encourage its inclusion in leadership appointments and in the criteria for promotions within police department. Further accountability and evaluation frameworks, including performance metrics, better assess leadership initiatives and the impact of innovation in police, as well as provide methods for holding leaders accountable for developing a culture of continuous learning and creativity.

Future Research suggestions and limitation

While this research provides additional literature and valuable insights but it also open some avenues for further future research. Further, we provide results for service innovation as a whole, future studies can explore the drivers of service innovation broadly such as exploring the impact of community policing strategies or digital technologies on performance outcomes. Furthermore, testing the impact of creative leadership in different hierarchical levels of police or across different cultures contexts can provide further and deeper understanding of its impact. Longitudinal studies would also be essential in accessing its long term effects on police performance, while we study only cross sectional. Further this study is conducted in only Punjab province so other provinces of Pakistan like KPK, Baluchistan and Sindh can study these variables because their cultural context is different from Punjab. Additionally on the country level perspective this study is conducted in Pakistan so other countries can also study these variables in their cultural settings.

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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used throughout this manuscript:

Abbreviation	Full Form
ASI	Assistant Sub-Inspector
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CI	Confidence Interval
CL	Creative Leadership
CPEC	China-Pakistan Economic Corridor
CR	Composite Reliability
DIG	Deputy Inspector General
DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Police
EL	Employee Learning
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio
KPK	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
NFI	Normed Fit Index
PLS	Partial Least Squares

Abbreviation	Full Form
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
PP	Police Performance
R²	Coefficient of Determination
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SI	Service Innovation
SP	Superintendent of Police
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean Square Residual
SSP	Senior Superintendent of Police
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
β	Standardized Beta Coefficient
