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SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: ACCELERATORS OF URBAN LAND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that urban land is the 'piston' of urban economy in emerging countries, its performance is often suffering from bureaucratic rigidity and lack of employee commitment. This study examines how situational leadership and organizational commitment influence the effectiveness of urban land organizational performance in Ethiopia's Amhara Region. Survey data from 346 employees were analyzed using covariance-based structural equation modeling (AMOS 23.0). The model demonstrated excellent fit. The findings reveal that situational leadership positively and significantly affects both organizational performance and commitment, with commitment further reinforcing performance. Mediation analysis further indicates that organizational commitment partially mediates the relationship between situational leadership and performance, underscoring its pivotal role in enhancing institutional effectiveness. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on leadership and governance by demonstrating how flexible leadership styles, when coupled with strong employee commitment, can foster organizational success in resource-limited and rigid bureaucratic contexts in urban land organizations. As the result, researchers recommend that urban land organizations in developing countries are urged to adopt the integration of situational leadership and employee commitment practices rather than sticking on the complex procedural bureaucratic approaches to leverage their urban land organizational performance.

KEY WORDS: Situational leadership, organizational commitment, organizational performance, urban land management, structural equation modeling, Ethiopia.

1. INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is one of the defining features of the twenty-first century, especially in emerging countries where rapid demographic shifts strain governance systems (Alemayehu Emiru, 2025; Cohen, 2006; Tesfay et al., 2019). In this context, urban land performance often falls to meet the diverse expectations of tax-paying customers. Poorly managed systems generate disputes, corruption, and declining service quality, eroding citizen-government trust and driving costly governance reforms (Demissie & Beyene, 2021; Gebru et al., 2026; Ghebrehiwet, 2021; Zhang & He, 2024). Evidence across Sub-Saharan Africa shows that ineffective leadership styles and low employee commitment reduce productivity and service quality; that ultimately reduces urban land organizational performance (Aguilera et al., 2023; Galperin et al., 2024; Geremias et al., 2024).

In Ethiopia, these pressures are particularly acute. Limited urban land supply in expanding areas, service delivery gaps and citizen dissatisfaction weaken municipal performance and institutional legitimacy (Aytenew et al., 2025; Engdaw, 2022; Siyum, 2024). In Amhara Region, entrenched corruption and informal syndicates dominate land transactions, depriving citizens of fair access to services and further eroding organizational performance (Asnakew et al., 2024; Demissie & Beyene, 2021; Engdaw, 2022). Brokers ("Delallas") and informal networks often bypass formal offices, reducing legality to mere legitimization of pre-arranged deals (Gebrihet, 2025; Koroso & Zevenbergen, 2024; Siyum, 2024). These practices compromise equity, transparency, and efficiency in urban land organizational performance (Davlembayeva et al., 2021). Beyond structural corruption, governance failures are compounded by weak leadership and declining organizational commitment (Davlembayeva et al., 2021; Mitiku & Hondeghem, 2020).

Situational Leadership Model II (Mahapatra & Jain, 2023; Mirčetić & Vukotic, 2020), with its flexible dimensions of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating, offers a framework for adapting leadership to dynamic municipal contexts such as the urban land sectors (Demissie et al., 2024; Kulachai et al., 2023). Organizational commitment, conceptualized by Meyer and Allen (1991), provides the critical link between leadership and performance, reflecting employees' willingness to remain engaged with institutional goals. In Ethiopia, however, the government civil servant commitment is undermined by weak

working culture, political disharmony, and limited innovation (Mitiku & Hondeghem, 2020; Tadesse, 2019). Moreover, the Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Homans, 1961) further emphasizes the reciprocal trust between leaders and employees, suggesting that effective leadership combined with strong commitment enhance organizational outcomes (Fauziah et al., 2023; Jemmy, 2024; Madison et al., 2025).

Yet, empirical evidence on these interactions within Ethiopia's urban land governance remains scarce (Alemayehu Emiru, 2025). Unlike prior studies that examined leadership and commitment in broader public institutions associated with the full-range leadership styles (Geremias et al., 2024; Hidayatulloh et al., 2023; Indrawan et al., 2020), this study uniquely investigates the Amhara Region's urban land administration offices in association with situational leadership, urging government to reduce the burden of bureaucratic leadership, practiced across the country's public service sectors (Ghebrehiwet, 2021). Besides, public servant commitment is consistently reducing undermining productivity and service delivery (Nega et al., 2021; Tadesse, 2019). Thus, this study addresses this gap by integrating situational leadership Model II, the Meyer and Allen's commitment model, and the social exchange theory into a single framework, tested through structural equation modelling.

The significance of this research lies in its contributions to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it extends situational leadership theory into the underexplored domain of urban land governance and validates organizational commitment as a mediating variable. Empirically, it provides evidence from Ethiopia's Amhara Region, a context underrepresented in leadership research despite its pressing social challenges. Practically, the study offers guidance for policymakers, mayors, and municipal managers. By employing situational leadership and strengthening employee commitment urban land administration can improve: (1) organizational productivity: flexible leadership enhances efficiency in service delivery; (2) Transparency and accountability: reducing corruption and informal syndicates through clear leadership practices; (3) Capacity building: empowering employees with training and participatory decision-making; and (4) Citizen trust: restoring confidence in local municipal governance by addressing dissatisfaction and grievances. To strengthen organizational productivity, service delivery, transparency, capacity building and citizen trust

through employing situational leadership and employee commitment empowering them and associates in the urban land administration sector, where now in critical customer dissatisfaction and social grievance.

These implications highlight how leadership practices can be implemented in real governance settings to strengthen institutional legitimacy and improve urban land performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Situational Leadership, Performance, and Commitment

Organizational performance is widely understood as the collective achievement of leaders and employees working toward institutional goals (Pasaribu *et al.*, 2022). Individual differences in knowledge, skills, and attitudes shape outcomes (Mustofa & Uii, 2021; Nugroho *et al.*, 2025), but leadership remains decisive in harmonizing these differences and mobilizing resources effectively (Fahlevi, 2021; Fauziah *et al.*, 2023; Karauri & Kyongo, 2024). Situational leadership theory emphasizes adaptability to follower readiness and contextual demands (Mirčetić & Vukotic, 2020). In fragile governance environments such as Ethiopia's urban land administration—where corruption and bureaucratic rigidity undermine productivity and service delivery (Demissie & Beyene, 2021; Indrawan *et al.*, 2020)—flexible and data-driven leadership is therefore critical. Yet, much of the existing literature treats situational leadership as a generic determinant of performance, leaving its specific relevance to fragile governance systems insufficiently examined (Mirčetić & Vukotic, 2020; Novruzov, 2024).

Extending this argument, situational leadership influences organizational commitment by fostering trust, motivation, and psychological attachment of employees with their organizations (Mahapatra & Jain, 2023; Suardhika *et al.*, 2025). Flexible leadership behaviors strengthen affective and normative commitment, whereas rigid bureaucratic styles often erode employee morale (Demissie *et al.*, 2024). Empirical studies highlight directive and supportive styles as enhancing affective and continuance commitment (Nwichi Chukwuocha, 2023), while delegating styles increase autonomy and long-term engagement (Njoroge *et al.*, 2023). Overall, situational leadership consistently demonstrates significant effects on organizational commitment across diverse sectors (Novruzov, 2024). However, most

of these studies focus on the education, banking, and policing sectors, leaving urban land governance largely unexplored. In Ethiopia, bureaucratic rigidity and weak leadership continue to undermine employee morale and commitment, limiting the sector's ability of productivity and delivering responsive and transparent services (Mitiku & Hondeghe, 2020; Siyum, 2024).

Organizational commitment, comprising affective, continuance, and normative dimensions (Meyer & Allen, 1991), has long been recognized as a driver of productivity, responsiveness, and loyalty (Fauziah *et al.*, 2023). Affective and normative commitment consistently predict positive outcomes such as reduced turnover and enhanced performance (Ouedraogo *et al.*, 2021), while continuance commitment produces weaker or inconsistent effects (Nketsiah & Anokye Nkansah, 2024). In fragile governance contexts such as Ethiopia's Amhara Region, strong employee commitment can partially offset systemic inefficiencies. Yet, its direct effect on performance in urban land governance has not been systematically explored, despite its critical role in its respective service delivery practices.

Extending the literature on leadership-performance linkages, the relationship between situational leadership and organizational performance is often mediated by the relationship between situational leadership and performance (Fauziah *et al.*, 2023). Commitment reflects trust, identification with organizational values, and willingness to exert effort for collective success. Empirical studies confirm that situational leadership strengthens commitment, which in turn enhances performance (Al-Jabari & Ghazzawi, 2019; Geremias *et al.*, 2024; Rai *et al.*, 2025). High levels of commitment reduce turnover and foster resilience, bridging managerial adaptability and organizational outcomes (Njoroge *et al.*, 2023). However, the magnitude of this mediation effect in relation to urban land productivity and service quality remains untested. By adopting the Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Commitment Model and grounding the analysis in the Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2017), this study advances the literature by contextualizing situational leadership within fragile urban land governance systems to explain organizational performance through the mediating role of commitment.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

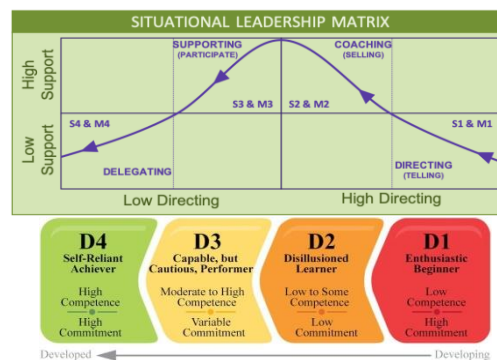
This study is grounded in the integration of two models and one theory that collectively justify the

proposed relationships between situational leadership, organizational commitment, and organizational performance. The first is Situational Leadership Model II (Mirčetić & Vukotic, 2020), evolved from the Hersey and Blanchard's Life Cycle Theory of Leadership (1969) and rooted in the Contingency Leadership Theory (Amghar, 2022; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; Hui, 2024). The second is the Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment, which distinguishes affective, continuance, and normative dimensions. Finally, Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Homans, 1961) provides the relational logic that explains how leadership behaviours foster commitment and, in turn, enhance performance. Together, these frameworks establish the theoretical foundation of the study: situational leadership influences organizational performance both directly and indirectly, with organizational commitment serving as the mediating strand. This integration allows the research to contextualize leadership and commitment within fragile urban land governance systems, offering a comprehensive lens to explain variations in organizational performance.

2.2.1. Situational Leadership II Model

Situational Leadership II emphasizes that effective leaders adapt their style to the competence and commitment levels of followers (Mirčetić & Vukotic, 2020). This adaptability is particularly relevant in urban land governance, where employees vary widely in skills and motivation due to systemic corruption and bureaucratic rigidity. The model identifies four leadership styles aligned with the developmental levels of followers (Figure 1): Directing (S1): High directive, low supportive applied when employees lack both ability and willingness; Coaching (S2): High directive, high supportive, used when employees are willing but lack ability; Supporting (S3): Low directive, high supportive, applied when employees have ability but lack willingness; and Delegating (S4): Low directive, low supportive, appropriate when employees are both willing and capable of doing tasks. The Developmental level of followers is a two-fold issue: commitment and Competence of followers. The rationale for selecting this model is its alignment with Ethiopia's civil service capacity-building strategy, which reflects flexible leadership while the bureaucratic leadership dominates the operational scenario. Situational Leadership II model therefore justifies the hypothesized link between leadership

style and organizational performance in the study area.



Development Level of the Individual
Fig. 1: Blanchard's situational leadership Model II
Source: Mirčetić & Vukotic, (2020:98-99)

2.2.2. The Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment

The Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment (1991) provides a robust framework for understanding employee attachment to organizations. The model distinguishes between affective commitment (emotional attachment and identification), continuance commitment (perceived costs of leaving), and normative commitment (moral obligation to remain) (Njoroge et al., 2023). These dimensions originate from employees' attitudes and perceptions, shaping loyalty, reducing turnover intentions, activate on-the-job behaviour, and enhance overall well-being (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective commitment is consistently the strongest predictor of positive organizational outcomes, as emotionally engaged employees exert discretionary effort (Zegeye et al., 2025). Continuance commitment stabilizes workforce retention but may foster compliance without genuine engagement, while normative commitment reflects moral obligation and can be strengthened through participatory and ethical leadership practices.

In the context of Ethiopia's urban land administration, this model is particularly relevant. Employees' loyalty, turnover intentions, and well-being are directly influenced by bureaucratic rigidity and corruption, making affective and normative commitment critical for sustaining organizational productivity and service delivery. Thus, this study applies the Meyer and Allen's model to assess how leadership behaviours foster different forms of commitment, which in turn influence organizational performance in rigid and fragile urban land governance systems.

2.2.3. The Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Homans, 1961) explains organizational relationships through reciprocity, rationality, and trust. It posits that human interactions are based on cost-benefit analysis, where supportive exchanges generate enhanced commitment that can advance organizational performance. Applied to leadership, SET suggests that when leaders provide support, fairness, and recognition, employees reciprocate with stronger commitment and improved performance in an organizational setting (Davlembayeva et al., 2021). Conversely, inequitable exchanges foster discontent and weaken organizational outcomes. This theory is governed by three principles: Rationality: Employers must be provided with reasonable benefits and resources to sustain employee motivation; Reciprocity: Social relationships between leaders and employees are reciprocal; supportive leadership fosters loyalty, while neglect erodes trust; specificity: Only reciprocal exchanges endure, meaning commitment is sustained when employees perceive fairness and mutual respect (TenHouten, 2020).

In Ethiopia's urban land governance, SET is crucial for understanding why rigid bureaucratic leadership erodes trust and commitment, widening the gap between government and citizens (Gebrihet, 2025). Situational leadership, by adapting to employee readiness, can restore reciprocity and foster stronger commitment, which mediates the relationship between leadership and performance. Thus, SET provides the relational logic for this study's model: situational leadership influences organizational performance indirectly through organizational commitment. By integrating Situational Leadership II, the Meyer and Allen's commitment model, and Social Exchange Theory, this study establishes a comprehensive theoretical framework that justifies all hypothesized relationships and explains the mediating role of commitment in rigid and fragile urban land governance contexts.

By combining Situational Leadership II, Meyer and Allen's commitment model, and Social Exchange Theory, this study develops a comprehensive framework. Situational leadership provides the behavioural foundation, organizational commitment explains the psychological mechanism, and SET offers the relational logic. Together, they justify all hypothesized relationships in the model and establish the theoretical basis for testing mediation effects in

Ethiopia's urban land governance offices.

2.3. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Grounded in Situational Leadership Model II (Blanchard, 1985), the Meyer & Allen's Commitment Model (1991), and the Social Exchange Theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017), this study integrates leadership, commitment, and performance into a unified framework. It posits that situational leadership directly influences performance, but its effect is significantly amplified when mediated by organizational commitment. This framework addresses the empirical gap in Ethiopia's urban land governance, offering both theoretical advancement and practical insights for strengthening productivity, service delivery and the human resource development. It highlights how situational leadership styles (directing, coaching, supporting, delegating) foster affective, continuance, and normative commitment, which in turn enhance organizational performance as illustrated by figure 2 below.

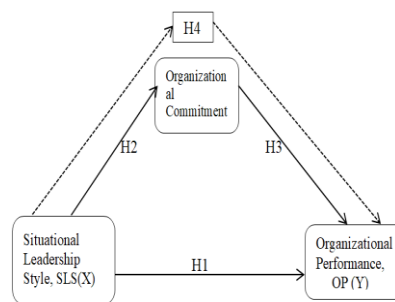


Fig.2: Conceptual framework of the study

Source: Researchers own work, (2025)

2.4. Hypotheses of the Study

The conceptual and empirical reviews on leadership, commitment and organizational performance showed the gap of addressing the strands of situational leadership and organizational commitment in enhancing urban land organizational performance in Ethiopia's Amhara Region, which operate under complex social demands and persistent challenges, unable to satisfy the expectations of tax paying customers. This was done employing the integration of Situational Leadership Model II, the Meyer and Allen's commitment model, and the Social Exchange Theory into a single framework, tested through structural equation modelling (SEM). Therefore, this gap motivated researchers to formulate the following hypotheses:

H1: Situational leadership has a significant and

positive effect on urban land organizational performance in Ethiopia's Amhara Region.

H2: Situational leadership has a significant and positive effect on organizational commitment in Ethiopia's Amhara Region.

H3: Organizational commitment has a significant and positive effect on urban land organizational performance in Ethiopia's Amhara Region.

H4: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between situational leadership and organizational performance in Ethiopia's Amhara Region.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research Design and Approach

This study adopted an explanatory research design, which is particularly suited for investigating causal relationships. Explanatory design enables researchers to move beyond description and test theoretical propositions against observed data, thereby identifying causes and providing empirical evidence to support or challenge predictions (Barroga et al., 2023). A quantitative approach was employed, relying on deductive reasoning to confirm or refute theoretical assumptions through statistical analysis (Yao, 2023). This approach was appropriate given the study's objective of testing the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between situational leadership and organizational performance. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was selected as the analytical technique, as it allows simultaneous estimation of direct and indirect effects, offering a robust test of mediation. The research was conducted within the Urban Land Development and Management offices of the Amhara Region, Ethiopia. To ensure comprehensive and reliable findings, the 14 urban land offices were purposively selected. These offices were chosen because they represent diverse zonal capitals where urban land governance challenges are most pronounced, and their professional employees and managers embody the organizational practices under study. This purposive selection ensured that the sample captured structural and operational realities across the region, making the findings generalizable to Ethiopia's broader urban land governance context. Within this framework, situational leadership is examined as the independent variable, organizational performance as the dependent variable, and organizational commitment as the mediating construct. This design directly operationalizes the conceptual framework,

enabling empirical testing of the four hypotheses developed depending on the gap identified in the literature review.

3.2. Sample

The study population comprised employees of Urban Land Development and Management offices in the Amhara Region, Ethiopia. From this population, 14 cities were purposively selected based on operational relevance, representativeness, and accessibility. Within these offices, professional employees and managers were identified as appropriate respondents, as they are directly engaged in leadership practices and organizational performance. To ensure statistical rigor, a simple random sampling technique was applied to select respondents from the total workforce of 1,887 of government employees. Using Yemane's (1967) sample size estimation formula, the required sample size was calculated to be 331. To compensate for potential non response, an additional 10% was added (Rahman, 2023), resulting in a final sample size of 346 respondents. This dual strategy, purposive city selection combined with random respondent sampling, ensured both contextual representativeness and methodological transparency.

3.3. Data Collection, Sources and Tools

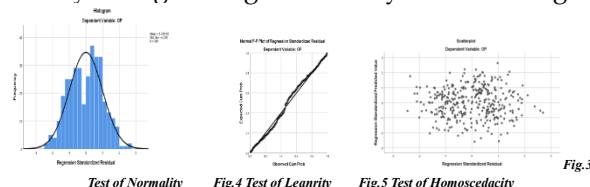
Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure situational leadership, organizational commitment, and organizational performance. Items were adapted from established scales: Situational Leadership Questionnaire (Sabay et al., 2023), 20 items covering directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating styles; the Meyer and Allen's Organizational Commitment Scale (1991), 18 items reflecting affective, continuance, and normative commitment; and the Non-financial performance indicators relevant to urban land administration (Øby, 2025; Richard et al., 2009; Susiana et al., 2018), 15 items measuring service quality, productivity, and human development activities were employed. The instrument was reviewed by subject matter experts and pre tested with a pilot group of 35 employees to ensure clarity and contextual relevance. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with all scales exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming internal consistency. Data collection was conducted in person across the selected offices between March and June 2025. Standardized instructions were provided, and respondents were

given adequate time to complete the questionnaire. Ethical safeguards, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, were strictly observed, ensuring that data collection was both systematic and ethically sound.

3.4. Data Processing and Analysis

Data were processed and analyzed using SPSS v.26 and AMOS v.23. Descriptive statistics were first employed to summarize demographic characteristics of respondents. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), while validity was examined using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), given that the measurement instruments were adopted from established scales. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted only as a preliminary step to examine item loadings, but the primary purpose of CFA was to confirm the dimensionality of constructs. Following measurement validation, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied to test the hypothesized causal relationships among situational leadership (SL), organizational commitment (OC), and organizational performance (OP). Mediation analysis was conducted within the SEM framework to examine the role of OC as an intervening variable. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices (χ^2/df , CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR), ensuring robustness and comparability with prior studies.

Prior to hypothesis testing, assumptions of multivariate analysis were carefully checked: Normality, Figure 3 confirmed that the distribution of residuals approximated normality, supporting the use of parametric techniques; Linearity, Figure 4, demonstrated that the relationships among SL, OC, and OP were linear, validating regression and SEM; and Homoscedasticity, Figure 5 indicated that variance across residuals was consistent, confirming the reliability of respective regression estimates. These diagnostic tests ensured that the data met the statistical requirements for SEM, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings.



3.5. Results and Discussions

3.5.1. Demographic Information of Respondents

The study achieved a strong response rate of 94.5%, with 346 valid questionnaires from government employees in urban land offices across the Amhara Region, ensuring reliability and relevance. Respondents were predominantly male (65%), reflecting the gender imbalance in Ethiopia's public service. The workforce was youthful; with 42% aged 21-30 and 51% aged 31-40, suggesting adaptability to leadership interventions but a need for mentoring and continuous capacity building. Educational attainment was moderate: 40% held first degrees, 27% diplomas, and 17% certificates, while only 8% had postgraduate qualifications (Table 1).

Table1: Demographic information of Respondents

Respondents	Description	f	%
Urban Land Employees	Government employees working in urban land Offices		
	Male	237	65
Gender	Female	128	35
	21-30 years	153	42
Age	31-40 years	186	51
	More than 40 years	26	7
Educational status	Reading and writing	29	8
	Certificate	62	17
	Diploma	99	27
	First Degree	146	40
	Second degree and above	29	8
Work Experience	1-10 years	157	43
	11-20 years	175	48
	More than 20 years	33	9
Department	Urban Land Marketing	88	24
	Urban Land Renewal development and Enhancement	106	29
	Urban Land Tenure Information Organization and Management	113	31
	Decentralized Urban Service	58	16
Total		346	100

Source: ANRS BoUDI, 2025

3.6. Reliability and Validity Tests

To ensure the robustness of the measurement model, reliability and validity tests were conducted prior to hypothesis testing (See summarized results in Table 2 below).

1. Composite Reliability (CR): Internal consistency

was assessed using CR, with values ≥ 0.70 considered acceptable (Sarstedt et al., 2017). In this study, CR values ranged from 0.80 to 0.89, confirming the emergence of strong internal consistency and reliable representation of the latent constructs (Badenes-Ribera et al., 2024). These results demonstrate that the items can consistently measure their intended constructs in their perspective.

2. Convergent Validity: Convergent validity was examined using factor loadings, CR, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). While CR values exceeded the recommended threshold, AVE results fell slightly below 0.50, indicating partial but not full convergent validity (Cheung et al., 2024). This suggests that although items were reliable indicators of their constructs, some variance was explained outside the latent factors, highlighting areas for refinement in future studies.

3. Discriminant Validity: Discriminant validity was confirmed, with construct correlations below 0.90 and heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratios within acceptable limits (Ringle et al., 2023; Rönkkö & Cho, 2020). This demonstrates that the constructs were distinct and non-redundant, thereby reducing the risk of multicollinearity (Henseler et al., 2015; Voorhees et al., 2016). Taken together, the CR, convergent validity, and discriminant validity results affirm the overall robustness of the measurement model, despite partial limitations in AVE. Importantly, since the instruments were adopted from established scales; Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed as the primary validation technique, while Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used only as a preliminary diagnostic step. This methodological rigor strengthens confidence in the measurement model and provides a solid foundation for subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 2: Construct Validity and Reliability (n = 346)

Situational Leadership				Organizational Commitment				Organizational Performance			
Items	Loading	AVE	CR	Items	Loading	AVE	CR	Items	Loading	AVE	CR
Di 1	.82	.81	.81	AC1	.76	.89	.89	Pr 1	.76	.83	.86
Di 2	.70			AC2	.78			Pr 2	.75		
Di 3	.67			AC3	.72			Pr 3	.71		
Di 4	.62			AC4	.73			Pr 4	.64		

Di 5	.59	.80	.80	AC5	.71	.87	.87	Pr 5	.63	.83	.83
C1	.78			AC6	.63			Pr 6	.58		
C2	.72			CC1	.81			Se 1	.78		
C3	.68			CC2	.77			Se 2	.70		
C4	.57			CC3	.73			Se 3	.65		
C5	.59			CC4	.69			Se 4	.69		
S1	.79	.80	.80	CC5	.65	.87	.87	Se 5	.67	.81	.81
S2	.69			CC6	.69			L DP 1	.76		
	.68			NC1	.78			L DP 2	.67		
S4	.61			NC2	.73			L DP 3	.69		
S5	.56			NC3	.74			L DP 4	.61		
De 1	.84	.81	.81	NC4	.61			L DP 5	.67		
De 2	.77			NC5	.67						
De 3	.62			NC6	.62						
De 4	.59										
De 5	.58										

Note: *** p < 0.001; Source: Own estimation (2025)

1. KMO and Bartlett’s Test

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett’s test of sphericity were conducted to assess the adequacy of the data for factor analysis (Table 3). Results confirmed that the items were suitable for confirmatory factor analysis. Specifically, KMO values for situational leadership (0.87), organizational commitment (0.89), and organizational performance (0.87), all exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.80, indicating strong sampling adequacy (Hair et al., 2022). Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also significant ($p < .001$), confirming that the correlation matrices were not identity matrices and that the data were appropriate for factor analysis (Sideridis et al., 2021). Given that the measurement instruments were adopted from established scales, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was employed as the primary validation technique. Items with standardized loadings below 0.50 were excluded, resulting in purified constructs that better

represented the underlying dimensions of situational leadership, organizational commitment, and organizational performance. The final measurement model comprised 20 items for situational leadership, 18 items for organizational commitment, and 15 items for organizational performance. Reliability indices were robust, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.80 to 0.87 and composite reliability (CR) between 0.80 and 0.89, both exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Sideridis *et al.*, 2021). Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were marginal, falling slightly below the 0.50 benchmark, suggesting partial but not full convergent validity (Cheung *et al.*, 2024; Schuberth *et al.*, 2023). Taken together, these results confirm that situational leadership, organizational commitment, and organizational performance are distinct, reliable, and valid constructs, thereby affirming the robustness of the measurement model (Kline, 2023). The strong KMO values and significant Bartlett's test provide further assurance that the dataset was well-suited for factor analysis, strengthening the credibility of subsequent hypothesis testing.

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Summary of item Adequacy of Variables

Variables	KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Situational leadership Style (SL)	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.87
	Approx. Chi-Square		2392.55
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	190
		Sig.	.000
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.89
Organizational Commitment(OC)	Approx. Chi-Square		2687.56
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	153
		Sig.	.000
	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.87
Organizational Performance	Approx. Chi-Square		1883.91
	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	120
		Sig.	0.000

Source: Researchers' own estimation, (2025)

3.7. Model Fit

The measurement model demonstrated excellent fit across multiple indices, confirming the robustness of the hypothesized structure (Table 4). The chi-square/df ratio was 1.08, well below the recommended threshold of 3.0, indicating minimal discrepancy between observed and estimated covariance matrices and ruling out over-fitting

(Kline, 2023). Absolute fit indices were strong: the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI =0.86) and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI =0.85) both exceeded the recommended cutoff of 0.85, confirming adequate model representation (Byrne & St, 2022). Incremental fit indices further reinforced adequacy, with the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI =0.98) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI=0.98) surpassing the 0.90 benchmark, demonstrating that the hypothesized model provided a superior fit compared to a null model (Hair *et al.*, 2022). Error indices also confirmed robustness: the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA=0.01) was far below the 0.08 threshold and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR=0.05) fell within the acceptable range (<0.08), supporting the model's accuracy in reproducing observed correlations (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Although the Normed Fit Index (NFI=0.82) was marginally below the recommended 0.85 threshold. Parsimonious fit was also confirmed, with the chi-square/df ratio (CMIN/df =1.08) well below the recommended maximum of 3.0, indicating that the model achieved a balance between explanatory power and simplicity (Schumaker *et al.*, 2022). Thus, the overall pattern of fit indices strongly supports the adequacy of the measurement model.

Table 4: Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Score	Recommended Value
Absolute fit indices		
P-Value	.01	> .05
Standardized RMR	.05	
RMSEA	.01	
GFI	.86	> .85
Incremental fit measures		
AGFI	.85	> .85
CFI	.98	> .90
TLI	.98	> .90
NFI	.82	> .85
Parsimonious fit		
CMIN/df	1.08	

Source: Researchers' own estimation (2025)

Taken together, the absolute, incremental, error, and parsimonious fit indices provide compelling evidence that the measurement model is both statistically sound and theoretically robust. Figure 7 presents the path diagram of the measurement model, visually illustrating the relationships among situational leadership,

organizational commitment, and organizational performance, complementing the statistical evidence summarized in Table 6.

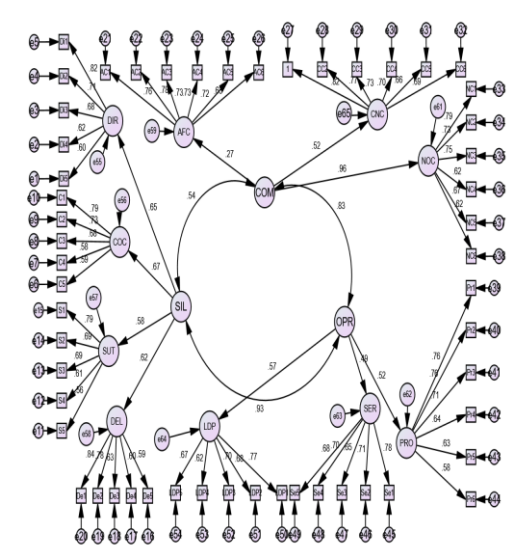


Fig.6: Measurement Model of the Study
Source: AMOS Estimation, (2025)

3.8. Model Robustness and Comparison

To assess robustness, the hypothesized full model was compared with two alternative specifications (Table 5).The first alternative tested only the direct effect of situational leadership on organizational performance, excluding organizational commitment. This restricted model demonstrated poor fit, with a significant chi-square difference ($\Delta\chi^2=103.94$, $\Delta df=2$) and weaker indices (GFI=0.86; TLI=0.96; CFI=0.96; RMSEA=0.02). These results indicate that omitting organizational commitment substantially reduced explanatory power, underscoring its mediating importance. The second alternative examined only the indirect mediation pathway, excluding the direct effect of situational leadership. This model also yielded weaker indices ($\Delta\chi^2 =31.06$, $\Delta df =1$; GFI =0.86; TLI=0.97; CFI=0.97; RMSEA=0.01), suggesting that a purely mediated specification failed to capture the full dynamics of the relationships. By contrast, the full hypothesized model achieved superior fit and parsimony (CMIN/df=1.08, $p =0.01$; GFI=0.86; TLI=0.98; CFI=0.98; RMSEA=0.01). These results confirm that the integrated structure, incorporating both direct and mediated pathways, best represents the observed data and provides the most robust explanation of the relationships among situational leadership, organizational commitment, and organizational performance

Table 5: Results of Model Comparisons

Structural Model	X ²	Df	$\Delta\chi^2$	G FI	T LI	C FI	RMS EA
Hypothesized model-Full	1479.24	1364	-	.86	.98	.98	.01(***)
Alternative model-1:Direct effect only	1583.19	1366	103.94	.86	.96	.96	.21(***)
Alternative model-2: Mediation/indirect effect only	1510.30	1365	31.06	.86	.97	.97	.18(***)

Source: Researcher’s own estimation, (2025)
All models are compared to the hypothesized model, ***p<0.001

3.9. Hypothesis Testing

(a) Direct Effects: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized relationships among situational leadership, organizational commitment, and organizational performance (Table 6). The results provided strong statistical support for all three hypotheses. Situational leadership exerted a significant positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta=0.68$, $p<.001$). It also had a substantial influence on organizational commitment ($\beta=0.54$, $P<.001$).In turn, organizational commitment positively affected organizational performance ($\beta =0.46$, $p < 0.001$).These findings confirm that situational leadership enhances organizational performance both directly and indirectly by fostering commitment, highlighting its pivotal role in shaping employee attitudes and organizational outcomes.

Table 6: Regression Weight

Hypotheses	Regression on Path	Anticipated impact	SRW	SE	C.R.	P-value	Decision
H1	SL→OP	Positive	.68** *	.15	4.44	p<0.001	Supported
H2	SL→OC	Positive	.54** *	.18	5.65	P<0.001	Supported
H3	OC→OP	Positive	.46** *	.16	3.51	P<0.001	Supported

Source: researcher’s own estimation (2025)
***Significance at P< 0.05 level, SRW= standard regression weight, C.R. =critical ratio; SE=standard error; SL-Situational leadership; OC-Organizational Commitment; OP- Organizational performance

(b)Indirect Effects: Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was conducted to examine the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between situational leadership and organizational performance. The results (Table 7) revealed that the indirect effect of situational leadership on performance through commitment was statistically significant ($\beta=0.25$, 95% CI [.11, 0.38], $p < 0.001$). The direct effect of leadership on performance remained strong, indicating that organizational commitment does not fully mediate the relationship but rather reinforces it. This pattern confirms partial complementary mediation and supports Hypothesis 4. In practical terms, situational leadership enhances organizational performance both directly and indirectly, with commitment acting as a reinforcing mechanism that strengthens the overall impact.

Table 7: Mediation effects

H4	Dire ct with out medi ation	Dire ct β medi ation	Indi rect β	P- Va lue	Bootstrapped Indirect Effect		Mediati on type
					Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI	
SL $\rightarrow$ O	β =.54 ***	β =.46	β =.24	.001	.11	.38	Partial Comple mentary mediatio n

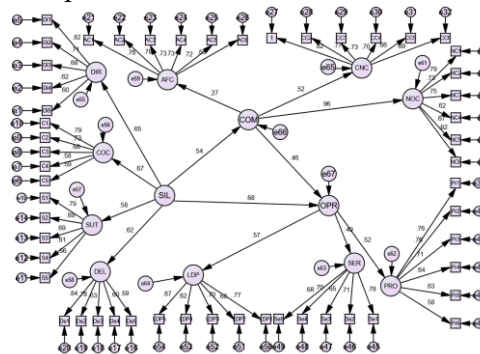
Source: researcher's own estimation (2025); $*(p<0.001)$; CI=95% confidence interval (two-tailed); Bootstrap sample

3.10. Structural Model Results

The structural model fit assessment was conducted to determine whether the observed data supported the hypothesized relationships. As shown in Figure 8, situational leadership explained 54% of the variance in organizational commitment. It also accounted for 68% of the variance in organizational performance, while organizational commitment explained 46% of the variance in performance. These R^2 values demonstrate substantial explanatory power and consistent support for the hypothesized pathways. Maximum likelihood estimation was employed to test the covariance matrix, forming the basis for both confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis. All critical ratio (C.R.) values exceeded the threshold of 1.96, confirming that the associations between each factor and its corresponding variable were statistically significant. Thus, the items included in

the model reliably explained the constructs under consideration.

Taken together, the model fit assessment confirmed the robustness of the hypothesized structure, with confirmatory analysis verifying each proposed hypothesis. The findings highlight that situational leadership exerts both direct and indirect influence on organizational performance, with organizational commitment acting as a reinforcing mechanism. This dual pathway underscores the strategic importance of leadership practices in shaping employee attitudes and driving organizational outcomes. However, in contexts such as the Ethiopian urban land regional performance, the results reinforce the view that effective leadership is not merely a managerial function but a transformative force, capable of mobilizing commitment and translating it into measurable performance gains, thereby fostering organizational resilience and sustainable development.



Source: AMOS Estimation, (2025)

Figure 7: Structural Path Diagram of the Hypothesized Model (Illustrates the direct and mediated pathways between situational leadership, organizational commitment, and organizational performance).

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study confirm that situational leadership significantly influences organizational performance. This result aligns with Zamzam et al. (2023), who demonstrated that situational leadership enhances performance through employee engagement in Indonesia, and Tesfaye and Chawla (2019), who established leadership's predictive role in Ethiopian private universities. Together, these studies reinforce the contextual relevance of our results and highlight flexible leadership as a decisive factor in urban land organizational performance success across diverse institutional settings. Leadership also emerged as a strong predictor of organizational commitment. Our evidence is consistent with Iddrisu & Mohammed (2025), who found leadership styles to

be critical in shaping commitment in the Canadian services sector. In Ethiopia, Alene et al., (2025) reported situational leadership practices as essential for sustaining teacher commitment in secondary schools, underscoring the universality of this relationship. These findings extend the Meyer and Allen's (1991) commitment model by demonstrating its applicability across both developed and developing contexts.

The pathway from organizational commitment to performance was equally validated. Ahakwa et al. (2024) showed that commitment drives performance in Ghanaian institutions, while Nugroho et al. (2025) emphasized innovative leadership as a catalyst for commitment and performance in Asian organizations. Our results confirm that commitment functions as a critical strand through which leadership translates into tangible organizational outcomes. Importantly, these findings carry practical implications for Ethiopia's urban land governance. Flexible leadership practices can be embedded into municipal management systems to strengthen employee commitment, reduce turnover, and enhance service delivery. By prioritizing adaptive leadership training, fostering participatory decision-making and building trust-based relationships, policy makers and municipal managers can improve transparency, responsiveness and citizen satisfaction. In fragile governance contexts, where bureaucratic rigidity and corruption erode institutional legitimacy, situational leadership combined with strong organizational commitment offers a pathway to restoring performance and rebuilding public trust. Mediation analysis further established partial complementary mediation, confirming that commitment amplifies leadership's direct effects without diminishing them. This finding echoes (Suardhika et al., 2025), who demonstrated that situational leadership and employee competence affect performance through motivation. The evidence suggests that while leadership directly drives performance, its impact is reinforced when employees are committed, creating a dual pathway of influence. Beyond theoretical contributions, these findings carry practical implications. Ethiopian studies (Aytenew et al., 2025; Ferede et al., 2024) emphasize that leadership responsiveness is indispensable for governance reforms and service delivery. By situating our results within these debates, we show that adapting flexible leadership is not only theoretically robust but also practically urgent in Ethiopia's urban land governance and performance endeavour. In

contexts of institutional rigidity and fragility, dynamic leadership adaptability emerges as a transformative force, mobilizing commitment and translating it into measurable performance gains in urban land performance arena. For policy makers and municipal managers, this means prioritizing leadership development programs, embedding participatory practices and fostering trust-based exchanges to strengthen employee commitment. Such measures can directly improve productivity, service quality and citizen satisfaction in the urban land administration sector.

Taken together, the findings of this study make both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the integration of Situational Leadership II, the Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Commitment Model, and Social Exchange Theory provides a comprehensive framework for explaining how leadership influences organizational performance directly and indirectly through commitment. This advances the literature by contextualizing leadership-commitment-performance linkages within fragile governance systems, a domain that has been largely overlooked in prior studies. Empirically, the study demonstrates that situational leadership is not only relevant in education, banking and policing sectors, but also in the underexplored field of urban land governance in Ethiopia.

Practically, the result underscores the urgent need for leadership adaptability in municipal governance. Flexible leadership styles can strengthen employee commitment, reduce turnover and improve service delivery, thereby enhancing transparency and citizen trust. For policy makers, this means embedding leadership development in to civil service reforms, promoting participatory practices, and institutionalizing accountability mechanisms to counter bureaucratic rigidity and corruption. For municipal managers, the findings highlight the importance of tailoring leadership approaches to employee competence and commitment levels, ensuring that organizational performance is sustained even in fragile contexts.

Finally, the study opens avenues for future research. Comparative regional studies and governance sectors could test the generalizability of these findings, while longitudinal design may capture how leadership-commitment-performance dynamics evolve over time. Further exploration of mediating and moderating variables, such as organizational culture or digital governance tools, could deepen understanding of how situational leadership translates into sustainable

organizational performance. By bridging theory, evidence and practice, this study contributes to both academic scholar advancement and the urgent reform agenda of Ethiopia's urban land governance.

5. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the effect of situational leadership on organizational performance in Ethiopia's urban land governance and assessed the mediating role of organizational commitment. Using structural equation modelling, all four hypotheses were supported, confirming that situational leadership directly enhances both performance and commitment, while commitment itself significantly improves performance and partially mediates the leadership-performance relationship. The findings extend Situational Leadership Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and the Meyer and Allen's commitment model by showing that leadership adaptability retains strong direct influence even in fragile governance systems, while commitment reinforces but does not fully mediate its impact. Practically, the results highlight the urgent need for leadership development as the cornerstone of institutional reform, cultivating flexibility, transparency, and responsiveness to employee readiness, while strengthening organizational commitment through participatory decision-making, value alignment, and trust-based practices to ensure sustainable outcomes. For Ethiopia's urban land sector and other developing countries, moving beyond out-dated bureaucratic leadership styles toward transformative, situation-oriented leadership is essential to mobilize commitment, improve service delivery, and drive sustainable regional development. Future research should extend this model by examining competence and commitment as dual mediators, employing mixed-method designs, and conducting comparative studies across countries and governance cultures to clarify how leadership mobilizes both skills and attitudes to sustain performance. Overall, situational leadership emerges not merely as a managerial tool but as a transformative force capable of restoring resilience, transparency, and citizen trust in fragile governance systems.

5.2 Recommendations

The findings of this study provide clear guidance for urban administrators and policymakers in

Ethiopia and similar developing contexts. Leadership development should be prioritized as the cornerstone of institutional reform, cultivating flexibility, transparency, and responsiveness to employee readiness. Strengthening organizational commitment is equally vital, achievable through aligning institutional values with employee expectations, fostering participatory decision-making, and building trust via fair and transparent land administration practices. Leadership training programs must emphasize adaptive approaches tailored to contextual challenges, equipping leaders to navigate institutional fragility with resilience. Institutional reforms should embed mechanisms for accountability, inclusiveness, and ethical governance, ensuring that leadership practices translate into sustainable organizational outcomes. When leadership adaptability is combined with strengthened commitment, organizations are better positioned to achieve resilient performance, improved service delivery, and enhanced citizen satisfaction. For Ethiopia's urban public sector, and other developing countries, moving beyond out-dated bureaucratic leadership styles toward transformative, situation-oriented leadership is essential to mobilize commitment and drive sustainable regional development.

5.3. Future Research Directions

Although this study provides robust evidence, several avenues remain open for deeper exploration. Future research should extend the current model by examining employee competence and organizational commitment as dual mediators in the relationship between situational leadership and organizational performance. This would enable fuller operationalization of the Situational Leadership II Model, which emphasizes that leadership effectiveness depends not only on adaptability to employee readiness but also on the interplay between competence and commitment. Testing this double mediation pathway would clarify how leadership simultaneously mobilizes skills and attitudes to drive performance outcomes. Researchers are also encouraged to adopt mixed-method designs that integrate quantitative rigor with qualitative insights, such as interviews, focus groups, and case studies, to capture contextual realities more effectively. Enhancing external validity will require larger and more representative samples across multiple organizations at the national level, ensuring broader generalizability of results. Comparative studies across different countries, sectors, and

governance cultures would also be valuable, as they could reveal whether mediation patterns vary by sector, institutional type, or national context.

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