

Situational leadership and Generation Z performance in student organizations: Evidence from Universitas Airlangga

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Abstract

Generation Z members in student organizations need leadership that adapts guidance and support to members' needs to facilitate organizational performance. This study aims to analyze the influence of situational leadership on Generation Z performance in student organizations at Universitas Airlangga. A quantitative survey was conducted with 61 active students selected through *purposive sampling*. The data were analyzed using simple linear regression. The results indicate that situational leadership has a positive and statistically significant association with member performance ($\beta = 0.547$; $t = 4.759$; $p < 0.001$), with a correlation coefficient of 0.527 and a coefficient of determination of 27.7%. These findings suggest that more favorable perceptions of situational leadership are associated with higher reported performance among student organization members. This study contributes to leadership research by extending the discussion of situational leadership to the context of student organizations and offers practical insights for student leaders in adapting guidance, support, and task delegation to members' needs.

Keywords: Situational leadership; Generation Z performance; Student organizations; Universitas Airlangga; Leadership styles.

Abstrak

Generasi Z dalam organisasi mahasiswa membutuhkan kepemimpinan yang mampu menyesuaikan pengarahan dan dukungan dengan kebutuhan anggota untuk menunjang kinerja organisasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan situasional terhadap kinerja Generasi Z dalam organisasi mahasiswa Universitas Airlangga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif melalui survei terhadap 61 mahasiswa aktif yang dipilih dengan *purposive sampling*. Data dianalisis menggunakan regresi linear sederhana. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan situasional berpengaruh positif dan signifikan secara statistik terhadap kinerja anggota ($\beta = 0,547$; $t = 4,759$; $p < 0,001$), dengan koefisien korelasi sebesar 0,527 dan koefisien determinasi sebesar 27,7%. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa penilaian yang lebih positif terhadap kepemimpinan situasional berkaitan dengan kinerja anggota yang lebih tinggi. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian kepemimpinan dalam konteks organisasi mahasiswa serta memberikan pertimbangan praktis bagi pengurus organisasi dalam menyesuaikan pengarahan, dukungan, dan pendelegasian tugas dengan kebutuhan anggota.

Kata Kunci: Kepemimpinan situasional; Kinerja Generasi Z; Organisasi mahasiswa; Universitas Airlangga; Gaya kepemimpinan.

Introduction

Generation Z plays an important role in student organizations, as student activities provide opportunities to develop skills, build relationships, and fulfill collective responsibilities. Hidayah et al. (2022), in a qualitative study involving 24 informants from eight universities in Yogyakarta, found that participation in student organizations supports cadre development, leadership skills, and educational awareness. Veda and Munthe (2025) also examined efforts to optimize the performance of Generation Z student organization officers through organizational leadership training. These studies indicate that student organizations are not merely spaces for activities but also environments for competency development. However, organizational involvement does not automatically guarantee optimal performance. Members must still complete tasks, meet work program targets, maintain coordination, and take responsibility for their contributions to organizational goals.

The performance of student organization members can be assessed in terms of task completion, target achievement, discipline, responsibility, and contributions to collective work. Mangasi and Hia (2024), in a literature review of 30 research articles published between 2012 and 2023, identified 23 factors associated with employee performance, with work motivation, training, and leadership style emerging as the most frequently discussed factors. Julianto and Agnanditiya Carnarez (2021) also examined the relationships among leadership, effective communication, performance, and organizational effectiveness through a management literature review. Although both reviews focused on professional organizations, their findings provide a basis for considering the role of leadership in managing organizational members. In student organizations, performance needs to be understood within the context of organizational roles involving voluntary activities, the distribution of responsibilities, and coordination between members and leaders.

One leadership approach worth examining is situational leadership, which involves adapting leaders' behaviors to members' needs and readiness to perform their tasks. Atiqoh et al. (2023) discussed the Hersey and Blanchard model, which comprises four leadership styles: *telling*, *selling*, *participating*, and *delegating*. These styles represent variations in the levels of direction and support that leaders can provide. Saputri et al. (2026), through a literature review, specifically examined the role of situational leadership in organizational decision-making effectiveness. Their review broadens the discussion of how leadership styles can be applied according to organizational needs, although its focus is on decision-making rather than the measurement of student organization members' performance. Accordingly, situational leadership warrants empirical examination as a variable associated with performance rather than being assumed to automatically improve every member's performance.

Leadership adaptation should also take Generation Z's characteristics into account without assuming that all its members have uniform needs. Mahapatra et al. (2022) discussed Generation Z as a group with particular work values and career preferences, taking cultural context into consideration. Reformasianto and Faizah (2024) examined the challenges leaders face in managing Generation Z from the perspective of Indonesian work culture, while Sulistyorini et al. (2024) explored Generation Z's expectations of the workplace through interviews with ten university graduates in Semarang and its surrounding areas. Bantam et al. (2024) specifically examined Generation Z and Millennials' perceptions of authoritarian leadership styles. These studies help explain the importance of understanding members' preferences and responses to leadership. However, generational characteristics cannot substitute for direct assessments of leaders' behaviors and student organization members' performance.

The relationship between leadership and performance has been examined in several studies using different approaches and research contexts. Drouvelis and Paiardini (2022) investigated feedback quality and performance in organizations using an experimental approach, making their findings relevant to understanding the importance of evaluative information in task execution, although their study did not specifically examine situational leadership. Mahendra et al. (2026) discussed transformational leadership and individual performance among Generation Z through a literature review, while Ahmadi and Putri (2025) examined Islamic educational leadership in relation to tradition and educational quality. These sources can enrich the conceptual context but do not directly establish the effect of situational leadership on student organization officers' performance. Therefore, this relationship needs to be examined using data from student organization members while considering the organizational context and characteristics of the respondents.

Previous studies provide a foundation for this research, but differences in context and focus remain important considerations. Anzelina and Gunawan (2026), in a survey of 115 Generation Z employees at PT Agung Sedayu Group using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), found a positive and statistically significant relationship between situational leadership and employee performance in a model that also included organizational culture, motivation, work environment, and job satisfaction. Syafrina and Mon (2024) examined factors affecting the performance of Generation Z workers, while Manurung et al. (2025) discussed Generation Z's strategies for navigating changes in the world of work and their relationship with performance. However, all three studies focused on professional work settings. Meanwhile, Hidayah et al. (2022) examined participation in student organizations rather than the relationship between situational leadership and performance. These differences in research focus indicate the need to examine this relationship in the context of student organizations at Universitas Airlangga.

In response to this research gap, this study aims to analyze the relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance in student organizations at Universitas Airlangga. The study involved 61 active students who were members or officers of student organizations and had direct experience interacting with an organizational leader or division head. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed through simple linear regression to examine the relationship between respondents' perceptions of situational leadership and their self-reported performance. The study's significance lies in providing empirical evidence from the context of student organizations, which differs from formal employment relationships in companies. In practical terms, the findings may inform evaluations of how leaders provide direction, support, and task delegation. However, the use of purposive sampling at a single university and an observational survey design limits the generalizability of the findings and does not provide sufficient evidence to establish causal relationships.

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey design to analyze the relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance in student organizations at Universitas Airlangga. The target population consisted of active Universitas Airlangga students involved in student organizations. The sample comprised 61 respondents selected through purposive sampling, a technique in which respondents are selected based on characteristics relevant to the research objectives (Memon et al., 2024). The eligibility criteria included being an active Universitas Airlangga student who participated in or was actively involved in a student organization and had direct experience interacting with a division head or organizational leader. Data were collected through a questionnaire survey in 2026. Situational leadership was designated as the independent variable (X), while Generation Z performance in student organizations was designated as the dependent variable (Y). Respondents were selected based on their organizational experience and direct interactions with leaders to ensure that their assessments were relevant to both variables under investigation.

The research instrument was developed based on theories relevant to the constructs of situational leadership and Generation Z performance. The questionnaire consisted of 24 items measuring situational leadership and 23 items measuring Generation Z performance. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Situational leadership was defined as a leadership approach in which leaders adapt their behaviors to members' conditions and needs, whereas Generation Z performance referred to members' execution of tasks, fulfillment of responsibilities, and performance of their roles within student organizations. Instrument quality was evaluated through item validity and internal

reliability testing. Item validity was assessed by comparing item-level correlations against the reference value used in the study, while reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha to assess the instrument's internal consistency. The development of measurement instruments should consider the alignment between constructs and their corresponding items to ensure that score interpretations remain relevant to the research objectives (Jebb et al., 2021).

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis began with descriptive statistics to characterize the scores of both variables, followed by validity and reliability testing of the research instruments. Residual normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test as part of the evaluation of regression assumptions. Subsequently, simple linear regression was used to examine the statistical relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance using the following equation:

$$Y = a + bX + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = Generation Z performance

a = constant

b = regression coefficient for situational leadership

X = situational leadership

ε = error term

The t-test was used to evaluate the statistical significance of the regression coefficient, while the coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to measure the proportion of variation in performance accounted for by the model. The results were interpreted based on the direction and magnitude of the regression coefficient, the statistical significance level, and the coefficient of determination. The study also observed principles of respondent consent and data confidentiality. Given the non-experimental survey design, the findings were interpreted as statistical relationships within the tested model and were not considered definitive evidence of causal relationships.

Results and Discussion

Respondent characteristics: Sex, age, faculty, semester, organizational experience, and organizational position

This study involved 61 Generation Z students who were active in student organizations at Universitas Airlangga. Respondent characteristics were analyzed in terms of sex, age, faculty, semester, length of organizational involvement, and organizational position. This description provides an overview of the respondents' demographic and academic backgrounds, as well as their organizational experience,

to contextualize the interpretation of the findings on situational leadership and Generation Z performance.

Table 1. Respondent characteristics by sex, age, and faculty

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Female	44	72.13%
	Male	17	27.87%
	Total	61	100%
Age	17–19 years	11	18.03%
	20–23 years	50	81.97%
	Total	61	100%
Faculty	Faculty of Vocational Studies	50	81.97%
	Faculty of Social and Political Sciences	2	3.28%
	Faculty of Advanced Technology and Multidiscipline	2	3.28%
	Faculty of Economics and Business	2	3.28%
	Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences	2	3.28%
	Faculty of Science and Technology	1	1.64%
	Faculty of Humanities	1	1.64%
	Faculty of Veterinary Medicine	1	1.64%
	Total	61	100%

Source: Primary research data, processed in 2026.

As shown in Table 1, female respondents constituted the majority of the sample, accounting for 72.13%, while male respondents accounted for 27.87%. In terms of age, most respondents were between 20 and 23 years old (81.97%). This composition indicates that the findings primarily reflect the perceptions of students within this age range. Nevertheless, age characteristics cannot be used directly to draw conclusions about organizational experience or performance, as neither aspect is determined by age alone.

The faculty distribution reveals a substantial concentration of respondents in the Faculty of Vocational Studies, which accounted for 50 respondents (81.97%), while the remaining 11 respondents came from seven other faculties. This distribution should be considered when interpreting the scope of the findings. Although the study was conducted in the context of Universitas Airlangga, the respondent composition more strongly represents the experiences of students from the Faculty of Vocational Studies than those of the university's entire student organization population. Therefore, findings should be generalized to the university level with caution. Furthermore, the

demographic data serve a descriptive purpose and are not used as a basis for drawing conclusions about differences in performance by sex, age, or faculty.

Table 2. Respondent characteristics by semester, length of organizational involvement, and organizational position

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Semester	3–4	6	9.84%
	5–6	55	90.16%
	Total	61	100%
Length of organizational involvement	Less than 6 months	8	13.11%
	6–12 months	23	37.70%
	1–2 years	26	42.62%
	More than 2 years	4	6.56%
	Total	61	100%
Organizational position	Core committee member	17	27.87%
	Member	16	26.23%
	Staff/division member	15	24.59%
	Coordinator	13	21.31%
	Total	61	100%

Source: Primary research data, processed in 2026.

Table 2 shows that most respondents were in semesters 5–6 (90.16%). In terms of organizational involvement, the largest group had participated in student organizations for 1–2 years (42.62%), followed by respondents with 6–12 months of experience (37.70%). Overall, 86.88% of respondents had been involved in student organizations for at least six months. This distribution indicates that most participants had experience in an organizational environment, although the duration of their involvement varied. This variation provides relevant context for examining situational leadership because members' needs for direction, support, and autonomy may differ according to their individual experience and circumstances. However, this study did not specifically examine the relationship between the length of organizational experience and performance.

In terms of organizational position, respondents were distributed across core committee members, regular members, staff or division members, and coordinators, with relatively balanced proportions. This diversity indicates that the sample included not only regular members but also students with coordinating or structural responsibilities. Differences in organizational position provide important context for understanding perceptions of situational leadership, given that responsibilities and authority may vary across roles. However, without comparative analysis, this

distribution cannot be used to conclude that respondents in any particular position have more favorable perceptions of leadership or higher performance.

Overall, the respondent profile indicates that the sample was dominated by students from the Faculty of Vocational Studies, aged 20–23, enrolled in semesters 5–6, and with at least six months of organizational experience. This profile provides context for interpreting the findings, particularly by clarifying the backgrounds of participants who assessed situational leadership and member performance. However, the predominance of respondents from a single faculty and the absence of analyses comparing demographic and organizational characteristics limit the conclusions that can be drawn from this distribution. Accordingly, respondent characteristics are treated as descriptive information for understanding the sample context rather than as direct evidence of causal relationships between respondents' backgrounds and Generation Z performance.

Instrument validity and reliability testing

The research instrument was evaluated to assess the validity and reliability of the items used to measure situational leadership and Generation Z performance. Validity testing was conducted to determine whether each questionnaire item met the established assessment criteria, while reliability testing was performed to evaluate the instrument's internal consistency. The tests covered 24 items measuring situational leadership (X) and 23 items measuring Generation Z performance (Y), involving 61 respondents.

The validity test results showed that the critical r value (r table) used in this study was 0.2521. All questionnaire items met the validity criteria because their calculated r values (r count) exceeded the critical r value. For situational leadership, the calculated r values ranged from 0.271 to 0.695, whereas those for Generation Z performance ranged from 0.364 to 0.727. A summary of the validity test results is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Instrument validity test results

Variable	Number of items	Critical r value	Range of calculated r values	Assessment
Situational leadership (X)	24	0.2521	0.271–0.695	All items met the criteria
Generation Z performance (Y)	23	0.2521	0.364–0.727	All items met the criteria

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

These results indicate that all items for both variables met the validity criteria based on the comparison between the calculated r values and the critical r value used in this study. Nevertheless, the item-level correlation values varied. For situational

leadership, item X12 had the lowest calculated r value (0.271), placing it relatively close to the critical value. In contrast, the calculated r values for Generation Z performance ranged from 0.364 to 0.727. Thus, all items met the criteria applied in this study. However, these findings should be interpreted as evidence of item validity based on item-level correlation testing, rather than as the sole basis for establishing the overall construct validity of the instrument.

Reliability testing was subsequently conducted using Cronbach's alpha, with a threshold of 0.60. The results showed that situational leadership had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.832, while Generation Z performance had a value of 0.883. Both values exceeded the established threshold, indicating that the instruments for both variables were reliable according to the criterion applied. A summary of the reliability test results is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Instrument reliability test results

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Threshold	Assessment
Situational leadership (X)	0.832	0.60	Reliable
Generation Z performance (Y)	0.883	0.60	Reliable

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

The reliability values indicate that the items measuring each variable demonstrated adequate internal consistency based on the threshold applied in this study. Generation Z performance had a higher Cronbach's alpha value than situational leadership. However, this difference indicates only a difference in the instruments' internal consistency and does not directly imply that one variable has greater validity than the other. Overall, the validity and reliability test results indicate that all questionnaire items met the criteria applied in this study and that both instruments were suitable for further analysis.

Classical assumption testing: Normality and heteroscedasticity

Classical assumption testing was conducted to evaluate whether the assumptions required for linear regression analysis were satisfied, allowing the model estimates and test results to be interpreted appropriately. In this study, the tests covered residual normality and heteroscedasticity. The normality test assessed whether the regression model residuals followed a normal distribution, whereas the heteroscedasticity test examined whether residual variances varied across different predicted values. Both tests were important for evaluating residual characteristics before further analyzing the relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance using linear regression. The results of these assumption tests were not used to directly test the research hypothesis but instead formed part of the assessment of model adequacy. Therefore, the regression results should be interpreted in light of these assumption test findings and their respective limitations.

Residual normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, based on data from 61 respondents. The test yielded an *Asymp. Sig.* value of 0.200. As this value exceeded the significance threshold of 0.05, the residuals were considered to meet the normality assumption according to the criterion applied in this study. In addition, inspection of the histogram and Normal P–P Plot indicated that the residual distribution generally followed a normal pattern. These visual observations supported the statistical test results, although their interpretation still depended on the distributional patterns displayed in the graphs. Accordingly, based on the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and the reported visual inspections, no strong evidence of substantial deviations from normality was identified. A summary of the normality test results is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Normality test results

Method	N	Significance	Interpretation
Kolmogorov–Smirnov	61	0.200	Normal

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

Heteroscedasticity was assessed by examining a scatterplot illustrating the relationship between the regression residuals and the model’s predicted values. This examination aimed to determine whether the residual distribution displayed any patterns that might indicate unequal variance. The scatterplot showed that the residual points were distributed both above and below zero without forming a systematic pattern. This distribution suggests that the residual variance did not exhibit an obvious systematic pattern based on visual inspection. Therefore, the regression model showed no apparent indication of heteroscedasticity according to the visual assessment criteria applied in this study. However, this conclusion is limited to the interpretation of the scatterplot and should not be regarded as definitive proof that heteroscedasticity is entirely absent. A summary of the heteroscedasticity assessment is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Summary of the heteroscedasticity test

Method	Observed pattern	Conclusion
Scatterplot	Residual points were distributed above and below zero without forming a discernible pattern.	No apparent indication of heteroscedasticity

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

Overall, the test results indicated that the residuals met the normality assumption based on the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, with a significance value of 0.200, while the scatterplot examination revealed no apparent indication of heteroscedasticity. These findings provide an initial basis for proceeding with the regression analysis of the relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance.

Nevertheless, satisfying these two assumptions does not, by itself, establish that all regression model requirements have been met. Interpretation of the results must also consider model specification, instrument quality, sample characteristics, and other relevant statistical test results. Given these limitations, the classical assumption test results should be understood as supporting the suitability of the regression analysis rather than serving as the sole evidence of the validity of the study's overall conclusions.

Descriptive analysis of situational leadership and Generation Z performance

The descriptive analysis showed that the situational leadership variable had a mean total score of 90.164 and a standard deviation of 10.072. The minimum score obtained by respondents was 67, while the maximum score was 109. Based on the mean score per item, the value was 3.757 on a measurement scale ranging from 1 to 5. This value fell within the interval of 3.41–4.20, placing situational leadership in the high category. These findings indicate that respondents tended to perceive the implementation of situational leadership in student organizations positively. Nevertheless, the mean score represents an overall summary of respondents' answers and does not imply that all members experienced or evaluated leadership behaviors in the same way. A summary of the descriptive statistics for situational leadership is presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for situational leadership

Statistic	Value
N	61
Mean	90.164
Standard deviation	10.072
Minimum	67
Maximum	109
Mean per item	3.757
Category	High

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

The mean situational leadership score can be interpreted in light of the respondents' varying levels of organizational experience, ranging from less than six months to more than two years. These differences in experience may influence members' needs for direction, guidance, and autonomy in performing their tasks. In the context of student organizations, situational leadership emphasizes the importance of adapting leadership behaviors to members' circumstances and needs. Leadership cannot always be implemented through a uniform approach because members may differ in their experience, abilities, and independence. The high category for this variable indicates that respondents generally perceived the implementation of situational leadership

positively. However, these descriptive findings do not provide a detailed explanation of which leadership style was most prevalent or which specific leadership behaviors were most commonly experienced by student organization members.

The Generation Z performance variable had a mean total score of 90.295 and a standard deviation of 10.454. The minimum score was 64, while the maximum score reached 111. Based on the mean score per item, the value was 3.926 on a measurement scale ranging from 1 to 5. This value fell within the interval of 3.41–4.20, placing Generation Z performance in the high category. These results indicate that respondents generally evaluated their ability to perform organizational tasks and fulfill their responsibilities positively. However, because these assessments were based on respondents' answers to the research instrument, the findings are more appropriately interpreted as an account of performance based on respondents' perceptions rather than as an objective measurement of each member's actual work outcomes. A summary of the descriptive statistics for Generation Z performance is presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for Generation Z performance

Statistic	Value
N	61
Mean	90.295
Standard deviation	10.454
Minimum	64
Maximum	111
Mean per item	3.926
Category	High

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

The high mean score for Generation Z performance can be discussed in light of the respondents' characteristics, as most were students in semesters 5–6 who had between six months and two years of organizational experience. This experience may have provided opportunities for members to understand task allocation, coordination mechanisms, and their responsibilities in carrying out organizational activities. Nevertheless, these characteristics do not, in themselves, demonstrate that organizational experience caused the respondents' high performance scores. Differences in the length of organizational involvement, organizational positions, and assigned responsibilities may also contribute to variations in members' abilities and work outcomes. Thus, the descriptive findings indicate that both situational leadership and Generation Z performance were in the high category. However, this pattern does not establish a statistically significant relationship between the two variables; their

association therefore requires further examination through the correlation and regression analyses.

Hypothesis testing: Correlation, simple linear regression, t-test, and coefficient of determination

Hypothesis testing began with correlation analysis to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance in student organizations at Universitas Airlangga. The analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.527, indicating a moderate positive relationship. This means that higher situational leadership scores tended to be associated with higher Generation Z performance scores. The finding provides an initial indication that the two variables moved in the same direction within the research sample. Nevertheless, correlation analysis does not establish the magnitude of the change in performance predicted by changes in situational leadership, nor is it sufficient to conclude that a statistically significant effect exists. The correlation test results are presented in Table 9 as a basis for proceeding with simple linear regression analysis.

Table 9. Correlation test results

Variables	r	Interpretation
Situational leadership (X) – Generation Z performance (Y)	0.527	Moderate positive relationship

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

The correlation coefficient of 0.527 provides a context for interpreting the results of the simple linear regression analysis. The regression analysis yielded the following equation:

$$Y = 41.008 + 0.547X$$

In this equation, Y represents the predicted Generation Z performance score, whereas X represents the situational leadership score. The constant of 41.008 indicates the predicted value of Y when X equals zero in the model. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient of 0.547 indicates that each one-unit increase in the situational leadership score was associated with a 0.547-unit increase in the predicted Generation Z performance score. The positive coefficient is consistent with the preceding correlation result. The constant, regression coefficient, standard error, *Beta*, t-statistic, and significance level are presented in Table 10 to provide a more detailed account of the model estimates.

Table 10. Simple linear regression results

Model	B	Std. error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	41.008	10.420	—	3.935	<0.001
Situational leadership (X)	0.547	0.115	0.527	4.759	<0.001

Dependent variable: Generation Z performance in student organizations (Y).

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

Based on the regression results in Table 10, the t-test was used to determine whether the regression coefficient for situational leadership was statistically significant in relation to Generation Z performance. Situational leadership yielded a t-value of 4.759, with a significance level of <0.001 . Because this value was below the 0.05 significance threshold, the research hypothesis proposing a positive and statistically significant relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance was supported by the test results. This conclusion is consistent with the positive regression coefficient of 0.547. Thus, the analysis indicates that the regression coefficient was statistically significant in the model examined. However, statistical significance does not, by itself, establish a comprehensive causal relationship, particularly because the study used survey data and included only one predictor variable.

The positive and statistically significant finding can be understood in the context of the importance of adapting leadership approaches to the needs of student organization members. This result is relevant to the study by Andriyani et al. (2024), which involved 400 Generation Z employees in Indonesia and found that micromanagement leadership had a negative relationship with performance. Their study indicated that excessive interference, close supervision, excessive control, and restrictions on authority were associated with lower performance among Generation Z employees. This finding provides a comparative context for understanding why leadership approaches may need to balance guidance with members' autonomy in fulfilling their responsibilities. Nevertheless, Andriyani et al.'s study focused on employees, whereas the present study examines members of student organizations. Furthermore, the levels of control and autonomy were not examined as separate variables in the present study. Accordingly, the previous study serves as a contextual point of comparison rather than direct evidence of the mechanisms underlying the relationship between situational leadership and performance in the current study.

In addition to the statistical significance of the regression coefficient, the model's ability to explain variation in performance must also be considered to avoid overstating the contribution of situational leadership. The coefficient of determination yielded an *R Square* value of 0.277 and an *Adjusted R Square* value of 0.265. The *R Square* value indicates that the regression model explained 27.7% of the variation in Generation Z performance scores within the research sample, while the remaining 72.3% was not explained by a model that included situational leadership as its sole predictor. Meanwhile, the *Adjusted R Square* value indicates an explained proportion of 26.5% after adjustment for the number of predictors and sample size. The correlation coefficient, *R Square*, and *Adjusted R Square* values are presented in Table 11 to complement the interpretation of the hypothesis-testing results.

Table 11. Coefficient of determination results

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Variance explained
0.527	0.277	0.265	27.7%

Source: Primary research data analyzed using SPSS (2026).

Overall, the hypothesis-testing results provide complementary findings. The correlation coefficient of 0.527 indicates a moderate positive relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance. The regression equation, $Y = 41.008 + 0.547X$, indicates a positive relationship, while the t-value of 4.759 and significance level of <0.001 support the conclusion that the regression coefficient was statistically significant. Furthermore, the *R Square* value of 0.277 indicates that the model explained 27.7% of the variation in respondents' performance scores. Thus, the research hypothesis was supported by the analysis, although the model's explanatory power should be interpreted proportionately. Situational leadership is one factor associated with Generation Z performance in student organizations at Universitas Airlangga, while the potential contributions of other factors not examined in this study should also be acknowledged.

The relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance in student organizations

Leadership in student organizations involves not only task allocation but also the ability of leaders to adapt their direction and support to members' needs. This study found that perceptions of situational leadership were in the high category, with a mean score of 3.757 per item and a mean total score of 90.164. These findings reflect respondents' generally positive assessments of the leadership they experienced. Thompson and Glasø (2018), in a survey of leaders and employees in Norwegian business organizations, found that situational leadership principles received support when leaders' and members' assessments of members' competence and commitment were aligned. Their findings highlight the importance of understanding members' circumstances before determining the appropriate level of direction and support. In the present study, the high score indicates positive perceptions but does not establish that any particular leadership style was the most dominant.

For Generation Z students, organizational involvement can provide opportunities to develop skills while fulfilling shared responsibilities. Maloni et al. (2019), in a survey of business students from seven universities in the United States, found that Generation Z students tended to prioritize career stability, skill development, and opportunities for advancement. Schroth (2019) also emphasized that organizations need to understand the characteristics and needs of Generation Z employees to facilitate their integration into the workplace. These studies provide a context for understanding the importance of leaders' attention to members' needs. In student organizations, members' abilities and experience can be considered when determining

the appropriate forms of direction and support. However, findings concerning work values and workplace environments do not demonstrate that all Generation Z students share the same leadership preferences, as their needs may vary according to their experience and responsibilities.

Performance in student organizations should be understood not merely in terms of task completion but also in terms of contributions to organizational activities. In this study, the mean performance score was 3.926 per item, with a mean total score of 90.295. These results indicate that respondents generally evaluated their performance positively. Prasetyaningtyas et al. (2022), in a study of Generation Z employees in the e-commerce industry in the Greater Jakarta area, found that leadership, job characteristics, and the work environment had significant positive effects on motivation and performance, while motivation also had a significant positive effect on performance. Maloni et al. (2019) highlighted the importance of skill development and advancement opportunities in the work values of Generation Z students. These studies help situate organizational support and individual development within the broader discussion of performance. Nevertheless, the questionnaire scores in the present study do not directly establish objective work outcomes or the success of organizational programs.

The relationship between situational leadership and performance is reflected in the direction of the association between the two variables in this study. The correlation coefficient of 0.527 indicates a moderate positive relationship, while the regression coefficient of 0.547 indicates that higher leadership scores were associated with higher predicted performance scores in the model. This finding is consistent with Irpan et al. (2022), who studied 176 employees at PT X in East Kutai Regency. Using a hierarchical regression model, they reported a statistically significant relationship between situational leadership and performance, with a beta coefficient of 0.507, a t-value of 7.787, and a p-value of 0.000. The consistency in the direction of these findings suggests that a positive relationship between situational leadership and performance has also been observed in formal employment settings. The present study extends this discussion to student organizations, although the two contexts differ in their objectives, structures of responsibility, and patterns of member involvement.

The positive relationship identified in this study is also consistent with findings from research examining situational leadership alongside other organizational factors. The t-test yielded a value of 4.759, with $p < 0.001$, indicating that the situational leadership coefficient was statistically significant in the model. Sudeva and Rasmini (2021), in a study of cooperatives in Klungkung Regency, found that situational leadership, organizational culture, educational attainment, and motivation were positively associated with employee performance. Sekareza et al. (2022), in a study involving 60 respondents at the manufacturing company PT Eastwind Mandiri Cangkiran, likewise

found that situational leadership, knowledge sharing, and work stress had significant positive relationships with performance, with knowledge sharing identified as the most dominant variable. These studies support the relevance of leadership in explaining performance while also indicating that other factors warrant consideration. However, findings from formal organizational settings cannot be directly generalized to student populations.

Theoretically, this relationship can be understood in terms of the importance of adapting leadership approaches to members' circumstances. Thompson and Glasø (2018) found that situational leadership theory received support when leaders' and members' assessments of members' competence and commitment were aligned. They also found that leaders' assessments could provide a better basis for determining the appropriate level of direction and support when discrepancies arose between assessments. Pasaribu et al. (2022) examined the relationships between situational leadership, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and employee performance. Together, these studies draw attention to the importance of aligning leadership approaches with members' circumstances. In student organizations, clear direction, support, participation in decision-making, and delegation may be considered according to members' needs. However, the present study did not examine these behaviors separately, meaning that the mechanisms underlying the relationship require further investigation.

Attention to members' needs is also relevant when considering the characteristics of Generation Z in organizational management. Venida (2022), through semi-structured interviews with seven Generation Z teachers, found that they valued skill development, professional growth, achievement and recognition, healthy workplace relationships, collaboration, work-life balance, and job and financial security. Pinandito and Savira (2022), in a study of 180 Generation Z employees in Indonesia, found that empowering leadership was negatively associated with turnover intention, with an R^2 value of 0.059. Meanwhile, Stiglbauer et al. (2022) developed the New Work Values Scale in an initial study involving 316 respondents and subsequently tested it on a representative German online sample of 956 respondents. They found generational differences in several work values, including clarity, money, career, development, stimulation, and relationships. These findings support the importance of attending to members' needs, but they do not directly establish the relationship between situational leadership and student performance.

Although the relationship identified in this study was statistically significant, situational leadership did not explain all the variation in student performance within organizations. The coefficient of determination of 0.277 indicates that the model explained 27.7% of the variation in performance scores, while the adjusted R^2 value of 0.265 represents the proportion explained after adjustment for the model. Desri et al.

(2023), in a study involving 55 respondents that examined the performance of student organization leaders at Universitas Andalas, Payakumbuh Campus, found that the leaders received favorable assessments on several variables, but none met all the assessment criteria. This finding suggests that performance evaluations in student organizations may encompass multiple dimensions that are not necessarily fulfilled simultaneously. Pasaribu et al. (2022) also examined performance alongside job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior in the context of situational leadership. In practical terms, the present findings support the development of adaptive leadership, while future research could examine additional predictors using a larger sample.

Conclusion

This study shows that situational leadership has a positive and statistically significant relationship with Generation Z performance in student organizations at Universitas Airlangga. The regression analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.547, a t-value of 4.759, and a significance level of $p < 0.001$. The correlation coefficient of 0.527 indicates a moderate positive relationship, while the coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.277 indicates that the model explains 27.7% of the variation in respondents' performance scores. These findings suggest that situational leadership is a relevant factor in understanding the performance of student organization members. In practice, adapting direction, support, participation, and the delegation of responsibilities to members' needs may be useful considerations for organizational leaders. However, because this study used questionnaire data and simple regression, its findings do not establish a causal relationship or directly test the mechanisms underlying the observed relationship.

This study contributes to research on leadership and performance by providing empirical evidence of the relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance in the context of student organizations. The findings may help organizational leaders evaluate their leadership approaches in response to members' needs rather than applying uniform patterns of direction and guidance. Nevertheless, the study has several limitations, particularly its use of a purposive sample of 61 respondents from a single university, which requires caution when generalizing the findings. In addition, the simple regression model did not account for other factors that may be associated with member performance. Future research should therefore involve respondents from multiple universities and student organizations, examine additional variables such as motivation, communication, member engagement, and organizational culture, and consider longitudinal or mixed-methods approaches to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between situational leadership and Generation Z performance.

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