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## **EFFECT OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AMONG UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES IN ETHIOPIA**

**Adamu Alemu Satena**

Lecturer, Department of Management, Bule Hora University, Ethiopia,

**Daba Derecha Damessa**

Lecturer, MSc. In Development Economics, Department of economics, Bule Hora University, Ethiopia

**Tamire Ashuro Dadiye**

Lecturer, Department of Management, Bule Hora University, Ethiopia,

&

**Shashi Kant**

Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Bule Hora University, Bule Hora; **Ethiopia**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the effect of servant leadership style on organizational performance among employees of Bule Hora University administration, Ethiopia. The research applies explanatory research design and follows a quantitative research approach. The target population for this study consists of all employees within the administration department of Bule Hora University. The sample size includes 361 participants who were selected using random sampling method. Data was collected through structured surveys that assessed servant leadership behaviors and organizational performance indicators. The data analysis conducted in this study includes regression analysis to determine the relationship between servant leadership dimensions and organizational performance. The findings indicate significant and positive effects of servant leadership on organizational performance among Bule Hora University administration employees. Future research should consider expanding the scope to include other universities and organizations, as well as incorporating qualitative methods to gain deeper insights into the experiences and perceptions of employees.

**Keywords:** Servant Leadership, Organizational Performance, University, Administration

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In today's globalized and competitive business environment, organizations strive to achieve and sustain high levels of performance. Effective leadership is critical for organizational success, and various leadership styles have emerged as influential factors in shaping employee behavior, engagement, and overall organizational performance. One such leadership style that has gained significant attention is servant leadership [1]. Servant leadership is a people-centered approach that emphasizes the leader's commitment to serving the needs of their followers, empowering them, and fostering their personal and professional development. It is based on the idea that leaders who prioritize the well-being and growth of their employees can create a positive work environment, enhance employee satisfaction, and ultimately drive organizational performance [2].

This research aims to investigate the effect of servant leadership style on organizational performance in a global context. In today's interconnected world, organizations operate across borders, engage with diverse cultures, and face unique challenges that require adaptive and

inclusive leadership approaches [3]. Understanding how servant leadership influences organizational performance on a global scale can provide valuable insights for leaders, managers, and organizations seeking to optimize their performance outcomes [4].

Furthermore, this research acknowledges the dynamic nature of global organizations and the potential moderating effects of cultural factors on the relationship between servant leadership and organizational performance [5]. Cultural dimensions, such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, may interact with servant leadership practices, influencing their impact on performance outcomes [6].

### 1.1 Concepts and Origin of servant leadership styles

The concept of servant leadership originates from the global domain and has been embraced by various cultures and societies, including Africa and Ethiopia [7]. The term "servant leadership" was coined by Robert K. Greenleaf in his essay titled "The Servant as Leader," published in 1970. Greenleaf was an American management expert and philosopher who proposed a leadership approach that focused on serving others rather than exerting power and authority [8].

Servant leadership is a leadership philosophy that emphasizes the leader's responsibility to serve and prioritize the needs of their followers or subordinates [9]. It involves a commitment to the growth, well-being, and development of others, with the aim of enabling them to reach their full potential.

Servant leaders exhibit a deep understanding and compassion for others, putting themselves in the shoes of their followers to comprehend their needs and concerns. They actively listen to their followers, valuing their opinions and perspectives, and create an open and inclusive environment where everyone feels heard [10]. Servant leaders strive to foster a culture of emotional and psychological well-being, promoting the healing of relationships and addressing conflicts in a constructive manner. They prioritize the needs of others above their own, seeking to support and uplift their followers rather than seeking personal gain or power [11].

Servant leaders empower their followers by providing them with the necessary resources, guidance, and autonomy to succeed, encouraging their personal and professional growth [12]. The concept of servant leadership aligns well with many traditional African values and leadership practices. In many African cultures, leaders are expected to be selfless, accountable, and deeply connected to their communities. The ubuntu philosophy, prevalent in various African societies, emphasizes the interconnectedness and shared humanity among individuals, which resonates with the servant leadership approach [13].

In Africa, servant leadership has been embraced as a model for ethical and transformative leadership. It encourages leaders to prioritize the welfare of their communities, promote collaboration, and work towards the collective good. By focusing on service, African servant leaders aim to address societal challenges, promote inclusivity, and foster sustainable development [14]. Ethiopia, with its rich cultural heritage and history, has its unique perspective on servant leadership. The Ethiopian culture values humility, community, and a sense of responsibility towards others. These values align well with the principles of servant leadership [15].

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on servant leadership in Ethiopia, particularly in the context of governance and public administration [16]. The Ethiopian government has recognized the importance of servant leadership in promoting good governance, accountability, and effective service delivery. The aim is to create a leadership culture that focuses on the needs of the people and facilitates their participation in decision-making processes [17].

## 1.2 Determinants of servant leadership style

### 1. Empowerments

Empowerment refers to the process of enabling individuals or groups to take control of their own lives, make decisions, and take actions that lead to personal and professional growth. Several determinants contribute to empowerment [18]. The availability of resources, such as education, information, financial capital, technology, and social networks, can significantly impact empowerment. Access to these resources provides individuals with the tools and opportunities to make informed decisions, pursue goals, and exert control over their lives [19]. Acquiring knowledge and developing relevant skills are crucial for empowerment. Education, vocational training, and skill-building programs equip individuals with the necessary competencies to navigate challenges, make informed choices, and effectively participate in decision-making processes. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their own abilities to accomplish tasks and overcome challenges [20].

High levels of self-efficacy contribute to empowerment by fostering confidence, resilience, and a proactive attitude towards achieving personal and professional goals. A supportive environment plays a vital role in empowerment [21]. This includes social support from family, friends, mentors, and organizations that encourage and provide guidance. An environment that values diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities empowers individuals to embrace their unique strengths and perspectives. Empowerment is closely linked to participation and having a voice in decision-making processes. When individuals are involved in shaping policies, programs, and decisions that affect them, they feel a sense of ownership, agency, and empowerment [22]. Having control over one's own choices, actions, and decisions is a fundamental aspect of empowerment. Autonomy allows individuals to exercise their rights, express their preferences, and pursue their goals in alignment with their values and interests.

### 2. Stewardship

Stewardship refers to the responsible management and care of resources, whether they are natural, financial, or organizational. Several determinants contribute to fostering a culture of stewardship [23]. A sense of ownership is a key determinant of stewardship. When individuals feel a sense of responsibility and accountability for the resources entrusted to them, they are more likely to engage in actions that promote their preservation, conservation, and sustainable use [24]. Ethical values and integrity play a crucial role in stewardship. Individuals and organizations that prioritize honesty, transparency, fairness, and ethical behavior are more likely to act in the best interests of the resources they manage. Ethical considerations guide decision-making and ensure that actions align with long-term sustainability and the well-being of stakeholders [25].

Environmental awareness is particularly relevant when it comes to natural resource stewardship. Understanding the importance of ecosystems, biodiversity, and the impacts of human activities fosters a sense of responsibility towards protecting and preserving the environment. Awareness of environmental challenges and the need for sustainable practices encourages individuals and organizations to adopt stewardship behaviors [26]. Education and knowledge are crucial determinants of stewardship. Providing individuals with information about the resources they are entrusted with, as well as their ecological, social, and economic value, enhances their understanding and ability to make informed decisions. Continuous learning and access to relevant knowledge empower individuals to become effective stewards [27]. Collaboration and partnerships are essential for effective stewardship. Addressing complex challenges often requires the collective effort of multiple stakeholders, including governments, organizations, communities, and

individuals. Collaboration enables the pooling of resources, expertise, and perspectives, leading to more comprehensive and sustainable stewardship initiatives.

### 3. Authenticity

Authenticity refers to being true to oneself, genuine, and aligned with one's values, beliefs, and identity. Several determinants contribute to authenticity. Self-awareness is a fundamental determinant of authenticity. It involves understanding one's values, strengths, weaknesses, and motivations. Being self-aware allows individuals to have a clear sense of their own identity and enables them to act in alignment with their true selves [28]. Authenticity is closely tied to living in accordance with one's values and beliefs. When individuals are aware of their core values and actively live by them, they are more likely to feel authentic [28].

Consistently acting in alignment with personal values promotes a sense of authenticity and integrity. Congruence refers to the alignment between one's thoughts, emotions, words, and actions. When individuals' internal experiences are consistent with their external expressions, they are perceived as authentic [29]. Being true to oneself and avoiding discrepancy between inner and outer selves enhances authenticity. Authenticity requires self-acceptance, which involves embracing one's strengths, limitations, and unique qualities. When individuals accept and appreciate themselves as they are, without striving to meet external expectations or conform to societal norms, they can live authentically [30]. Authenticity often involves allowing oneself to be vulnerable and showing genuine emotions and experiences. Being open and honest about one's thoughts, feelings, and experiences creates a genuine connection with others and fosters authenticity in relationships. Engaging in introspection and reflection allows individuals to explore their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors more deeply [31].

### 4. Accountability

Accountability refers to the responsibility and answerability for one's actions, decisions, and outcomes. Several determinants contribute to fostering accountability. Establishing clear expectations is essential for fostering accountability [32]. When individuals understand what is expected of them in terms of goals, performance standards, and responsibilities, it becomes easier to hold them accountable for their actions and outcomes. Transparency and effective communication are vital determinants of accountability. When information flows freely and individuals have access to relevant information, they are better equipped to understand the impact of their actions and make informed decisions [33]. Open communication also allows for feedback, clarification, and accountability discussions. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities provide individuals with a framework for accountability. When each person understands their specific role, tasks, and areas of responsibility, it becomes easier to assess individual performance and hold them accountable for meeting their obligations. Establishing performance metrics and evaluation processes is crucial for accountability. When individuals' performance is measured against specific criteria and evaluated objectively, it provides a basis for assessing their level of accountability [34].

Regular performance reviews and feedback sessions help identify areas for improvement and reinforce accountability [35]. Accountability is reinforced by establishing consequences for non-compliance or poor performance, as well as providing incentives for meeting or exceeding expectations. When individuals understand that their actions have consequences, both positive and negative, it motivates them to act responsibly and be accountable for their performance. Leadership plays a significant role in fostering accountability within an organization. When leaders set a positive example by demonstrating accountability themselves and creating an environment that values and encourages accountability, it sets the tone for the entire organization [36].

#### 1.3 Origin and concept of organizational performance

The concept of organizational performance originated from the global perspective of assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations in achieving their goals and objectives. It involves evaluating various aspects of an organization, such as financial performance, operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, employee productivity, and overall success in delivering desired outcomes [42].

In the African context, the concept of organizational performance aligns with global perspectives but also takes into account specific regional factors and challenges. African organizations face unique socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts that influence their performance. Factors such as infrastructure limitations, skills gaps, access to markets, governance issues, and resource constraints can impact organizational performance in Africa [34].

When zooming in on Ethiopia, the concept of organizational performance is influenced by the country's specific economic, political, and social conditions. Ethiopia is a diverse nation with a rapidly growing economy and a significant focus on development and industrialization. Organizational performance in Ethiopia is shaped by factors such as government policies, investment climate, infrastructure development, human capital development, and the country's efforts to achieve sustainable development goals [38].

In Ethiopia, there has been an increasing emphasis on measuring and improving organizational performance to drive economic growth, attract foreign investments, and enhance public service delivery. The government has implemented various initiatives and reforms to promote performance management and accountability in both the public and private sectors. This includes the introduction of performance-based budgeting, results-based management systems, and the establishment of performance evaluation frameworks [54].

#### 1.4 Determinants of organizational performance

**Financial performance:** Financial performance refers to the evaluation of an organization's financial health and success. Several determinants contribute to financial performance. The ability to generate revenue is a fundamental determinant of financial performance [37]. Organizations need to effectively market their products or services, attract customers, and generate sales to generate revenue streams. Factors such as pricing strategies, market demand, customer retention, and effective sales and marketing efforts influence revenue generation. Efficient cost management is crucial for financial performance. Organizations need to control and optimize their expenses, including raw materials, labor costs, overhead expenses, and operational costs [38].

Effective cost management strategies, such as lean operations, negotiation with suppliers, and process improvements, can positively impact financial performance. Profitability indicators, such as gross profit margin, operating profit margin, and net profit margin, are important determinants of financial performance. Organizations need to maintain healthy profit margins to cover costs, invest in growth, and generate returns for stakeholders [39]. Factors influencing profitability include pricing strategies, cost control, economies of scale, and product/service differentiation. Efficient cash flow management is essential for financial performance. Organizations need to ensure a steady inflow of cash from operations, effectively manage accounts receivable and payable, and maintain adequate cash reserves for operational needs. Cash flow management impacts an organization's ability to meet financial obligations, invest in growth, and navigate financial challenges [40]. The effective utilization of assets is a determinant of financial performance. Organizations need to optimize the use of their assets, whether it's physical assets like machinery and equipment or intangible assets like intellectual property. Efficient asset

utilization, measured through metrics such as asset turnover and return on assets, can positively impact financial performance [41].

**Customer satisfaction:** Customer satisfaction refers to the extent to which customers' expectations are met or exceeded by a product, service, or overall experience. Several determinants contribute to customer satisfaction [42]. The quality of the product or service is a significant determinant of customer satisfaction. Customers expect products or services to meet their needs, perform as promised, and provide value for their investment. High-quality products that are reliable, durable, and meet or exceed customer expectations contribute to customer satisfaction [43]. The level of customer service provided by an organization plays a crucial role in customer satisfaction. Customers appreciate responsive, friendly, and knowledgeable customer service representatives who can address their inquiries, issues, and concerns promptly and effectively [44]. Excellent customer service builds trust, enhances the overall experience, and contributes to customer satisfaction. Timeliness and efficiency in delivering products or services are important determinants of customer satisfaction.

Customers value organizations that respect their time and can provide prompt delivery, quick response times, and efficient service [45]. Delays, long waiting times, or inefficient processes can negatively impact customer satisfaction. Personalization and customization options contribute to customer satisfaction. Customers appreciate organizations that can tailor products or services to their specific needs and preferences. Offering personalized recommendations, customization features, or personalized communication shows that an organization values individual customers and enhances their satisfaction [46].

**Internal business process:** Internal business processes refer to the activities and operations within an organization that facilitate the creation, delivery, and improvement of products or services. Several determinants contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of internal business processes [47]. Well-designed and standardized processes are essential for efficient and effective business operations. Clear process definitions, documented procedures, and standardized workflows help ensure consistency, reduce errors, and streamline operations. Process design should focus on eliminating bottlenecks, optimizing resource utilization, and improving overall efficiency [48].

The use of automation and technology plays a significant role in improving internal business processes. Adopting appropriate technology solutions, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, workflow management software, or customer relationship management (CRM) tools, can enhance process efficiency, accuracy, and speed. Automation reduces manual effort, minimizes errors, and enables seamless integration between different process stages [49]. Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) and monitoring process performance is crucial for continuous improvement. Regularly measuring and analyzing process metrics provides insights into bottlenecks, inefficiencies, and areas for improvement. Monitoring performance helps identify deviations, implement corrective actions, and drive process optimization [50]. Emphasizing a culture of continuous improvement and innovation is vital for optimizing internal business processes. Encouraging employees to suggest process enhancements, promoting a learning environment, and implementing feedback loops facilitate the identification and implementation of process improvements [51].

Embracing new ideas, technologies, and methodologies fosters innovation and drives efficiency gains. Effective resource allocation is a determinant of internal business process performance. Organizations need to allocate resources, such as human capital, financial resources, and technology, in a way that aligns with process requirements [52]. Optimizing resource utilization ensures that processes are adequately supported, minimizing waste and maximizing productivity.

**Learning and growth:** Learning and growth are crucial aspects of organizational development and sustainability. Several determinants contribute to fostering a culture of learning and promoting growth within an organization [53]. Leadership plays a key role in creating a learning and growth-oriented culture. Leaders who prioritize and actively support learning initiatives set the tone for the entire organization. They allocate resources, provide mentorship, encourage experimentation, and promote continuous learning as a core value [54]. Providing diverse learning opportunities and development programs is essential to foster learning and growth. This includes offering training programs, workshops, seminars, conferences, and e-learning platforms [55]. Organizations should facilitate skill enhancement, knowledge sharing, and personal and professional development for employees at all levels [56]. Creating a learning culture where employees feel safe to take risks, share ideas, and learn from failures is crucial. Psychological safety allows individuals to express their opinions, seek feedback, and engage in open dialogue without fear of judgment or retribution [57]. A supportive and inclusive environment enhances learning, collaboration, and innovation. Regular performance feedback and recognition mechanisms contribute to learning and growth. Providing constructive feedback helps employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement, enabling them to enhance their skills and performance [58]. Recognition programs that acknowledge and reward achievements and growth further motivate employees to strive for continuous improvement.

## 2. EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Relationship between empowerment and organizational performance

The relationship between empowerment and organizational performance has been widely studied, and research consistently demonstrates a positive association between the two. This influential study defines psychological empowerment as a motivational construct comprising four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact [58]. The author finds that psychological empowerment positively relates to various outcomes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance. Empowered employees feel a sense of ownership, have increased motivation, and are more likely to contribute to organizational success [59].

This study specifically focuses on the relationship between leadership empowerment behavior and performance in the sales context. The authors find that when salespeople perceive their leaders as empowering, they experience higher levels of job satisfaction, customer satisfaction, and ultimately, better sales performance [60]. Empowered salespeople feel more confident and motivated to deliver high-quality service, leading to improved organizational outcomes [61]. [62] This study examines the relationship between psychological empowerment and various outcomes, including effectiveness, satisfaction, and strain. The authors find that psychological empowerment positively influences job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall effectiveness. Empowered employees experience lower levels of strain and are more likely to perform well, contributing to positive organizational performance [63].

This study investigates the mediating role of intrinsic motivation in the relationship between empowerment, work engagement, and service innovation. The findings suggest that empowerment positively influences work engagement, which in turn enhances service innovation. Empowered employees are more engaged in their work, leading to higher levels of creativity, problem-solving, and organizational performance [64]. This study focuses on developing a measurement instrument to assess empowering leader behaviors. The authors find that empowering leader behaviors positively relate to employee job satisfaction and performance. Leaders, who empower their employees by providing autonomy, support, and resources create a work environment that fosters high-performance outcomes [65].

Overall, the literature consistently supports a positive relationship between empowerment and organizational performance. Empowered employees experience higher job satisfaction, engagement, commitment, and are more likely to contribute innovative ideas, resulting in enhanced organizational performance. Organizations that prioritize empowerment create a culture that nurtures employee growth, motivation, and ultimately, success [66].

## 2.2 Relationship between stewardship and organizational performance

The relationship between stewardship and organizational performance has been a topic of interest in management and organizational behavior research [69]. Stewardship refers to a leadership approach that emphasizes the responsible and ethical management of resources for the benefit of the organization as a whole [68]. This seminal article introduces stewardship theory and outlines its key principles. Stewardship theory suggests that leaders who adopt a stewardship orientation are more likely to act in the best interest of the organization and its stakeholders, rather than pursuing self-interest [70]. The authors argue that stewardship-oriented leaders foster trust, cooperation, and commitment among employees, which positively influence organizational performance [71].

This study examines the trickle-down effect of ethical leadership, a key aspect of stewardship, on organizational performance. The findings indicate that ethical leadership positively influences employee attitudes (e.g., trust, organizational commitment) and behaviors (e.g., extra-role behavior, helping others), which in turn enhance organizational performance. Ethical leaders who prioritize the welfare of the organization create a positive work environment that fosters employee engagement and performance [72]. This study explores the influence of organizational justice and perceived support (including supervisor support) on employee trust, which is closely related to stewardship. The findings suggest that when employees perceive fairness in the organization and receive adequate support, they are more likely to trust their leaders and engage in positive behaviors that contribute to organizational performance [73].

This study investigates the relationship between ethical leadership (a core aspect of stewardship) and work performance. The findings reveal that ethical leadership positively influences organizational citizenship behavior and organizational trust, which, in turn, enhance work performance. Ethical leaders who prioritize the organization's well-being and demonstrate integrity foster a positive work environment that encourages employee engagement and performance [74]. This article critically examines the literature on charismatic and transformational leadership, which share some similarities with stewardship. The authors argue that while charismatic and transformational leaders can have positive effects on performance, they may also have negative consequences when leaders prioritize their own interests over the organization's welfare. In contrast, stewardship-oriented leaders prioritize the long-term sustainability and success of the organization, which is more likely to result in improved organizational performance [75].

Overall, the literature suggests that a stewardship orientation, characterized by ethical leadership, organizational justice, perceived support, and trust, is associated with enhanced organizational performance. Leaders who adopt a stewardship approach foster a positive work environment, build trust, encourage employee engagement, and promote behaviors that contribute to the overall success of the organization.

## 2.3 Relationship between Authenticity and organizational performance

The relationship between authenticity and organizational performance has gained attention in recent years, as scholars and practitioners recognize the importance of authentic leadership and organizational culture. Authenticity refers to being true to oneself, displaying consistency between

one's values, beliefs, and actions [76]. This influential study introduces the concept of authentic leadership and its potential impact on organizational performance. Authentic leaders are characterized by self-awareness, transparency, and a strong sense of personal values. Research suggests that authentic leadership positively relates to employee outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance. Authentic leaders create a climate of trust and open communication, which fosters employee engagement and motivation, ultimately leading to improved organizational performance [77].

This study focuses on the development and validation of a measure for authentic leadership. The authors find that authentic leadership positively influences employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and extra-role behaviors. Authentic leaders who promote a positive and genuine work environment contribute to higher employee performance and overall organizational success [78]. This study explores the role of perceived organizational support and perceived supervisor support in fostering employee engagement. The findings indicate that when employees perceive their organization and supervisors as authentic and supportive, they are more likely to be engaged in their work. Engaged employees exhibit higher levels of job performance, innovation, and commitment, contributing to organizational performance [79].

This article provides a comprehensive conceptualization of authenticity. It highlights the importance of authenticity in leadership and organizational contexts. Authenticity is associated with positive psychological outcomes, including higher self-esteem, well-being, and fulfillment. When individuals are allowed to express their authentic selves within the workplace, they are more likely to experience positive work-related outcomes, including increased job satisfaction and performance [67]. This study examines the relationship between authentic leadership and follower well-being. The findings suggest that authentic leaders positively influence follower eudaemonic well-being, which includes aspects such as vitality, meaning, and fulfillment in work. When employees experience higher levels of well-being, they are more likely to be engaged, motivated, and perform at higher levels, leading to improved organizational performance [64].

Overall, the literature supports a positive relationship between authenticity and organizational performance. Authentic leadership fosters a positive work environment, enhances employee engagement, well-being, and commitment, which in turn positively impact individual and organizational performance. Organizations that prioritize authenticity and cultivate a culture of genuineness are more likely to achieve higher levels of performance and success.

## 2.4 Relationship between Accountability and organizational performance

The relationship between accountability and organizational performance is crucial for the effective functioning and success of an organization. Accountability refers to the responsibility and answerability of individuals and groups for their actions, decisions, and outcomes [45].

This book emphasizes the importance of accountability in performance measurement and control systems. The author argues that well-designed accountability systems can align individual and team goals with organizational objectives, leading to improved performance. Clear accountability structures help employees understand their roles and responsibilities, making them more committed and focused on achieving organizational goals [64].

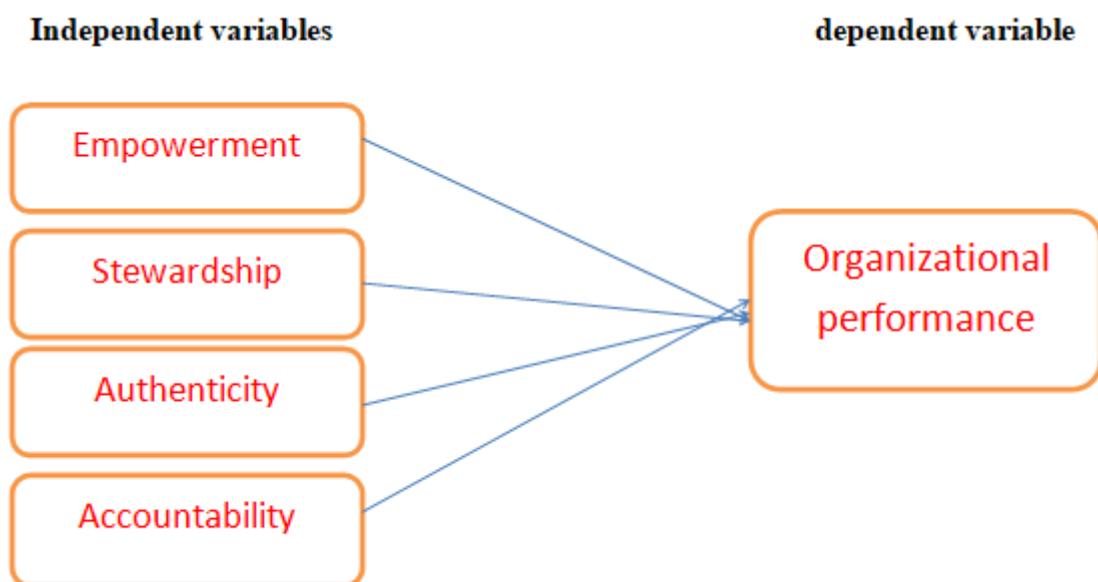
This review paper examines the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational performance. Ethical leaders emphasize accountability and hold themselves and others responsible for their actions. The findings suggest that ethical leadership positively influences employee behavior, job satisfaction, and organizational performance. When leaders prioritize accountability and ethical conduct, employees are more likely to engage in responsible behaviors that contribute

to organizational success [74]. This meta-analysis explores the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and performance. OCB refers to discretionary behaviors that are not formally rewarded but contribute to organizational effectiveness. The study finds that accountability is positively related to OCB. When employees feel accountable for their actions, they are more likely to engage in behaviors that go beyond their formal job requirements, resulting in improved individual and organizational performance [62].

This article examines the concept of legitimacy and its impact on organizational performance. Legitimacy refers to the perception that an organization's actions are appropriate, proper, and in line with societal norms and expectations. Accountability plays a significant role in managing legitimacy because organizations that are transparent, responsible, and accountable for their actions are more likely to maintain a positive reputation and gain stakeholder support, which can enhance performance [54]. This review paper focuses on error management and learning in organizations. Accountability plays a crucial role in error management because it involves identifying and taking responsibility for mistakes and learning from them. Organizations that foster a culture of accountability and learning from errors create an environment that encourages continuous improvement and innovation, leading to enhanced organizational performance [63].

Overall, the literature indicates that accountability is positively related to organizational performance. Accountability enhances employee engagement, responsible behavior, goal alignment, and learning from errors. Organizations that prioritize accountability create a culture of responsibility, transparency, and continuous improvement, which in turn contributes to improved individual and organizational performance.

### Conceptual frame work



### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology researcher used described involves a quantitative research approach, specifically utilizing a descriptive research design. The target population for study is 3,751 Bule Hora University administration employees. To determine the sample size, have used the Yemane (1967) formula, which is a common formula for calculating sample size in research studies. The resulting sample size is 361 participants. For data analysis, researcher used regression and correlation analyses. Regression analysis was helping examine the relationship between variables,

while correlation analysis will assess the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables.

In terms of data collection, you mentioned that a cross-sectional design will be used, indicating that data will be collected at a single point in time. Additionally, researcher used to employ random sampling, which involves randomly selecting participants from the target population to ensure representativeness. To analyze the data and perform the regression and correlation analyses, the researcher used the statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). SPSS is commonly used for data analysis in social science research and offers a range of statistical tools and tests.

### **Data analyses**

**Table1. Reliability Statistics for each variable**

	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Empowerment	.865
Stewardship	.868
Authenticity	.914
Accountability	.890
Organizational performance	.856

**Source:** SPSS 26 version output of the survey, 2024

The table 1 above presents the reliability statistics for each variable measured in the survey. Reliability analysis, often measured by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, assesses the internal consistency and reliability of the items within each variable. A higher Cronbach's Alpha value indicates greater internal consistency and reliability. In this study, the variables of Empowerment, Stewardship, Authenticity, Accountability, and Organizational Performance were evaluated. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for each variable were calculated to determine their internal consistency. The results indicate that all variables have good reliability, as their Cronbach's Alpha values exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.7. The Empowerment variable yielded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.865, suggesting strong internal consistency among its items. Similarly, the Stewardship variable demonstrated good reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.868. The Authenticity variable exhibited excellent reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.914. The Accountability variable also displayed good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.890. Lastly, the Organizational Performance variable demonstrated strong reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.856.

#### 4. CORRELATION MATRIX OF DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

**Table 2. Correlation Matrix of Dependent and Independent Variables**

Correlations		Empowerment	Stewardship	Authenticity	Accountability	Organizational performance
Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	1	.729**	.182**	.728**	.493**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.001	.000	.000
	N	361	361	361	361	361
Stewardship	Pearson Correlation	.729**	1	.552**	.524**	.661**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	361	361	361	361	361
Authenticity	Pearson Correlation	.182**	.552**	1	.027	.411**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000		.633	.000
	N	361	361	361	361	361
Accountability	Pearson Correlation	.728**	.524**	.027	1	.347**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.633		.000
	N	361	361	361	361	361
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	.493**	.661**	.411**	.347**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	361	361	361	361	361

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source:** Own Survey Data of 2024

The table 2 above presents the correlation matrix of the dependent variable (Organizational Performance) and independent variables (Empowerment, Stewardship, Authenticity, and Accountability). The correlations between the variables are measured using Pearson correlation coefficients. Empowerment shows a strong positive correlation with Stewardship ( $r = 0.729$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), Authenticity ( $r = 0.182$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and Accountability ( $r = 0.728$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, Stewardship exhibits a strong positive correlation with Authenticity ( $r = 0.552$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and Accountability ( $r = 0.524$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These findings suggest that higher levels of empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability are associated with one another. In terms of their relationship with Organizational Performance, Empowerment ( $r = 0.493$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), Stewardship ( $r = 0.661$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), Authenticity ( $r = 0.411$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and Accountability ( $r = 0.347$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) all

show positive correlations. These results suggest that higher levels of empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability are associated with improved organizational performance.

**Table3. Collinearity Statistics**

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Empowerment	.190	5.267
	Stewardship	.244	4.106
	Authenticity	.566	1.768
	Accountability	.453	2.209

**Source:** Own computation using SPSS 26 version of the survey, 2024

The table 3 above presents the collinearity statistics for the independent variables (Empowerment, Stewardship, Authenticity, and Accountability) in the regression model. Collinearity statistics, such as tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF), are used to assess the presence of multicollinearity among the independent variables. Tolerance is a measure of how much of the variance in an independent variable is not accounted for by other independent variables. A tolerance value close to 1 indicates low multicollinearity, whereas a value close to 0 suggests high multicollinearity. VIF is the reciprocal of tolerance and provides a measure of the extent to which multicollinearity is present. A VIF value greater than 1 indicates the presence of multicollinearity, with higher values indicating stronger collinearity among the variables.

The results show that all variables have tolerances below 0.6, indicating the presence of multicollinearity. The VIF values further confirm the presence of collinearity, as they exceed 1 for all variables. These findings suggest that there is a high degree of collinearity among the independent variables in the regression model. It is important to note that multicollinearity can affect the interpretation of regression coefficients and lead to unstable estimation results. Therefore, when interpreting the results of the regression analysis, it is crucial to consider the presence of multicollinearity and its potential impact on the findings.

**Table 4. Autocorrelation Test**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Sig. Change	F	Durbin-Watson
1	.941 <sup>a</sup>	.886	.884	2.07627	.000	1.514	
Predictors: (Constant), empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, accountability							
Dependent Variable: organizational performance <sup>b</sup>							

The table 4 above presents the results of the autocorrelation test for the regression model. Autocorrelation refers to the correlation between the residuals (errors) of a regression model at different time points. The Durbin-Watson statistic is commonly used to test for autocorrelation. It has values ranging from 0 to 4, with 2 indicating no autocorrelation, values less than 2 indicating positive autocorrelation, and values greater than 2 indicating negative autocorrelation.

The coefficient of determination (R-squared) is 0.886, indicating that approximately 88.6% of the variance in the dependent variable (organizational performance) can be explained by the independent variables (empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability) in the model. The adjusted R-squared is 0.884, which is slightly lower than the R-squared value. It takes into account the degrees of freedom and adjusts the R-squared value accordingly.

The standard error of the estimate is 2.07627, which represents the average difference between the observed and predicted values of the dependent variable. The p-value associated with the F change statistic is 0.000, indicating that the regression model as a whole is statistically significant. The Durbin-Watson statistic is 1.514. This value suggests that there may be positive autocorrelation present in the residuals of the model. The presence of autocorrelation in the residuals can affect the reliability of the regression results. Positive autocorrelation suggests that the errors in the model are correlated across time, indicating that the assumption of independence of observations is violated. It is important to address autocorrelation to ensure the validity of the regression analysis and the interpretation of the results.

**Table 5. ANOVA**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10451.363	6	1741.894	404.067	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1340.690	311	4.311		
	Total	11792.053	317			

a. Dependent Variable: organizational performance  
b. Predictors: (Constant), empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, accountability

**Source:** Own Survey Data of 2024

The table 5 above presents the results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the regression model. ANOVA assesses the significance of the regression model as a whole by comparing the variation explained by the model (regression sum of squares) to the unexplained variation (residual sum of squares). The regression sum of squares is 10451.363, indicating the amount of variation in the dependent variable (organizational performance) that is explained by the independent variables (empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability) in the model. The degrees of freedom for the regression model are 6, representing the number of independent variables in the model. Mean Square: The mean square is calculated by dividing the sum of squares by the corresponding degrees of freedom. In this case, the mean square for the regression is 1741.894. The F-statistic is calculated by dividing the mean square of the regression by the mean square of the residual. The F-value for the regression model is 404.067.

The p-value associated with the F-statistic is .000, indicating that the regression model as a whole is statistically significant. These results suggest that the regression model, which includes the independent variables (empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability), significantly explains the variation in the dependent variable (organizational performance). The p-value of .000 indicates that the probability of obtaining such a large F-value by chance alone is very low.

**Table 6. Regression Coefficient Analysis for Organizational Performance**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	Sig.
		B	Std. Error		
1	(Constant)	-7.808	1.084		.000
	Empowerment	.429	.064	.294	.000
	Stewardship	.702	.071	.385	.000
	Authenticity	.108	.048	.057	.027
	Accountability	.156	.043	.103	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

The table 6 above presents the regression coefficient analysis for the independent variables (Empowerment, Stewardship, Authenticity, and Accountability) in relation to the dependent variable (Organizational Performance). The constant term in the regression model is -7.808. It represents the estimated value of the dependent variable (Organizational Performance) when all the independent variables are zero. The coefficient for Empowerment is 0.429. This indicates that a one-unit increase in Empowerment is associated with a 0.429 unit increase in Organizational Performance. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for Empowerment is 0.294, suggesting that Empowerment has a moderate positive impact on Organizational Performance.

The coefficient for Stewardship is 0.702. This means that a one-unit increase in Stewardship is associated with a 0.702 unit increase in Organizational Performance. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for Stewardship is 0.385, indicating a moderate positive impact on Organizational Performance. The coefficient for Authenticity is 0.108. This implies that a one-unit increase in Authenticity is associated with a 0.108 unit increase in Organizational Performance. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for Authenticity is 0.057, indicating a small positive impact on Organizational Performance. The p-value for Authenticity is .027, suggesting that the relationship between Authenticity and Organizational Performance is statistically significant.

The coefficient for Accountability is 0.156. This means that a one-unit increase in Accountability is associated with a 0.156 unit increase in Organizational Performance. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for Accountability is 0.103, indicating a small positive impact on Organizational Performance. The p-value for Accountability is .000, indicating that the relationship between Accountability and Organizational Performance is statistically significant.

The coefficients provide information about the magnitude and direction of the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The standardized coefficients (Beta) allow for the comparison of the relative importance of the independent variables in influencing the dependent variable.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the regression analysis and the coefficients obtained, it can be concluded that the servant leadership style has a significant and positive effect on organizational performance. The results indicate that the specific dimensions of servant leadership, including empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability, contribute to enhancing organizational performance. The findings show that when leaders adopt a servant leadership style characterized by empowering their employees, promoting effective stewardship, fostering authenticity, and emphasizing accountability, they can positively impact the overall performance of the organization. Empowerment and stewardship were found to have particularly strong positive effects on organizational performance, indicating that giving employees autonomy and responsibility, as well as demonstrating effective leadership and guidance, can lead to improved performance outcomes.

Additionally, the dimensions of authenticity and accountability were found to have relatively smaller, yet still significant, positive effects on organizational performance. This suggests that leaders who prioritize authentic leadership behaviors, such as being genuine, transparent, and true to themselves, can positively influence the performance of their organizations. Similarly, holding individuals accountable for their actions and promoting a culture of responsibility and transparency can contribute to improved organizational performance.

Overall, these findings highlight the importance of adopting a servant leadership style in organizations, as it can have a significant positive impact on performance outcomes. By prioritizing empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability, leaders can create a supportive and

productive work environment that fosters employee engagement, motivation, and ultimately leads to enhanced organizational performance.

## IMPLEMENTATION

The effect of servant leadership style on organizational performance has implications for various aspects, including managerial, theoretical, and practical implementation

### 1. Managerial Implications:

Managers and leaders should consider adopting a servant leadership style to enhance organizational performance. This involves empowering employees, promoting stewardship, fostering authenticity, and emphasizing accountability. Managers can focus on creating a supportive work environment that encourages employee growth, autonomy, and responsibility, thereby influencing performance outcomes positively. Leaders should prioritize building authentic relationships with their employees, promoting transparency, and demonstrating ethical behaviors, which can contribute to improved organizational performance. Holding individuals accountable for their actions and fostering a culture of responsibility and transparency can enhance performance and overall organizational effectiveness.

### 2. Theoretical Implications:

The findings support and contribute to the existing theoretical frameworks and research on servant leadership and its impact on organizational performance.

The study provides empirical evidence for the relationship between servant leadership and organizational performance, adding to the body of knowledge in leadership theory.

The specific dimensions of servant leadership (empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability) highlighted in the study can serve as a basis for future research and theoretical development in the field.

### 3. Practical Implementation

Organizations can incorporate servant leadership principles into their leadership development programs and training initiatives. Leaders can be trained and encouraged to adopt servant leadership behaviors, ensuring they understand and implement practices related to empowerment, stewardship, authenticity, and accountability. Performance evaluation systems and feedback mechanisms can be aligned with servant leadership principles, recognizing and rewarding leaders who exhibit and promote these behaviors. Organizations can establish a culture that values and supports servant leadership, fostering an environment where employees feel empowered, trusted, and accountable for their work.

The effect of servant leadership style on organizational performance has practical implications for managers, theoretical implications for leadership research, and opportunities for practical implementation within organizations. By embracing servant leadership principles, organizations can create a positive and productive work environment that ultimately leads to improved performance outcomes and long-term success.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURES IMPLICATION

The findings of the study may be limited to the specific context or sample used in the research. Different industries, cultures, and organizational settings may yield different results. Therefore, caution should be exercised when generalizing the findings to other contexts. The study may

establish a correlation between servant leadership and organizational performance, but it may not definitively establish a causal relationship. Other factors and variables not considered in the study could also influence organizational performance.

The data collected for the study may be subject to self-reporting bias, as participants may provide socially desirable responses. This bias could impact the accuracy and reliability of the results. The study may rely on a single method of measurement for servant leadership and organizational performance, which may limit the comprehensiveness and validity of the findings.

Conducting longitudinal studies would provide insights into the long-term effects of servant leadership on organizational performance. Examining how servant leadership behaviors influence performance over time would enhance understanding and establish a stronger causal relationship.

Conducting research in diverse cultural contexts would help determine if the effects of servant leadership on organizational performance hold true across different cultural settings. Comparing results from various cultures can provide valuable insights into the cultural nuances of servant leadership.

Exploring the mediating and moderating variables that influence the relationship between servant leadership and organizational performance could provide a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms. Factors such as employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational culture could be potential mediators or moderators.

Comparing servant leadership with other leadership styles (e.g., transformational leadership, transactional leadership) in terms of their effects on organizational performance would provide a broader understanding of leadership approaches. Understanding the relative effectiveness of different leadership styles can help organizations make informed decisions regarding their leadership practices.

Integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of servant leadership on organizational performance. Qualitative approaches can capture rich and contextualized data, complementing the quantitative findings.

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