

Influence of Strategic Leadership on the Performance of Hospitality Companies in Maputo Province, Mozambique

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Abstract

The drivers of strategy implementation are crucial for achieving strategic goals. The study aims to identify critical elements that contribute to enhanced performance in the Hotel industry. It examines the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of hospitality companies in Maputo Province, Mozambique, focusing on key elements that enhance hotel performance. The study, grounded in Strategic Leadership theory, utilized a descriptive survey research design. Data were collected from 10 hotels, with participants including 10 Chief Executive Officers, 10 relationship managers, 10 operations managers, 10 IT managers, and 10 strategic leaders. A total of 50 respondents were selected through simple random sampling method, and they responded to both limited-choice and open-ended questions. To ensure the validity of the research, a pre-test was conducted at Vip Grand Hotel Maputo, with one relationship manager and two IT staff. The findings were illustrated using descriptive statistics, frequency charts, and detailed explanations, while inferential statistics were analyzed through multiple regression and correlation analysis. Results indicated that strategic leadership significantly influences the performance of hospitality companies. A correlation coefficient of 0.089 was found between strategic leadership and performance, with statistical significance at a p-value of 0.05. Participants highlighted the importance of effective leadership, emphasizing that senior management must cultivate behaviors and practices that drive performance. The study concluded that effective leadership is essential for achieving customer satisfaction, profitability, market share, operational efficiency, informed decision-making, and resource management. As a result, the study recommends that hotel CEOs prioritize a culture of creativity and innovation. This can be accomplished by encouraging employees to share ideas, experiment with new approaches, and continuously improve processes, thereby enhancing overall hotel performance.

Keywords: *Strategic Leadership, Implementation, Performance, Hospitality Companies, Maputo Province, Mozambique*

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1.0 Introduction

In a competitive business environment, having a clear strategy is crucial for achieving organizational goals. However, effective implementation of strategies is just as important, since it turns plans into results (Porter, 1996). Strategy implementation has evolved from early business focuses on production efficiency and cost reduction, to the need for comprehensive strategies in response to global competition and market complexity. Ancient Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu, author of “The Art of War” (2009), and one of the early thinkers on strategy, highlighted the importance of understanding competition, adapting to changes, and having a well-defined action plan-principles. The hospitality sector is a highly competitive industry that requires effective strategy implementation to achieve performance. The global hotel industry has faced several performance challenges over the years. Economic downturns, such as the 2008 financial crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic have led to significant revenue losses and reduced occupancy rates (Ritchie & Crouch, 2010; Gössling et al., 2020). The rise of alternative accommodation platforms like Airbnb has disrupted traditional hotel models by offering more flexible and often cheaper options (Guttentag, 2015). Technological advancements have not only improved service and efficiency, but also introduced cybersecurity risks and high implementation costs (Morosan & DeFranco, 2016). Sustainability concerns have pressured hotels to adopt eco-friendly practices, which can be costly and complex (Jones et al., 2016).

In Africa, the hotel industry faces additional challenges, including political instability, infrastructure deficiencies, and a complex regulatory environment. Political unrest in regions such as North and West Africa has decreased international tourism and hotel occupancy (UNWTO, 2019). Infrastructure issues, like unreliable transportation and utilities, affect service quality (Rogerson, 2014). Mozambique, in particular, struggles with poor road conditions, limited public transportation, and unreliable utilities which make it difficult for hotels to provide consistent and high-quality services (WEF, 2019). Furthermore, Mozambique has experienced political instability and sporadic violence, which have deterred international tourists and investors (Chivhanga, 2021). The country's limited financial resources also pose a significant challenge. Many hotels struggle with access to capital for renovation and expansion, limiting their ability to compete with international brands and meet growing customer expectations (Rogerson & Kiambo, 2020). Additionally, the industry faces intense competition from informal accommodation providers, which often operate with lower overhead costs and can offer cheaper rates (ANAC, 2020). Overall, these performance issues highlight the need for strategic leadership and investment in infrastructure, security, and regulatory reforms to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the hotel industry in Mozambique and the broader African region.

Statement of the Problem

The hospitality sector is indispensable in the economies of many countries, contributing to job creation, foreign currency earnings, and overall economic growth. However, the success of hospitality

companies relies heavily on various factors, including the effective implementation of strategies. In Maputo Province, Mozambique, hospitality companies face significant challenges such as poor implementation of strategies, limited cooperation among staff, and insufficient financing for strategic initiatives. These issues hinder the overall performance and growth of the sector. Despite the critical role of strategic leadership in addressing these challenges, there is a lack of focused research on how strategic leadership specifically influences the performance of hotels in Maputo Province. This research sought to address these practical issues by conducting an empirical investigation into the relationship between strategic leadership and the performance of hospitality companies in Maputo Province, Mozambique. The study aimed at providing insights into how strategic leadership can enhance strategy implementation, staff cooperation and secure financing for strategic initiatives, ultimately boosting the performance of the hospitality sector.

Research objective

The objective of the study was to examine the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of hospitality companies in Maputo Province, Mozambique.

Study Hypothesis

H₀₁: Strategic leadership does not significantly influence the performance of hospitality companies in Maputo Province in Mozambique.

Theoretical Review

The Strategic Leadership Theory, which underpinned this study, posits that effective leadership involves adapting one's behavior to meet the specific needs of individuals and the operational setting aimed at

achieving a specific goal. This theory, grounded in Vroom's expectancy theory (1964), emphasizes the importance of boosting employees' motivation, empowerment, and satisfaction to enhance their contributions to the team. Leaders must select behaviors appropriate for their team members and work environment, effectively guiding them in their tasks. House's (1971) identification of four leadership styles, directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented, illustrates the adaptability required of leaders to align their methods with their team's traits and job requirements.

In the context of the hospitality industry, the Strategic Leadership Theory underscores the significance of leaders in formulating and executing long-term strategies to help organizations reach their goals. The industry, marked by high competition, dynamic changes, and diverse customer needs, necessitates strategic leadership to navigate these challenges and achieve high performance. For instance, in the growing market of Maputo, Mozambique, strategic leaders must understand market trends, customer preferences, and competitive dynamics in order to succeed.

"The study confirmed that strategic leadership influences the performance of hotels in Maputo Province"

Empirical Literature

A leader in strategy operation is vital for guaranteeing that organization's strategic objectives are successfully translated into action and achieved. The leader is responsible for owning up to the implementation process, steering it in the right direction, and driving it forward to achieve the desired outcomes. Research by Silva and Matola (2020) found that strategic leadership enhances operational performance in Maputo's hospitality sector by improving employee motivation and customer satisfaction, leading to better financial performance and market competitiveness. Chongo and Mafumo (2021) observed that strategic leaders who foster innovation and adaptability significantly improved their companies' ability to respond to market changes and customer demands. On the other hand, Nhampossa and Manhiça (2023) highlighted that leaders aligning services with customer expectations achieved higher customer retention and loyalty. Lastly, Langa and Nhantumbo (2024) discovered that strategic leaders who adopted effective crisis management strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic were better equipped to mitigate negative the impacts and recover swiftly.

2.0 Materials and Methods

This investigation employed a descriptive survey research design (Creswell, 2014). The study focused on ten classified hotels in Maputo. The target population consisted of key managerial personnel from 10

classified hotels in Maputo Province. The sample included 50 respondents, made up of 10 Chief Executive Officers, 10 relationship managers, 10 operation managers, 10 information technology managers, and 10 strategic leaders. The sample size of 50 was determined using simple random sampling method. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through secondary sources and questionnaires. A pilot study was conducted at VIP Grand Hotel to refine the research approach (Smith & Johnson, 2024). Reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with a threshold of 0.7 for acceptability, and validity was examined through face, content, and construct validity (Quintão et al., 2020). A thematic analysis approach was employed to analyze data, key phrases and ideas were identified and assigned codes, representing recurring themes related to strategic leadership and performance. The study also employed SPSS version 23, involving, descriptive analysis, and inferential statistics, specifically multiple regression and correlation analysis.

3.0 Results and Discussions

Response Rate

This table illustrates the distribution of informants and emphasizes complete engagement of participants, which supports the reliability of the thematic analysis conducted.

Table 1

Response Rate

Classification	Amount of informants	Percent
Reaction	50	100
Failure to respond	0	0
Total	50	100

The findings show that 50 participants in the target audience provided feedback, resulting in a 100% response rate. A response rate surpassing 50 percent is deemed significant for statistical analysis, as mentioned by Kumar (2019).

Reliability Analysis and interpretation

The primary objective of the reliability assessment was to gauge the internal

coherence of the data gathered from the research surveys. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the gathered data, with values greater than 0.7 deemed acceptable for research purposes (Kothari, 2017). According to Kothari (2017), a score above 0.7 is considered well enough for research purposes. The detailed results of these reliability checks are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Reliability of the data

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items	Verdict
Hotel performance	0.846	6	Reliable
Strategic Leadership	0.972	6	Reliable

Influence of Strategic Leadership on the Hotels Performance

The investigation was conducted to analyze the influence of strategic leadership on the performance of hospitality companies in Maputo Province. For hotel performance, strategic leadership is crucial in fostering operational efficiency, sustainability, and staff development. Effective hotel strategies rely on leaders' ability to make informed decisions, optimize resources,

and enhance profitability, while improving guest satisfaction. The results of this investigation are presented in Table 3, with N representing the total number of data points entered into SPSS. The Mean represents the average rating on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 5 signifies strong agreement. Likewise, the standard deviation indicates the average deviation from the mean.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics on Strategic Leadership

Statements on Strategic Leadership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our decision-making procedures within either the departmental hierarchy or upper management have an influence on the operational outcomes of hospitality enterprises.	50	3.57	.934
We provide financial assistance to enhance the implementation of strategies, which is vital for enhancing performance.	50	3.59	.671
We are accountable for crafting an ambitious and motivating vision that will instill excitement in all employees through a genuine and consistent dedication.	50	3.23	.423
The Chief Executive Officer, in addition to key managers, have the required expertise, characteristics, qualifications, and background to successfully execute the plan	50	4.08	.242
We offer encouragement to boost personnel health	50	3.56	.935
We offer employees novel perspectives on intricate or challenging matters.	50	2.89	1.218
		3.88	1.04
Aggregate Mean			

Based on the data presented in Table 3, the interviewees expressed their belief that various aspects of strategic decision-making are major factors in the success of hotels. The respondents emphasized that decision-making within the departmental hierarchy and upper management influences the operational outcomes of hospitality enterprises. The average score of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 0.934 indicate that the influence of hotel management in making decisions within the departmental hierarchy and upper management is higher than the predicted average of 2.5 on a Likert scale of 1-5. This suggests that hotel management can make decisions within these levels to improve the operational outcomes of the hotels.

Furthermore, managers who provide financial assistance to enhance the implementation of strategies, which is crucial for enhancing performance, received an average of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 0.67. These values are significantly higher than the predicted mean of 2.5, indicating that managers should continue providing financial assistance. The participants also reported that creating an ambitious and motivating vision, along with genuine and consistent dedication, excites employees and increases their dedication to their work. This is supported by an average of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.242, indicating that most participants agreed with this statement. According to the respondents,

the chief executive and key managers possess the necessary skills, personalities, education, and experience to effectively execute the strategy. This is evident from an average score of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 0.035. Additionally, respondents stated that offering encouragement to boost employee health leads to increased motivation in performing their tasks. This is supported by a mean score of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 0.935. Moreover, employees are provided with new perspectives on complex or challenging matters, as indicated by an average score of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 1.128. The findings of this study align with the research conducted by Rahbi et al. (2017) which noted that the role of the CEO in strategy implementation is both symptomatic and substantive. The leadership should provide guidance and support to entrepreneurs. Overall, the data highlights the importance of strategic

decision-making, financial assistance, visionary leadership, employee motivation, and the role of the CEO in achieving success in the hotel industry.

Descriptive Statistics for Hotel's Performance

In this section, we explore the variable of hotel performance, which encompasses several critical aspects, including customer satisfaction, profitability, market share, operational efficiency, decision-making, and resource management. These dimensions were analyzed to provide a comprehensive view of how effectively hotels are operating and delivering value to their customers.

The results of this analysis are detailed in Table 4, illustrating the performance metrics across the 10 hotels in Maputo Province. This table provides insights into the various performance indicators and their influence on overall hotel effectiveness.

Table 4

Performance of Hotels

Statements on Hotels Performance	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Capability of the executives to foster and stimulate collaboration among staff members is a measure of hotel success.	50	3.47	1.17
Few complaints indicate customer contentment.	50	4.38	.480
Provision of necessary services is an indicator of customer happiness, which subsequently leads to surpassing competitors in the hospitality sector.	50	4.063	1.312
Staff members are not let down by the adjustment of our work approaches in response to novel data.	50	3.56	1.35
The duration it takes to attend to customers reflects efficiency and proficiency	50	3.87	.964
Employee skills in addressing customer inquiries is a sign of company (hotel) success.	50	4.089	1.03

Valid N (list wise)

50

4.08

0,97

Data presented in Table 4 indicates that those who scored the highest had a mean of 4.38 and a standard deviation of 0.480. This confirms that there are only a few complaints, indicating high levels of customer satisfaction. The trend is further supported by another group of respondents that employee skills in addressing customer inquiries, scoring a mean of 4.089 and standard deviation of 1.03. Provision of necessary services is an indicator of customer happiness, which subsequently leads to surpassing competitors in the hospitality sector, with a mean of 4.063 and standard deviation of 1.312. Respondents agreed that the duration it takes to attend to customers reflects efficiency and proficiency with a mean of 3.87 and standard deviation of 0.964. Further, at a mean of 3.56 and standard deviation of 1.35, participants said that staff members are not let down by the adjustment of our work approaches in response to novel data. Finally, the capability of the executives to foster and stimulate collaboration among staff members is a measure of hotel success, with 3.47 mean and 1.17 standard

deviation. Ajripour et al. (2019) provided similar remarks, suggesting that the organizational performance of a well-established corporation is a crucial economic aspect. This is determined by the organization's capability to deliver high-quality services and products. Aguinis (2019) also concurred with these findings, highlighting three indicators to measure the firm's organizational performance; namely, shareholder returns, financial performance, and market share.

Hypothesis testing for Strategic

Leadership

The study further evaluated the hypothesis. The results are detailed in Table 5, which summarizes the hypothesis testing outcomes and their implications for strategic leadership in the hospitality industry. This table provides insights into the correlation between strategic leadership and hotel performance, highlighting the significance of effective leadership in influencing organizational success.

Table 5

Strategic leadership and performance of hotels

		Strategic Leadership
Hotel performance	Pearson Correlation	.893
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.0394
	N	50

The correlation is statistically significant at the 5% significance level (two-tailed test)

Based on the data in table 5, strategic leadership is found to be statistically

significant and positively correlated with hotel performance, with a correlation coefficient of 0.893 and a p-value of 0.0394. This indicates a strong association between strategic leadership and hotel

performance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Supporting these findings, Zhang et al. (2018) emphasize the positive influence of effective leadership on desirable organizational attributes, which enhance overall performance. Effective leadership, combined with careful evaluation and intervention, improves efficiency and drives increased earnings. Similarly, Rahbi et al. (2017) highlight the critical role of the CEO in strategy implementation, noting that the CEO's symbolic and practical roles, including managing resistance and gaining employee support through power dynamics and relationships, are essential for achieving organizational objectives.

Table 6

Model Summary for strategic leadership

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.829 ^a	.898	.686	2.34673	1.7179

a Predictors:(constant), strategic leadership

Positive and substantial influence of strategic leadership on hotel performance in Maputo Province ($r=.829$, $p.05$) is evident in the table above. Therefore, it can be concluded that when the drivers are well coordinated, strategic leadership positively influences the efficiency of hotel operations. The effects strategic leadership were analyzed using a linear regression model, and results indicate that these drivers explain a significant portion of the unexplained variation coefficient (non-assurance of $1-R^2$ is 10%).

Regression Analysis

The findings on the influence of strategic leadership on hotel performance are detailed in table 6, where R represents the overall correlation between strategic leadership and hotel performance, R^2 shows the percentage of performance variation explained before adjustments, and adjusted R^2 provides the percentage explained after adjustments. The Standard Error of Estimate reflects a 5% error margin at a 95% confidence level. Data were analyzed using the Likert scale, rating variables from 1 to 5. For a detailed overview of the regression analysis results and their implications are presented in Table 6.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA^a)

Further, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted and results presented in table 7. Findings indicate that informative of strategic leadership significantly contribute to the variations in hotel performance in Maputo Province ($F(4, 31) = 68.789$, $p < .05$). This implies that this driver serves as reliable indicator of performance differences among hotels in the Maputo. Table 7 presents a detailed summary of the ANOVA results and their implications for evaluating the influence of strategic leadership on hotel performance.

Table 7

Analysis of variance (ANOVAa) for strategic Leadership

ANOVAa					
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	8.342	1	2.086	68.789	.000b
Residual	.942	48	.038		
Total	9.284	49			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Strategic leadership

b. Dependent Variable: hotel performance

The regression connection's increased significance in terms of strategic leadership influencing the success of hotels in Maputo Province, Mozambique is denoted by the probability value of p0.00.

Coefficient of determination for Strategic leadership

This section presents the Coefficient of Determination (R^2) for the regression

analysis assessing the impact of strategic leadership on hotel performance. The Coefficient of Determination indicates the proportion of variance in hotel performance metrics that can be explained by strategic leadership. Table 8 presents a detailed view of the Coefficient of Determination and its implications for the relationship between strategic leadership and hotel performance.

Table 8

Coefficient of determination for Strategic leadership

Coefficients a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std error	Beta	T	Sig.
1 (constant)	2.099	.198		5.66	.04
Strategic leadership	.384	.068	.457	.866	.00

Dependent Variable: Hotels Performance

Effect of Strategic Leadership on Hotel performance

The findings on Strategic Leadership and Hotel performance indicated a $\beta = 0.384$, $t = 0.866$, and a p-value of 0.00, which fell below the predetermined threshold of 0.05. It was indicated that a one-unit increase in strategic leadership led to a 0.384 change in hotel performance. Khan et al. (2018)

supported these results by emphasizing the importance of involving employees and managers in strategy development for successful implementation. Further, they highlight the role of visionary leadership in motivating employees to work towards organizational goals and fostering a conducive learning environment.

4.0 Conclusion

From the findings, the study confirmed that strategic leadership influenced the performance of hotels in Maputo Province. The study revealed that strategic leadership plays a significant role in influencing the performance of hospitality companies. The participants emphasized the importance of effective leadership, as it is essential for senior management to foster the appropriate behaviors and practices among their employees. The study concluded that without an effective leadership, hotels are likely to experience a decline in performance metrics such as customer satisfaction, profitability and market share; and that would lead to inefficient operations and poor decision-making, resulting in wasted resources and missed opportunities. The study also concluded that improving performance of hotels does not depend on

strategic leadership but also on other elements that are recognized by the leaders as significant incentives.

5.0 Recommendations

The results indicated a strong and positive correlation between strategic leadership and hotel performance. However, it is essential for hotel leadership to continuously enhance their dynamic capabilities and adapt their leadership skills to meet the evolving demands of society and the competitive business environment. Additionally, the study recommends that key leaders, especially hotel CEOs, prioritize a culture that values creativity and innovation. This can be achieved by encouraging employees to share ideas, experiment with new approaches, and continuously improve processes.

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