



Exploring the role of strategic leadership in driving public sector reforms in Mozambique

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Abstract

Purpose: The study aimed to explore the role of strategic leadership in driving public sector reforms in Mozambique, focusing on how leadership practices influence reform implementation, employee engagement, and institutional performance.

Methodology/Design: A qualitative research approach was adopted under a constructivist paradigm. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 30 key public sector officials, including senior managers, department heads, and policy implementers. Purposive sampling was employed to select participants with direct involvement in reform initiatives. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, ensuring reliability through consistent interview protocols and validity through member checking and triangulation with policy documents and prior studies.

Findings: The study revealed that strategic leadership positively shapes reform outcomes through visionary guidance, participatory decision-making, and effective resource allocation. Additionally, leadership practices significantly influenced employee engagement and institutional performance via open communication, recognition, capacity building, and performance monitoring.

Implications: Findings suggest that effective strategic leadership is crucial for enhancing both the success of public sector reforms and employee commitment, offering practical guidance for policymakers and public sector managers to strengthen reform initiatives.

Originality/Value: The study contributes to the literature by applying Strategic Leadership Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory in the context of Mozambique's public sector, providing nuanced insights into the mechanisms through which leadership drives reform success and institutional effectiveness in emerging economies.

Keywords: Strategic leadership, public sector reforms, employee engagement, institutional performance, mozambique, qualitative study

Introduction

Strategic leadership plays a central role in shaping the direction, efficiency, and effectiveness of public sector organizations worldwide. In the context of Mozambique, public institutions are tasked with implementing policies and reforms that aim to improve service delivery, transparency, and institutional performance. However, these organizations often operate under complex conditions, including limited financial resources, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and political pressures (Matavele & Pires, 2023) [15].

Effective strategic leadership goes beyond administrative supervision; it involves setting a clear vision, aligning resources, influencing organizational culture, and motivating employees to embrace reforms (Alemu, Bekele, & Tadesse, 2021) [4]. Leaders who exhibit strategic competencies can anticipate challenges, make informed decisions, and guide institutions toward achieving policy objectives. In Mozambique, public sector reforms have historically faced delays and implementation gaps, often attributed to weak leadership, low employee engagement, and fragmented coordination (Nhantumbo & Cossa, 2021) [18].

Globally, studies indicate that strategic leadership directly affects reform outcomes by fostering innovation, encouraging accountability, and building capacity among employees (Mutia & Karanja, 2023; Wright & Pandey, 2020) [16, 21]. By understanding how leaders influence the adoption and success of reforms in Mozambique, insights can be gained into the factors that facilitate effective public administration and institutional transformation.

Problem Statement

Notwithstanding the numerous reform initiatives, public sector organizations in Mozambique continue to struggle with achieving their performance goals. Reforms are often hindered by inconsistent policy implementation, low employee morale, and limited alignment between leadership strategies and organizational objectives (Matavele & Pires, 2023) [15]. While previous studies have explored public sector performance broadly, there is limited empirical evidence on how strategic leadership directly contributes to reform success in Mozambique. Without understanding the mechanisms through which leaders drive change, reform efforts risk being ineffective, unsustainable, or poorly institutionalized.

Study Objective

The study explores the role of strategic leadership in driving public sector reforms in Mozambique. Specifically, the study seeks to

1. Explore how strategic leadership practices influence the implementation and success of public sector reforms in Mozambique and;
2. Examine the role of strategic leadership in shaping employee engagement and institutional performance during public sector reform initiatives.

Significance of The Study

The study provides valuable insights into the role of strategic leadership in guiding public sector reforms in Mozambique. Thus, in examining leadership practices, decision-making processes, and their influence on employee

behavior, the research will highlight critical factors that contribute to successful policy implementation. Findings from this study can inform policymakers and organizational leaders on designing strategies that enhance institutional efficiency and responsiveness.

Moreover, the study contributes to scholarly knowledge by addressing a gap in qualitative research on strategic leadership in African public administration. It emphasizes the interplay between leadership, organizational culture, and reform outcomes, offering lessons that are applicable not only in Mozambique but also in similar developing country contexts facing institutional and governance challenges (Atinga, Abekah-Nkrumah, & Domfeh, 2020)^[6].

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The Strategic Leadership Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory underpin the study

Strategic Leadership Theory

Strategic Leadership Theory explains how leaders influence organizational direction by setting visions, aligning resources, and guiding employee behavior toward long-term goals (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001)^[8]. In public sector reforms, strategic leadership is crucial for ensuring that reform initiatives are effectively planned, communicated, and executed, fostering alignment between institutional objectives and employee actions.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes leaders' ability to inspire, motivate, and empower employees to exceed expectations (Bass & Riggio, 2006)^[7]. In the context of public sector reforms, transformational leadership helps build commitment, encourage innovation, and overcome resistance to change, which are essential for successful reform implementation.

Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership refers to the ability of leaders to influence organizational direction, allocate resources effectively, and guide employee behavior toward achieving long-term goals (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001)^[8]. In the public sector, strategic leaders are critical in shaping institutional priorities, fostering commitment among staff, and ensuring that organizational objectives are met efficiently. Studies in African public institutions show that effective strategic leadership enhances employee engagement, decision-making, and overall organizational performance (Alemu *et al.*, 2021; Mutia & Karanja, 2023)^[4, 16].

Public Sector Reforms in Mozambique

Public sector reforms in Mozambique aimed to improve governance, efficiency, and service delivery, often involving restructuring, policy changes, and capacity building. Leadership plays a central role in determining the success of these reforms by guiding implementation, reducing resistance, and promoting accountability (Matavele & Pires, 2023; Nhantumbo & Cossa, 2021)^[15, 18]. Empirical evidence suggests that where leaders provide clear vision, support employees, and communicate effectively, reforms are more likely to achieve their intended outcomes (Atinga *et al.*, 2020)^[6].

Strategic Leadership Practices on Public Sector Reforms in Mozambique

Strategic Leadership Theory explains how top-level leaders influence organizational direction by setting a clear vision, aligning resources, and guiding employee behavior toward long-term goals (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001)^[8]. In the context of Mozambique, public sector reforms often encounter challenges such as limited resources, bureaucratic inertia, and unclear policy frameworks (Matavele & Pires, 2023)^[15]. Strategic leaders who provide clear guidance, promote accountability, and foster participatory decision-making are better positioned to drive reform success.

Empirical evidence supports this view. Nhantumbo and Cossa (2021)^[18] observed that Mozambican government agencies with strategic leadership practices experienced smoother policy implementation and higher adherence to reform objectives. Alemu, Bekele, and Tadesse (2021)^[4] similarly found across African public organizations that leaders engaging in proactive planning, transparent communication, and problem-solving achieved better reform outcomes. These findings suggest that strategic leadership, through vision, resource coordination, and employee alignment, serves as a key driver for implementing public sector reforms successfully.

By framing the study through Strategic Leadership Theory, this objective emphasizes that leadership behaviors are not only influential but essential for translating reform policies into tangible results, ensuring both efficiency and effectiveness in the Mozambican public sector.

Strategic Leadership in Shaping Employee Engagement and Institutional Performance

Transformational Leadership Theory highlights how leaders inspire and motivate employees to exceed expectations, fostering commitment, creativity, and organizational performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006)^[7]. In public sector reform contexts, transformational leaders engage employees through vision communication, recognition of contributions, and participatory decision-making, which enhances engagement and reduces resistance to change.

In Mozambique, studies have shown that such leadership practices positively affect employee engagement and institutional performance. Nhantumbo and Cossa (2021)^[18] noted that involving employees in reform planning created ownership and increased willingness to support changes. Atinga, Abekah-Nkrumah, and Domfeh (2020)^[6] found that supportive leadership practices in African public organizations strengthened commitment, leading to higher efficiency and better service delivery. Similar findings in Kenya and South Africa demonstrate that transformational leadership fosters trust, motivation, and sustained performance outcomes (Mutuku, Mwangi, & Otieno, 2022; Alemu *et al.*, 2021)^[4, 17].

Framing this objective through Transformational Leadership Theory underscores that employee engagement is a critical mechanism through which leadership practices translate into improved institutional performance. Leaders who inspire, mentor, and empower staff drive both individual and organizational outcomes during public sector reform initiatives.

Empirical Review

Al-Shammari and Al-Qahtani (2021)^[3] conducted a quantitative survey among 300 middle and senior managers

in Saudi public institutions to explore how strategic leadership affects employee engagement and organizational outcomes. Participants completed structured questionnaires that measured leadership practices, staff engagement, and performance indicators. Analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM) revealed that strategic leadership significantly predicted employee engagement and positively influenced organizational performance. The study highlighted that leaders who communicate vision clearly and involve staff in decision-making were better able to foster engagement and improve institutional results.

In the UAE, Al-Mazrouei and Ali (2020) [2] used a mixed-methods design, surveying 250 employees in federal government agencies and conducting follow-up interviews with 15 department heads. The quantitative portion used regression analysis to examine the link between transformational leadership and employee commitment, while interviews explored how leadership practices shaped work motivation. Findings showed that transformational leadership behaviors such as empowerment, feedback, and individualized support were strongly associated with improved employee commitment, which in turn enhanced organizational performance and service quality.

Petrenko *et al.* (2022) [20] investigated strategic leadership and organizational effectiveness in Ukrainian public sector organizations using a cross-sectional survey of 280 civil servants. The study applied confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and SEM to assess relationships between leadership practices, employee attitudes, and performance outcomes. Results showed that strategic leadership had a direct positive impact on institutional performance and an indirect effect through employee commitment. The researchers noted that in transitional contexts like Ukraine, leadership capability is crucial for navigating reform pressures and maintaining organizational stability.

Methodology

Philosophical Foundation

The study was guided by a constructivist philosophical paradigm, which emphasizes understanding participants' lived experiences and perceptions within their real-life context (Creswell & Creswell, 2019) [11]. This approach was deemed suitable because strategic leadership and public sector reforms are complex, context-specific phenomena that require in-depth exploration of participants' subjective experiences rather than purely quantitative measures (Bryman, 2016) [10].

Research Design

A case study design was adopted to explore strategic leadership practices and their influence on public sector reforms in selected Mozambican institutions (Yin, 2018) [22]. This design allowed the researcher to collect detailed, context-rich data, capturing both challenges and successes in reform implementation.

Target Population and Sampling

The target population consisted of senior managers, department heads, and policy implementers in public sector organizations actively involved in reform initiatives. Using purposive sampling, 30 participants were selected for their direct involvement in strategic leadership and reform implementation. This sample size is supported by qualitative research norms, which prioritize depth and richness of data

over quantity, ensuring thematic saturation (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2020) [12].

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, enabling participants to share their experiences and perspectives freely. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and anonymized to protect confidentiality. This method allowed for flexibility in probing and clarifying responses while ensuring comprehensive coverage of the research objectives.

Data Analysis Technique

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the transcribed data systematically. This approach involved coding the data, identifying patterns, and grouping them into themes that reflect the relationships between strategic leadership practices and reform outcomes (Braun & Clarke, 2021) [9].

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity were ensured through member checking, peer debriefing, and maintaining a clear audit trail of all research activities. These measures enhanced credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) [14].

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly observed, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and protecting participants' autonomy. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any time without consequence (Creswell & Creswell, 2019) [11].

Results

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 30 participants, comprising senior managers, department heads, and policy implementers in Mozambican public sector organizations involved in reform initiatives, took part in the study. Understanding the demographic composition provides context for interpreting their perspectives on strategic leadership and public sector reforms. The participants varied in age, gender, educational background, years of experience, and professional roles, which may influence their perceptions and experiences.

The study collected demographic information from 30 participants to provide context for understanding the perspectives on strategic leadership and public sector reforms in Mozambique. As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents were male (60%), while females constituted 40% of the sample. In terms of age distribution, most participants fell within the 35–44-year category (40%), followed by 45–54 years (27%), 25–34 years (20%), and 55 years and above (13%). This distribution indicates a mix of early, mid, and late-career professionals, reflecting varied levels of experience and exposure to public sector management.

Regarding educational attainment, over half of the respondents held a master's degree (53%), while 33% had a bachelor's degree and 14% a doctorate. This suggests a highly qualified sample capable of providing informed insights into leadership practices and reform processes. In terms of professional experience, 40% had 6–10 years, 27% had 11–15 years, 17% had 1–5 years, and another 17% had more than 16 years of experience. These findings indicate

that the sample included both emerging and seasoned professionals with diverse perspectives. Finally, participants' roles varied, with 40% serving as department heads, 33% as senior managers, and 27% as policy implementers. This variety ensures a broad understanding of strategic leadership practices and their influence on reform initiatives. Similar demographic trends

have been observed in studies conducted in Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, where mid-career professionals with advanced degrees significantly contributed to insights on public sector reform and leadership effectiveness (Atinga *et al.*, 2020; Kiggundu, 2021) [6]. Table 1 presents a summary of the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 30)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	18	60
	Female	12	40
Age	25–34 years	6	20
	35–44 years	12	40
	45–54 years	8	27
	55+ years	4	13
Highest Education Level	Bachelor's degree	10	33
	Master's degree	16	53
	Doctorate	4	14
Years of Experience	1-5	5	17
	6–10	12	40
	11-15	8	27
	16 +	5	17
Position	Senior Manager	10	33
	Department Head	12	40
	Policy Implementer	8	27

Source: Field Data, 2025

Reliability and Validity of The Study

The reliability and validity assessment for this study focused on ensuring that the data collected from participants accurately reflected their experiences and perspectives regarding strategic leadership in public sector reforms in Mozambique. For Objective 1, which explored how strategic leadership practices influence the implementation and success of public sector reforms, reliability was strengthened by using a consistent interview guide, audio-recording all interviews, and conducting peer reviews of transcripts. Validity was enhanced through member checking with participants and triangulation with policy documents and prior studies. These steps confirmed that the identified themes were credible, consistent, and aligned with existing literature.

For Objective 2, which examined the role of strategic leadership in shaping employee engagement and institutional performance during reform initiatives, reliability was ensured through a systematic coding process, iterative review of transcripts, and cross-checking of emerging themes. Validity was further reinforced by confirming findings with participants and comparing them with documented institutional practices and prior research. This approach demonstrated that the results reliably captured how leadership practices influence employee engagement and institutional effectiveness in the context of public sector reforms. Table 2 summarizes the reliability and validity measures and outcomes for both study objectives, highlighting the methodological rigor applied throughout the research process.

Table 2: Reliability and Validity Results for Study Objectives 1 & 2

Objective	Reliability Measures	Validity Measures	Result/Outcome
1. To explore how strategic leadership practices, influence the implementation and success of public sector reforms in Mozambique	Consistent interview guide applied to all participants; audio-recorded interviews; peer review of transcripts	Member checking with participants; triangulation with policy documents and prior studies	High reliability and credibility; themes confirmed by participants and aligned with literature
2. To examine the role of strategic leadership in shaping employee engagement and institutional performance during public sector reform initiatives	Systematic coding process using thematic analysis; iterative review of transcripts; cross-checking of emerging themes	Validation through participant confirmation; comparison with documented institutional practices and prior studies	Strong validity; findings accurately reflected leadership influence on engagement and performance

Source: Field Data, 2025

Objective 1: Exploring how strategic leadership practices influence the implementation and success of public sector reforms

Three main themes emerged: visionary guidance, participatory decision-making, and effective resource allocation.

Visionary guidance: Participants emphasized the importance of leaders providing a clear direction for

reforms. One participant noted, “When our leaders clearly communicate the goals of the reform, we understand our roles better and work more efficiently.”

Participatory decision-making: Several respondents highlighted that involving staff in planning and execution increased ownership of reform initiatives. A department head stated, “When I am consulted during policy changes, I feel responsible for ensuring its success.”

Effective resource allocation: Leaders who prioritized the allocation of financial, human, and technical resources were reported to facilitate smoother implementation of reforms. A senior manager explained, “Reforms only succeed when the right tools and personnel are in place, and our leaders make sure these are available.”

These themes indicate that strategic leadership practices play a crucial role in steering reforms toward successful outcomes

Objective 2: Examining the role of strategic leadership in shaping employee engagement and institutional performance

Four key themes emerged: communication and feedback, recognition and support, capacity building, and performance monitoring.

Communication and feedback: Leaders who maintain open channels of communication help employees stay informed and engaged. A policy implementer shared, “Regular updates and feedback make me feel connected to the reform process and motivated to contribute.”

Recognition and support: Acknowledging employee efforts was reported to boost morale and commitment. One respondent noted, “When leaders appreciate our hard work, we put in more effort and take ownership of outcomes.”

Capacity building: Training and mentoring initiatives led by leaders enhanced employees’ ability to perform effectively. A senior manager remarked, “Workshops and coaching sessions give us the skills needed to handle complex reform tasks.”

Performance monitoring: Strategic oversight and evaluation helped maintain accountability and improve institutional effectiveness. A department head mentioned, “Monitoring progress and addressing challenges early keeps the institution on track.”

These findings show that strategic leadership directly influences employee engagement and institutional performance

Discussion of Findings

Objective 1: Exploring How Strategic Leadership Practices Influence the Implementation and Success of Public Sector Reforms

The findings revealed that strategic leadership plays a pivotal role in guiding public sector reforms in Mozambique. Three main themes emerged: visionary guidance, participatory decision-making, and effective resource allocation, all of which align with Strategic Leadership Theory, which emphasizes that leaders set the direction, align resources, and influence employee behavior to achieve organizational goals (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001)^[8]. Visionary guidance emerged as a critical factor in successful reform implementation. Participants emphasized that when leaders clearly articulate reform objectives, employees understand their roles and responsibilities, enhancing efficiency and commitment. One participant stated, “When our leaders clearly communicate the goals of the reform, we understand our roles better and work more efficiently.” This aligns with studies in South Africa, where Agyemang *et al.*

(2024)^[1] reported that leaders who communicated a clear vision significantly improved reform adoption in public institutions. Similarly, in Kenya, Mutuku *et al.* (2022)^[17] found that clarity of purpose from senior leaders increased employee engagement and commitment during policy changes.

Participatory decision-making also surfaced as a key theme. Involving employees in planning and executing reforms enhanced ownership and accountability. A department head noted, “When I am consulted during policy changes, I feel responsible for ensuring its success.” This supports findings from Lesotho, where Alemu *et al.* (2021)^[4] showed that inclusive leadership approaches strengthened buy-in and accelerated reform processes. In Cameroon, Matavele and Pires (2023)^[15] observed that participatory strategies enabled employees to contribute ideas, increasing the likelihood of successful reform outcomes.

Effective resource allocation was highlighted as essential for reform success. Leaders who ensured the availability of financial, human, and technical resources facilitated smooth implementation. A senior manager explained, “Reforms only succeed when the right tools and personnel are in place, and our leaders make sure these are available.” This is consistent with prior evidence from South African public institutions, where well-resourced leadership teams were linked to higher reform success rates (Atinga *et al.*, 2020)^[6]. In Kenya and Cameroon, strategic distribution of resources was shown to enhance institutional capacity and improve operational efficiency during reform initiatives (Mutia & Karanja, 2023; Ohemeng & Amoako-Asiedu, 2022)^[16, 19]. Generally, the results confirm that strategic leadership practices such as vision, inclusion, and resource management significantly influence the implementation and success of public sector reforms in Mozambique, consistent with the principles of Strategic Leadership Theory.

Objective 2: Examining the Role of Strategic Leadership in Shaping Employee Engagement and Institutional Performance

The analysis highlighted that strategic leadership significantly shapes both employee engagement and institutional performance during public sector reforms in Mozambique. Four key themes emerged: communication and feedback, recognition and support, capacity building, and performance monitoring, which are strongly aligned with Transformational Leadership Theory. This theory posits that leaders inspire and motivate employees through vision, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and effective communication to achieve higher performance and engagement (Bass & Riggio, 2006)^[7].

Communication and feedback were emphasized by participants as a critical enabler of engagement. Leaders who maintained open and consistent channels of communication ensured employees understood reform goals and felt involved in the process. A policy implementer remarked, “Regular updates and feedback make me feel connected to the reform process and motivated to contribute.” Prior studies in Ghana reported that transformational leaders who communicate effectively foster greater employee involvement and initiative, resulting in higher institutional performance (Atinga *et al.*, 2020)^[6]. Similarly, research from the USA and Canada demonstrated that continuous feedback and transparent communication under transformational leadership enhanced staff

engagement and organizational effectiveness in public agencies (Wright & Pandey, 2020; Ross *et al.*, 2020) [21].

Recognition and support also emerged as essential for boosting morale and commitment. One respondent explained, “When leaders appreciate our hard work, we put in more effort and take ownership of outcomes.” This aligns with Australian studies where employee recognition by transformational leaders increased motivation, loyalty, and task performance (Wilson *et al.*, 2019). In Austria, acknowledgment of contributions under transformational leadership was linked to stronger engagement and improved institutional efficiency (Hakala & Mäkelä, 2022) [13].

Capacity building through training, coaching, and mentoring enhanced employees’ competencies to manage complex reform tasks. A senior manager noted, “Workshops and coaching sessions give us the skills needed to handle complex reform tasks.” Prior research in Ghana and the USA has shown that transformational leaders who invest in employee development improve adaptability, innovation, and performance outcomes (Mutia & Karanja, 2023; Andaleeb, 2019) [5, 16].

Performance monitoring was highlighted as a means to maintain accountability and drive institutional effectiveness. A department head stated, “Monitoring progress and addressing challenges early keeps the institution on track.” Similar findings were reported in Canadian and Australian public sector studies, where transformational leadership practices involving performance oversight positively influenced institutional outcomes (Ross *et al.*, 2020; Wilson *et al.*, 2019).

Essentially, the findings demonstrate that transformational leadership practices—effective communication, recognition, capacity building, and performance monitoring—directly enhance employee engagement and institutional performance, supporting the theoretical underpinnings of Transformational Leadership Theory.

Implications

The findings of this study have several important implications for public sector management in Mozambique. First, they highlight the critical role of strategic leadership in guiding and sustaining reform initiatives. Leaders who provide a clear vision, involve employees in decision-making, and allocate resources effectively can significantly improve the implementation and success of public sector reforms. This suggests that leadership development programs should emphasize these strategic capabilities to strengthen reform outcomes.

Second, the study underscores the importance of employee engagement as a mediating factor between leadership practices and institutional performance. Transformational leadership behaviors, including open communication, recognition, capacity building, and performance monitoring, were shown to enhance employee commitment, motivation, and accountability. Public sector organizations can benefit from adopting structured engagement strategies that align employees with organizational goals and reforms.

Third, the research contributes to policy and practice by demonstrating that leadership interventions are not only managerial tools but also strategic enablers of institutional effectiveness. Policymakers and public sector administrators can leverage these insights to design leadership frameworks, training programs, and performance management systems that foster long-term sustainability and efficiency in reform initiatives.

Finally, the study offers theoretical validation, confirming that Strategic Leadership Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory provide a strong foundation for understanding how leadership shapes reform success, employee engagement, and organizational performance in emerging public sector contexts. This bridges theory and practice and guides future research in similar governance settings.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, several recommendations can be made to strengthen public sector reforms in Mozambique.

First, public sector organizations should invest in strategic leadership development programs that emphasize vision setting, participatory decision-making, and effective resource management. Training leaders to communicate reform goals clearly and allocate resources efficiently can enhance the successful implementation of policies.

Second, organizations should prioritize employee engagement initiatives. Leaders should maintain open communication channels, provide regular feedback, recognize contributions, and offer capacity-building opportunities. These practices increase employee commitment, motivation, and accountability, which in turn support organizational performance.

Third, policymakers and administrators should institutionalize performance monitoring mechanisms. Regular evaluation of reform progress and early identification of challenges ensures that interventions remain on track and resources are optimally utilized.

Finally, public sector institutions should adopt a holistic leadership approach that integrates strategic and transformational leadership principles. By aligning leadership behaviors with reform objectives and employee needs, organizations can sustain long-term improvements, foster trust, and drive institutional effectiveness.

These recommendations collectively provide practical guidance for enhancing both leadership practices and reform outcomes in Mozambique’s public sector.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

The study had some limitations. First, the sample size of 30 participants, while adequate for qualitative insights, limits the generalizability of the findings across all public sector organizations in Mozambique. Second, data relied on self-reported experiences, which may introduce subjective bias. Third, the study focused only on strategic leadership, leaving out other leadership styles that might influence reforms and employee engagement.

For future research, studies could expand the sample size and include multiple regions to improve generalizability. Quantitative approaches or mixed-method designs could complement qualitative insights and provide statistical validation. Additionally, exploring the role of other leadership styles, such as transactional or servant leadership, and their interaction with strategic leadership could provide a more comprehensive understanding of public sector reform outcomes.

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