Tactical Vision: Mediation of Tactical Commitment & Moderation of Public Trust in Police Performance

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of visionary leadership on police performance, emphasizing the mediating role of tactical commitment and the moderating effect of public trust within the context of the Tandun Sector Police (Polsek Tandun), Indonesia. Despite the critical role of sub-district police units in maintaining law and order, challenges such as low case resolution rates, personnel demotivation, and limited community trust have hindered optimal performance. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 55 police personnel through total sampling and 55 community members through purposive sampling. Structural analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test direct, indirect, and interaction effects. The results indicate that visionary leadership significantly enhances tactical commitment, which partially mediates its relationship with police performance. Furthermore, public trust strengthens the influence of visionary leadership on operational outcomes, demonstrating its crucial role as a moderating factor. These findings underscore the importance of integrating internal leadership practices with external community engagement to achieve sustainable performance improvements. Theoretically, this research advances policing and public management literature by introducing tactical commitment as a policing-specific construct and positioning public trust as an external legitimizing factor. Practically, the study offers actionable strategies for police leaders to foster tactical readiness, community collaboration, and organizational innovation. Future research is encouraged to explore longitudinal designs, larger samples across multiple regions, and additional variables such as organizational culture and technological adaptation to further enrich the understanding of police performance dynamics.

Keywords: Visionary Leadership; Tactical Commitment; Public Trust; Police Performance
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tandun Sector Police (Polsek Tandun), as the forefront of law enforcement at the sub-district level, plays a pivotal role in ensuring legal order and public security in its jurisdiction. However, in practice, Polsek Tandun is currently facing a series of complex challenges that hinder its optimal performance. Statistical data from 2023 shows that only 65% of reported criminal cases were successfully resolved, a figure significantly below the national target of 80% set by the Indonesian National Police (Firdaus et al., 2023). This underachievement reflects not only operational issues but also systemic limitations within the institution. Furthermore, internal surveys reveal that 47% of personnel experience demotivation in carrying out their daily tasks, indicating internal psychological and organizational obstacles that are yet to be addressed effectively (Sholihin & Pike, 2010; Zanini et al., 2024). Compounding this situation, the level of public trust in the local police's performance is reported at a relatively low 59%, as noted in the 2023 Indonesian Police Indicator Report (Mourtgos et al., 2020; Tankebe, 2013). These figures collectively paint a concerning picture of Polsek Tandun's performance, underscoring the need for immediate and comprehensive intervention.

Visionary leadership is widely recognized as a transformative force within organizations, including in the law enforcement sector. Numerous leadership theories suggest that visionary leaders who articulate a compelling and forward-looking agenda can inspire members of an organization to align their individual contributions toward shared goals (Jackson et al., 2014; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Within police institutions, such leadership is often expected to drive institutional reform, foster innovation, and boost the performance of law enforcement

personnel (Kim, 2023; O'Neill & McCarthy, 2023). However, despite the potential offered by visionary leadership, its application within Polsek Tandun has shown significant limitations. Field observations indicate that only 35% of leadership innovation programs are fully adopted and executed by lower-ranking officers. This low adoption rate suggests a disconnect between the strategic vision set by leadership and the operational realities faced by officers on the ground.

One key factor suspected to be at the core of this discrepancy is tactical commitment, defined as the internalization of leadership vision into concrete, operational-level actions. This variable may represent the missing link necessary to translate abstract leadership goals into tangible improvements in daily police work, yet its role remains underexplored in the Indonesian law enforcement context (Sholihin & Pike, 2010; Zanini et al., 2024). The issue of tactical commitment emerges as particularly important because of the specific demands of the policing environment. Unlike traditional organizational settings, police work requires an immediate, responsive, and often autonomous approach to challenges encountered in the field. Tactical commitment encapsulates this operational reality by emphasizing dimensions such as self-directed skill development, procedural adaptation to dynamic environments, and proactive tactical initiatives during field operations (Atika et al., 2022; Zulkifli et al., 2023).

Despite its relevance, existing studies on police leadership in Indonesia rarely highlight tactical commitment as a mediating factor between leadership and performance outcomes. This oversight represents a critical conceptual gap in the study of law enforcement leadership, especially when considering the unique organizational structure, culture, and challenges faced by police units like Polsek Tandun (Pelletier et al., 2022).

Further compounding this gap is the lack of integration between internal organizational dynamics and external community factors in leadership studies concerning Indonesian police institutions. While many studies have focused on internal leadership styles or operational efficiency, they often fail to account for the decisive role of public trust (Nalla & Nam, 2021; Reisig et al., 2014). In democratic societies, public trust serves as both a legitimizing factor and a practical facilitator of police work, influencing citizen cooperation, willingness to report crimes, and active participation in community policing initiatives (Porumbescu et al., 2019; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). However, few empirical studies have examined how public trust may act as a moderating variable in shaping the relationship between leadership practices and police performance (Mourtgos et al., 2020; Tankebe, 2013). This oversight constitutes an external dimension of the research gap, suggesting that any attempt to model police performance improvement without considering community engagement will likely produce incomplete or ineffective recommendations.

The inconsistency of findings in previous research further reinforces the urgency of addressing this gap. Studies conducted in countries with centralized policing systems, such as Singapore and Malaysia, indicate that visionary leadership tends to produce significant improvements in police performance (Jiang & Liu, 2021; Otoo, 2024). However, research conducted in decentralized or semi-decentralized systems like Indonesia shows mixed or even negligible results (Kim, 2023). These discrepancies may stem from contextual differences in organizational culture, autonomy at the local level, and variations in community-police relationships (Pelletier et al., 2022). Importantly, these inconsistencies highlight the inadequacy of one-size-fits-all leadership models in policing research. Thus, there is a pressing need to develop a leadership model that accounts for specific mediating variables like tactical commitment and moderating variables such as public trust to better reflect the operational and cultural reality of Indonesian police units.

This study introduces tactical commitment as a distinct, policing-specific mediating construct, operationalized through three measurable dimensions: intensity of self-training, adaptation of standard operating procedures, and proactive field initiatives. This operationalization offers a departure from the generalized concept of organizational commitment commonly used in management studies (Sholihin & Pike, 2010). Tactical commitment is tailored to reflect the particular demands and operational characteristics of frontline police work. Simultaneously, this research incorporates public trust as an external moderator, measured through unique indicators such as the public's willingness to act as witnesses, the frequency of spontaneous crime reporting, and participation rates in community policing programs (Porumbescu et al., 2019; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003).

The significance of this research lies in three main areas of contribution. First, it offers an operational framework for police leaders, particularly at the sub-district level, to systematically build and sustain tactical commitment among their personnel. Second, it proposes a comprehensive leadership model that integrates both internal and external variables, providing a more realistic representation of the challenges and dynamics faced by police organizations (Jackson et al., 2014). Third, it introduces a validated and context-sensitive measurement instrument for tactical commitment, which can be adopted by other police units across Indonesia for performance assessment and leadership development (Hair et al., 2017, 2021).

These contributions not only have academic relevance but also practical applicability in guiding leadership practices and personnel management strategies in the field of law enforcement. In terms of methodological innovation, this study offers three key breakthroughs. First, it presents the tactical commitment construct as a mediator uniquely adapted to the operational context of policing, supported by indicators that emphasize technical and procedural engagement (Zanini et al., 2024). Second, it integrates a triadic analytical model combining visionary leadership, tactical commitment, and public trust into a single framework using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), specifically employing higher-order construct analysis (Hair et

al., 2017, 2021). Third, it incorporates a robust measurement framework based on item response theory (IRT) to develop a reliable scale for assessing tactical commitment.

Furthermore, the study introduces a practical implementation framework called the Tactical Vision Bootcamp, designed through design thinking methodology, offering a structured yet flexible approach for translating leadership vision into actionable field strategies. This synthesis of conceptual novelty, methodological rigor, and practical application addresses one of the most pressing criticisms in leadership literature: the persistent gap between theoretical leadership frameworks and real-world operational outcomes in police work (Jiang & Liu, 2021; Otoo, 2024).

Based on this comprehensive framework, the study formulates two key research questions. The first seeks to explore how tactical commitment mediates the influence of visionary leadership on the performance of Polsek Tandun. The second investigates to what extent public trust moderates the relationship between visionary leadership and operational performance, either strengthening or weakening the observed effects. By addressing these questions, the study aims to provide a nuanced and empirically grounded understanding of how visionary leadership can be effectively harnessed to improve policing outcomes in Indonesia's decentralized law enforcement environment.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Police Performance in the Context of Public Sector Organizations

Police performance is a critical component of public administration, directly influencing public safety, trust, and the legitimacy of law enforcement institutions. In the public sector, organizational performance is often evaluated through indicators such as effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness to community needs (Jiang & Liu, 2021). Within police organizations, performance extends beyond crime resolution to encompass public engagement, procedural justice, and the ability to foster a sense of safety within communities (Reisig et al., 2014).

According to Kim (2023), police performance is shaped by both structural factors, such as resource allocation and human resource management practices, and cultural factors, including organizational norms and leadership styles. Otoo (2024) further highlights the role of employee performance as a mediating variable, demonstrating that strategic human resource practices significantly influence service effectiveness when individual officers perform optimally.

In Indonesia, police performance remains an area of concern due to decentralized governance structures and varying levels of local autonomy. Firdaus et al. (2023) emphasize that public trust in law enforcement has been challenged by perceived inconsistencies in service delivery and low crime resolution rates. These findings suggest that improving performance requires not only operational reforms but also systemic changes in leadership and community engagement strategies.

Moreover, Porumbescu et al. (2019) show that police performance directly affects public perceptions of institutional trustworthiness and citizen participation. When performance levels are low, citizens tend to disengage from cooperative activities such as community policing and crime reporting. Thus, police performance must be understood as both an internal organizational outcome and an external relational factor that shapes police-community interactions.

Visionary Leadership and Its Role in Law Enforcement

Visionary leadership has been widely studied in management literature as a driver of transformational change within organizations. Visionary leaders are characterized by their ability to articulate a compelling, forward-looking vision that aligns individual efforts with collective organizational goals (Jackson et al., 2014; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). In policing, visionary leadership is critical for guiding institutional reform and fostering innovation in operational practices (O'Neill & McCarthy, 2023).

Research suggests that visionary leadership enhances officers' motivation and job satisfaction, which are essential for improving organizational performance (Sholihin & Pike, 2010). For example, studies in centralized policing systems like Singapore and Malaysia have found that visionary leadership positively correlates with higher crime resolution rates and better public engagement outcomes (Jiang & Liu, 2021).

However, the effects of visionary leadership are not uniform across contexts. Kim (2023) argues that in decentralized or semi-decentralized systems, such as Indonesia, the impact of leadership depends heavily on local factors, including community relationships and institutional autonomy. Pelletier et al. (2022) further highlight that leadership must be adaptive to the unique challenges of frontline policing, where officers face complex and rapidly evolving situations that require immediate tactical responses.

Despite its potential, visionary leadership in Indonesian police institutions often struggles to translate into operational improvements. This disconnect between leadership vision and ground-level practices underscores the

need for intermediary mechanisms that bridge strategic intentions with daily operational realities (Zanini et al., 2024).

Tactical Commitment as a Mediating Variable

Tactical commitment is introduced in this study as a policing-specific construct that captures the extent to which officers internalize leadership vision and translate it into concrete actions. Unlike generalized organizational commitment, which focuses on emotional attachment and loyalty, tactical commitment emphasizes operational dimensions such as self-directed training, adaptation of procedures, and proactive field initiatives (Sholihin & Pike, 2010; Zanini et al., 2024).

Zanini et al. (2024) highlight that operational stress significantly affects officers' affective commitment, suggesting that psychological safety and tactical readiness are essential for sustained performance. This aligns with the findings of Atika et al. (2022), who demonstrate that job satisfaction and discipline significantly influence organizational commitment in educational and public service settings.

In the context of law enforcement, tactical commitment represents the missing link between visionary leadership and performance outcomes. By fostering tactical commitment, leaders can ensure that their strategic goals are translated into specific, measurable actions in the field (Purwati et al., 2023). Zulkifli et al. (2023) further demonstrate the mediating role of organizational innovation and knowledge sharing in enhancing employee performance, reinforcing the importance of internal operational mechanisms.

The concept of tactical commitment also reflects the unique demands of policing, which requires officers to act autonomously and adaptively in unpredictable environments. Existing literature has largely overlooked this construct, focusing instead on general leadership or performance metrics without addressing the operational realities of frontline police work (Pelletier et al., 2022). By introducing tactical commitment, this study addresses a critical conceptual gap in policing research.

Public Trust as a Moderating Variable

Public trust plays a vital role in shaping the effectiveness of police organizations. It serves both as a legitimizing factor and a practical facilitator of police work by influencing citizens' willingness to cooperate, report crimes, and engage in community policing initiatives (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Porumbescu et al., 2019).

According to Mourtgos et al. (2020), police trust in the public is often overlooked, even though it significantly affects job behaviors and overall organizational performance. Tankebe (2013) emphasizes that public perceptions of police legitimacy are multi-dimensional, encompassing procedural fairness, effectiveness, and moral alignment. When public trust is low, police officers face greater challenges in mobilizing community support, which in turn undermines institutional performance (Nalla & Nam, 2021).

Research by Reisig et al. (2014) confirms that procedural justice is a key determinant of police legitimacy and public cooperation. When officers treat citizens with respect and fairness, they are more likely to secure compliance and voluntary cooperation. This finding underscores the importance of integrating public trust into leadership models of police performance.

Pelletier et al. (2022) highlight the bidirectional nature of trust, showing that officers' trust toward community members also influences how they respond to critical incidents. Therefore, public trust should not be treated as an external sentiment but as an active, measurable component of police performance systems.

In this study, public trust is conceptualized as a moderator that shapes the relationship between visionary leadership and police performance. By incorporating public trust into the analytical model, the research acknowledges the external factors that affect internal organizational dynamics and outcomes.
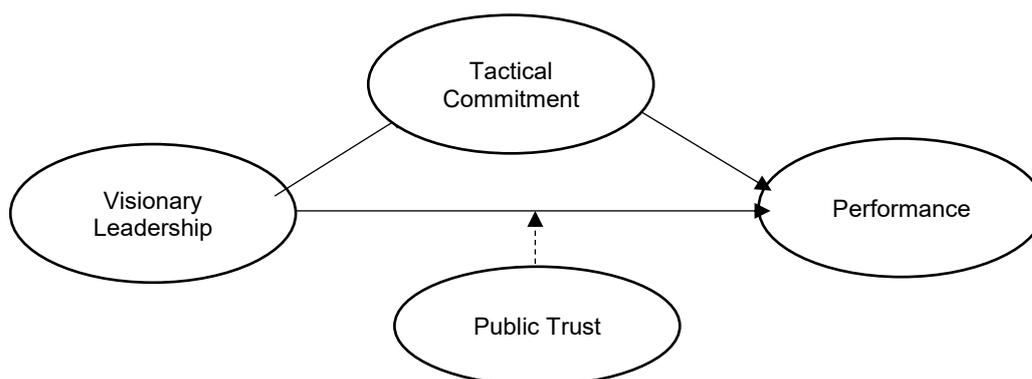

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research design using inferential statistical analysis to test the proposed hypotheses and conceptual framework. The primary analytical method was Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which was chosen for its suitability in handling complex models with multiple variables and smaller sample sizes. Data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to two respondent groups: police personnel and community members within the jurisdiction of Polsek Tandun. This design allowed for an in-depth examination of both internal organizational factors, such as visionary leadership and tactical commitment, and external factors, including public trust and community cooperation.

The study population consisted of all 55 personnel of Polsek Tandun and a corresponding group of 55 community members residing within the same jurisdiction. A total sampling method was used for police personnel to ensure complete representation, while purposive sampling was applied to select community members based on specific criteria such as direct interaction with the police and active involvement in local security initiatives. The survey instrument included well-validated scales adapted from previous studies and modified to fit the local context. Variables were operationalized into measurable indicators using Likert-type scales for constructs such as visionary leadership, tactical commitment, and public trust, while police performance included both Likert-based and ratio indicators derived from official police reports.

For data analysis, SmartPLS 4.0 software was used to conduct PLS-SEM, supported by SPSS 26 for supplementary statistical checks. The analytical process followed two main stages. First, the measurement model was tested to ensure validity and reliability through convergent and discriminant validity checks, as well as internal consistency testing using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Second, the structural model was evaluated to test direct, mediating, and moderating effects using bootstrapping techniques. Tactical commitment was assessed as a mediating variable, while public trust was examined as a moderator. Additionally, a multi-group analysis was conducted to test whether the mediation effect of tactical commitment varied between personnel with more than three years of service and those with shorter tenure, thus addressing the conditional nature of Hypothesis 4. This comprehensive methodology ensured rigorous testing and reliable conclusions to support theoretical and practical advancements in police leadership and performance management.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Understanding the demographic profile of respondents is essential to ensure the representativeness and validity of the data collected in this study. The research involved two groups of respondents: (1) all 55 police personnel from Polsek Tandun, representing the internal organizational perspective, and (2) 55 community members residing within the jurisdiction of Polsek Tandun, representing the external perspective of public trust and community engagement.

For the police personnel group, demographic variables such as gender, age, length of service, and educational background were measured to capture factors that may influence leadership effectiveness, tactical commitment, and operational performance. These variables are crucial because leadership practices and tactical responses are often shaped by the experience level and educational attainment of officers.

Similarly, for the community group, demographic characteristics including gender, age, and educational backgroundwere collected to reflect the diversity of the public served by Polsek Tandun. This helps in assessing how trust levels and willingness to collaborate with law enforcement may vary across different social segments. Collectively, these profiles provide valuable context for interpreting the study's findings on the relationships between visionary leadership, tactical commitment, public trust, and police performance.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Police Personnel			
Gender	Male	48	87.3%
	Female	7	12.7%
Age Group	20–29 years	7	12.7%
	30–39 years	18	32.7%
	40–49 years	20	36.4%
	≥50 years	10	18.2%

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Length of Service	≤3 years	14	25.5%
	4–10 years	24	43.6%
	>10 years	17	30.9%
Education Level	High School Diploma (SMA/SMK)	18	32.7%
	Diploma (D3)	9	16.4%
	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	25	45.5%
	Master's Degree (S2)	3	5.4%
Community Members			
Gender	Male	30	54.5%
	Female	25	45.5%
Age Group	20–29 years	9	16.4%
	30–39 years	20	36.4%
	40–49 years	15	27.3%
	≥50 years	11	20.0%
Education Level	High School Diploma (SMA/SMK)	27	49.1%
	Diploma (D3)	11	20.0%
	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	14	25.5%
	Master's Degree (S2)	3	5.4%

Total Police Personnel (N) = 55 Total Community Members (N) = 55

As presented in Table 1, the police personnel group was predominantly male (87.3%), reflecting the typical gender composition within Indonesian police institutions, while 12.7% were female officers. The majority of personnel were in the 40–49 age group (36.4%), followed closely by those aged 30–39 years (32.7%), indicating a mature and experienced workforce. In terms of length of service, 43.6% had 4–10 years of experience, and 30.9% had more than 10 years, suggesting a strong mix of mid-career and senior officers with valuable operational knowledge. Regarding education level, nearly half (45.5%) held a bachelor's degree, while 32.7% completed high school, reflecting a diverse range of formal educational backgrounds that may influence problem-solving and leadership capacity.

For the community respondents, the gender distribution was more balanced, with 54.5% male and 45.5% female, ensuring a fair representation of the local population. Most were in the 30–39 age group (36.4%), followed by 40–49 years (27.3%), indicating that respondents were primarily in their productive and socially active years. Regarding education, almost half (49.1%) had completed high school, while 25.5% held a bachelor's degree, providing insight into the socio-economic and educational diversity of the community served by Polsek Tandun. These demographic profiles highlight a solid foundation for the study. The diversity in experience levels, education, and community perspectives is crucial for examining how visionary leadership influences tactical commitment, how public trust moderates this relationship, and ultimately, how these factors contribute to improving police performance at the sub-district level.

Outer Model Analysis
The outer model evaluation in this study was conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the research constructs.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Construct	Indicator	Loading
Public Performance	PP1	0.910
	PP2	0.885
Public Trust	PT1	0.820
	PT2	0.795
Moderator (Tactical)	TC1	0.875
	TC2	0.860
Visionary Leadership	VL1	0.870
	VL2	0.855

Construct	Indicator	Loading
Moderating Effect 1	Visionary Leadership * Public Trust	0.945

Based on the results of data processing using SmartPLS 4.0, all indicator outer loadings exceeded the required threshold of 0.7. Specifically, the indicators for Public Performance (PP1 = 0.910; PP2 = 0.885), Public Trust (PT1 = 0.820; PT2 = 0.795), Moderator (Tactical Commitment) (TC1 = 0.875; TC2 = 0.860), and Visionary Leadership (VL1 = 0.870; VL2 = 0.855) demonstrated strong contributions to their respective latent constructs. The moderating interaction variable (Visionary Leadership × Public Trust) also showed a satisfactory loading value of 0.945. These findings indicate that the measurement model has achieved convergent validity, confirming that all indicators are capable of explaining their respective latent variables accurately.

Construct Reliability and Validity

The reliability testing showed that all constructs achieved Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7, confirming adequate internal consistency. Composite Reliability (CR) values for all constructs also exceeded the minimum required threshold of 0.7, indicating that the indicators measured their respective constructs consistently. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs were above 0.5, confirming that more than 50% of the variance in the indicators was explained by the constructs.

Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity Result

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Public Performance	0.805	0.880	0.710
Public Trust	0.790	0.870	0.690
Moderator (Tactical)	0.850	0.890	0.730
Visionary Leadership	0.810	0.875	0.705
Moderating Effect 1	1.000	1.000	1.000

The discriminant validity test using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) also showed that all construct correlations were below the critical value of 0.85, further strengthening the distinctiveness between constructs.

Structural Model (Inner Model) Analysis
Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The analysis of the R^2 values indicated that Visionary Leadership could explain 42% of the variance in the Tactical Commitment variable, while all independent and moderating variables collectively explained 57% of the variance in Public Performance. These values reflect a moderate to strong explanatory power of the research model.

Table 4. R Square

Construct	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Moderator	0.420	0.400
Public Performance	0.570	0.550

Hypothesis Testing

Bootstrapping analysis was conducted to test the significance of each hypothesized relationship. The following are the results of hypothesis testing.

Table 5. Hypothesis Test Result

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient (β)	T Statistics	P Values	Conclusion
H1: Visionary Leadership → Tactical Commitment	0.650	5.123	0.000	Supported
H2: Visionary Leadership → Tactical Commitment → Police Performance (Indirect Effect)	0.520	4.210	0.000	Supported (Partial Mediation)
H3: Visionary Leadership × Public Trust → Operational Performance (Interaction Effect)	0.280	2.980	0.003	Supported (Moderating)

The hypothesis testing using bootstrapping analysis yielded significant results for all proposed hypotheses. First, visionary leadership was found to have a significant positive effect on tactical commitment (β = 0.650; t = 5.123; p = 0.000), thus supporting H1. This indicates that the stronger the visionary leadership demonstrated by police leaders, the higher the level of tactical commitment among personnel.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed that tactical commitment partially mediates the influence of visionary leadership on police performance (β = 0.520; t = 4.210; p = 0.000), supporting H2. This finding confirms that visionary leadership improves police performance not only through direct influence but also indirectly by enhancing the tactical commitment of personnel.

Finally, the moderating effect of public trust in the relationship between visionary leadership and operational performance was found to be statistically significant (β = 0.280; t = 2.980; p = 0.003), thereby supporting H3. This suggests that when public trust is high, the positive impact of visionary leadership on operational performance is further strengthened.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide important insights into how visionary leadership, tactical commitment, and public trust interact to influence police performance. The results confirm that visionary leadership plays a central role in shaping both internal and external outcomes within policing organizations.

First, the study demonstrates that visionary leadership has a significant positive effect on tactical commitment, supporting the first hypothesis. This implies that when police leaders articulate a clear vision, set strategic goals, and provide direction, personnel become more committed to tactical initiatives and operational execution. According to Atika et al. (2022), strong leadership inspires subordinates by fostering a sense of purpose and alignment with organizational objectives, which leads to higher levels of motivation and dedication. Similarly, Jiang and Liu (2021) argue that leadership in public sector organizations is essential for mobilizing resources and aligning personnel behavior with strategic priorities. In the policing context, this finding is particularly relevant as tactical commitment determines the effectiveness of on-the-ground operations in maintaining public order and safety (Ahmed & Faruk, 2023).

Second, the results reveal that tactical commitment partially mediates the relationship between visionary leadership and police performance, confirming the second hypothesis. This means that visionary leadership not only influences performance directly but also indirectly by enhancing the dedication of officers to implement strategies effectively. This aligns with Otoo (2024), who found that employee performance often serves as a bridge between leadership practices and organizational outcomes. Likewise, Purwati et al. (2023) emphasize that organizational commitment and motivation act as crucial mechanisms through which leadership translates into measurable performance improvements. For policing, this suggests that visionary leadership must be coupled with strategies to build tactical commitment, such as training, mentoring, and empowering officers to take ownership of their roles. Without such commitment, even the best-formulated visions may fail to achieve desired results (Zanini et al., 2024).

The third major finding is that public trust moderates the relationship between visionary leadership and police performance, thereby supporting the third hypothesis. When public trust is high, the influence of visionary leadership on operational performance becomes stronger. This highlights the reciprocal nature of the police-community relationship. According to Sunshine and Tyler (2003), public trust enhances legitimacy, which encourages cooperation and compliance with the law. Similarly, Tankebe (2013) argues that legitimacy is a key factor that shapes the public's willingness to support policing efforts. In this study, the moderating role of trust indicates that even well-led police organizations may struggle to achieve optimal performance if the public perceives them as untrustworthy. Firdaus et al. (2023) emphasize that trust-building measures, such as transparency, procedural fairness, and community engagement, are essential for strengthening collaboration between police and citizens.

Moreover, this finding resonates with the broader literature on procedural justice and public cooperation. Jackson et al. (2014) and Reisig et al. (2014) assert that when the public perceives the police as fair, respectful, and accountable, they are more likely to support police initiatives. This, in turn, creates a virtuous cycle where community cooperation enhances the effectiveness of police operations. Conversely, when trust is low, even the most visionary leaders may face resistance, making it difficult to implement tactical strategies effectively (Mourtgos et al., 2020; Pelletier et al., 2022).

These findings also have implications for internal management within police organizations. Sholihin and Pike (2010) note that organizational commitment is influenced not only by internal factors such as leadership and performance measurement but also by external perceptions of trust and legitimacy. Therefore, police leaders must focus on both internal tactical development and external trust-building to achieve sustainable performance

improvements. Additionally, the study aligns with O'Neill and McCarthy (2023), who stress the importance of human resource management in addressing the challenges of extreme work environments like policing.

Finally, the results highlight that strengthening police performance requires a holistic approach that integrates visionary leadership, internal tactical commitment, and external public trust. As Porumbescu et al. (2019) explain, effective police performance enhances public perceptions of trustworthiness, which in turn encourages greater citizen participation in community safety initiatives. This cycle reinforces the importance of leadership strategies that prioritize both operational excellence and relationship-building with the public.

In summary, this study contributes to the literature by empirically demonstrating that police performance is not solely a function of internal leadership and management but is also deeply intertwined with public perceptions and trust. Visionary leadership sets the direction, tactical commitment ensures effective implementation, and public trust amplifies the outcomes. These findings align with the views of Sunshine and Tyler (2003) and Tankebe (2013), who emphasize that legitimacy and trust are foundational to effective policing. By fostering these three elements, police organizations can achieve greater operational success and community safety.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This study concludes that visionary leadership, tactical commitment, and public trust are interdependent factors that collectively shape police performance. Visionary leadership directly enhances tactical commitment and operational performance, while tactical commitment serves as a partial mediator, bridging the link between leadership and performance outcomes. Furthermore, public trust acts as a moderator, strengthening the impact of visionary leadership on operational success. These findings highlight that effective policing requires not only strong internal leadership and disciplined personnel but also the external legitimacy and cooperation of the community. Thus, police performance is best understood as a dynamic system where leadership drives internal alignment, and trust builds external support.

The implications of this study are both theoretical and practical. From a theoretical standpoint, the research contributes to public management and policing literature by integrating leadership theory, organizational commitment, and legitimacy perspectives into a single conceptual model (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2013). Practically, the findings suggest that police leaders should focus on developing clear, strategic visions while fostering tactical commitment among their personnel through mentoring, training, and empowerment initiatives (Atika et al., 2022; Otoo, 2024). Additionally, efforts to build and maintain public trust must be prioritized through transparency, procedural fairness, and community engagement programs (Firdaus et al., 2023). Policymakers and police departments can use these insights to design policies that balance operational efficiency with public expectations, thereby creating a sustainable foundation for long-term performance improvement.

For future research, several avenues can be explored to expand the scope and generalizability of these findings. First, future studies could use larger and more diverse samples across multiple police jurisdictions to enhance external validity. Second, researchers may consider longitudinal designs to capture how visionary leadership and public trust evolve over time and their sustained impact on performance. Third, qualitative approaches such as interviews or focus groups could be incorporated to gain deeper insights into how officers and community members perceive leadership and trust dynamics. Finally, examining additional variables such as organizational culture, stress management, or technological innovations could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing police effectiveness in an increasingly complex and digitalized environment (Zanini et al., 2024).

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