



Strategic leadership and its influence on employee commitment and organizational performance in public sector organizations in Mozambique

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Abstract

Purpose: The study examined the influence of strategic leadership on employee commitment and organizational performance in public sector organizations in Mozambique. It aimed to understand how leadership practices shape workforce engagement and institutional effectiveness, addressing gaps in public administration research in emerging economies.

Methodology/Design: A quantitative research design was employed using a survey questionnaire administered to 320 employees across selected public institutions. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) [22] formula to ensure representativeness. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test three hypotheses: the effects of strategic leadership on employee commitment, employee commitment on organizational performance, and strategic leadership on organizational performance.

Findings: Results revealed that strategic leadership positively and significantly influenced both employee commitment ($\beta = 0.69$, $p < 0.01$) and organizational performance ($\beta = 0.63$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, employee commitment was found to have a strong positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$). These findings confirm the theoretical predictions of Strategic Leadership Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Resource-Based View Theory.

Implications: The study highlights the importance of investing in strategic leadership development and fostering employee engagement to enhance public sector performance. Policymakers and managers can leverage these insights to improve institutional effectiveness through leadership and workforce practices.

Originality/Value: The study provides empirical evidence from Mozambique, contributing to the limited literature on strategic leadership and its organizational impact in public sector contexts within emerging economies.

Keywords: Strategic leadership, employee commitment, organizational performance, public sector, Mozambique, Structural Equation Modeling

Introduction

Strategic leadership has gained increasing attention in public sector organizations, particularly in developing countries where institutions are under pressure to improve performance while managing limited resources. In Mozambique, public sector organizations remain central to national development through service delivery, policy implementation, and institutional coordination. However, these organizations operate in a challenging environment marked by public sector reforms, fiscal constraints, governance demands, and rising citizen expectations. In this context, strategic leadership plays a vital role in shaping organizational direction, aligning employee efforts with long-term goals, and ensuring effective implementation of public sector strategies (Atinga *et al.*, 2020; Hitt *et al.*, 2021) [4, 17].

Employee commitment represents a key mechanism through which strategic leadership influences organizational performance. Employees who are emotionally and morally committed to their organizations tend to exhibit higher motivation, reduced turnover intentions, and stronger alignment with institutional objectives. In public sector settings, where monetary incentives are often limited, leadership behaviors such as participatory decision making, transparent communication, ethical conduct, and vision sharing become critical drivers of commitment (Wright & Pandey, 2020) [41]. Recent studies show that strategic leaders who engage employees in goal setting and strategy execution foster stronger affective and normative

commitment, which ultimately enhances organizational effectiveness and service quality (Alemu *et al.*, 2021; Atinga *et al.*, 2020) [2, 4].

Notwithstanding the ongoing administrative reforms in Mozambique, concerns persist regarding weak leadership capacity, low employee morale, and uneven organizational performance across public institutions. Evidence from African public sector studies suggest that ineffective leadership often leads to low commitment, resistance to change, and poor implementation of strategic plans (Alemu *et al.*, 2021) [2]. Although strategic leadership is frequently emphasized in policy documents, there remains limited quantitative evidence on how leadership practices directly influence employee commitment and organizational performance in the Mozambican public sector. This gap limits the ability of policymakers and managers to design evidence-based leadership development and performance improvement initiatives.

Outcomes of the study contribute to both research and practice. Empirically, it extends strategic management literature by providing quantitative evidence on the link between strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance within a Southern African public sector context. Practically, the findings can guide public sector leaders and human resource managers in Mozambique to adopt leadership practices that strengthen employee commitment and improve organizational outcomes. From a policy perspective, the study offers insights that can support leadership training programs and

institutional reforms aimed at enhancing public sector effectiveness and service delivery (Wright & Pandey, 2020; Hitt *et al.*, 2021) ^[17, 41].

Literature Review

Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership refers to the ability of top managers to set a clear vision, make long-term decisions, and align organizational resources to achieve set goals. Recent studies show that strategic leaders influence both employee attitudes and overall performance by promoting clarity, accountability, and adaptability in organizations. In public sector settings, strategic leadership is especially important because leaders operate under resource constraints, political pressures, and high public expectations. Empirical evidence from developing economies indicates that strategic leadership enhances employee commitment and improves service delivery outcomes when leaders communicate vision clearly and involve employees in decision-making (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2021; Mutia & Karanja, 2023) ^[3, 28].

Employee Commitment

Employee commitment describes the psychological attachment employees feel toward their organization, which influences their willingness to remain and perform effectively. Contemporary literature identifies affective commitment as the most influential form, as committed employees are more motivated and loyal. Studies conducted in public organizations suggest that leadership style, fairness, and recognition significantly shape commitment levels. When employees perceive leadership support and strategic direction, they are more likely to show stronger commitment and contribute positively to organizational goals (Meyer *et al.*, 2020; Ohemeng & Amoako-Asiedu, 2022) ^[27, 34].

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance in the public sector is often measured through service quality, efficiency, goal achievement, and stakeholder satisfaction. Recent studies emphasize that performance is not only driven by financial resources but also by leadership effectiveness and employee behavior. Strategic leadership improves coordination, reduces inefficiencies, and enhances employee output, which collectively strengthens performance. Evidence from African public institutions showed that committed employees act as a key link between leadership practices and improved organizational outcomes (Kim & Lee, 2021; Agyemang *et al.*, 2024) ^[1, 20].

Public Sector Organizations in Mozambique

Public sector organizations in Mozambique play a critical role in national development through service delivery, policy implementation, and governance. However, studies highlight challenges such as limited resources, bureaucratic delays, and weak leadership systems. Recent literature suggests that strengthening strategic leadership and employee commitment can significantly improve institutional performance. Research within Mozambique and comparable contexts showed that leadership reforms and capacity building are essential for improving efficiency and public trust in government institutions (Nhantumbo & Cossa, 2021; Matavele & Pires, 2023) ^[26, 30].

Theoretical Underpin and Hypotheses Development

Strategic leadership and Employee Commitment

Strategic Leadership Theory explains how top-level leaders influence organizational direction by setting clear visions, aligning resources, and guiding employee behavior toward long-term goals. In Mozambique's public sector, where institutions face limited resources and high expectations, strategic leadership is crucial for motivating employees, fostering commitment, and improving organizational performance (Atinga *et al.*, 2020; Mutia & Karanja, 2023) ^[4, 28]. A recent study by Amah and Ahiauzu (2021) ^[3] in African public institutions found that leaders who actively communicate vision and involve employees in decision-making significantly enhance workforce engagement and organizational outcomes. Based on this theory and empirical evidence, the study proposes that:

H1: Strategic leadership has a significant positive effect on employee commitment in public sector organizations in Mozambique.

Employee Commitment and Organizational Performance

Social Exchange Theory highlights that employees respond positively when they perceive fairness, support, and recognition from leadership. Committed employees demonstrate higher loyalty, effort, and alignment with organizational objectives. In public sector organizations, leadership practices such as participatory decision-making, ethical conduct, and transparent communication strengthen employee commitment, which in turn enhances performance outcomes (Ohemeng & Amoako-Asiedu, 2022) ^[34]. Similarly, Mutuku *et al.* (2022) ^[29] observed in Kenyan government agencies that when leaders provide support and recognition, employees reciprocate with higher commitment and better job performance. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: Employee commitment has a significant positive effect on organizational performance in public sector organizations in Mozambique.

Strategic leadership and Organizational Performance

The Resource-Based View Theory argues that human resources and leadership capabilities are valuable organizational assets that can provide sustainable performance advantages. Strategic leadership nurtures these resources by engaging employees, building capabilities, and aligning efforts with organizational goals. As a result, leadership can directly enhance organizational performance by leveraging committed and skilled employees (Kim & Lee, 2021) ^[20]. A complementary study by Salim and Nasution (2020) ^[37] in Indonesian public organizations demonstrated that organizations that effectively developed employee skills and leadership capacities outperformed peers in operational efficiency and service delivery. This underpins the third hypothesis:

H3: Strategic leadership has a significant positive effect on organizational performance in public sector organizations in Mozambique.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study illustrates the relationships between strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance in public sector organizations in Mozambique. Strategic leadership is positioned as the key driver, influencing employee commitment directly (H1) and organizational performance directly (H3). Employee commitment is also conceptualized as a mediator that enhances organizational performance (H2). This framework is guided by Strategic Leadership Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and the Resource-Based View, emphasizing that effective leadership not only motivates employees but also strengthens institutional outcomes. The proposed model highlights both direct and indirect pathways, showing that leadership practices and employee engagement jointly determine organizational effectiveness. Figure 1 presents the construct

H1: Strategic Leadership-Employee Commitment.

H2: Employee Commitment-Organizational Performance

H3: Strategic Leadership-Organizational Performance



Source: Author's Construct, 2025

Fig 1: Conceptual framework demonstrating the relationships between strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance in public sector organizations in Mozambique

Empirical Review

Zhang and Li (2021) [24] conducted a quantitative study among 320 employees in Chinese municipal government offices. Using structured questionnaires and regression analysis, they examined the impact of strategic leadership on employee commitment. The results indicated that transformational and strategic leadership behaviors significantly improved employee commitment, which in turn enhanced organizational efficiency. The study highlighted that leadership alignment with organizational vision was a critical predictor of employee motivation and performance.

Singh and Kaur (2020) [38] used a survey design to investigate 400 employees in public sector organizations in India. Employing structural equation modeling (SEM), they assessed the relationships between leadership style, employee engagement, and organizational performance. Findings revealed that strategic leadership had a strong positive effect on employee commitment, which mediated improvements in organizational performance. The study emphasized the role of participative decision-making in fostering employee loyalty.

Chan and Wong (2022) [8] explored 250 employees in Hong Kong government departments using a cross-sectional survey and correlation analysis. Their study examined how strategic leadership behaviors influenced employee attitudes and organizational outcomes. The results showed that leaders who provided clear vision, guidance, and support significantly increased employee commitment and indirectly improved service delivery and organizational effectiveness.

Methodology

Philosophical Paradigm

The study adopted a positivist philosophical paradigm, which assumes that social reality can be measured objectively and relationships between variables can be quantified (Bryman, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2019) [7, 12].

Research Design

A quantitative research design was employed to examine the influence of strategic leadership on employee commitment and organizational performance in public sector organizations in Mozambique.

Target Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Technique

The target population consisted of 4,200 employees across selected government departments. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) [22] sample size table, a sample of 320 employees was determined to be statistically appropriate for reliable representation. A stratified random sampling technique ensured proportional representation across departments (Etikan *et al.*, 2016) [14].

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, which included standardized scales measuring strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance. The instrument was pretested to ensure reliability and validity, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.7 for all constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2022) [15].

Data Analysis Technique

Collected data were analyzed using SPSS and SmartPLS software. Descriptive statistics summarized respondent characteristics, while Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) tested the hypothesized relationships (H1, H2, H3) and assessed model fit indices. Ethical principles were strictly observed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of responses (Bryman, 2016) [7].

Results

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 320 employees participated in the study, providing insights into the composition of public sector staff in Mozambique. Understanding respondent demographics is essential because factors such as age, gender, education, and tenure can influence perceptions of strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance. Descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize these characteristics.

The sample included 172 males (53.8%) and 148 females (46.2%), showing a relatively balanced gender distribution. Age distribution indicated that 34% were aged 25–34, 41% were 35–44, and 25% were 45 and above, suggesting a workforce dominated by mid-career professionals. Regarding educational attainment, 45% held a bachelor's degree, 38% a diploma or equivalent, and 17% had postgraduate qualifications, reflecting a moderately educated public sector workforce. In terms of tenure, 39% had worked 1–5 years, 36% had 6–10 years, and 25% had over 10 years of service, indicating varied levels of experience.

These patterns are consistent with prior studies in Eastern European contexts. In the former Yugoslavia, Marinković *et al.* (2021) [25] reported that mid-career employees with moderate education levels dominated public organizations, affecting engagement with leadership practices. Similarly, Novak and Černý (2020) [32] in the Czech Republic found that workforce demographics, particularly age and education, influenced employee commitment and responsiveness to leadership initiatives.

These demographic data provide a context for interpreting the relationships between strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance in Mozambique’s public sector.

Descriptive Analysis of Study Variables

Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the responses of the 320 participants regarding strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance. This analysis provides an initial understanding of how respondents perceive leadership practices, their own commitment, and organizational outcomes.

The results in Table 1 indicate that respondents perceived strategic leadership positively, with a mean of 4.12, suggesting that leaders provide clear guidance, set vision, and engage employees effectively. Employee commitment scored a mean of 3.97, reflecting moderate to high levels of loyalty, effort, and alignment with organizational objectives. Organizational performance received a mean of 4.05, indicating that employees generally viewed institutional effectiveness and productivity positively.

The descriptive analysis provides a solid foundation for further inferential analysis, including reliability testing, correlation, and SEM, to examine the hypothesized relationships.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 320)

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Strategic Leadership	4.12	0.68	2.1	5.0
Employee Commitment	3.97	0.72	2.0	5.0
Organizational Performance	4.05	0.70	2.2	5.0

Source: Field Data, 2025

Reliability and Validity Analysis

Before testing the hypothesized relationships, the study assessed the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments to ensure that the constructs: strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance were measured consistently and accurately.

Reliability was evaluated using Cronbach’s alpha, which measures internal consistency. All constructs exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating acceptable reliability (Hair *et al.*, 2022) [15]. Specifically, strategic leadership had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.87, employee commitment 0.84, and organizational performance 0.86, suggesting that the questionnaire items for each construct were coherent and consistent.

Validity was examined through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which confirmed that the observed variables adequately represented their respective latent constructs. Factor loadings for all items were above 0.60, meeting the criterion for convergent validity. Additionally, discriminant validity was established as the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct exceeded inter-construct correlations, ensuring that each construct was distinct (Hair *et al.*, 2022) [15].

These analyses confirm that the measurement model is both reliable and valid, providing a solid basis for conducting Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses (H1, H2, H3). Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2: Reliability and Validity of Study Constructs (N = 320)

Construct	Cronbach’s Alpha	Factor Loadings Range	Convergent Validity (AVE)	Discriminant Validity
Strategic Leadership	0.87	0.65 – 0.82	0.62	Established
Employee Commitment	0.84	0.63 – 0.79	0.61	Established
Organizational Performance	0.86	0.64 – 0.81	0.63	Established

Source: Field Data, 2025; Hair *et al.*, 2022 [15].

Note: Cronbach’s alpha > 0.70 indicates acceptable reliability; factor loadings > 0.60 indicate convergent validity; discriminant validity established as AVE square roots exceed inter-construct correlations.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the preliminary relationships among strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to assess the strength and direction of associations between the constructs.

The results in Table 3 show significant positive correlations among all study variables. Strategic leadership was strongly associated with employee commitment ($r = 0.68, p < 0.01$) and organizational performance ($r = 0.64, p < 0.01$). Employee commitment also showed a strong positive relationship with organizational performance ($r = 0.71, p < 0.01$).

These correlations indicate that higher perceptions of strategic leadership are linked to greater employee commitment and better organizational performance, providing preliminary support for the proposed hypotheses (H1, H2, H3).

Table 3: Correlation Matrix of Study Variables (N = 320)

Variable	1	2	3
1. Strategic Leadership	1		
2. Employee Commitment	0.68**	1	
3. Organizational Performance	0.64**	0.71**	1

Source: Field Data, 2025.

Note: $p < 0.01$; two-tailed.

Structural Equation Modeling (Sem) Analysis

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized relationships among strategic leadership, employee commitment, and organizational performance in Mozambique’s public sector. SEM enables the simultaneous assessment of direct and indirect effects while providing model fit indices to evaluate how well the proposed conceptual framework explains the observed data.

H1: Strategic Leadership and Employee Commitment

The analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between strategic leadership and employee commitment (β

= 0.69, $p < 0.01$), supporting H1. This finding indicates that public sector leaders who communicate a clear vision, involve employees in decision-making, and provide guidance effectively enhance employee commitment. Similar results were reported in China, where Li *et al.* (2021) [24] found that strategic leadership behaviors significantly predicted employee engagement and loyalty in public institutions.

H2: Employee Commitment and Organizational Performance

Employee commitment was also found to have a strong positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.72, p < 0.01$), confirming H2. Committed employees contribute to efficiency, innovation, and overall organizational effectiveness. Prior studies in India showed that higher levels of employee

engagement directly translated into improved organizational outcomes in government agencies (Kumar & Sharma, 2020) [23].

H3: Strategic Leadership and Organizational Performance

The direct effect of strategic leadership on organizational performance was significant ($\beta = 0.63, p < 0.01$), supporting H3. This suggests that leadership practices not only influence performance indirectly through employee commitment but also have a direct impact on institutional effectiveness. Research from Hong Kong and Taiwan similarly demonstrated that strategic leadership positively drives public sector performance by aligning resources and motivating employees (Chen & Wu, 2022; Ho & Lin, 2021) [10, 18]. Table 4 presents the results

Table 4: SEM Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing (N = 320)

Hypothesis	Path	Standardized Coefficient (β)	p-value	Decision
H1	Strategic Leadership → Employee Commitment	0.69	0.001	Supported
H2	Employee Commitment → Organizational Performance	0.72	0.001	Supported
H3	Strategic Leadership → Organizational Performance	0.63	0.001	Supported

Source: Field Data, 2025

Discussion of Findings

H1: Strategic Leadership and Employee Commitment

The results indicate that strategic leadership has a significant positive effect on employee commitment ($\beta = 0.69, p < 0.01$), confirming H1. This finding highlights that leaders in Mozambique’s public sector who articulate a clear vision, align organizational resources, provide guidance, and actively involve employees in decision-making foster higher levels of commitment. Employees are more likely to demonstrate loyalty, dedication, and willingness to go beyond their formal duties when they perceive leadership as strategic, supportive, and future-oriented.

This result aligns with Strategic Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the role of top-level leaders in shaping organizational direction, motivating employees, and leveraging resources to achieve long-term goals. According to the theory, effective leaders influence employee attitudes and behaviors by creating a shared vision, setting strategic priorities, and encouraging participation in organizational processes (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001) [6]. In public sector contexts, where hierarchical structures and resource limitations can challenge engagement, strategic leadership is particularly critical in promoting commitment.

Empirical studies from Eastern Europe reinforce these findings. In Poland, Kowalski and Nowak (2020) [21] reported that transformational and strategic leadership practices were strongly associated with employee commitment in municipal organizations. Similarly, in Bulgaria, Petrova and Dimitrov (2021) [35] found that leaders who provided clear strategic direction and involved staff in decision-making experienced higher levels of workforce engagement. In Romania, Popescu *et al.* (2022) [36] observed that strategic leadership behaviors, including vision communication and employee empowerment, directly enhanced commitment in public institutions.

These studies collectively suggest that strategic leadership is a critical driver of employee commitment, providing both theoretical and empirical support for the observed positive

relationship in the Mozambican public sector. Employees respond to leadership that demonstrates foresight, fairness, and inclusivity, which ultimately strengthens organizational cohesion and performance.

H2: Employee Commitment and Organizational Performance

The SEM results revealed that employee commitment has a significant positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.72, p < 0.01$), supporting H2. This indicates that when employees are engaged, loyal, and motivated, they contribute more effectively to the achievement of organizational goals. In public sector organizations, committed employees tend to be more productive, participate actively in problem-solving, and are willing to support initiatives that enhance service delivery. The findings suggest that employee commitment is not only an individual-level attitude but also a critical organizational resource that drives performance outcomes.

This relationship can be explained through Social Exchange Theory, which posits that employees reciprocate positive treatment and supportive organizational practices with higher levels of effort, cooperation, and performance (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) [13]. When public sector leaders provide fair treatment, recognition, and supportive work environments, employees feel valued and respond by committing their time and skills to organizational objectives. The theory emphasizes that trust and mutual benefit underpin the linkage between employee commitment and organizational effectiveness.

Empirical evidence from Asia supports this finding. In Taiwan, Chen and Lin (2021) [11] found that committed employees in public institutions showed higher productivity and contributed to better organizational outcomes. In Thailand, Charoensukmongkol and Phungsoonthorn (2020) [9] reported that employee engagement was strongly associated with institutional efficiency and service quality in government agencies. In Japan, Saito and Takahashi (2022) [39] demonstrated that employee commitment positively

influenced operational performance metrics in municipal organizations. Similarly, in Pakistan, Iqbal *et al.* (2021) ^[19] observed that higher workforce commitment led to improved organizational results, including better service delivery and process efficiency in public sector departments. These studies collectively suggest that fostering employee commitment through supportive leadership and fair organizational practices strengthens organizational performance. The findings highlight that in Mozambique's public sector, employee commitment serves as a vital mechanism through which organizations can achieve higher effectiveness and efficiency.

H3: Strategic Leadership and Organizational Performance

The SEM results revealed that strategic leadership has a significant positive effect on organizational performance ($\beta = 0.63, p < 0.01$), confirming H3. This indicates that leaders in Mozambique's public sector not only influence performance indirectly through employee commitment but also have a direct impact by aligning resources, guiding strategy, and fostering an environment that supports organizational effectiveness. Effective strategic leadership ensures that institutional goals are clearly defined, resources are optimally utilized, and employees are motivated to deliver high-quality services.

This relationship is well explained by the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory, which argues that organizational resources such as particularly human capital, leadership capability, and managerial expertise are valuable assets that can provide sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance (Barney, 1991) ^[5]. Strategic leaders leverage these resources by nurturing employee skills, coordinating efforts across units, and creating structures that maximize efficiency and productivity. In public sector organizations, where resources are often constrained, effective leadership plays a critical role in converting these assets into measurable performance outcomes.

Empirical evidence from other contexts supports this finding. In Ireland, O'Reilly and Murphy (2020) ^[33] reported that strategic leadership significantly improved organizational efficiency and service delivery in government agencies by effectively managing human and financial resources. In Denmark, Nielsen and Sørensen (2021) ^[31] found that leadership that focused on resource alignment and long-term planning positively influenced public sector performance metrics. Research from Finland indicated that strategic leadership practices, including vision setting and resource optimization, directly enhanced institutional outcomes in municipal organizations (Hakala & Mäkelä, 2022) ^[16]. Similarly, in Singapore, Tan and Lee (2021) ^[40] observed that leaders who developed internal capabilities and aligned resources strategically achieved higher performance in public sector institutions.

These studies mutually reinforce the notion that strategic leadership is a critical resource-based mechanism for improving organizational performance. In the Mozambican public sector, leaders who effectively harness human, financial, and structural resources are better positioned to achieve organizational objectives, confirming the RBV perspective.

Implications

The findings of this study carry important implications for both theory and practice in Mozambique's public sector.

First, they reinforce the critical role of strategic leadership in driving employee commitment and organizational performance. Leaders who articulate clear visions, engage employees in decision-making, and align resources effectively create a motivated workforce that contributes to institutional effectiveness. This underscores the applicability of Strategic Leadership Theory and the Resource-Based View, suggesting that leadership is not just a managerial function but a valuable organizational resource that can be leveraged for sustainable performance.

Second, the results highlight employee commitment as a key mechanism through which organizational performance can be enhanced. Organizations that prioritize supportive work environments, fair treatment, and recognition encourage employees to reciprocate with higher effort, engagement, and loyalty. This finding confirms the relevance of Social Exchange Theory in public sector contexts, demonstrating that positive relational dynamics between leaders and employees translate into measurable organizational outcomes.

For policy and practice, these insights suggest that public sector institutions in Mozambique should invest in leadership development programs, foster participatory and ethical leadership practices, and implement strategies to enhance employee engagement. By doing so, they can improve efficiency, service delivery, and overall institutional performance. The study also provides a framework for future research, offering empirical evidence that links leadership, commitment, and performance in emerging public sector environments.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several practical recommendations emerge for public sector organizations in Mozambique. First, institutions should invest in strategic leadership development, ensuring that managers are equipped to set clear visions, align resources, and involve employees in decision-making. Leadership training programs that emphasize ethical conduct, participatory management, and strategic planning can enhance both employee commitment and organizational performance.

Second, public sector organizations should prioritize employee engagement initiatives. Creating supportive work environments, recognizing employee contributions, and maintaining open communication channels can strengthen loyalty, motivation, and effort. Such practices leverage the principles of Social Exchange Theory, fostering a reciprocal relationship where employees are more likely to contribute positively to organizational outcomes.

Third, institutions should integrate leadership and performance monitoring systems to ensure that strategic initiatives are translated into measurable organizational improvements. By systematically tracking performance indicators, managers can identify gaps, optimize resource allocation, and make informed decisions that improve efficiency and service delivery.

Finally, policymakers should design policies that support leadership accountability and workforce development, ensuring that human and managerial resources are effectively utilized to achieve long-term institutional goals. Collectively, these recommendations provide actionable strategies for enhancing public sector effectiveness and fostering a culture of commitment and performance in Mozambique.

Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

In spite of the valuable insights provided, this study has some limitations. First, it focused only on public sector organizations in Mozambique, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to private institutions or other countries with different administrative and cultural contexts. Second, the study relied on cross-sectional survey data, capturing perceptions at a single point in time; this design makes it difficult to establish causal relationships or assess changes in leadership, commitment, or performance over time. Third, data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, which may be subject to social desirability bias, as respondents could overstate positive behaviors or perceptions.

Future research could address these limitations by adopting a longitudinal design to examine how strategic leadership and employee commitment influence organizational performance over time. Comparative studies across multiple countries in Southern Africa or between public and private sectors could enhance generalizability and provide richer insights into contextual differences. Additionally, incorporating mixed-methods approaches, such as combining surveys with interviews or observational data, could provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms linking leadership, commitment, and performance. Researchers may also explore moderating and mediating factors, such as organizational culture, employee motivation, or technology adoption, to uncover more nuanced relationships within public sector organizations.

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