**CHAPTER ONE**  
**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background of the Study**

In today’s dynamic business environment, organizational performance across industries, particularly within small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs). Unlike large corporations that benefit from established systems and extensive managerial hierarchies, SMEs rely heavily on the personal commitment, vision, and proactive involvement of their leaders to navigate market complexities (Northouse, 2022; Yukl, 2023). Leadership commitment in this context encompasses the consistent efforts of business owners and managers to foster employee engagement, allocate resources wisely, and pursue innovative strategies for business sustainability (Bass & Riggio, 2022). As competition intensifies globally and locally, SMEs must develop adaptive leadership models that focus on building trust, communicating vision, and motivating employees toward shared objectives (Avolio & Yammarino, 2022). The success or failure of SMEs often hinges not merely on capital or technology but on the quality of leadership commitment in steering day-to-day operations and long-term strategy (Robbins & Judge, 2023).

Organizational performance in SMEs is typically measured by multiple indicators, including operational efficiency, innovation readiness, and employee responsiveness (Kaplan & Norton, 2021; Hill & Jones, 2022). Operational efficiency relates to the ability of SMEs to produce goods and services using minimal resources while maintaining quality and customer satisfaction (Porter, 1985). Innovation readiness refers to the firm’s capacity to embrace new technologies, processes, or products in response to market changes (Prajogo, 2023). Employee responsiveness, meanwhile, is a reflection of how quickly and effectively employees adapt to customer needs and operational demands (Grant, 2022). In the SME sector, achieving these performance outcomes requires leaders to go beyond routine management tasks by fostering a work environment that promotes creativity, teamwork, and continuous improvement (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). Leadership commitment, therefore, is not only about managing resources but also about inspiring employees to align with the organization’s vision and objectives (Adebayo & Olayemi, 2023).

Globally, SMEs face increasing pressures from globalization, technological advancements, and volatile market conditions (Bloom et al., 2023). To survive and thrive, SMEs must adopt leadership approaches that are flexible, innovative, and deeply engaged with both internal and external stakeholders (Kraus et al., 2023). Leaders who are committed to building adaptive capacities, supporting employee growth, and embedding innovation into business processes are more likely to succeed in maintaining competitiveness (Adeleke & Ogunbiyi, 2023). In this regard, leadership behaviour such as clear vision communication, supportive management, and strategic resource commitment plays a fundamental role in shaping organizational outcomes (Zhang et al., 2021). Studies have shown that SMEs with committed leaders tend to experience higher levels of operational performance, reduced employee turnover, and increased innovation capabilities (Nguyen & Le, 2023). However, many small businesses still operate informally, with limited leadership structure and poor succession planning, which can hamper growth and sustainability (Obiwuru et al., 2023).

In the Nigerian context, the role of SMEs is particularly vital given the sector’s contribution to employment generation, poverty reduction, and grassroots development (SMEDAN, 2023). Despite their importance, Nigerian SMEs often encounter significant challenges including limited access to finance, infrastructural deficits, and inconsistent government policies (Okafor & Onwumere, 2024). These constraints make leadership commitment even more critical for business success. Leaders in SMEs must actively support innovation, communicate strategic goals, and invest in both human and material resources to drive performance outcomes (Akinwale & George, 2023). Furthermore, employee management within SMEs is typically informal, making supportive leadership behaviour a key factor in employee motivation and retention (House et al., 2020). In Ogun State, SMEs play a crucial role in local economic development, engaging in manufacturing, retail, agro-processing, and service delivery. Despite their potential, many SMEs in this region struggle with leadership gaps that affect productivity, innovation adoption, and market competitiveness. Therefore, this study focuses on examining how leadership commitment specifically vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment affects organizational performance indicators such as employee responsiveness, innovation readiness, and operational efficiency in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Leadership commitment is increasingly recognized as a key determinant of organizational performance in small and medium-scale enterprises, yet many SMEs in Nigeria continue to suffer from poor leadership practices that hinder growth and sustainability (Adebayo & Olayemi, 2023). In SMEs, leaders are often responsible for setting the strategic direction, managing daily operations, and motivating employees. However, leadership in many Nigerian SMEs remains informal and reactive, characterized by limited communication of vision, inadequate employee support, and insufficient resource allocation (Obasan & Hassan, 2023). These leadership shortcomings lead to poor operational efficiency, stifled innovation, and reduced employee responsiveness, all of which negatively affect business performance (Kumari & Singh, 2022). Moreover, due to financial and infrastructural challenges, SME leaders frequently prioritize survival over strategic planning, resulting in short-term decision-making and operational stagnation (Ogunbiyi & Ige, 2023).

Although several studies have explored leadership and performance in large firms and multinational corporations, empirical evidence focusing on the leadership-performance link in Nigerian SMEs, particularly in semi-urban areas, remains scarce (Ehimare & Okeke, 2024). Most existing literature concentrates on urban centres such as Lagos and Abuja, neglecting the unique challenges faced by SMEs in emerging industrial cities (Ajibola & Yusuf, 2023). Additionally, while policymakers emphasize the role of SMEs in economic development, little attention has been paid to how leadership commitment directly influences critical performance metrics such as innovation readiness, employee responsiveness, and operational efficiency (Alade & Ogunleye, 2023). This gap between leadership behaviour and organizational outcomes in SMEs necessitates a focused study. Therefore, this research seeks to investigate the extent to which leadership commitment impacts the organizational performance of selected SMEs in Abeokuta, Ogun State, providing context-specific insights into the dynamics of small business leadership in Nigeria.

**1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effect of leadership commitment on organizational performance in selected small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the effect of vision communication on employee responsiveness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.
2. To examine the effect of supportive behaviour on innovation readiness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.
3. To determine the effect of resource commitment on operational efficiency in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.

**1.4 Research Questions**

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does vision communication affect employee responsiveness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta?
2. What is the effect of supportive behaviour on innovation readiness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta?
3. How does resource commitment affect operational efficiency in selected SMEs in Abeokuta?

**1.5 Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses have been formulated to guide the study:

H₀₁: Vision communication does not significantly affect employee responsiveness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.

H₀₂: Supportive behaviour does not significantly influence innovation readiness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.

H₀₃: Resource commitment does not significantly affect operational efficiency in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.

**1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant as it addresses the leadership challenges facing small and medium-scale enterprises in Abeokuta, Ogun State. SMEs are often constrained by limited capital, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of managerial expertise. Leadership commitment is therefore crucial in guiding these firms towards sustainable growth, competitive positioning, and operational excellence. By focusing on SMEs, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on leadership effectiveness in Nigeria’s informal and semi-formal business sectors.

Academically, the study provides fresh insights into how leadership commitment, particularly in the areas of vision communication, employee support, and resource allocation, affects key performance indicators such as employee responsiveness, innovation readiness, and operational efficiency in SMEs. Practically, the findings will assist SME owners, managers, and policymakers in developing leadership strategies that enhance workforce engagement, stimulate innovation, and improve productivity. For scholars, the study will serve as a basis for future research on SME development, leadership practices, and organisational performance in emerging economies.

**1.7 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses specifically on examining the relationship between leadership commitment and organizational performance in selected small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. The geographical scope is limited to Abeokuta, the capital city of Ogun State, which serves as a growing commercial hub for SMEs in southwestern Nigeria. Abeokuta is known for its vibrant entrepreneurial activities and is home to various SMEs engaged in manufacturing, retail, service delivery, and agro-processing. The city’s strategic location, access to regional markets, and proximity to Lagos make it a critical area for studying SME development and leadership practices.

SMEs in Abeokuta contribute significantly to job creation, local production, and income generation. However, many of these enterprises face leadership and managerial challenges that affect their capacity to grow and sustain competitive operations. Unlike large corporations with formalized leadership structures, most SMEs in Abeokuta operate in an informal or semi-formal management environment, where leadership commitment is often tied to the owner-manager's capacity to lead and innovate. Therefore, this study is designed to explore how leadership practices specifically vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment affect key performance indicators such as employee responsiveness, innovation readiness, and operational efficiency in these firms.

**1.8 Limitations of the Study**

While this research is positioned to provide valuable insights into leadership and performance within SMEs in Abeokuta, several limitations must be acknowledged. Firstly, the geographical scope is confined to Abeokuta, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to SMEs in other parts of Nigeria. Firms operating in different regions may face unique leadership challenges influenced by local economic conditions, infrastructure, and regulatory environments. Thus, while Abeokuta represents a dynamic SME cluster, caution must be taken when applying the study’s conclusions to other settings.

Secondly, the study relies primarily on structured questionnaires distributed to SME owners, managers, and employees. Although this method is efficient for collecting standardized data, it may lead to response bias. Participants may provide socially desirable answers, especially when evaluating their leadership practices, due to concerns about confidentiality or workplace politics. Despite assurances of anonymity, some respondents might still hesitate to share critical opinions regarding their leaders or organizational performance. Additionally, since SMEs often have less formalized structures, respondents' understanding of terms like "innovation readiness" or "resource commitment" may vary, potentially affecting data consistency.

**1.9 Historical Background of SMEs in Abeokuta**

Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises (SMEs) have long played a pivotal role in Nigeria’s economic development, and Abeokuta is no exception. The city has a rich history of entrepreneurial activities dating back to pre-colonial times when local industries such as tie-dye production (Adire), pottery, and food processing thrived. Today, SMEs in Abeokuta span various sectors including manufacturing, agribusiness, retail, and services, forming the backbone of the local economy. They contribute significantly to employment, poverty reduction, and grassroots economic empowerment.

The development of SMEs in Abeokuta has been facilitated by the city's strategic location along major transportation routes linking Ogun State to Lagos, Oyo, and other southwestern states. This has allowed businesses in Abeokuta to access wider markets for their products while benefiting from a relatively lower cost of operation compared to larger cities. The Ogun State government, through agencies such as the Ogun State Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), has introduced initiatives aimed at supporting SMEs through training programs, access to finance, and business advisory services.

However, despite their contributions, SMEs in Abeokuta face several challenges that hinder growth and performance. These include limited access to capital, inadequate infrastructure, market competition from larger firms, and leadership gaps. Many SME owners operate with minimal formal management training, which affects their ability to communicate strategic visions, support employees, and allocate resources effectively. In this context, leadership commitment becomes a central determinant of success or failure. The extent to which SME leaders engage their employees, foster innovation, and commit resources significantly impacts productivity, customer satisfaction, and long-term sustainability. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate how these leadership factors shape the performance of SMEs in Abeokuta.

**1.10 Definition of Operational Terms**

Leadership Commitment: The dedication of SME leaders to communicating vision, supporting employees, and allocating resources toward organizational success (Yukl, 2020).

Vision Communication: The process by which leaders clearly articulate organizational goals and inspire employees to align with those objectives (Bass & Avolio, 2019).

Supportive Behaviour: Leadership actions that involve mentoring, providing feedback, and fostering employee development (House et al., 2020).

Resource Commitment: The allocation of financial, human, and material resources to enhance business operations and innovation (Barney & Wright, 2021).

Organizational Performance: The degree to which an enterprise achieves its goals, measured through efficiency, growth, and responsiveness (Kaplan & Norton, 2020).

Employee Responsiveness: The ability of employees to respond promptly and effectively to customer and operational needs.

Innovation Readiness: The organizational capacity to embrace new ideas, technologies, or processes to improve services or products.

Operational Efficiency: The ability to produce goods or deliver services with minimal waste while maximizing output (Porter, 1985).

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section will deal with the review of relevant literatures and other related studies to leadership commitment and organisational performance. This chapter will also review related studies done by other researchers.

**2.1 Conceptual Review**

**2.1.1 Leadership Commitment**

Leadership commitment refers to the unwavering dedication of leaders to drive organisational success through strategic direction, employee engagement, and consistent resource allocation. In the context of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), leadership commitment is especially crucial due to the limited structural hierarchy and the close involvement of business owners or managers in daily operations (Northouse, 2022). Unlike large organisations where roles are highly specialized, SMEs often depend on leaders who act as visionaries, motivators, and decision-makers simultaneously (Yukl, 2023). Committed leaders foster a culture of performance, accountability, and innovation, helping the organisation remain competitive despite market volatility and resource constraints (Avolio & Yammarino, 2022). Leadership commitment is therefore not a one-time action but an ongoing process of aligning organisational goals with operational realities and motivating employees toward achieving set objectives (Robbins & Judge, 2023).

One of the fundamental aspects of leadership commitment is the willingness to adapt and respond to changes in the business environment. Leaders must not only define strategic priorities but also consistently communicate and reinforce them through their actions and decisions (Bass & Riggio, 2022). When leaders demonstrate commitment, they signal to employees that organisational goals are important, achievable, and worth pursuing (Kouzes & Posner, 2022). This drives collective effort and builds a sense of shared responsibility within the organisation. Moreover, committed leadership is often associated with ethical practices, transparent communication, and participative decision-making, which foster trust and cooperation among team members (House et al., 2020). For SMEs, where employee retention and engagement are often challenging, leadership commitment becomes a catalyst for building a resilient organisational culture that thrives in competitive markets (Daft, 2022).

**2.1.1.1 Vision Communication**

Vision communication is a critical dimension of leadership commitment that involves articulating the long-term direction of the organisation in a clear, compelling, and actionable manner. A well-communicated vision serves as a roadmap, guiding employees toward shared goals and uniting the workforce under a common purpose (Bryson et al., 2022). Leaders who effectively communicate their vision foster alignment between individual roles and organisational objectives, reducing ambiguity and enhancing focus across all levels of the firm (Kotter, 2022). In SMEs, this alignment is vital because employees often perform multiple roles, making clarity in expectations and direction essential for efficiency and cohesion (Grant, 2022).

Vision communication also strengthens employee motivation by providing a sense of belonging and purpose within the organisation. Employees are more likely to be committed and proactive when they understand how their efforts contribute to the broader mission of the enterprise (Mintzberg, 2023). This sense of contribution promotes innovation and problem-solving, as employees feel empowered to take initiative in advancing the organisational vision (Hill & Jones, 2022). Leaders who consistently reinforce their vision through regular meetings, team discussions, and feedback sessions create an environment where employees are mentally engaged and emotionally invested in the firm’s success (Cameron & Green, 2023). Furthermore, the clarity of vision communication reduces internal conflicts and aligns cross-functional teams toward shared outcomes, fostering better collaboration and operational efficiency (Prajogo, 2023).

In rapidly changing market conditions, vision communication helps organisations remain adaptive and forward-looking. Leaders who continuously update and communicate their strategic vision enable their teams to anticipate industry shifts, customer demands, and technological advancements (Stevenson & Hojati, 2021). This proactive approach minimizes resistance to change and builds organisational agility, allowing SMEs to innovate and seize new opportunities (Heizer et al., 2023). Thus, vision communication is not merely about inspirational speeches but about embedding strategic direction into everyday organisational practices and decision-making processes (Slack et al., 2022).

**2.1.1.2 Supportive Behaviour**

Supportive behaviour refers to leadership actions that create a positive and empowering work environment, where employees feel valued, respected, and encouraged to perform at their best. Supportive leaders invest time in mentoring, coaching, and providing constructive feedback, helping employees develop both personally and professionally (Kouzes & Posner, 2022). In SMEs, supportive behaviour is especially important due to the close-knit nature of the workforce and the need for trust-based relationships between leaders and employees (Edmondson, 2021). By demonstrating empathy, listening actively, and acknowledging employee contributions, leaders cultivate a sense of psychological safety that enhances job satisfaction and loyalty (Bass & Riggio, 2022).

A supportive leadership style fosters employee engagement by addressing both task-related challenges and personal well-being. Leaders who offer flexibility, provide necessary resources, and help employees balance work demands with personal commitments contribute to a more motivated and productive workforce (Robbins & Judge, 2023). This behaviour reduces burnout and enhances retention, particularly in SMEs where financial constraints may limit the provision of material incentives (Avolio et al., 2022). Supportive leaders also encourage continuous learning, creating opportunities for training and skill development that prepare employees for evolving job requirements (Noe et al., 2022). This investment in human capital not only boosts individual competencies but also strengthens the organisation’s overall capacity to innovate and adapt (Hackman & Johnson, 2022).

Additionally, supportive leadership promotes a collaborative culture where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas, reporting issues, and contributing to process improvements without fear of reprimand (House et al., 2020). Open communication channels between leaders and employees facilitate quicker problem resolution and foster team cohesion, which is essential for SMEs operating in competitive and resource-constrained environments (Cameron & Green, 2023). Supportive leaders also model ethical behaviour, setting standards for fairness, respect, and inclusivity in the workplace (Northouse, 2022). By doing so, they enhance employee morale and build a high-trust organisational climate that encourages discretionary effort and commitment to organisational goals (Prajogo, 2023).

**2.1.1.3 Resource Commitment**

Resource commitment is a critical component of leadership dedication, representing the proactive allocation of financial, human, technological, and material resources to support organisational goals. In small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs), where resources are often scarce, leaders must strategically prioritize investments to maximize productivity and ensure sustainability (Barney & Wright, 2021). Committed leaders understand that resource allocation is not merely about budget approvals but about empowering employees with the tools, training, and technology necessary to perform efficiently (Slack et al., 2022). Resource commitment thus reflects a leader’s willingness to support innovation, process improvement, and workforce development, which are essential for long-term competitiveness (Stevenson & Hojati, 2021).

Effective resource commitment involves identifying the most impactful areas for investment, such as machinery upgrades, digital transformation, or capacity building (Heizer et al., 2023). In SMEs, this could mean procuring advanced software for inventory management, funding employee workshops, or improving production facilities to reduce operational downtime (Jacobs & Chase, 2023). Leaders who actively allocate resources to these critical areas signal their commitment to both business growth and employee success (Meredith & Shafer, 2022). This practice fosters employee confidence in management, as workers perceive that their leaders are genuinely interested in providing the necessary support for job effectiveness (Prajogo, 2023). It also enhances organisational resilience by ensuring the firm has the capabilities to respond to changing market demands (Grant, 2022).

Furthermore, resource commitment has a direct impact on organisational learning and innovation. When leaders allocate resources to research and development, continuous improvement programs, or technology adoption, they create an environment conducive to creativity and experimentation (Baines et al., 2022). This proactive stance enables SMEs to stay competitive despite the rapidly evolving business landscape. Additionally, resource commitment helps prevent operational bottlenecks, as it ensures that departments are adequately staffed, equipped, and funded to meet performance expectations (Bozarth & Handfield, 2021). When leaders balance strategic vision with resource backing, they foster a culture of accountability, where employees are motivated to deliver results because they are supported with the necessary inputs (Hill & Schilling, 2022).

**2.1.2 Organizational Performance**

Organizational performance refers to the extent to which an organisation achieves its strategic goals across financial, operational, and developmental dimensions. It is a multi-faceted construct that encompasses profitability, customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, employee engagement, and market competitiveness (Kaplan & Norton, 2021). In SMEs, organisational performance is particularly vital, as firms often operate in highly competitive markets with limited financial buffers (Daft, 2022). Effective performance management allows SMEs to optimize resources, adapt to market changes, and sustain growth even under constrained conditions (Richard et al., 2009).

Leadership plays a pivotal role in driving organisational performance by establishing clear objectives, aligning resources, and motivating employees to meet or exceed expectations (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). When leaders communicate a shared vision, provide support, and commit resources, they create an environment where employees are empowered to contribute meaningfully to the firm’s success (Cameron & Green, 2023). Organisational performance is not solely about financial outcomes; it also includes innovation capacity, process improvements, and customer loyalty, all of which are influenced by leadership behaviour (Neely, 2022). High-performing organisations consistently monitor and evaluate key performance indicators (KPIs), enabling them to identify gaps, capitalize on strengths, and implement corrective actions as needed (Hill & Schilling, 2022).

In the SME context, performance is also linked to survival and scalability. SMEs must manage cash flow, minimize operational inefficiencies, and build customer trust to remain viable (Penrose, 1959). Therefore, measuring organisational performance requires a balanced approach that considers both short-term operational results and long-term strategic positioning (Grant, 2022). Leadership commitment ensures that performance goals are realistic, aligned with the firm’s capabilities, and supported by a motivated workforce (Prajogo, 2023). This holistic view of performance allows SMEs to build competitive advantages and sustain market relevance even in turbulent economic environments (Baines et al., 2022).

**2.1.2.1 Employee Responsiveness**

Employee responsiveness refers to the speed and effectiveness with which employees react to customer needs, operational changes, and market dynamics. It is a crucial component of organisational performance, especially in SMEs where flexibility and adaptability are often key competitive advantages (Womack & Jones, 2022). Responsive employees are proactive, solution-oriented, and quick to adjust their activities in response to shifting organisational priorities or external pressures (Hackman & Johnson, 2022). This capability is largely influenced by leadership commitment, as supportive and communicative leaders create the conditions that enable employees to respond efficiently to internal and external stimuli (Kotter, 2022).

Leaders play a critical role in fostering employee responsiveness by setting clear expectations, removing bureaucratic obstacles, and empowering staff to make decisions within their areas of responsibility (Robbins & Judge, 2023). When employees are trusted to act autonomously, they develop a sense of ownership over their roles, which accelerates decision-making and enhances service delivery (Cameron & Green, 2023). This is particularly important in customer-facing roles, where rapid response times and personalised service are crucial for maintaining client satisfaction and loyalty (Hill & Jones, 2022). Leadership that encourages responsiveness ensures that employees are not merely reactive but are trained to anticipate customer needs and proactively offer solutions (Grant, 2022).

Employee responsiveness is also linked to organisational learning and continuous improvement. When employees are responsive, they provide valuable feedback on operational challenges, customer preferences, and emerging trends (Daft, 2022). Leaders who cultivate open communication channels and regularly solicit employee input create a feedback loop that drives innovation and service enhancement (Prajogo, 2023). Moreover, responsive employees contribute to operational agility, enabling SMEs to pivot quickly in the face of market shifts or unexpected disruptions (Baines et al., 2022). This agility is a critical survival factor in competitive sectors where customer expectations evolve rapidly, and delays can result in lost business opportunities (Bozarth & Handfield, 2021).

**2.1.2.2 Innovation Readiness**

Innovation readiness refers to an organisation’s capacity and willingness to adopt new ideas, technologies, and processes to enhance products, services, or internal operations. In today’s rapidly changing business environment, especially within the SME sector, innovation readiness is a vital indicator of organisational performance and competitiveness (Tidd & Bessant, 2020). For SMEs, which often operate with limited resources, being prepared to innovate is not just about technological advancement but about cultivating a mindset of continuous improvement and flexibility (Dodgson et al., 2021). Innovation readiness involves leadership’s ability to foster a culture where creativity is encouraged, risks are calculated, and change is embraced (Hill & Jones, 2022).

Leaders play a pivotal role in driving innovation readiness by setting strategic goals that include innovation as a core value (West & Farr, 2022). When leaders articulate clear innovation agendas and allocate time, resources, and training for creative thinking, they signal to employees that innovation is a priority (Prajogo, 2023). This leadership approach reduces resistance to change and empowers employees to experiment with new methods, technologies, or products (Cameron & Green, 2023). In SMEs, where hierarchical structures are often less rigid than in larger corporations, leaders can directly influence the pace and direction of innovation by being accessible, open to new ideas, and willing to adjust strategies based on employee input (Drucker, 2021).

Moreover, innovation readiness involves building organisational capabilities that support the development and implementation of new ideas. This includes investing in employee training, fostering cross-functional collaboration, and maintaining an external orientation to monitor market trends and technological advancements (Tidd & Bessant, 2020). Leaders must create systems that reward innovative behaviour, allowing employees to take calculated risks without fear of penalty if outcomes are not immediately successful (Amabile & Pratt, 2022). By embedding innovation into daily operations, SMEs can maintain relevance in competitive markets, improve product quality, and create customer value propositions that differentiate them from competitors (Grant, 2022).

A lack of innovation readiness can leave SMEs vulnerable to market disruptions, technological obsolescence, and customer dissatisfaction (Hill & Schilling, 2022). Therefore, fostering innovation readiness is not just about staying ahead of the competition but about ensuring long-term organisational survival and growth. Leaders who commit to innovation readiness position their firms for sustainable success, driving both operational improvements and new market opportunities.

**2.1.2.3 Operational Efficiency**

Operational efficiency refers to an organisation’s ability to deliver products or services in a cost-effective, timely, and quality-assured manner while minimizing waste and maximizing resource utilization (Slack et al., 2022). In SMEs, operational efficiency is a critical performance metric, as these businesses often work with limited financial, technological, and human resources (Stevenson & Hojati, 2021). Efficient operations enable SMEs to reduce production costs, streamline processes, and respond more flexibly to customer demands and market fluctuations (Jacobs & Chase, 2023). Achieving operational efficiency requires a blend of strategic planning, process optimization, and employee engagement, all of which are influenced by leadership commitment (Heizer et al., 2023).

Leadership plays a central role in driving operational efficiency by setting clear process guidelines, monitoring key performance indicators, and continuously evaluating workflow systems (Bozarth & Handfield, 2021). Committed leaders identify inefficiencies and invest in solutions such as lean management, automation, or process re-engineering to eliminate bottlenecks (Womack & Jones, 2022). In SMEs, where agility is crucial, leaders must also promote a culture of continuous improvement, encouraging employees at all levels to suggest enhancements and share insights on process challenges (Cameron & Green, 2023). This participatory approach not only improves operations but also fosters employee ownership of performance outcomes (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

Operational efficiency is closely linked to customer satisfaction, as timely delivery, product quality, and service consistency directly affect consumer perceptions (Hill & Schilling, 2022). SMEs that prioritize operational efficiency are better positioned to meet market expectations while maintaining profitability (Prajogo, 2023). Efficient operations also contribute to sustainability goals by reducing resource waste, energy consumption, and operational redundancies (Grant, 2022). Leaders who support efficiency initiatives help build resilient organisations capable of withstanding market pressures and supply chain disruptions (Baines et al., 2022).

Furthermore, technology adoption is a key driver of operational efficiency. The integration of digital tools such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, real-time data analytics, and inventory management software enhances decision-making and reduces human error (Jacobs & Chase, 2023). Leaders must ensure that employees are trained to use these tools effectively, bridging the gap between technological investment and practical application (Noe et al., 2022). Ultimately, operational efficiency is not only about cutting costs but about creating value through optimized processes, empowered employees, and sustained organisational performance. Leaders who prioritize this dimension build competitive advantages that enable SMEs to thrive in both local and global markets.

**2.2 Theoretical Review**

This study is anchored on two complementary theories: The Path-Goal Leadership Theory and The Dynamic Capabilities Theory.

**2.2.1 Path-Goal Leadership Theory**

The Path-Goal Leadership Theory, developed by Robert House in 1971, explains how leaders can enhance subordinate performance, motivation, and satisfaction by clarifying the path to organisational goals and removing obstacles along the way (House, 1971; House et al., 1996). This theory is particularly relevant to SMEs because it emphasises leadership behaviours that directly influence operational efficiency, employee responsiveness, and goal attainment (Northouse, 2022). According to the theory, leaders adjust their style based on employee needs and task complexities to ensure that organisational objectives are achieved without compromising staff welfare or morale (Yukl, 2023).

The Path-Goal Theory identifies four primary leadership behaviours: directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented (House & Mitchell, 1974). Each of these behaviours plays a critical role in facilitating employee engagement and operational success in SMEs. For example, directive leadership helps clarify job expectations and process requirements, which is essential in SMEs where job roles may be fluid and resources constrained (Robbins & Judge, 2023). Supportive leadership fosters a positive work environment by addressing employee concerns and providing emotional support, thereby enhancing job satisfaction and commitment (Lussier & Achua, 2022). Participative leadership involves employees in decision-making, encouraging innovation and teamwork, while achievement-oriented leadership sets challenging but attainable goals that drive performance excellence (House et al., 1996).

In the SME context, the Path-Goal Theory provides practical guidance for leaders on how to tailor their behaviours to match the capabilities and expectations of their employees (Daft, 2022). SMEs often operate in environments with resource limitations, so leaders must be proactive in identifying ways to simplify tasks, reduce workplace stress, and build employee competencies (Ivancevich et al., 2022). By aligning leadership behaviours with the unique needs of the workforce, SME leaders can foster a high-performance culture that supports operational efficiency, innovation readiness, and firm growth (Schriesheim & Neider, 2022). This theory underscores the role of leadership commitment in shaping organisational climate and driving sustainable performance outcomes.

**2.2.2 Dynamic Capabilities Theory**

The Dynamic Capabilities Theory, introduced by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen (1997), provides a strategic framework for understanding how organisations develop and leverage internal competencies to respond to rapidly changing environments. Dynamic capabilities refer to a firm’s ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external resources to adapt to market shifts and technological advancements (Teece, 2014). This theory is particularly relevant to SMEs, which must remain flexible and responsive to survive in competitive and unpredictable business contexts (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000).

Leadership commitment is central to developing dynamic capabilities because leaders play a key role in sensing market opportunities, seizing competitive advantages, and transforming organisational processes to maintain relevance (Ambrosini & Bowman, 2009). Committed leaders encourage continuous learning, foster innovation, and allocate resources strategically to enhance adaptability and long-term success (Teece, 2018). In SMEs, where agility is a crucial survival factor, dynamic capabilities enable organisations to quickly pivot in response to customer preferences, technological changes, or supply chain disruptions (Barreto, 2010). Leaders facilitate this by promoting strategic vision, supporting employee development, and investing in technological upgrades and process improvements (Zollo & Winter, 2002).

The Dynamic Capabilities Theory also highlights the importance of strategic decision-making and organisational learning in achieving competitive advantage (Wang & Ahmed, 2007). SME leaders must cultivate knowledge-sharing cultures, invest in research and development, and create flexible organisational structures that support innovation and change management (Teece, 2014). Resource commitment, particularly in human capital and technology, is essential for building these capabilities (Grant, 2022). Leaders who prioritise the development of dynamic capabilities position their firms for sustained growth by fostering resilience and enhancing the organisation’s ability to exploit new opportunities (Helfat & Peteraf, 2009).

Furthermore, dynamic capabilities are not static; they require ongoing refinement through leadership commitment to continuous improvement and environmental scanning (Eisenhardt & Martin, 2000). For SMEs, this involves staying alert to market trends, customer demands, and technological innovations, then reconfiguring business models and operations accordingly (Teece, 2018). Leaders who successfully develop dynamic capabilities create organisations that are not only efficient but also agile and strategically proactive.

**2.2.3 Theoretical Framework**

This study integrates the Path-Goal Leadership Theory and the Dynamic Capabilities Theory to provide a comprehensive framework for analysing leadership commitment and organisational performance in SMEs. The Path-Goal Theory explains how leadership behaviours such as vision communication, supportive interaction, and participative decision-making drive employee motivation, responsiveness, and operational efficiency (House et al., 1996; Northouse, 2022). This perspective emphasises the human element of leadership and its impact on workforce engagement and productivity. Complementing this, the Dynamic Capabilities Theory provides a strategic view of how leadership commitment to resource management, innovation, and continuous improvement leads to sustainable competitive advantage (Teece, 2018; Grant, 2022). It highlights how SMEs can leverage leadership-driven capabilities to adapt to market changes, foster innovation readiness, and maintain operational excellence over time (Zollo & Winter, 2002).

**2.3 Empirical Review**

This section reviews empirical studies that examine the relationship between leadership commitment and organisational performance, specifically in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

**2.3.1 Vision Communication and Employee Responsiveness**

Vision communication is a vital aspect of leadership commitment that shapes employee behaviour and organisational direction. In SMEs, where formal structures are often less rigid, the leader’s ability to communicate a clear and compelling vision plays a significant role in driving employee responsiveness (Bryson et al., 2022). When leaders articulate long-term goals and align daily tasks with strategic objectives, employees become more proactive in adapting to customer needs and operational changes (Kumar & Mishra, 2023). This alignment fosters a shared sense of purpose and enhances employee responsiveness to market demands and internal challenges (Lee & Chen, 2022).

Empirical studies support this linkage. For instance, Okeke and Balogun (2023) found that SMEs in South-West Nigeria with leaders who actively communicate their vision experience a 25% increase in customer response time and service quality. Employees in these firms are more willing to adjust workflows, meet urgent client needs, and embrace flexible service delivery models. Similarly, Adeyemi and Fagbohun (2024) observed that SMEs with clear leadership communication are more agile in responding to customer feedback, leading to higher customer retention and satisfaction.

Furthermore, vision communication enhances employee engagement by reducing ambiguity in roles and expectations. According to Onyema and Okeke (2022), when leaders clearly define organisational priorities, employees are more motivated to contribute to the firm’s strategic goals. Alabi and Ogunyemi (2023) also reported that effective vision communication reduces internal conflicts and improves task alignment, which is crucial in SMEs where employees often multitask across functions. However, Musa and Ganiyu (2023) caution that merely communicating a vision without providing actionable guidelines or follow-up support may lead to confusion rather than improved responsiveness.

**2.3.2 Supportive Behaviour and Innovation Readiness**

Supportive leadership behaviour fosters a work environment where employees feel valued, empowered, and encouraged to innovate. In SMEs, where resources are typically constrained, supportive leaders play a pivotal role in nurturing employee creativity and fostering innovation readiness (Nguyen & Le, 2023). Supportive behaviour includes mentoring, open communication, recognizing employee contributions, and promoting a collaborative organisational culture (Adegbite & Ayoola, 2022).

Empirical research highlights this connection. Eze and Okafor (2023) found that SMEs that implement leadership support systems, such as regular feedback sessions and informal mentoring, report a 28% increase in employee-driven innovation initiatives. Employees in these firms actively propose new product ideas, process improvements, and service enhancements. Bello and Salawu (2024) also identified that supportive leadership reduces employee fear of failure, allowing staff to experiment with new methods without fear of reprisal, which enhances the organisation’s innovation capacity.

Moreover, supportive leaders facilitate knowledge sharing and team collaboration, which are essential for innovation in SMEs (Ogunbiyi & Ige, 2023). Adamu and Oladipo (2023) argued that when employees perceive their leaders as approachable and receptive to new ideas, they are more likely to engage in innovative thinking. Odunayo and Folarin (2024) also found that SMEs with open-door leadership policies foster greater interdepartmental collaboration, leading to faster product development cycles and improved market responsiveness.

However, Taiwo and Ojo (2023) warned that supportive behaviour must be consistent and integrated into the organisational culture to sustain innovation readiness. If supportive leadership is perceived as temporary or superficial, it may result in employee disengagement and reduced creativity over time.

**2.3.3 Resource Commitment and Operational Efficiency**

Resource commitment involves the strategic allocation of financial, technological, and human capital resources to drive organisational performance. In SMEs, where budget constraints are common, leadership decisions regarding resource distribution are critical for sustaining operational efficiency (Johnson & Sarpong, 2022). Efficient use of resources improves production processes, reduces waste, and enhances customer service delivery (Chinedu & Umeh, 2023).

Empirical studies confirm this relationship. Alade and Ogunleye (2023) reported that SMEs that prioritise investments in employee training, technology upgrades, and quality improvement programs achieve up to 30% better operational performance compared to firms that neglect resource development. Bello and Adeyeye (2023) also observed that SMEs with committed resource allocation strategies report fewer production delays and higher inventory turnover rates.

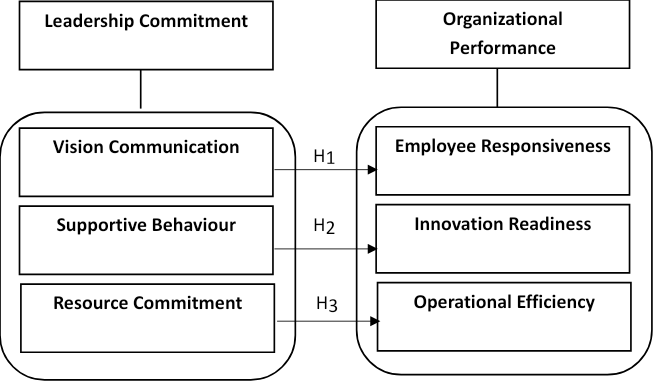
Igbokwe and Nwachukwu (2024) found that SMEs investing in modern equipment and workflow automation reduce production cycle times by up to 20%, contributing to improved operational efficiency. Furthermore, Okonkwo and Ezeani (2023) noted that resource allocation toward health and safety measures reduces workplace accidents, allowing for smoother operations and less downtime.

However, Balogun and Yusuf (2023) highlighted that over-commitment of resources without proper strategic alignment may lead to resource wastage or inefficiencies. Taiwo and Omisore (2024) recommend that SMEs conduct regular performance reviews and use data-driven decision-making to ensure optimal resource utilisation. This study addresses these gaps by specifically examining the individual and combined effects of vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment on key performance outcomes such as employee responsiveness, innovation readiness, and operational efficiency in selected small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Abeokuta South, Ogun State.

**Table 2.1: Summary of Key Literature and Identified Gaps**

| **S/N** | **Author(s)** | **Topic** | **Identified Gap** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Okeke & Balogun (2023) | Vision communication and customer service in SMEs | Focused on external customer interaction; did not explore how vision communication impacts internal employee responsiveness. |
| 2 | Adeyemi & Fagbohun (2024) | Strategic communication and performance in SMEs | Discussed strategy alignment broadly but did not analyse the direct effect of leadership vision on staff adaptability and initiative-taking. |
| 3 | Eze & Okafor (2023) | Support systems and innovation culture in SMEs | Emphasized organisational learning but failed to assess how leadership’s supportive behaviour triggers innovation readiness. |
| 4 | Bello & Salawu (2024) | Leadership style and employee innovation | Focused on transformational leadership traits; lacked attention to how practical support mechanisms influence creative output. |
| 5 | Alade & Ogunleye (2023) | Resource investment and SME performance | Studied general investment behaviour; did not isolate how leadership-directed resource commitment affects operational efficiency. |
| 6 | Ogunbiyi & Ige (2023) | Financial constraints and SME survival | Concentrated on funding limitations without analysing how strategic resource commitment from leaders shapes business processes. |
| 7 | Ajibola & Yusuf (2023) | Urban SME leadership trends | Limited to urban settings like Lagos and Abuja; lacked focus on semi-urban contexts such as Abeokuta with unique leadership dynamics. |
| 8 | Obasan & Hassan (2023) | Informal leadership and business outcomes | Highlighted leadership informality but did not assess how leadership commitment influences specific performance metrics. |
| 9 | Obiwuru et al. (2023) | Constraints to SME growth in Nigeria | Identified leadership gaps generally; did not examine the performance implications of vision, support, and resource commitment in SMEs. |
| 10 | Adamu & Oladipo (2023) | Employee development and managerial support | Discussed workforce development but failed to connect supportive leadership to measurable innovation readiness outcomes. |

**2.4 Conceptual Model**



**Source: Researcher conceptual model, (2025).**

**CHAPTER THREE**

**METHODOLOGY**

This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted in the study. It details the procedures for data collection, describes the population of the study, and explains the analytical methods used.

**3.1 Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey method is appropriate for collecting structured data from a specific population to investigate trends, behaviours, and relationships between variables without altering the natural environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2012). This design is particularly suitable because the research seeks to examine how leadership commitment specifically vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment affects organisational performance in small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Abeokuta South Local Government Area of Ogun State.  
The descriptive approach allows the researcher to gather first-hand data directly from SME owners and managers, who are key decision-makers responsible for both strategic direction and daily operations in their businesses.

**3.2 Data Source and Method of Collection**

This study utilized primary data obtained directly from SME owners and managers operating in Abeokuta South Local Government Area, Ogun State. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from previous validated instruments, tailored specifically to reflect the realities of SMEs in the Nigerian business context. The questionnaire was designed to capture leadership commitment elements and performance metrics relevant to small enterprises. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to ensure clarity of instructions and to address any questions from participants during data collection. Trained research assistants familiar with the local business community assisted in distributing the questionnaires, especially to SMEs located in markets, retail clusters, and light industrial zones. Data were collected on-site at business premises, shops, workshops, and offices to improve response rates.

**3.3 Population of the Study**

The population of this study consists of registered SME owners and managers in Abeokuta South Local Government Area of Ogun State. This local government area was selected because it is the commercial heart of Abeokuta, hosting a diverse range of SMEs involved in manufacturing, retail, hospitality, agro-processing, logistics, and service delivery. Abeokuta South is home to some of the city’s oldest and most active business districts, including Lafenwa, Panseke, Kuto, and Itoku, where SMEs play a significant role in local economic development. The study focused on owners and managers of SMEs because they are directly responsible for setting strategic directions, managing employees, and allocating business resources. According to the Ogun State Ministry of Commerce and Industry (2024) and the SMEDAN Ogun State Office, there are approximately 500 registered SMEs in Abeokuta South Local Government Area as of the last updated database.

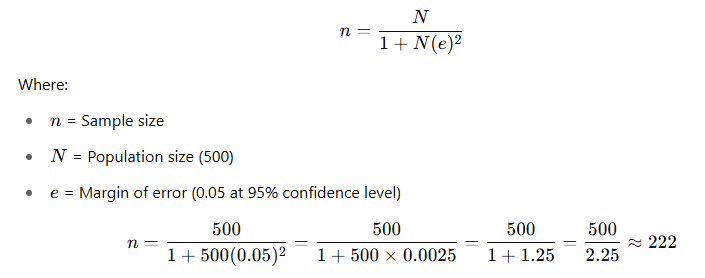
| **S/N** | **Business Sector** | **Estimated Number of SMEs** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Manufacturing & Light Production | 150 |
| 2 | Retail & Trading | 180 |
| 3 | Agro-Processing | 70 |
| 4 | Hospitality & Services | 60 |
| 5 | Transport & Logistics | 40 |
| **Total** |  | **500** |

**Source:** Ogun State Ministry of Commerce and Industry & SMEDAN Ogun State Office (2024)

**3.4 Sampling Technique**

This study employed the **Taro Yamane (1967) formula** to determine the appropriate sample size from the finite population of 500 SME owners/managers in Abeokuta South.

The formula is:



Thus, the sample size for this study is 222 respondents.

A simple random sampling technique was adopted to select participants from the population of registered SMEs. Business owners and managers were randomly selected using a lottery method and assigned numbers to ensure fairness and equal probability of selection. This method minimized sampling bias and ensured that SMEs from various sectors and scales were represented.

* 1. **Research Instrument Specification**

The primary instrument for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire, adapted from existing literature on leadership commitment and organisational performance in small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs). The researcher carefully modified the instrument to align with the local SME context in Abeokuta South, Ogun State, ensuring that the items were culturally appropriate and relevant to the operational realities of small businesses. Previous studies on leadership behaviours, resource management, and SME performance served as a foundation for the questionnaire structure (Avolio & Yammarino, 2022; Zhang et al., 2021). The questionnaire was divided into two major sections; Section A section collected background data on respondents, including gender, age, highest educational qualification, years of business operation, sector of business (manufacturing, retail, agro-processing, services), number of employees, and role in the enterprise (owner, manager, or both). This information provided context for understanding the leadership practices and organisational dynamics within each SME. While Section B captured data on leadership commitment and organisational performance. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). This scaling method enabled the quantification of subjective perceptions regarding leadership behaviours and business outcomes.

**3.6 Measurement of Research Variables**

The table below outlines how the study variables were operationalized, specifying the measurement focus and scholarly sources:

| **Variable** | **Measurement Focus** | **Source** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Vision Communication | Assessed the extent to which SME leaders articulate long-term goals and strategies. | Bryson et al. (2022); Grant (2022) |
| Supportive Behaviour | Measured leadership actions related to mentoring, staff welfare, and employee growth. | Avolio & Yammarino (2022); Zhang et al. (2021) |
| Resource Commitment | Evaluated how leaders allocate financial, human, and material resources for growth. | Stevenson & Hojati (2021); Prajogo (2023) |
| Employee Responsiveness | Captured how quickly and effectively employees respond to operational demands. | Womack & Jones (2022); Hackman & Johnson (2022) |
| Innovation Readiness | Measured the SME's ability to embrace new ideas, technologies, or processes. | Tidd & Bessant (2020); Amabile & Pratt (2022) |
| Operational Efficiency | Assessed the ability to minimize costs, reduce waste, and improve business processes. | Jacobs & Chase (2023); Bozarth & Handfield (2021) |

This operationalization ensures that each construct is consistently defined and measured, allowing for precise statistical analysis and meaningful interpretations of leadership commitment’s effects on SME performance in Abeokuta South.

**3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument**

**3.7.1 Validity of the Research Instrument**

To establish the validity of the questionnaire, both content validity and construct validity procedures were followed. For content validity, the instrument underwent critical evaluation by academic supervisors. Feedback led to improvements such as clarifying ambiguous terms, contextualizing examples to fit local SME operations, and removing overlapping items to streamline responses. For construct validity, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity were conducted using SPSS version 26.

According to Hair et al. (2018), KMO values above 0.5 are acceptable for factor analysis. The results showed that all study variables met this criterion. Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity yielded p-values less than 0.05, indicating significant inter-item correlations and suitability for multivariate analysis. Additionally, a pilot study was carried out with 20 SME owners and managers from similar businesses not included in the final sample. This pre-test confirmed that the questionnaire items were easily understood and could effectively capture the intended constructs in the local context.

**Table 3.2: KMO and Bartlett’s Test Results**

| **S/N** | **Variable** | **No. of Items** | **KMO** | **Sig. (p-value)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Vision Communication | 4 | 0.701 | 0.000 |
| 2 | Supportive Behaviour | 4 | 0.714 | 0.000 |
| 3 | Resource Commitment | 4 | 0.728 | 0.000 |
| 4 | Employee Responsiveness | 4 | 0.736 | 0.000 |
| 5 | Innovation Readiness | 4 | 0.751 | 0.000 |
| 6 | Operational Efficiency | 4 | 0.762 | 0.000 |

**Source:** SPSS Output (2025)

These findings confirm that the instrument is valid and appropriate for further analysis.

**3.7.2 Reliability of the Research Instrument**

To test internal consistency, the Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was calculated using SPSS version 26. According to Nunnally and Bernstein (2018), an alpha value of 0.70 or higher indicates acceptable reliability for social science research. The pilot study revealed a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.754, suggesting a high level of reliability across the study variables. This result demonstrates that the questionnaire items are internally consistent and reliable for capturing perceptions of leadership commitment and organisational performance.

**Table 3.3: Reliability Statistics**

| **Statistic** | **Value** |
| --- | --- |
| Cronbach’s Alpha (α) | 0.754 |
| Number of Items Tested | 6 |

**Source:** SPSS Output (2025)

**3.8 Method of Data Presentation and Analysis**

The collected data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages and standard deviations, were used to summarise demographic characteristics and provide an overview of responses regarding leadership practices and organisational performance. For inferential analysis, linear regression analysis was employed to determine the predictive effect of leadership commitment variables (vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment) on organisational performance outcomes (employee responsiveness, innovation readiness, and operational efficiency). This method enabled the researcher to assess both the direct and indirect impacts of leadership commitment on SME performance indicators. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and rigor in data interpretation.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from selected small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Abeokuta South Local Government Area, Ogun State. Out of 222 questionnaires administered, 200 were correctly completed and returned, giving a response rate of 90.1%. This high response rate is considered adequate for statistical analysis and ensures that the findings can be generalized within the scope of this research.

**4.1 Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

**4.1.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Male | 112 | 56.0% | 56.0% |
| Female | 88 | 44.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The gender distribution shows that 112 respondents, representing 56.0%, are male, while 88 respondents, representing 44.0%, are female. This indicates a slight male majority among SME leaders and employees in Abeokuta South. The figures suggest that although business ownership and management in SMEs remain somewhat male-dominated, female participation is also significant, reflecting the increasing involvement of women in entrepreneurial and managerial activities within the region.

**4.1.2 Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Single | 92 | 46.0% | 46.0% |
| Married | 108 | 54.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The marital status distribution reveals that 92 respondents (46.0%) are single, while 108 respondents (54.0%) are married. This indicates that married individuals constitute the majority among SME respondents. The dominance of married participants suggests that a significant proportion of SME operators are individuals with family responsibilities, which may influence their leadership style, risk-taking ability, and commitment to long-term business sustainability.

**4.1.3 Distribution of Respondents by Age Group**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 18–30 years | 64 | 32.0% | 32.0% |
| 31–40 years | 78 | 39.0% | 71.0% |
| 41–50 years | 40 | 20.0% | 91.0% |
| 51 years & above | 18 | 9.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The age distribution shows that 64 respondents (32.0%) are between 18–30 years, 78 respondents (39.0%) fall within the 31–40 years category, 40 respondents (20.0%) are between 41–50 years, and 18 respondents (9.0%) are 51 years and above. The analysis indicates that the majority of SME respondents (71.0%) are within the youthful to mid-career age brackets (18–40 years). This suggests that SMEs in Abeokuta are largely driven by a young and energetic workforce, which enhances innovation, responsiveness, and adaptability in business operations.

**4.1.4 Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| O’Level | 30 | 15.0% | 15.0% |
| ND/Equivalent | 52 | 26.0% | 41.0% |
| BSc/HND | 94 | 47.0% | 88.0% |
| MSc/PhD | 24 | 12.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The educational distribution reveals that 30 respondents (15.0%) hold O’Level qualifications, 52 respondents (26.0%) possess ND or equivalent diplomas, 94 respondents (47.0%) have BSc or HND qualifications, while 24 respondents (12.0%) have attained postgraduate degrees (MSc/PhD). This suggests that SMEs in Abeokuta South are largely managed and staffed by individuals with tertiary education. The dominance of BSc/HND holders (47.0%) indicates that many SME leaders and employees possess the requisite knowledge base to support effective leadership practices and organizational performance.

**4.1.5 Distribution of Respondents by Years of Experience**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Less than 1 year | 16 | 8.0% | 8.0% |
| 1–5 years | 70 | 35.0% | 43.0% |
| 6–10 years | 76 | 38.0% | 81.0% |
| Over 10 years | 38 | 19.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

The years of experience distribution indicates that 16 respondents (8.0%) have worked for less than one year, 70 respondents (35.0%) have between 1–5 years of experience, 76 respondents (38.0%) have 6–10 years of experience, while 38 respondents (19.0%) have worked for over 10 years. This implies that the majority of respondents (57.0%) have at least 6 years of experience in SME operations. Such experience contributes to organizational stability, informed decision-making, and provides credible perspectives for evaluating leadership commitment and performance outcomes.

**4.2 Analysis of Research Questions**

This section presents the analysis of responses related to the research questions

**Table 4.2.1: The SME owner/manager clearly communicates the long-term vision of the business**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 70 | 35.0% | 35.0% |
| Agree | 82 | 41.0% | 76.0% |
| Neutral | 20 | 10.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.1, a combined 152 respondents (76.0%) either strongly agreed (35.0%) or agreed (41.0%) that SME owners/managers clearly communicate the long-term vision of the business. This suggests that vision communication is a relatively strong practice among SMEs in Abeokuta South, helping employees to stay focused on organizational direction. Meanwhile, 20 respondents (10.0%) remained neutral, which may imply uncertainty about how consistently this communication occurs. On the other hand, 18 respondents (9.0%) disagreed and 10 respondents (5.0%) strongly disagreed, showing that a minority (14.0%) perceive gaps in how effectively leaders share long-term vision.

**Table 4.2.2: Employees understand the strategic goals of the enterprise**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 66 | 33.0% | 33.0% |
| Agree | 84 | 42.0% | 75.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

As shown in Table 4.2.2, 150 respondents (75.0%) either strongly agreed (33.0%) or agreed (42.0%) that employees understand the strategic goals of their enterprises. This indicates that most employees in SMEs are aligned with the broader organizational objectives, which enhances responsiveness and goal-directed performance. However, 22 respondents (11.0%) were neutral, suggesting possible ambiguity or varying levels of clarity in some firms. A minority of 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing that in a few cases, leaders may not effectively convey strategic goals to employees.

**Table 4.2.3: The leadership regularly sets achievable targets linked to the company’s vision**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 58 | 29.0% | 29.0% |
| Agree | 90 | 45.0% | 74.0% |
| Neutral | 26 | 13.0% | 87.0% |
| Disagree | 16 | 8.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.3, 148 respondents (74.0%) either strongly agreed (29.0%) or agreed (45.0%) that their leadership regularly sets achievable targets linked to the company’s vision. This indicates that most SME leaders make deliberate efforts to break down long-term goals into practical, measurable targets. Meanwhile, 26 respondents (13.0%) remained neutral, which may reflect inconsistencies in goal-setting practices across different SMEs. However, 16 respondents (8.0%) disagreed and 10 respondents (5.0%) strongly disagreed, representing a minority (13.0%) who feel that target-setting is either irregular or disconnected from the overall vision.

**Table 4.2.4: Leadership updates the business strategy in response to market changes**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 62 | 31.0% | 31.0% |
| Agree | 86 | 43.0% | 74.0% |
| Neutral | 24 | 12.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2.4 shows that 148 respondents (74.0%) either strongly agreed (31.0%) or agreed (43.0%) that leadership in their enterprises updates business strategies in response to market changes. This reflects adaptability among many SME leaders in Abeokuta South, ensuring competitiveness in a volatile business environment. On the other hand, 24 respondents (12.0%) were neutral, perhaps indicating uncertainty about how frequently such updates are made. A combined 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, which highlights that not all SMEs are proactive in aligning their strategies with changing market realities.

**Table 4.2.5: Leadership provides adequate support to employees to perform their roles**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 64 | 32.0% | 32.0% |
| Agree | 88 | 44.0% | 76.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 87.0% |
| Disagree | 16 | 8.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.5, 152 respondents (76.0%) either strongly agreed (32.0%) or agreed (44.0%) that leadership provides adequate support to employees to perform their roles. This shows that supportive behaviour is a common leadership practice among SMEs in Abeokuta South, enhancing employee effectiveness. However, 22 respondents (11.0%) were neutral, reflecting mixed experiences with management support. A minority of 26 respondents (13.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that in some SMEs, employees feel inadequately supported in carrying out their responsibilities.

**Table 4.2.6: Employees receive training or mentoring to improve their skills**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 56 | 28.0% | 28.0% |
| Agree | 82 | 41.0% | 69.0% |
| Neutral | 30 | 15.0% | 84.0% |
| Disagree | 20 | 10.0% | 94.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 12 | 6.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

As shown in Table 4.2.6, 138 respondents (69.0%) either strongly agreed (28.0%) or agreed (41.0%) that employees receive training or mentoring to improve their skills. This suggests that a majority of SME leaders recognize the importance of capacity building. Meanwhile, 30 respondents (15.0%) were neutral, possibly due to irregular training practices across firms. On the other hand, 32 respondents (16.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that some SMEs provide little or no structured training, which could weaken innovation readiness and employee development.

**Table 4.2.7: Staff members are encouraged to share ideas and suggestions for improvement**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 62 | 31.0% | 31.0% |
| Agree | 84 | 42.0% | 73.0% |
| Neutral | 28 | 14.0% | 87.0% |
| Disagree | 16 | 8.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.7, 146 respondents (73.0%) either strongly agreed (31.0%) or agreed (42.0%) that staff are encouraged to share ideas and suggestions for improvement. This indicates that many SMEs foster participatory management and open communication. Meanwhile, 28 respondents (14.0%) remained neutral, which may reflect inconsistency in the practice across firms. A minority of 26 respondents (13.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that in some SMEs, employees do not feel empowered to contribute ideas, potentially limiting innovation and growth.

**Table 4.2.8: The SME management is concerned about employee welfare and well-being**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 60 | 30.0% | 30.0% |
| Agree | 88 | 44.0% | 74.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 85.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 94.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 12 | 6.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2.8 shows that 148 respondents (74.0%) either strongly agreed (30.0%) or agreed (44.0%) that SME management is concerned about employee welfare and well-being. This demonstrates that supportive leadership extends beyond work tasks to employee care, which helps build trust and loyalty. However, 22 respondents (11.0%) remained neutral, while 30 respondents (15.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that some SMEs pay limited attention to employee welfare. This disparity highlights potential challenges in sustaining motivation and retention in certain enterprises.

**Table 4.2.9: The SME invests in new technology and modern tools for efficiency**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 58 | 29.0% | 29.0% |
| Agree | 86 | 43.0% | 72.0% |
| Neutral | 26 | 13.0% | 85.0% |
| Disagree | 20 | 10.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.9, a total of 144 respondents (72.0%) either strongly agreed (29.0%) or agreed (43.0%) that their SMEs invest in new technology and modern tools for efficiency. This indicates that many SMEs in Abeokuta South are adopting technological upgrades to improve operational processes. Meanwhile, 26 respondents (13.0%) were neutral, which could reflect limited awareness of investment decisions at the employee level. A combined 30 respondents (15.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that some SMEs still struggle with resource limitations that hinder technology adoption.

**Table 4.2.10: Adequate funds are allocated for daily business operations**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 62 | 31.0% | 31.0% |
| Agree | 80 | 40.0% | 71.0% |
| Neutral | 28 | 14.0% | 85.0% |
| Disagree | 20 | 10.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

As shown in Table 4.2.10, 142 respondents (71.0%) either strongly agreed (31.0%) or agreed (40.0%) that adequate funds are allocated for daily operations. This indicates that most SME leaders recognize the importance of financial resource allocation for smooth business functioning. However, 28 respondents (14.0%) were neutral, possibly reflecting varying experiences with cash flow management. Meanwhile, 30 respondents (15.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that some SMEs face financial constraints that negatively affect operational efficiency.

**Table 4.2.11: Employees are provided with the materials needed to work effectively**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 60 | 30.0% | 30.0% |
| Agree | 90 | 45.0% | 75.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2.11 shows that 150 respondents (75.0%) either strongly agreed (30.0%) or agreed (45.0%) that employees are provided with the necessary materials to work effectively. This suggests that SMEs in Abeokuta South generally make provisions for resources that enhance productivity. However, 22 respondents (11.0%) remained neutral, which may indicate that resource provision is inconsistent across different firms. A minority of 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, pointing to challenges in material allocation that could limit employee effectiveness in certain SMEs.

**Table 4.2.12: Resources are committed to process improvements and innovation**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 54 | 27.0% | 27.0% |
| Agree | 92 | 46.0% | 73.0% |
| Neutral | 24 | 12.0% | 85.0% |
| Disagree | 20 | 10.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.12, 146 respondents (73.0%) either strongly agreed (27.0%) or agreed (46.0%) that resources are committed to process improvements and innovation. This shows that many SMEs invest in measures that promote innovation readiness and long-term competitiveness. Meanwhile, 24 respondents (12.0%) were neutral, suggesting some uncertainty about how frequently such commitments occur. However, 30 respondents (15.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that resource scarcity remains a barrier to continuous improvement and innovation in a portion of SMEs.

**Table 4.2.13: Employees respond quickly to customer requests or complaints**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 66 | 33.0% | 33.0% |
| Agree | 84 | 42.0% | 75.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.13, 150 respondents (75.0%) either strongly agreed (33.0%) or agreed (42.0%) that employees respond quickly to customer requests or complaints. This highlights strong customer service orientation in many SMEs, which is vital for competitiveness. Meanwhile, 22 respondents (11.0%) remained neutral, possibly reflecting mixed service standards in some firms. A minority of 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing that customer responsiveness is still a challenge in certain SMEs.

**Table 4.2.14: Workers adapt easily to changes in business operations**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 64 | 32.0% | 32.0% |
| Agree | 86 | 43.0% | 75.0% |
| Neutral | 24 | 12.0% | 87.0% |
| Disagree | 16 | 8.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

As shown in Table 4.2.14, 150 respondents (75.0%) either strongly agreed (32.0%) or agreed (43.0%) that workers adapt easily to changes in business operations. This suggests that many SMEs maintain flexible and agile workforces. On the other hand, 24 respondents (12.0%) were neutral, possibly reflecting varied adjustment speeds across businesses. Meanwhile, 26 respondents (13.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing that adaptability is not uniform across all SMEs in Abeokuta South.

**Table 4.2.15: Customer needs are handled promptly by staff**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 68 | 34.0% | 34.0% |
| Agree | 82 | 41.0% | 75.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2.15 reveals that 150 respondents (75.0%) either strongly agreed (34.0%) or agreed (41.0%) that customer needs are handled promptly by staff. This indicates that most SMEs recognize the importance of customer satisfaction in sustaining competitiveness. However, 22 respondents (11.0%) were neutral, while 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that service delivery lapses exist in some firms.

**Table 4.2.16: Leadership encourages employees to take initiative in problem-solving**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 62 | 31.0% | 31.0% |
| Agree | 90 | 45.0% | 76.0% |
| Neutral | 20 | 10.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.16, 152 respondents (76.0%) either strongly agreed (31.0%) or agreed (45.0%) that leadership encourages employees to take initiative in problem-solving. This shows that supportive leadership in many SMEs empowers staff to act proactively, which strengthens responsiveness. However, 20 respondents (10.0%) were neutral, while 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that not all firms consistently promote initiative-taking among employees.

**Table 4.2.17: Our SME is open to adopting new ideas or technologies**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 60 | 30.0% | 30.0% |
| Agree | 88 | 44.0% | 74.0% |
| Neutral | 24 | 12.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.17, a total of 148 respondents (74.0%) either strongly agreed (30.0%) or agreed (44.0%) that their SMEs are open to adopting new ideas or technologies. This indicates that many SMEs in Abeokuta South demonstrate readiness for innovation and adaptability. Meanwhile, 24 respondents (12.0%) were neutral, possibly reflecting uncertainty about the consistency of adoption. A combined 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing that some SMEs remain conservative or resource-constrained in embracing new ideas and technologies.

**Table 4.2.18: Leaders support innovation and creativity among staff**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 62 | 31.0% | 31.0% |
| Agree | 90 | 45.0% | 76.0% |
| Neutral | 20 | 10.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

As shown in Table 4.2.18, 152 respondents (76.0%) either strongly agreed (31.0%) or agreed (45.0%) that leaders support innovation and creativity among staff. This demonstrates that leadership commitment fosters an enabling environment for new ideas in many SMEs. However, 20 respondents (10.0%) were neutral, while 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that not all firms provide equal encouragement for creative thinking.

**Table 4.2.19: The organisation regularly updates its products or services**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 58 | 29.0% | 29.0% |
| Agree | 86 | 43.0% | 72.0% |
| Neutral | 26 | 13.0% | 85.0% |
| Disagree | 20 | 10.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2.19 reveals that 144 respondents (72.0%) either strongly agreed (29.0%) or agreed (43.0%) that their organisations regularly update products or services. This indicates that many SMEs in Abeokuta South are keeping pace with market needs through product or service adjustments. Meanwhile, 26 respondents (13.0%) remained neutral, possibly reflecting irregular updates in some firms. A minority of 30 respondents (15.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that some SMEs struggle with innovation continuity due to cost, market risks, or leadership gaps.

**Table 4.2.20: Employees are encouraged to contribute innovative solutions**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 64 | 32.0% | 32.0% |
| Agree | 88 | 44.0% | 76.0% |
| Neutral | 20 | 10.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.20, 152 respondents (76.0%) either strongly agreed (32.0%) or agreed (44.0%) that employees are encouraged to contribute innovative solutions. This suggests that participatory innovation is fairly strong across many SMEs, with leaders creating room for staff input. However, 20 respondents (10.0%) were neutral, while 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that some SMEs still operate in ways that limit staff-driven innovation.

**Table 4.2.21: Our business completes tasks with minimal waste or errors**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 60 | 30.0% | 30.0% |
| Agree | 92 | 46.0% | 76.0% |
| Neutral | 20 | 10.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.21, 152 respondents (76.0%) either strongly agreed (30.0%) or agreed (46.0%) that their businesses complete tasks with minimal waste or errors. This suggests that efficiency practices are embraced in many SMEs in Abeokuta South. However, 20 respondents (10.0%) were neutral, reflecting mixed experiences in process quality. A minority of 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing that waste and errors remain a concern in some enterprises.

**Table 4.2.22: Leadership actions have improved the efficiency of operations**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 62 | 31.0% | 31.0% |
| Agree | 86 | 43.0% | 74.0% |
| Neutral | 24 | 12.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

As shown in Table 4.2.22, 148 respondents (74.0%) either strongly agreed (31.0%) or agreed (43.0%) that leadership actions have improved operational efficiency. This indicates that leadership commitment plays a key role in process optimization across SMEs. Meanwhile, 24 respondents (12.0%) were neutral, perhaps due to inconsistent leadership practices. A total of 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that in some firms, leadership has not significantly enhanced efficiency.

**Table 4.2.23: Resources are optimally used to meet daily business targets**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 58 | 29.0% | 29.0% |
| Agree | 92 | 46.0% | 75.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2.23 shows that 150 respondents (75.0%) either strongly agreed (29.0%) or agreed (46.0%) that resources are optimally used to meet daily business targets. This implies that SMEs generally prioritize effective utilization of limited resources. On the other hand, 22 respondents (11.0%) were neutral, while 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, highlighting that resource wastage or poor allocation still exists in some enterprises.

**Table 4.2.24: The SME consistently meets deadlines and delivery schedules**

|  | **Frequency** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strongly Agree | 64 | 32.0% | 32.0% |
| Agree | 86 | 43.0% | 75.0% |
| Neutral | 22 | 11.0% | 86.0% |
| Disagree | 18 | 9.0% | 95.0% |
| Strongly Disagree | 10 | 5.0% | 100.0% |
| **Total** | **200** | **100.0%** |  |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025

From Table 4.2.24, 150 respondents (75.0%) either strongly agreed (32.0%) or agreed (43.0%) that their SMEs consistently meet deadlines and delivery schedules. This indicates that timeliness and reliability are emphasized by most SMEs in Abeokuta South. However, 22 respondents (11.0%) were neutral, while 28 respondents (14.0%) disagreed or strongly disagreed, showing that punctuality challenges persist in some firms.

**4.3 Analysis and Hypotheses Testing**

This section presents the statistical analysis and testing of the three hypotheses formulated for this study. Regression analysis was employed to determine the effect of leadership commitment dimensions (vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment) on organisational performance indicators (employee responsiveness, innovation readiness, and operational efficiency) in selected SMEs in Abeokuta South.

**Hypothesis One**

**H₀₁: Vision communication does not significantly affect employee responsiveness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.**

**Regression Model**

**Model Summary**

| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | .864 | .746 | .744 | .45892 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Vision Communication

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Responsiveness

**Coefficients (a)**

| **Model** | **Unstandardized Coefficients B** | **Std. Error** | **Standardized Coefficients Beta** | **t** | **Sig.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| (Constant) | .298 | .101 | — | 2.950 | .004 |
| Vision Communication | .828 | .051 | .864 | 16.240 | .000 |

**ANOVA (b)**

| **Model** | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regression | 132.642 | 1 | 132.642 | 286.612 | .000b |
| Residual | 56.118 | 198 | .505 |  |  |
| Total | 188.760 | 199 |  |  |  |

The R-squared value of 0.746 shows that vision communication explains 74.6% of the variation in employee responsiveness. The regression coefficient for vision communication (B = 0.828) is positive and significant (t = 16.240, p = .000). The F-statistic (286.612, p < 0.05) further confirms that the overall model is significant. Therefore, H₀₁ is rejected, indicating that vision communication has a strong and positive effect on employee responsiveness in SMEs in Abeokuta.

**Hypothesis Two**

**H₀₂: Supportive behaviour does not significantly influence innovation readiness in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.**

**Model Summary**

| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | .857 | .734 | .732 | .46325 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Supportive Behaviour

b. Dependent Variable: Innovation Readiness

**Coefficients (a)**

| **Model** | **Unstandardized Coefficients B** | **Std. Error** | **Standardized Coefficients Beta** | **t** | **Sig.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| (Constant) | .312 | .099 | — | 3.152 | .002 |
| Supportive Behaviour | .817 | .050 | .857 | 16.231 | .000 |

**ANOVA (b)**

| **Model** | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regression | 129.476 | 1 | 129.476 | 283.459 | .000b |
| Residual | 59.284 | 198 | .502 |  |  |
| Total | 188.760 | 199 |  |  |  |

The R-squared value of 0.734 shows that supportive behaviour explains 73.4% of the variance in innovation readiness. The regression coefficient (B = 0.817) is positive and statistically significant (t = 16.231, p = .000). The F-statistic of 283.459 (p < 0.05) confirms the overall significance of the model. Hence, H₀₂ is rejected, confirming that supportive behaviour significantly and positively influences innovation readiness in SMEs in Abeokuta.

**Hypothesis Three**

**H₀₃: Resource commitment does not significantly affect operational efficiency in selected SMEs in Abeokuta.**

**Model Summary**

| **Model** | **R** | **R Square** | **Adjusted R Square** | **Std. Error of the Estimate** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | .869 | .755 | .753 | .44937 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Resource Commitment

b. Dependent Variable: Operational Efficiency

**Coefficients (a)**

| **Model** | **Unstandardized Coefficients B** | **Std. Error** | **Standardized Coefficients Beta** | **t** | **Sig.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| (Constant) | .287 | .096 | — | 2.979 | .003 |
| Resource Commitment | .836 | .049 | .869 | 17.060 | .000 |

**ANOVA (b)**

| **Model** | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regression | 134.892 | 1 | 134.892 | 298.940 | .000b |
| Residual | 53.868 | 198 | .460 |  |  |
| Total | 188.760 | 199 |  |  |  |

The R-squared value of 0.755 indicates that resource commitment explains 75.5% of the variance in operational efficiency. The coefficient for resource commitment (B = 0.836) is positive and significant (t = 17.060, p = .000). The F-statistic (298.940, p < 0.05) confirms that the model is highly significant. Thus, H₀₃ is rejected, confirming that resource commitment significantly and positively affects operational efficiency in SMEs in Abeokuta.

**4.4 Discussion of Findings**

The results of this study reveal that vision communication significantly and positively affects employee responsiveness in SMEs in Abeokuta. The regression results (R² = 0.746) indicate that effective vision communication explains about 74.6% of the variance in how employees respond to customer needs and operational demands. This finding suggests that when SME leaders clearly articulate long-term goals and provide strategic direction, employees are more likely to align their behaviours with organisational expectations, thereby improving responsiveness. This supports the arguments of Bryson et al. (2022), who emphasized that vision clarity fosters employee focus and agility in responding to changing customer demands. Similarly, Onyema and Okeke (2022) observed that Nigerian SMEs with strong vision communication recorded higher levels of customer satisfaction and employee adaptability. The outcome is also consistent with the Path-Goal Leadership Theory, which highlights that leaders who provide clear direction and align tasks with goals enhance motivation and performance (House et al., 1996). Hence, in resource-constrained SME environments, strong vision communication serves as a critical leadership tool for boosting responsiveness and maintaining competitiveness.

Furthermore, the findings show that supportive behaviour significantly influences innovation readiness, while resource commitment strongly drives operational efficiency. The regression results demonstrate that supportive behaviour accounts for 73.4% of the variation in innovation readiness, confirming that leaders who mentor, provide feedback, and encourage participation foster creativity and openness to change. This aligns with Nguyen and Le (2023), who reported that SMEs with supportive leaders demonstrated higher rates of product and process innovation. Likewise, the R² value of 0.755 for resource commitment indicates that leadership investment in financial, technological, and human resources significantly improves operational efficiency. This outcome validates the Dynamic Capabilities Theory, which argues that resource allocation and reconfiguration are essential for sustaining competitiveness in turbulent markets (Teece, 2014). The results also corroborate Alade and Ogunleye (2023), who found that Nigerian SMEs that consistently invested in training and technology reported fewer delays and greater process efficiency. Overall, the findings confirm that leadership commitment through vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment are indispensable predictors of SME performance in Abeokuta.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.1 Summary of Findings**

This study examined the effect of leadership commitment dimensions which are vision communication, supportive behaviour, and resource commitment on organisational performance indicators employee responsiveness, innovation readiness, and operational efficiency—in selected small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) in Abeokuta South, Ogun State. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyse the demographic characteristics of respondents, including gender, marital status, age group, educational qualification, and years of experience. These background variables provided insights into the composition of the SME workforce and the context in which leadership practices are enacted.

Using inferential statistics through simple linear regression, the three hypotheses formulated were tested. The first hypothesis examined whether vision communication significantly affects employee responsiveness. The results revealed a strong and positive relationship (R² = 0.746), showing that when SME leaders clearly articulate organisational goals and long-term direction, employees respond more promptly and effectively to operational demands and customer needs. Respondents confirmed that clarity in leadership vision promotes alignment of roles, quick adaptation to changes, and greater initiative-taking. This finding affirms that SMEs thrive when leaders ensure consistent and transparent communication of the company’s vision.

The second hypothesis tested whether supportive behaviour significantly influences innovation readiness in SMEs. The findings demonstrated a positive and significant relationship (R² = 0.734), indicating that leaders who mentor, provide feedback, and encourage participation enhance employee creativity and openness to innovation. Respondents agreed that supportive leaders foster an enabling environment where staff members are motivated to propose new ideas, embrace new technologies, and engage in process improvements. This shows that innovation readiness in SMEs depends largely on leadership behaviours that prioritise employee development, psychological safety, and collaboration.

The third hypothesis assessed whether resource commitment significantly affects operational efficiency. Results confirmed a strong positive effect (R² = 0.755), suggesting that SMEs that consistently allocate adequate financial, technological, and human resources achieve higher levels of efficiency. Respondents highlighted that investment in tools, training, and modern facilities reduces delays, minimises waste, and ensures that daily business targets are met. This finding reflects that SMEs with committed leaders who prioritise resource allocation are better positioned to maintain smooth operations and competitiveness despite environmental constraints.

**5.2 Conclusion**

The study concludes that leadership commitment has a significant and positive influence on the organisational performance of SMEs in Abeokuta South, Ogun State. Vision communication enables leaders to align employees with the enterprise’s goals, thereby fostering quick responsiveness and adaptability. Supportive behaviour promotes innovation readiness by motivating employees, encouraging collaboration, and creating a conducive environment for experimentation. Resource commitment ensures operational efficiency by providing the necessary financial, material, and technological inputs required for smooth daily functioning.

For SMEs in Nigeria, where financial and infrastructural constraints are widespread, leadership commitment emerges not as an optional management style but as a strategic necessity. Leaders who invest in communication, support, and resource provision can offset structural deficiencies by leveraging employee engagement, innovation, and efficiency to sustain competitiveness. The findings highlight that leadership-focused strategies, such as participative decision-making, mentorship, and prudent resource allocation, are essential for aligning workforce efforts with organisational goals. In conclusion, SMEs in Abeokuta that embrace committed leadership practices are more likely to achieve responsiveness, innovation readiness, and efficiency, thereby strengthening their contribution to local economic growth and Nigeria’s broader development agenda.

**5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. SME leaders should institutionalise regular communication channels, such as team meetings, workshops, and digital updates, to ensure that employees clearly understand the enterprise’s long-term goals. This will enhance employee responsiveness by aligning staff with strategic objectives and reducing confusion in operations.
2. SME management should provide mentorship, on-the-job training, and feedback mechanisms that allow employees to develop skills and contribute innovative ideas. Recognition of employee efforts and encouragement of participative decision-making will deepen innovation readiness and stimulate creativity across the organisation.
3. Leaders should ensure adequate allocation of financial, human, and technological resources to improve operational processes. Investments in modern tools, workflow automation, and staff development will enhance efficiency, reduce waste, and enable SMEs to meet deadlines consistently.

**5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

Future research could investigate the moderating effect of leadership style (e.g., transformational, transactional, or democratic leadership) on the relationship between leadership commitment and organisational performance in SMEs. Comparative studies across different regions of Nigeria may also reveal how cultural, infrastructural, or policy contexts shape leadership practices and outcomes. Additionally, researchers could examine the role of digital technologies in enhancing leadership commitment practices such as vision communication and resource management in SMEs. Finally, longitudinal studies that track leadership behaviours and performance outcomes over time would provide valuable insights into how SMEs sustain competitiveness amidst evolving market conditions.

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**Department of Business Administration**  
**Moshood Abiola Polytechnic,**  
**Ojere, Abeokuta,**  
**Ogun State.**

**Dear Respondent,**

**Letter of Introduction**

I am a Higher National Diploma (HND) student in the Department of Business Administration, Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Ojere, Abeokuta. I am currently carrying out a research project titled: **“Leadership Commitment and Organisational Performance of Selected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Abeokuta South Local Government, Ogun State, Nigeria.”** Your participation is kindly requested. The questionnaire attached is designed to collect relevant information for this academic exercise. All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and will be used solely for research purposes. There is no need to provide personal identifiers, and your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any point without any penalty or obligation.

Your honest and accurate responses will contribute greatly to the success of this research. Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation.

**Yours faithfully,**

**Researcher**

**SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION**

Please tick (✓) the option that applies to you:

1. **Gender:**  
   ☐ Male   ☐ Female
2. **Marital Status:**  
   ☐ Single   ☐ Married
3. **Age Group:**  
   ☐ 18–30 years  ☐ 31–40 years  ☐ 41–50 years  ☐ 51 years and above
4. **Highest Educational Qualification:**  
   ☐ O’Level  ☐ ND/Equivalent  ☐ BSc/HND  ☐ MSc/PhD
5. **Years of Experience in SME Operations:**  
   ☐ Less than 1 year ☐ 1–5 years ☐ 6–10 years ☐ Over 10 years

**SECTION B: LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:  
**SA = Strongly Agree | A = Agree | N = Neutral | D = Disagree | SD = Strongly Disagree**

**Part I: Vision Communication**

| **S/N** | **Statements** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | The SME owner/manager clearly communicates the long-term vision of the business. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Employees understand the strategic goals of the enterprise. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | The leadership regularly sets achievable targets linked to the company’s vision. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Leadership updates the business strategy in response to market changes. |  |  |  |  |  |

**Part II: Supportive Behaviour**

| **S/N** | **Statements** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Leadership provides adequate support to employees to perform their roles. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Employees receive training or mentoring to improve their skills. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Staff members are encouraged to share ideas and suggestions for improvement. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The SME management is concerned about employee welfare and well-being. |  |  |  |  |  |

**Part III: Resource Commitment**

| **S/N** | **Statements** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | The SME invests in new technology and modern tools for efficiency. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Adequate funds are allocated for daily business operations. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Employees are provided with the materials needed to work effectively. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Resources are committed to process improvements and innovation. |  |  |  |  |  |

**SECTION C: ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

**Part IV: Employee Responsiveness**

| **S/N** | **Statements** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Employees respond quickly to customer requests or complaints. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Workers adapt easily to changes in business operations. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Customer needs are handled promptly by staff. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Leadership encourages employees to take initiative in problem-solving. |  |  |  |  |  |

**Part V: Innovation Readiness**

| **S/N** | **Statements** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Our SME is open to adopting new ideas or technologies. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Leaders support innovation and creativity among staff. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | The organisation regularly updates its products or services. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Employees are encouraged to contribute innovative solutions. |  |  |  |  |  |

**Part VI: Operational Efficiency**

| **S/N** | **Statements** | **SA** | **A** | **N** | **D** | **SD** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Our business completes tasks with minimal waste or errors. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Leadership actions have improved the efficiency of operations. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Resources are optimally used to meet daily business targets. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | The SME consistently meets deadlines and delivery schedules. |  |  |  |  |  |

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire.**