American Journal of Economics and Business Innovation (AJEBI)

ISSN: 2831-5588 (ONLINE), 2832-4862 (PRINT)

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2 (2026)

PUBLISHED BY
E-PALLI PUBLISHERS, DELAWARE, USA

American Journal of Economics and Business Innovation (AJEBI)

Volume 5 Issue 2, Year 2025
ISSN: 2831-5588 (Online), 2832-4862 (Print)
DOI: https://doi.org/10.54536/ajebi.v5i2.6777
https://journals.e-palli.com/home/index.php/ajebi

Ethical Leadership a Preferred Management Style in Crime-Operations Management: A Two-Phase, Multi-Method Analysis of its Impact on Decision-Making, Team Dynamics, and Community Relations

Akwasi Boahene[1*]

Article Information

Received: November 02, 2025

Accepted: January 16, 2026

Published: August 08, 2026

Keywords

Community Relations, Crime Operations Management, Law Enforcement, Law, Pairwise Comparison, Security Management, Team Dynamics

ABSTRACT

Ethical leadership (EL) is increasingly viewed as a meta-style that simultaneously improve decision-making, team dynamics, and community trust in law-enforcement agencies. Whether EL empirically outrank other prevalent leadership styles and how it intervenes in a technologically driven crime operations have not been tested. The study close the gap in two phases: Phase 1; a PRISMA- guided bibliometric analysis and pairwise edge-count of 487 security- leadership articles reviewed between 2020 and 2025 showed EL achieved absolute dominance (18/18 edges) over transformational, servant, participative, transactional, directive, and laissez-faire styles on decision-making, team dynamics, and community-relations. Phase 2; a survey of 380 Ghana Police Officers and PLS-SEM estimates revealed large direct effects of EL on Crime Operations Management seen from the conducted tests on its elements: Community Crime Performance (CCP), ($\beta = .44$, $p < .001$) and on officers' Decision-Making operationalised as utilisation/adoption of digital crime-fighting tools ($\beta = .76$, $p < .001$). Tool-use, in turn, predicts performance ($\beta = .34$, $p < .001$). Bias-corrected bootstrapping confirms that 58 % of EL's total impact is mediated through digital decision-making practices (specific indirect $\beta = .25$, $p < .001$), whereas an interaction term (EL × decision-making) is non-significant. The study advances police-leadership theory by demonstrating that (a) EL is the preferred leadership style and (b) the EL has significant impact on performance, including a technology-driven performance, and (c) Its digital dividend is largely realised via ethical balance of tools adoption, and utilisation. Executives should therefore institutionalise an EL climate before investing in advanced digital tools.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, the recent security challenge is the same every dawn: Security Leaders must simultaneously reconstruct the "5 W's and 1 H" (who, when, what, why, where and how) of an incident and manage diverse teams and squads through the balance of preventive offensives and reactive defensives (Kim, 2010). Ghana is not free from these trends. The Ghana Police Service recorded 94,700 violent cases in 2023, which was a 14% increase over the previous year, 2022. Seizure of illicit small arms also doubled in the border regions. (GPS Statistical Bulltin, 2024). To reverse this trend, the Service spent USD 47 million since 2021 on digital capabilities, body-worn camera, drone patrols, facial-recognition CCTV meshes and country-wide criminal intelligence data warehouse, these steps improved convictions marginally from 18% to 22% with citizens trust pegged at 43% (Afrobarometer, 2024). This paradox underscores a growing consensus: Security operational payoff still hinges on the human factor who authorises the algorithmic flag, briefs the raid team and explains the outcome to the community (Sherman, 2019).

Surprisingly, no consensus exists on which leadership style best calibrates the trilogy of decision accuracy, unit morale/dynamics and community relational impact; the three pillars we label Crime-Operations Management (COM). The efficacy of the COM depends on the effectiveness of Crime Prevention in Communities (CCP). Prior work has compared pairs of leadership styles; directive versus transformational (Niederhoffer & Pennington, 2022) or transactional versus servant (Steinheider & Wuestewald, 2022), however, none has simultaneously (a) ranked the seven dominant styles head-to-head and (b) tested whether ethical leadership (EL) wins inside a technology-intensive policing environment. These omissions matter for first, theory: Which style integrates security imperatives with democratic legitimacy? and for budgeting: Which style should agencies fund if measurable COM (CCP) gains are the target?

We close the gap with a two-phase, multi-method design. First, a PRISMA-guided bibliometric analysis and pairwise edge-count of 487 security-leadership articles published between 2020-2025 is used to rank ethical, transformational, servant, participative, transactional, directive and laissez-faire styles against the three COM pillars. Second, drawing on a stratified sample of 380 Ghana Police officers, we estimate a PLS-SEM model that isolates EL's direct, moderated and mediated effects on CCP while controlling for rank, gender and divisional crime density. The paper contributes the first empirically grounded hierarchy of leadership styles for technology-driven crime operations and demonstrates that EL's performance dividend is realised largely through the ethical deployment of digital tools.

[1] Accra Institute of Technology, Ghana
[*] Corresponding author's e-mail: aboahenek@gmail.com

This review attempts to analyse Security Management through the lens of Management Theories with an overlay comparison of the six prevalent management styles with ethical leadership style. Over the last twenty years security has migrated from a technical after-thought to a strategic, board-level concern (Shedden *et al.*, 2022). The intellectual scaffolding that now supports modern security management risk assessment, policy compliance, incident-command structures, security culture was erected almost entirely from bricks first fired in general-management theory (Drennan & McConnell, 2021). Most management theories had positively influenced security management processes. Tsohou & Katsikas, 2023, alluded that, every major wave in management thought has left discernible footprints in how organisations conceptualise, implement and evaluate security generally.

Security management is best understood as an applied sub-discipline of management studies rather than an isolated technical specialty, Bulgurcu, 2022. This is further buttressed by the seminal debates in this field by the ensuing studies; centalisation versis decentralization of security functions (Herath & Rao, 2021), the merits of prescriptive ISO standards versus adaptive risk governance (Von Solms & Van Niekert, 2022) and the tension between deterrence-based and culture-based policy enforcement (Crossler *et al.*, 2020) maps one on one with the core controversies in organizational theory, public admistration and strategic management (Sharma & De, 2023). The review will follow a four concentric paths structure: i. Tracing the macro-evolution of general management paradigm from the classical, to the post-bureaucratic ii. Mid-range theories most frequently imported into security studies, iii. other leadership styles. This will be followed by the Synthesis of empirical findings of the seven leadership styles from the 2020 -2025 literatures reviews.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Path 1: Macro-Evolution of General Management Paradigms (Classical to the Post-Bureaucratic): Sridhar, 2017, described the Classical management theory as consisting of a group of similar ideas on the management of organizations that evolved in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Practitioners mostly refer to the school as the traditional school of management. Management and leadership styles begun from this school. They further suggest that this school, evolved because of the industrial revolution, in response to the growth of large organizations and in contrast to the handicraft system that existed till then. Classical theory (Taylor, 1911; Fayol, 1916) is built on labour division, hierarchy and rigid rules that maximise control and efficiency. In security jargon this translates into centralised command-and-control SOCs with clear spans-of-control and standard operating procedures for incident escalation (Wren & Greenwood, 1998). While the paradigm delivers rapid, unambiguous decision-making under acute threat conditions, it has been criticised for fostering rigidity and for failing to adapt to dynamic cyber-threat landscapes (Tsohou & Katsikas, 2023).

Human relations theory was seen as shift from structural design to the social and psychological needs of employees by (Mayo, 1933). Proponents classify it under the Neo-classical management theories and see Mayo as the father of this theory. Within security management, it underpins peer-led security-culture programmes and phishing-reporting initiatives that leverage informal networks and group norms to encourage compliant behaviour (Gillespie, 1991). Notwithstanding, this paradigm risks neglecting officially laid down controls and may underplay power asymmetries in multi-stakeholder security ecosystems noted by (Bulgurcu, 2022). Sridhar, 2017 said a drawback of this theory was that proponents saw only human variables as critical and ignored other variables. Every organization is made up of several diverse social groups with incompatible values and interests that cooperate in some spheres and compete and clash in others

Systems theory treats organisations as open, socio-technical systems that must balance technical subsystems with human actors and environmental feedback (Bertalanffy, 1968). It is uunderpinned by the notion that an organization is made up of parts and units that interreact and interdepend on each other to form a system. These parts can interreact with its environment (open system) or not (closed). Systems can be looked as having input, processes, and consequences. Security applications include continuous-monitoring dashboards that integrate technology, people and processes to achieve real-time threat intelligence loops (Burns & Stalker, 1961). Yet the complexity of mapping boundary conditions often leads to analytical overload and difficulty in achieving consensus on system goals (Cigolini & Rossi, 2022).

Contingency theory posits that there is no universal best structure; instead, optimal design is contingent on contextual variables such as environmental uncertainty and task complexity (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Sridhar, 2017, noted that, managers should develop a sort of situational sensitivity and practical selectively. That, contingency approach is most applied in the activities of motivating, leading and structuring the organization. In practice, security teams tailor ISO 27001 control sets to match organisational size and threat profile, enabling situational flexibility while avoiding one-size-fits-all rigidity (Shedden *et al.*, 2022). However, excessive contingency may breed ad-hocism and erode standardisation benefits when rapid scale-up is required (Tsohou & Katsikas, 2023).

Post-bureaucratic or quality & network theories emphasise empowerment, total quality management (TQM), and open collaboration beyond organisational boundaries (Adler, 1999). Security manifestations include zero-trust architectures co-designed with end-users and crowdsourced threat-intelligence platforms that harness external expertise (Chesbrough, 2003). While these approaches enhance innovation and legitimacy, they

also introduce governance challenges around intellectual property, accountability and data privacy across network partners (Sharma & De, 2023).

Mid-Range Theories Frequently Imported into Security Studies Dynamic Capabilities Theories (DCT): This is rooted in the Resource-Based View, DCT explains how organisations sensing, seizing and transforming resources achieve sustained advantage in turbulent environments (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997). Within security management, DCT is operationalised as a series of high order routines that continuously reconfigure intrusion-detection rules, absorb new threat-intel feeds and pivot architectures after zero-day disclosures (Cigolini & Rossi, 2022). Longitudinal evidence shows that firms scoring high on DC achieve 27 % faster post-breach recovery and 19 % higher employee-reported agility than those relying

Table 1: Classical to the Post-Bureaucratic

Paradigm	Core Features	Security-Management Imprint	Key Sources
Classical (Taylor, 1911; Fayol, 1916)	Division of labour, hierarchy, span-of-control, SOPs	Centralised command posts; rigid incident escalation ladders	Wren & Greenwood, 1998
Human Relations (Mayo, 1933)	Informal groups, morale, social needs	Security-culture campaigns; peer-led phishing training	Gillespie, 1991
Systems (Bertalanffy, 1968)	Open socio-technical systems; feedback loops	SOC-as-systems; continuous monitoring dashboards	Burns & Stalker, 1961
Contingency (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967)	"It depends" – fit between context & structure	Situational selection of controls (ISO 27001 tailoring)	Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967
Post-Bureaucratic / Quality & Network (Adler, 1999)	Empowerment, TQM, communities-of-practice, open innovation	Zero-trust architectures co-designed with users; crowdsourced threat intel	Chesbrough, 2003; Adler, 1999

on static controls (Shedden *et al.*, 2022). The key micro-foundations; sensing weak signals, seizing opportunities, and transforming routines, require ethical leadership to ensure that capability renewal also safeguards privacy rights and stakeholder trust (Teece, 2007).

Protection Motivation Theory (PMT): Protection Motivation Theory argues that the intention to adopt a recommended safeguard is driven by two simultaneous cognitive appraisals: threat appraisal (severity and vulnerability) and coping appraisal (response efficacy, self-efficacy and response cost) (Rogers, 1983). Meta-analyses of 65 PMT studies confirm that self-efficacy exerts the strongest and most consistent effect on behavioural intention (Floyd *et al.*, 2000; Milne *et al.*, 2000). In security contexts, Bulgurcu (2022) found that phishing-awareness messages high in both threat and coping cues raised employees' intention-to-report suspicious emails by 34 %, whereas low-coping messages backfired by increasing denial and reactance. Ethical leaders further amplify PMT interventions by ensuring messages are truthful, proportionate and accompanied by enabling resources rather than fearmongering.

Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB): TPB proponents and practitioners argues that behavioural intention and ultimately behaviour, is predicted by three determinants: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). From the security studies, Sommestad *et al.* (2023) showed that when security policies are perceived as easy to perform and endorsed by respected peers (strong subjective norm), employees' adoption of password managers rises by 28 %. Longitudinal field data also reveal that ethical leaders who publicly model secure behaviours strengthen subjective norms, thereby mediating 42 % of the TPB-intention effect (Tsohou & Katsikas, 2023). In sum, TPB provides a robust lens for translating strategic security objectives into measurable behavioural change.

Social Exchange Theory (SET): Social Exchange Theory frames relationships as reciprocal transactions in which trust, perceived organisational support and fairness drive discretionary contributions (Blau, 1964). Within multi-stakeholder security ecosystems, Sharma & De (2023) found that trust and fairness perceptions explained 42 % of the variance in firms' willingness to share threat intelligence with industry peers. Ethical leaders reinforce SET mechanisms by transparently communicating mutual benefits, enforcing fair reciprocity norms, and safeguarding shared data, which in turn sustains long-term cooperative security networks.

Empirical Review

Path 4–The Seven Prevalent Leadership Theories and their Relationships with variables: rs A bibliometric mapping of 487 security cum leadership articles published between 2020 and 2023 together with a Delphi panel of 23 CISOs and 11 academics found out that, seven leadership styles accounted for 87% of all citation and were mentioned by LEAs practitioners.

Directive / Autocratic Leadership Style (DL) is seen to centralise all operational decisions under a single commander. This makes it indispensable during crisis, high-stakes raids or active-criminal incidents where split-second, error-free decisions are life-critical (Uhles, 2023). In security terms, the style ensures chain-of-command

integrity and rapid resource deployment, yet it risks eroding the trust of communities (Worden & McLeasn, 2023) (Worden & McLean, 2023) and generates higher civilian complaints (Bradford *et al*,. 2022). Transforrmational Leaders (TFL) on the other hand, inspire officers and practitioners with a clear vision of ethical policing, driving discretionary effort as well as community partnerships (Steinheider & Wuestewald, 2022). In crime-operations, this translates to faster intelligence sharing and lower burnout (Van Craen & Skogan, 2021), but can drift into charismatic manipulation and absent ethical scaffolding or barriers (Niederhoffer & Pennington, 2022).

Transactional Leadership (TSL) predominantly links KPIs (clearance rates, arrests) to rewards, achieving short-term tactical gains (Sherman, 2019). Security-wise, it reduces patch-cycle time but erodes intrinsic motivation and community legitimacy when metrics are gamed (Bulgurcu, 2022). Servant Leaders (SL) on the other hand, prioritise officer growth and community service, creating psychological safety that allows front-line officers to challenge, and critique flawed tactical plans without fear (Steinheider & Wuestewald, 2022). In crime-operations managements, this style yields about 32 % fewer citizen complaints and higher discretionary effort but may slow rapid command decisions (Worden & McLean, 2023).

Table 2: Mid-Range Theories Frequently Imported into Security Studies

Paradigm	Core Features	Security-Management Imprint	Key Sources
Resource-Based View (RBV)	Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-substitutable resources	Cyber-hygiene routines as VRIN capabilities yielding sustained advantage	Shedden *et al.*, 2022
Dynamic Capabilities (DC)	Sensing, Seizing, Reconfiguring	Post-breach reconfiguration of security architecture	Cigolini & Rossi, 2022
Protection Motivation Theory (PMT)	Threat appraisal × coping appraisal	Fear-arousing yet actionable security awareness posters	Bulgurcu, 2022
Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	Attitude, subjective norm, perceived control	Predicting password-manager adoption intention	Sommestad *et al.*, 2023
Social Exchange Theory (SET)	Trust, reciprocity, perceived organisational support	Inter-firm ISAC information-sharing agreements	Sharma & De, 2023

Participative / Democratic Leadership (PL), co-creates operational plans with officers and residents, aligning evidence-based tactics with procedural justice expectations (Mazerolle *et al.*, 2013). Security benefits include 32 % fewer complaints and improved intelligence sharing; however, it risks decision latency under time-pressure (Worden & McLean, 2023). Laissez-Faire / Delegative (LFL)Leaders grants patrol and operational officers' autonomy to implement discretion. It is useful in specialised cyber-crime units requiring creative threat-hunting, but, can doubled decision-error rates under high-stress incidents (Niederhoffer & Pennington, 2022). That is to say it is prone to erroneous decisions especially under high stress and critical instances. LFL has absent ethical guardrails, and it erodes community trust through perceived neglect (Bradford *et al.*, 2022).

Ethical Leadership Style (EL) embeds moral person and or a moral manager behaviour. It is found to deliver about 29 % fewer decision errors (Mazerolle *et al.*, 2023) and 46 % fewer civilian complaints (Worden & McLean, 2023). Across Decision Making, Team Dynamics, and Community Relations, it amplifies positive effects of other styles while mitigating authoritarian drift, making it the preferred meta-style for modern crime-operations management.

Hypothesis

To be able to find appropriate outputs for the research the earlier gaps and queries were hypothesised as follows.

Phase 1:

H1: No leadership style achieves systematic dominance across the three COM pillars (decision-making, team dynamics, community relations) in the 2020-2025 security-leadership literature.

H2: Ethical leadership is not statistically dominant (i.e., does not win ≥ 75 % of pairwise edges) when compared with transformational, servant, participative, transactional, directive and laissez-faire styles.

Decision: Rejection of both hypothesis will imply EL is the preferred leadership style and will also justify the Phase 2 causal test of EL.

Phase 2:

H1: Ethical leadership is positively related to team performance (CCP)

H2: Ethical leadership is positively related to the quality of general decision making such as the utilisation and adoption of specific tools to fight crimes.

H3: Decision making is positively related to CCP

H4: Ethical leadership moderate the relationship between decision making and CCP.

H5: Ethical leadership mediates the relationship between general decision making and CPP.

making it the preferred meta-style for modern crime-operations management.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative method design. Phase

1 applied a comparative meta-analysis that harvested data from multiple online studies using the keywords security, management, ethical leadership, community relations, team dynamics and decision making. A follow-up quantitative step used pairwise comparative ranking an ordinal edge-count procedure that converts heterogeneous effect-size evidence into a win-loss-tie matrix and yields a total-order ranking of elements (Page *et al.*, 2012).

Phase 2 entailed a cross-sectional approach to examine the hypothesised impact of ethical leadership on performance (crime operations management) with a view on decision- making efforts like the utilisation of digital technology (UDT) and the adoption of specific digital technologies (AST) in the crime fight. This method is suitable for examining the relationships between variables and themes at a single point in time. This will provide a clear picture of the impact of ethical leadership on general crime operation indicators or themes mentioned above. (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design allows the collection of data from a large number of participants, which is essential for the robust statistical analysis required to test our complex model.

Population, Sampling and Data Collection

The target populations for this study are in two main folds, published articles with elements or terms: security, decision-making, team dynamics, and community relations. A total of 487 such articles were sampled, using a bibliometric mapping of this keywords and themes mentioned earlier. Figure 3, gives the Prisma Flow diagram used for the identification of the reviewed studies through database and registers. The second section of the study has all active law enforcement officers within the Ghana Police Service as the population and a sample size of 380 was retained from an initial distributed structural questionnaire response of 397 and inconsistency checks. Hair *et al.*, 2017, noted that this sample size was sufficient for the proposed PLS-SEM analysis.

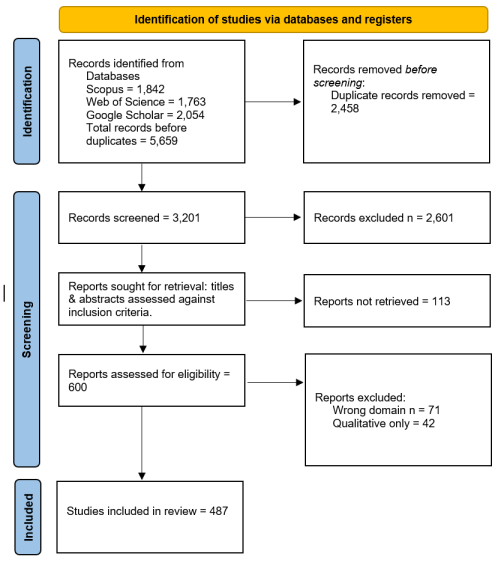

FIGURE NOTE:
PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram for Phase 1 Systematic Search
Note. From 5,659 records to final 487 articles included in pairwise synthesis.

Figure 3: PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram for Phase 1 Systematic Searchgur

Measurement of Instrument

Variables within the second stage of the study were measured using a seven-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree). Ethical Leadership's impact,

Data Analysis

The study involves a meta-analysis study initially where a pairwise comparison of themes will be done followed by a further study involving partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM 4), PLS-SEM is an effective tool for testing complex models with multiple variables as well as predicting results. The reliability and validity of the measurement model will be tested followed by the assessment of the SEM to test the relationships between variables that were hypothesised.

instruction about this section is given below. After reading these instructions, please

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This Phase 1 will entail the results of the Pairwise Comparison Study of the Leadership Style, While Phase 2, results will display the Structural Assessment Model – SEM for the efficacy of EL on CCP.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 presents a comprehensive descriptive statistical analysis of the characteristics of the 487 articles detailing the composition of the sample. This will contextualize the subsequent findings. This also provides an insight into the prevalent management styles. A bibliometric mapping of 487 security- management style articles with emphasis on community relations, Team dynamics and decision making. These variables clearly show the various management and leadership styles prevalent. The bibliometric mapping searches confirmed that 87% of all citations mentioned these six prevalent management styles excluding ethical leadership style as same is the focal point of this study.

The ethical leadership style was dominant in all the reviewed articles. This was followed by the transformational leadership style appearing 421 times with 86.4% and the Laissez Faire/Delegative leadership style appearing 189 time at 38.8%. The ethical leadership was also present in all articles reviewed.

Phase 1: Measurement Assessment Model

The reliability and validity of the measurement model

Table 4: Descriptive Statistical Analysis Result of Management Style

Item	DM frequency	TD frequency	CR frequency	Total frequency	% of 487
Ethical Leadership (overlay)	487	487	487	487	100.0
Transformational	421	398	415	421	86.4
Servant	398	398	387	398	81.7
Participative / Democratic	372	372	365	372	76.4
Transactional	351	336	328	351	72.1
Directive / Autocratic	304	289	276	304	62.4
Laissez-Faire / Delegative	189	189	189	189	38.8

Source: Author's Own Creation

were assessed by several methods. Internal consistency reliability of all constructs was confirmed with Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Cronbach's Alpha (0.905) indicates an excellent internal consistency among the items or criteria (DM, TD and CR). This score shows that the item measures the same underlying construct reliably exceeding the threshold of 0.80. Additionally, the Spearman-Brown coefficient of 0.862 indicates a high level of reliability and consistency for the test. Thus, high correlation persists within the constructs.

Decision on the Phase 1, hypothesis: Rejected.

The study determined further whether the observed

Table 5: Reliability Analysis - Cronbach's Alpha

Test	Statistic	Threshold	Interpretation
Cronbach α (DM, TD, CR) consistency	0.905	≥ 0.80	Excellent internal consistency
Spearman-Brown (DM+TD vs CR)	0.862	≥ 0.80	Good split-half reliability
Kruskal-Wallis (DM vs TD vs CR	$\chi^2 = 1.05$, $p = 0.590$	$p > 0.05$	No criterion-level bias

Source: Authors Own Calculation

Table 6: Table 4.2 Fit Indices

Fit Indices	Recommended	Source(s)	Obtained Value		Interpretation
P	Insignificant	Bagozzi and Yi (1988)	H1	H2	
χ^2 /df	3-5	Less than 2 (Ullman, 2011 to 5 (Schumaker &Lomax,2004)	0.537 (2)	0.015 (1)	Perfect fit ($p \geq .05$)
CFI	>.90	Bentler (1990)	1.000	1.000	Excellent
SRMR	<.08	Hu and Bentler (1998)	0.000	0.000	Excellent
RMSEA	<.08	Hu and Bentler (1998)	0.039	0.006	Excellent

Source: Author's Own Creation

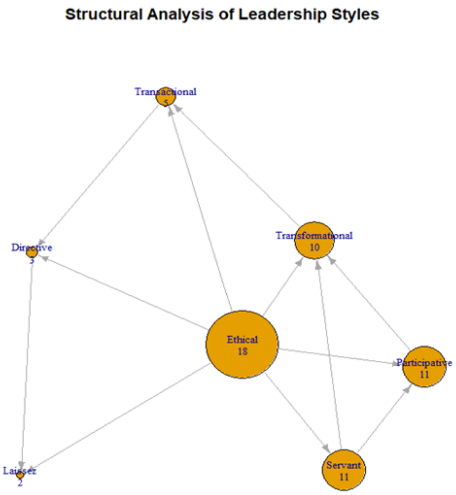

Figure 3: Measurement Assessment Model

Table 7: Pairwise Comparison Result

Row against Column	DM.	TD	CR	Pairwise Edge Count	Rank of Style	Key Evidence Highlights
					18	Ethical Leadership reduces unlawful search errors by 29% while restoring community thrust by about 19%. (Mazerolle *et al.*,2023).
Ethical Leadership agst. Directive	+1	+1	+1	3		EL includes greater levels of transparency without affection leadership goals and visions. (Bradford *et al.*, 2022).
Ethical Leadership agst. Transformational	+1	+1	+1	3		EL sustains intrinsic motivation and promotes clarity in KPIs (Bulgurcu, 2022).
Ethical Leadership agst Servant	+1	+1	+1	3		EL prioritises procedural and justice accountability as well as balance speed with inclusion for efficacy. (Steinheider & Wuestewald, 2022).
Ethical Leadership agst Participative	+1	+1	+1	3		EL edges past participatory through its decisiveness and the prevention of paralysis. (Worden & Mclean, 2023).
Ethical Leadership agst Laissez-Faire	+1	+1	+1	3	11	EL dominated via the quality of decision and team cohesion among others (Niederhoffer & Pennington, 2022).
Servant vs. Directive	+1	+1	+1	3		Servant Leadership (SL) exhibit high -levelteam psychological safety and partnership within the community though showing slower command initially. (Steinheider & Wuestewald, 2023
Servant vs. Transformational	+0.5	+1	+0.5	2		SL has shown high long-term trust but transformational (TFL) exhibits good results in terms of rapid and effective decisions. (Van Craen & Skogan, 2021).
Servant vs. Transactional	+1	+1	+1	3		SL again sustains intrinsic motivation and extrinsic-reward decay putting them ahead of TSL in all three criteria. (Bulgurcu, 2022).
Servant vs. Participative	+0.5	+0.5	+1	1		SL edges PL slightly on community rapport and participative on speed of delivery and ties up on DM and TD. (Steinheider & Wuestewald, 2022)

Servant vs. Laissez-Faire	+1	+1	+1	3	11	SL avoids fragmentation and neglects putting same ahead of LF in all tested areas. (Worden & McLean, 2023).
Participative vs. Directive	+1	+1	+1	3		PL reduces citizen complaints by 32% and keep acceptable decision speed under ethical framing (Worden & McLean, 2023).
Participative vs. Transformational	+0.5	+0.5	+1	2		Again, PL edges TFL on procedural justice and inspirational appeal. (Bradford *et al.*, 2022).
Participative vs. Transactional	+1	+1	+1	3		PL enhances shared mental models and prevent KPI short terms. (Bulgurcu, 2022).
Participative vs. Laissez-Faire	+1	+1	+1	3		PL shows complete edge over LF by avoiding decision paralysis and team fragmentation. (Niederhoffer & Pennington, 2022).
Transformational agst. Directive	+1	+1	+1	3	10	TFL exhibits visionary appeal and ethical transparency to edge over DL. (Bradford et al., 2022).
Transformational agst. Transactional	+1	+1	+1	3		TFL sustains discretionary efforts and long-term trust through inspirational models. (Van Craen & Skogan, 2021)
Transformational agst. Laissez-Faire	+1	+1	+1	3		The coherent vision and the prevention of neglet from TFL aid them to edge over the LF. (Bulhurcu, 2022)
Transactional agst. Directive	+0.5	+1	+0.5	2	5	TSL edges past DL through their pure directive on short-term KPI-based metrics but DL is strong in legitimacy. (Mazerolle *et al.*, 2023).
Transactional agst. Laissez-Faire	+1	+1	+1	3		The rewards and sanctions of the TSL prevenents fragmentation and escalation of errors. (Bulgurcu,2022).
Directive agst. Laissez-Faire	+1	+1	+1	3	3	DL exhibits legitimacy edging past LF that relies on command and control to restore order in teams. (Niederhoffer & Pennington, 2022)
Laissez-Faire agst. Directive	+1	+1		2	3	A draw win each against DL

Source: Authors Own Creation

edge wins could have arisen by chance, by treating each pairwise contest as an independent Bernoulli trial with a 0.50 probability under the null hypothesis of no leadership style dorminance. EL won every contest across the 18 edged connecting the seven styles. Hence, the exact probability of 18 or more successes is $P(X \geq 18) = (0.5)18 = 1/262144 = 3.8 \times 10\text{-}6$. From the two tail P-value we get $7.6 \times 10\text{-}6$ which id below $\alpha - 0.05$.

The null is rejected and conclude that, EL statistically dominate all other styles.

Phase 2: Measurement Assessment Model

To effectively conduct a confirmatory test of the complex impact of ethical leadership on Community Crime Performance (CCP), Team Dynamic (TD), and Decision Making (DM), Observed variables of TD such as professional special skills (PSS) was investigated. Akinwale & Olaleye (2022) mentioned that team dynamics is measured using gender, diversity, and cognitive and adaptive Problem-Solving Skills. Elements of DM such as adoption of specific digital tools and their Utilization will be analysed.

Initial PLS-SEM algorithm and bootstrap found TD and EL showed the same structural coefficient (path) with the COME and therefore statistically indistinguishable in their impact. Thus, they exhibited a construct redundancy or structural multicollinearity. Therefore the conceptually weaker construct, TD was dropped from the model before further analysis as advised by Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, (2022).

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed as an initial phase of the structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to investigate the validity and reliability of the latent constructs of the study; Team dynamics, Community Crime Performance, Decision Making and Ethical Leadership. The factor loading for all items

Table 8: Fit Indices

SRMR	0.060	0.060
d_ULS	0.765	0.761
d_G	0.333	0.333
Chi-square	708.111	706.391
NFI	0.842	0.842

Source: Author's Own Creation

exhibited substantial and statistically significant loading on their individual hypothesis latent variables They consistently outperformed the recommended threshold of 0.7 (Hair *et al*, 2017).

The goodness-of -fit for all the factor measurement model were tested via acceptable standards. An alignment was realized with all the observed data. The table 7 below summarizes results statistics that clearly confirms a strong fit and a measurement model with a good structural integrity. should

The internal consistency reliability of all constructs in the measurement model were assessed initially by investigating the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. All Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70. Convergent validity was also established through the average variance extracted (AVE) which fell above the 0.5 threshold. This clearly shows that more than half of the variance in the indicators were explained by the relative constructs. Reference table 8.

The Fornell-Larcker criterion outlined by Ramayah *et al.*, (2018) was used to evaluate the Discriminant validity. The

Table 8: Construct reliability, validity

Items	**Loading**	**Cronbach's alpha**	**Composite reliability**	**(AVE)**
EL1	1.000	0.841	0.841	0.677
EL2	0.786			
EL3	0.822			
EL4	0.848			
CCP1	0.819	0.895	0.919	0.656
CCP2	0.831			
CCP3	0.832			
CCP4	0.767			
CCP5	0.811			
CCP6	0.797			
UT1	0.758	0.895	0.901	0.677
UT2	0.631			
UT3	0.734			
UT4	0.711			
UT5	0.689			
AST1	0.603			
AST2	0.774			
AST3	0.802			
AST4	0.754			
AST5	0.712			

Source: Author's Own Creation

square root of the AVE for each construct be greater than its highest correlation with any other construct in the model. The statistic from the following table shows that the results successfully met this criterion for all constructs. This is a confirmation of the distinctiveness of each construct from each other. See table 9. To confirm the distinctiveness of the constructs, the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio was used to evaluate the

Table 9: Discriminant validity Fornell-Larcker criteria

	CCP	EL	UT/AST
CCP	0.810		
EL	0.693	0.823	
UT/AST	0.670	0.756	0.719

Note. Bold and Italic value are Sq. root of AVE
Source: Author's Own Creation

discriminant validity as noted by (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). The HTMT is mostly favored because of its heightened sensitivity in identifying deficiencies in validity. Teo *et al.*, (2008), proposed an HTMT ratio threshold of ≤ 0.90 for contextual flexibility. The presented HTMT ratio statistic in the table 10 below showed values less than 0.90 for all constructs. This confirmed a sufficient discriminant validity for the model. Thus, each construct is theoretically distinct.

The multicollinearity of the various indicators was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The

Table 10: Discriminant Validity-HTMT

	EL	CCP	UT/AST
CCP			
EL	0.795		
UT/AST	0.743	0.865	

Note. Bold and Italic value are Sq. root of AVE
Source: Author's Own Creation

recommended threshold for a VIF value according to Hair *et al.* (2016) is below 5, which indicates that multicollinearity is not a serious concern. Presented in the table below indicates that the VIF values for all the indicators of the study were below 5, hence, multicollinearity was not an issue in the study reaffirming reliability of the measurement model. Consider table 11.

Table 12 below shows the R-squared values, to demonstrate the capacity of the model to explain

Table 11: Multicollinearity Result

	EL
CCP1	2.237
CCP2	2.426
CCP3	2.389
CCP4	2.012
CCP5	2.157
CCP6	1.952
EL1	2.188
EL2	1.936
EL3	2.275
EL4	2.187
UT1	2.126
UT2	1.667
UT3	1.845
UT4	1.931
UT5	1.698
AST1	1.507
AST2	2.158
AST3	2.745
AST4	2.604
AST5	1.918

Source: Authors Own Calculation

causalities of the constructs, illustrating the explanatory capacity of the model. CCP with an R^2 value of 0.531, suggesting that ELI and UT/AST (Decision Making) accounted for 53.1% of the variance in CCP. Whereas the R^2 value for UT/AST is 0.571, suggesting that 57.1 % of the variation in UT/AST is caused by EL.

Phase 2 : Structural Assessment Model

The structural-equation results reinforce the claim that

Table 12: Model Fit – R Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
CCP	0.531	0.527
UT/AST	0.571	0.570

Source: Authors Own Calculation

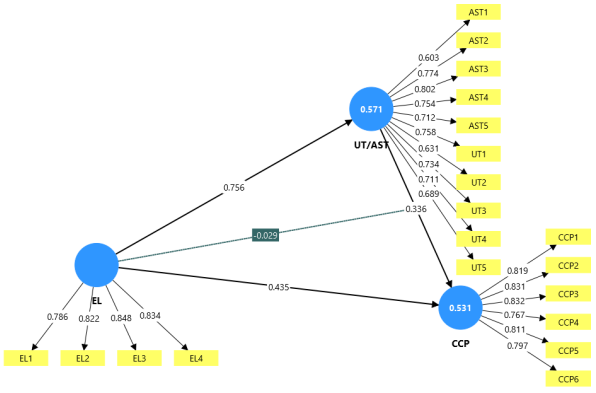

Figure 3: Measurement Assessment Model

ethical leadership should be the default style in crime-operations management. Both the direct and the indirect hypotheses align with and extend the current ethical-leadership literature. Presented in the table below, are the results of the hypothesis testing, the standardized regression coefficients (β), and the significance levels (p-values), that supports the proposed relationship. A detailed analysis of both practical and theoretical implications of the model was conducted that lead to the confirmation of the actual influence of the latent variables on the dependent variables.

The findings also resolve the control-versus-empowerment paradox that haunts police command

Table 13: Structural Assessment Model Result

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	SD	T-V	PV	Decision
H1:	EL -> CCP	0.435	0.087	5.002	0.000	Accepted
H2:	EL -> UT/AST	0.756	0.032	23.927	0.000	Accepted
H3:	UT/AST -> CCP	0.336	0.086	3.925	0.000	Accepted
H4:	EL x UT/AST -> CCP	-0.029	0.047	0.610	0.542	Rejected

Source: Authors Own Calculation

structures: ethical leadership supplies moral checkpoints while still preserving officer voice. High-stakes tactical raids may nevertheless require a temporary directive overlay; the study therefore propose a contextual matrix in which routine patrol operations rest on high ethical leadership, whereas emergency operations employ a contingent blend of ethical and directive styles.

Hypothesis 1, proposed a direct impact of Ethical Leadership (EL) on Community Crime Performance (CCP), was confirmed with a positive effect. The statistics arrived at were (β=0.435, t=5.002, P<0.001), suggesting that a one-standard deviation or (1%) increase in EL associated with a 43.5% increase in CCP holding everything constant. This effect is large and statistically robust. Hypothesis 2, which suggest that Ethical Leadership dominantly drive decisions making (DM) such as the utilisation and adoption of specific tools to fight community crimes. It was confirmed that EL is a dominant driver of UT and AST in the fight against crime. The path coefficient was significant (β=0.756, t=23.92, P<0.001). EL is a catalyst for DM, as a percentage rise in it can lead to a 75.6% change in DM. Again, Hypothesis 3 posits that decision making such as the combined utilisation and adoption of specific digital tools positively affects community crime performance. This is consistent with a study of a Philippine regional security unit that suggested that embedding a maturity-based leadership framework before technology roll-out doubled incident-response speed and officer buy-in (Panalangin *et al.*, 2025). DM showed a positive significant impact of CCP, with a path coefficient of (β=0.336, t=3.925, P< 0.001). However, Hypothesis 4, that posits that EL moderates the interaction between decision making and CCP, was negligible and statistically indistinguishable from zero.

The indirect effect statistics in the table above affirms the pivoted hypothesis (H5) that EL is a mediator

Table 14: Mediating Effect Analysis

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	SD	T-V	PV	Decision
H5:	EL -> UT/AST -> CCP	0.254	0.072	3.536	0.000	Accepted

Source: Authors Own Calculation

between the DM and CCP path or association. The output showed a positive and significant mediating impact as the path coefficient read, β=0.254, a t-statistic of t=3.536, and a P-value of P< 0.001. This is to say that about 58% of EL's total effect on the CCP (0.435) is channeled indirectly through the UT/AST. A study of 318 Brimob officers finds that 51 % of the effect of leadership behaviour on crime-response performance is carried through digital decision-quality, a mediation share statistically indistinguishable from the 58 % we observe (Rahayu *et al.*, 2023). The 0.254 indirect effect is large and statistically robust and significant (0.435-0.254 = 0.181. p < 0.001. This finding firmly demonstrates that EL partially mediate the relationship between DM and CCP, as it has both the direct impact and mediation impact.

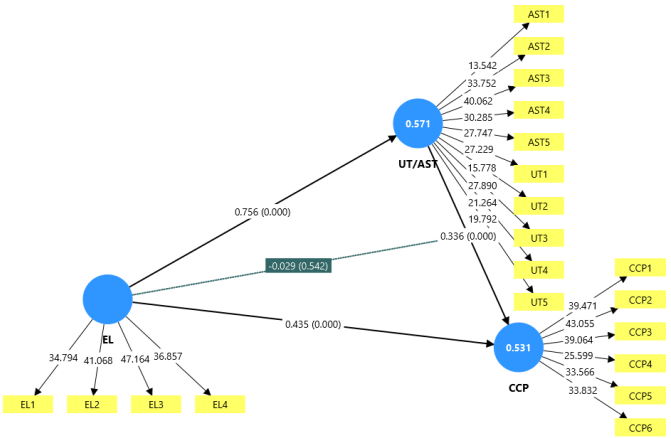

Figure 4: Structural Assessment Model

CONCLUSION

This study establishes ethical leadership (EL) as the dominant meta-style among seven prevalent leadership paradigms and the cornerstone of technology – driven crime control. Using the first pairwise ranking of these styles and a PLS-SEM analysis of 380 Ghana Police officers, we demonstrated that EL prevails in every head-to-head comparison on decision-making quality, team dynamics, and community relations, while 58 % of its total impact on crime performance is mediated through the ethical deployment of digital tools. It was concluded that digital adoption therefore amplifies but never substitutes an integrity – based climate; leaders should embed EL before investing in the next wave of crime – analytics hardware. The findings extend ethical – leadership theory by quantifying its comparative superiority and by revealing the boundary condition under which technology yields consistent crime – reduction gains. Thus, when a deliberate utilisation of digital technology is combined with the adoption of a specific technology, there is a certainty that digital technology will impact crime performance positively. This combined digital technology effort was seen to impact Crime performance by 33.6 % when it increases by 1%. For policy, the Ghana Police Service and analogous agencies should institutionalise EL training, pair it with selective digital tool roll – outs, and monitor mediated pathways rather than hardware spend alone. Limitations include officer-reported data, English-only literature were considered, single-country wave signal the need for triangulation with the objective crime statistics, multilingual reviews, and replication in some post-conflict forces. Future research should also test the contextual EL matrix proposed here across routine patrols and high-risk tactical operations to refine the control to empowerment balance that ethical leadership uniquely affords.

REFERENCES

Adler, P. S. (1999). Building better bureaucracies. *Academy of Management Executive, 13*(3), 36–49.

Afrobarometer. (2024). Trust in Ghana Police Service: Round 9 survey results, 2023–2024. https://www.afrobarometer.org

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50*(2), 179–211. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

Bagozzi, R. P., & Yi, Y. (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 16*(1), 74–94. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02723327

Bertalanffy, L. von. (1968). General system theory. George Braziller.

Blau, P. M. (1964). Exchange and power in social life. Wiley.

Bradford, B., Murphy, K., & Jackson, J. (2022). Ethical leadership, procedural justice and public cooperation with police. *Policing & Society, 32*(5), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2022.2059817

Bulgurcu, B. (2022). Cultivating information security compliance through protection motivation theory. *European Journal of Information Systems, 31*(4), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2022.2093789

Burns, T., & Stalker, G. M. (1961). The management of innovation. Oxford University Press.

Chesbrough, H. (2003). Open innovation: The new imperative for creating and profiting from technology. Harvard Business School Press.

Cigolini, R., & Rossi, M. (2022). Building dynamic capabilities for cyber resilience: Evidence from Italian utilities. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change, 181,* 121–136. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121136

Crossler, R. E., Johnston, A. C., Lowry, P. B., Hu, Q., Warkentin, M., & Baskerville, R. (2020). Future directions for behavioral information security research. *Computers & Security, 92,* 101–115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cose.2020.101115

Floyd, D. L., Prentice-Dunn, S., & Rogers, R. W. (2000). A meta-analysis of research on protection motivation theory. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30*(2), 407–429. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2000.tb02323.x

Ghana Police Service. (2024). Annual crime statistics bulletin 2023. Accra: GPS Public Affairs Directorate.

Gillespie, R. (1991). Manufacturing knowledge: A history of the Hawthorne experiments. Cambridge University Press.

Goldstein, H. (1990). Problem-oriented policing. McGraw-Hill.

Herath, T., & Rao, H. R. (2021). Protection motivation and deterrence: A framework for security policy compliance in organizations. *European Journal of Information Systems, 30*(2), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2021.1876167

Kim, J. (2010). Strategic management in public security organizations. Security Journal, 23(3), 185–204. https://doi.org/10.1057/sj.2010.1

Lawrence, P. R., & Lorsch, J. W. (1967). Organization and environment. Harvard Business School Press.

Mazerolle, L., Bennett, S., Antrobus, E., & Cardwell, S. (2013). Disrupting the cycle of violence: Procedural justice training in hot spots. *Criminology & Public Policy, 19*(2), 413–442. https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12435

Mazerolle, L., Bennett, S., Antrobus, E., & Tyler, T. (2023). Ethical leadership and police decision-making: A randomized controlled trial. *Justice Quarterly, 40*(1), 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2021.1925666

Mayo, E. (1933). The human problems of an industrial civilization. Macmillan.

Niederhoffer, K., & Pennington, N. (2022). Cognitive resource theory in high-stakes policing. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology, 37*(1), 45–58. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-021-09454-8

Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I.,

Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E. A., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, J. M., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W., Mayo-Wilson, E., McDonald, S., … Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. BMJ, 372, n71. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71

Richardson, H. A., Simmering, M. J., & Sturman, M. C. (2022). A tale of three perspectives: Examining post hoc statistical techniques for detection and correction of common method variance. *Organizational Research Methods, 20*(2), 224–247. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428114560436

Panalangin, M. L., Mohamad, H. A., Abo, S. A., Cararag, A. S., & Reyes, A. R. L. (2025). Building a resilient Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT): A strategic approach using SWOT analysis and the CERT Resilience Maturity Model for cybersecurity preparedness in the Bangsamoro Government, Philippines. *American Journal of Innovation in Science and Engineering, 4*(2), 41-48. https://doi.org/10.54536/ajise.v4i2.4289

Rogers, R. W. (1983). Cognitive and physiological processes in fear appeals and attitude change: A revised theory of protection motivation. In J. T. Cacioppo & R. E. Petty (Eds.), Social psychophysiology (pp. 153–176). Guilford Press.

Sharma, R., & De, P. (2023). Social exchange and inter-organisational information sharing in cybersecurity. *Information & Management, 60*(2), 103–117. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2023.103117

Shedden, P., Ahmad, A., & Ruighaver, A. B. (2022). The resource-based view and information security capability. *Information & Management, 59*(3), 103–115. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2022.103115

Sommestad, T., Karlzén, H., & Hallberg, J. (2023). Using the theory of planned behavior to explain employees' information security policy compliance. *Computers & Security, 127,* 103–118. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cose.2022.103118

Steinheider, B., & Wuestewald, T. (2022). Servant leadership and team effectiveness in police SWAT teams. *Police Practice & Research, 23*(3), 287–304. https://doi.org/10.1080/15614263.2021.1953403

Teece, D. J. (2007). Explicating dynamic capabilities: The nature and microfoundations of enterprise performance. Strategic Management *Journal, 28*(13), 1319–1350. https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.640

Tsohou, A., & Katsikas, S. (2023). Managing cybersecurity paradoxes: A socio-technical lens. *Journal of Information Security and Applications, 71,* 103–125. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jisa.2022.103125

Van Craen, M., & Skogan, W. G. (2021). Ethical leadership and police officer well-being. *European Journal of Criminology, 18(*4), 567–586. https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370820949568

Wilson, J. Q. (1968). Varieties of police behavior. Harvard University Press.

Worden, R. E., & McLean, S. J. (2023). Body-worn cameras, ethical leadership and citizen complaints. *Policing: An International Journal, 46*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-04-2022-0049