

**ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE****OPEN ACCESS****Analysis of Leadership Capacity to Motivate Employees to Perform Public Services Well
(Case Study in Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSI) Dili Timor-Leste)**¹Mariano De Deus., ²João Noronha., ³Albertino de JesusMaster of Public Administration UNPAZ
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This research explores the role of sustainable farming methods in minimizing climate change effects on vegetable production in Aileu Vila, Timor-Leste. Conducted between October and November 2024, it assesses approaches like crop diversification, organic farming, agroforestry, and water conservation to enhance resilience against shifting rainfall patterns, temperature changes, and extreme weather. Through field observations, farmer interviews, and data analysis, the study identifies major challenges, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of technical knowledge. Results indicate that while sustainable practices boost productivity and resilience, their adoption remains constrained by high costs, restricted financial access, and insufficient support systems. Overcoming these obstacles through improved resource availability, capacity-building programs, and supportive policies is essential for broader implementation. This study offers valuable insights for policymakers, NGOs, and local stakeholders aiming to strengthen sustainable agriculture in Timor-Leste, ensuring food security and climate adaptation in the long term.



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INTRODUCTION

In the context of public services, service quality is a key indicator of the effectiveness of a country's governance. Quality public services not only reflect the ability of government institutions to meet public needs but also serve as a benchmark for the success of social development and community welfare. In Timor-Leste, the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSI) plays a crucial role in providing services that support social welfare, particularly for vulnerable groups. However, in practice, significant challenges remain in the implementation of public services, including low employee motivation and a lack of effective leadership within the MSSI (Ministerio Solidariedade Social e Inclusion (MSSI) Timor-Leste, 2023).

The reality on the ground demonstrates that the quality of public services in the MSSI is influenced not only by the availability of material resources but also by the leadership and motivation of employees. Good public services make a significant contribution to community development. In Timor-Leste, ministries responsible for social policy, such as the MSSI, carry out the crucial task of providing social security and assistance to vulnerable groups. However, the quality of these services is determined not only by material factors but also by the leadership and motivation of employees. This study aims to understand how the leadership capacity of managers at the MSSI can motivate employees to carry out their duties efficiently and serve the public well (Salvador Suro Dos Santos Bucar et al., 2024).

Effective leadership in government has a significant impact on employee motivation. Leaders who are able to inspire and motivate their subordinates can create a positive work environment, which in turn improves employee performance in providing public services. However, within the MSSI, there are indications that the existing leadership capacity is not optimal in motivating employees. This is reflected in low levels of employee satisfaction, high absenteeism, and a lack of initiative in carrying out tasks, largely due to a lack of adequate leadership management training (Haberfeld et al., 2013).

In addition to internal factors, external factors such as social, economic, and cultural conditions in Timor-Leste also influence leadership dynamics and employee motivation. Therefore, it is important to conduct an in-depth analysis of leadership capacity within the MSSI and how it may contribute to employee motivation in providing public services. Quality public services are a crucial contribution to community development. In Timor-Leste, ministries responsible for social policy, such as the MSSI, carry out the crucial task of providing social security and assistance to vulnerable groups. However, the quality of these services is not only determined by material factors, but also by the leadership and motivation of employees. This study aims to understand how the leadership capacity of managers at MSSI can motivate employees to carry out their duties efficiently and serve the public well (Powell & McGrath, 2019).

The Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion plays a crucial role in formulating social protection and inclusion policies for vulnerable groups. When problems such as delays in service delivery, lack of coordination, or

low levels of user satisfaction occur, this can impact public trust in the government. This study is important because it provides a clear understanding of the relationship between leadership and motivation and can serve as recommendations for strengthening leadership and improving the quality of public services (Ministerio Solidariedade Social e Inclusion (MSSI) Timor-Leste, 2023).

In the era of globalization, effective and efficient public services are crucial for the public. Whether in government, state institutions, or non-governmental organizations, the success of public services is determined not only by sound systems but also by strong and competent leadership. Leadership in the context of public services involves a leader's ability to direct and mobilize existing resources to achieve the common goal of providing quality services to the public. Quality public services encompass various aspects, such as speed, accuracy, responsiveness, and openness to public needs. Effective leaders in the public service context must possess attitudes and skills that enable them to address the complex challenges of providing satisfactory service. They must be able to understand the aspirations and needs of the community and develop innovative strategies to improve service quality (Taufiqurokman et al., 2024).

Furthermore, good leadership also plays a role in inspiring and motivating civil servants. A visionary leader is able to clearly communicate the organization's vision and mission, thus providing a strong orientation to employees in carrying out their duties. Through effective leadership, leaders can build a work culture that is inclusive, collaborative, and oriented towards superior public service. Furthermore, strong leadership also plays a crucial role in overcoming complex challenges at MSSI. A leader who is able to make sound decisions, adapt to change, and manage risks wisely will be able to effectively face various challenges that arise. Effective leaders also have the ability to build extensive networks, both inside and outside the organization, to optimize resources and address challenges with a collaborative approach (Nureny et al., 2021).

To maintain discipline, human resources are a crucial factor needed in an organization. To carry out their duties and achieve good performance, employees require discipline and motivation so that their work behaviors can achieve organizational goals. Motivation drives someone to action and demonstrates that performance is the result of specific functions or activities carried out by employees over a specific period. Existing theories suggest that motivation drives workers or employees to demonstrate better performance to the public (Lund, 2021).

In the context of public services at MSSI, the directors general and department heads strive to motivate employees to provide quality public services. For example, the directors regularly develop training programs for employees on vulnerability case management, social security, and child protection. This training provides motivation because employees feel that the government values their capabilities. The effect of leadership on motivation is evident in employees' punctuality, providing services with patience and respect, and producing transparent work reports (Salim & Ernanda, 2023).

Leadership within MSSI is also implemented through various motivational measures, such as regular training on vulnerability case management, social security, and child protection. This training provides motivation because employees feel valued by the government. The effects of this leadership are evident in employees who feel happy and ready to serve the public, such as the elderly, vulnerable children, and people with disabilities. In practice, motivation is reflected in employee behavior, such as arriving on time, providing services with patience and respect, and producing transparent work reports (Bolden, 2006).

In public administration in Timor-Leste, leadership is an essential factor determining the quality and efficiency of government services. Leadership capacity not only impacts the internal aspects of the organization but also influences employee motivation in carrying out their duties. Motivation is crucial because it encourages employees to work with consistency, dedication, and responsibility. Good public service is a government priority, as employees act as intermediaries between the state and the public. Motivated employees are better prepared to respond to public needs and ensure transparency,

fairness, and trust in public institutions. Therefore, effective leadership requires instilling vision, directing employees, and creating an inclusive, fair, and inspiring work environment (Batista-Foguet et al., 2021).

An analysis of leadership capacity and employee motivation will shed light on the relationship between leadership style and service performance. Research in this area will contribute to public policy development, administrative reform, and the formation of local leadership capable of fostering a culture of public service that benefits citizens. Motivating leadership at MSSI, such as that demonstrated by the Director General and Department Heads through regular training, demonstrates that employees feel valued and motivated to provide the best service to the public, especially vulnerable groups (Kolzow et al., 2021).

The impact of leadership on motivation is evident in employee behavior, which includes punctuality, patient and respectful service delivery, and transparent reporting. In practice, motivation is reflected in employee behavior, such as punctuality, patient and respectful service delivery, and transparent reporting (A.H. Maslow, 1943; Locality et al., 2012; Maslow, 1943). Thus, research on the analysis of leadership capacity in motivating employees to provide good public services at the MSSI in Dili, Timor-Leste, is highly relevant and important. This research is expected to make a tangible contribution to efforts to improve the quality of public services in Timor-Leste by strengthening leadership capacity and increasing employee motivation within the MSSI (Eckardt et al., 2021; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

Leadership is the process by which an individual, known as a leader, influences and guides a group of people or team members to achieve a common goal. In an organizational context, leadership encompasses the ability to motivate, inspire, and facilitate collaboration among team members. Leadership is not only related to position or title; it also involves interpersonal skills, such as communication empathy, and effective decision making Daniel Goleman (1995). A good leader can create a clear vision, build strong relationships, and foster a positive work environment, so that team members feel motivated and committed to achieving organizational goals. In public services, effective leadership is crucial to improving employee performance and the quality of services provided to the public (James MacGregor Burns 1978). Leaders who understand the needs and aspirations of their employees will be more successful in creating high levels of motivation and engagement within their teams.

Theory of Organizational Behavior as (Grand Theory) Organizational behavior is the study of how behavior should be, both at the individual and group level, in an organization. (Rajagukguk, 2017) stated that organizational behavior is a form of updating knowledge and thinking about how people act in organizations. Meanwhile, according to Hanggreni, still in Rajagukguk, organizational behavior is a core field of science that includes three determinants of organizational behavior: individuals, groups, and structures, as well as their application so that organizations can work more effectively. Individual forms of behavior include respecting and honoring the organization, minimizing work errors, supporting vision and mission accomplishment, while group behavior involves interactions with co-workers, working in teams, and a supportive work environment. The basic concept of organizational behavior consists of two things: the nature of the person and the nature of the organization. Human nature consists of individual differences, being a rational whole, and having behavior motivated by something. And the nature of organizations consists of organizations as social systems and having shared interests (Rosmayudi, 2022). Organizational Culture Organizational culture is a set of systems containing values, beliefs, assumptions and norms that are applied, adopted and obeyed by members in the organization as a form of guidance in behaving and being problem solvers in the organization (Sutrisno, 2010). Values, norms and beliefs become the basis of organizational resources in performing tasks and responsibilities, in their implementation to a similar degree, cultural examples, cultural values, application, compliance, self-awareness. Organizational culture is strategic because it plays a role in encouraging organizational work effectiveness both in the short run and long run (Eckardt et al., 2021).

Leadership Style.

Leadership style refers to how a leader interacts with and influences team members (Kurt Lewin 1939). Different leadership styles can affect employee motivation, performance and satisfaction. Common leadership styles include:

a) Autocratic Leadership.

Autocratic leaders make decisions unilaterally and do not involve team members in the decision-making process. This style is often used in emergency situations where quick decisions are required. While it may produce quick results, this style can reduce employee motivation and engagement in the long run (Bornman & Louw, 2023).

b) Democratic Leadership.

Democratic leaders involve team members in the decision-making process. They encourage participation and discussion, so team members feel valued and have a voice. This style tends to increase employee motivation, job satisfaction, and engagement, as well as create a collaborative work environment (“Leadership Styles and Training in the Police Service in Sharjah,” 2023).

c) Laissez-faire leadership.

Laissez-faire leaders give team members complete freedom to make decisions and manage their own work. This style can encourage creativity and innovation, but it can also lead to confusion and a lack of direction if not managed properly. This style is most effective when team members have a high level of skill and experience (“Leadership Styles and Training in the Police Service in Sharjah,” 2023).

Hierarchy of Needs Theory

According to Abraham Maslow 1943 proposed that human needs can be organized in a hierarchy, from basic needs to higher needs. In the context of employee motivation, Maslow states that to motivate employees, organizations must meet their needs in sequence:

- Physiological Needs: Basic needs such as adequate wages to meet the needs of life.
- Security Needs: A sense of job security and stability.
- Social Needs: Good peer relationships and a sense of belonging.
- Estimated Need: Recognition of achievements and contributions teacher.
- Self-Actualization Needs: Opportunities to develop and reach full potential.

THE METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. The qualitative approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of leadership capacity and employee motivation in the context of public service in the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion. Descriptive methods are used to describe the phenomena that occur and provide a clear picture of the relationship between leadership and employee motivation. According to Sugiyono 2008, is a well-known expert in research methodology in Indonesia. His work, “Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Research Methods,” is a key reference in the study of research methodology. According to Bogdan and Taylor 1975, as explained in the book Moleong (2006), qualitative methods are research approaches that focus on an in-depth understanding of social phenomena and human behavior. The following is a further explanation of qualitative methods based on Bogdan and Taylor’s perspective: Definition of Qualitative Methods.

Qualitative methods are research approaches that aim to understand the meanings, experiences, and perspectives of individuals or groups within their social context. This research does not focus solely on numbers or statistical data, but rather on narratives, descriptions, and interpretations of human experiences.

Key Informant

Pozisaun	Numeru Informante
Director General of Corporate Services	1
Inspector General	1
National Director of Administration, Human Resources and Heritage	1
National Director of Social Assistance	1
Director of Dili Municipality Social Solidarity and Inclusion Center	1
Employee in charge of Program Directorate	1
Implementation Technician at the Social Solidarity and Inclusion Center of Dili Municipality	1
Municipal Employee (Direct Service)	1
Total	8

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a) Profiles of Research Institutions

The Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSI), established by Decree-Law No. 54/2023, designs and implements policies on social security, assistance, and community reintegration to improve citizens’ lives, especially vulnerable groups: widows and mothers with poor children, abandoned families, the elderly, people with disabilities and mental illness, and disaster-affected communities. Its vision is secure social protection for all; its mission includes social action, assistance, security, reintegration, gender equality, empowerment, and institutional capacity. The structure spans Minister and Deputy Minister, cabinets, Directors-General, Inspectorate, eight National Directors, twelve Municipal Directors, 31 department heads, 15 unit heads, 2 section heads, 361 permanent staff, 90 agents, and 19 advisors .

b) Research Data Presentation

The working environment at MSSI (Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion) prioritizes social services, social security, and protection of vulnerable groups. In Timor-Leste, MSSI creates a work environment that pays attention to vulnerable communities with the objective of promoting social inclusion and security for all. Persons with disabilities: Promote the rights and access to services for persons with disabilities.

To illustrate in more detail about this research data, the researcher presents the following data, based on observation, interview and documentation. These findings provide direct insight into the experience and challenges and benefits felt in the process of implementation of programs in MSSI related to public services through the motivation of employees.

c) Leadership Motivation for Employees to Perform Public Services Well in MSSI

Leadership motivation is a key factor in improving employee performance, particularly in a public service context. A leader who can motivate his subordinates not only acts as a decision-maker but also as an inspiration, fostering employee morale and a sense of responsibility for their tasks. In public organizations, motivation is crucial because the services provided are oriented toward the public interest, not just personal or institutional benefit. The Director General of MSSI explained that;

“Public service leadership emphasizes integrity, participation, and service orientation, with relationships built on trust, collaboration, and accountability between leaders and the public. Public sector leadership is not only about managing bureaucracy, but also about serving the public fairly, transparently, and responsively.” (According to Mr. Fernando R. 28-10-2025, 09:38 HTL).

d) Leadership Impact on Public Service Performance

Leadership is a key factor in determining the success of public organizations in providing services to the public. In the context of ad public ministry,

leadership is not only related to a leader's ability to direct and control subordinates, but also encompasses the ability to create a vision, build an adaptive organizational culture, and foster commitment to public service values such as accountability, transparency, and efficiency. The Director General of MSSSI explained that;

"Leadership is the ability to influence, direct, and guide others toward the achievement of shared goals. In a variety of contexts-organizations, communities, governments, or families-leadership plays a vital role in creating direction, building motivation, and maintaining harmony. True leadership begins with action, not just a word, works as an example of integrity, powerful, and empathetic". (According to Mr. Fernando R. 28-10-2025, 09:38 otl).

e) Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

In the implementation of a program or activity, success cannot be separated from the presence of factors that support or hinder its implementation. Supporting factors are elements or conditions that play a positive role and help achieve goals, while inhibiting factors are those that have the potential to delay, reduce, or even disrupt the achievement of desired outcomes. Supporting factors can come from various aspects, including competent human resources, availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure, conducive policies, and active participation of all relevant parties. In addition, leadership commitment and strong inter-agency coordination are also crucial elements in strengthening the effectiveness of activity implementation. A responsive social environment and community support contribute to accelerating the achievement of planned goals.

Discussion and Interpretation of Data

a) Analysis of Leadership Capacity and Motivation in Public Service

The analysis of leadership capacity within an institution is an effort to understand the extent to which a leader can effectively perform their leadership functions to achieve organizational goals. Leadership capacity relates not only to an individual's ability to direct and motivate organizational members, but also encompasses the strategic, managerial, and interpersonal competencies required to manage change, resolve conflict, and optimize available resources. In the institutional context, leadership capacity can be viewed through several key dimensions, such as visionary capacity, which is the extent to which a leader can clearly formulate organizational direction and strategy; managerial capacity, which is the ability to plan, organize, and control institutional activities; and social and communication capabilities, which include the ability to build collaborative relationships, mobilize participation, and maintain cohesion among organizational members. This analysis was conducted by examining data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation of leadership activities within the institution. The collected data was then reduced, categorized, and analyzed to identify patterns of leadership behaviors, strategies for decision making, and leaders' responses to organizational challenges. The results of the analysis are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the level of leadership capacity to perform their role and to uncover the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence leadership effectiveness. Thus, this research not only contributes to strengthening leadership theory, but also provides practical recommendations for improving institutional performance through sustainable leadership capacity development.

b) Capacity Analysis and Leadership Interpretation of Employee Motivation in Public Service

Employee motivation analysis is a study that aims to understand the factors that drive people within an organization to work at their best to achieve common goals. Motivation is a crucial element in human resource management as it is directly related to employee productivity, loyalty and performance. A thorough understanding of motivation allows organizations to design effective management strategies to boost employee morale and

engagement. Work motivation can be influenced by a variety of factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic factors include the need for achievement, recognition, responsibility, and career development; while extrinsic factors include compensation, work environment, organizational policies, and employee relations. Several theories, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, are often used as a basis for analyzing employee behavior and work motivation in the context of modern organizations. The analysis process was conducted by collecting data using questionnaires, interviews, or observation of employees in the institution under study. The data are then processed and analyzed to identify motivation levels, the dominant factors influencing them, and their relationship to work performance or productivity. This analysis can also reveal the extent to which organizational policies, leadership styles, and reward systems play a role in shaping employee motivation. The results of this analysis of employee motivation are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this research enriches the study of human resource management, particularly in the area of organizational behavior. Practically, the results can serve as a basis for leaders or managers to formulate strategies to increase work motivation, such as developing reward systems, improving work climate, and improving employee communication and participation in organizational decision-making.

Relevance to Previous Studies

Organizational Behavior (OB) research is crucial for improving public and private sector effectiveness. In Timor-Leste, it is highly relevant to the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSSI), which implements social policies and supports vulnerable groups. Global OB theories such as Robbins and Judge on workplace interactions, Maslow's needs hierarchy, Herzberg's two-factor theory, and Rainey's public-sector insights offer tools to understand motivation, leadership, communication, and culture in MSSSI. Adapting these to Timor-Leste helps address resource limits, work conditions, and non-profit service motives. This study aims to analyze internal dynamics, guide context-fit management models, and strengthen institutional capacity for more effective social policy delivery.

Implications of Research Findings

a) Theoretical Implications

This research advances public administration by applying Organizational Behavior (OB) theory to Timor-Leste's Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSSI). It emphasizes how motivation, leadership, communication, and culture drive effectiveness in a service-oriented, collectivist context. Drawing on Robbins & Judge and Luthans, it argues for adapting global OB to local realities. Maslow and Herzberg help explain motivation beyond pay, highlighting moral duty and solidarity. Key implications: culturally sensitive adaptation of OB; integrating ethical and social motivations; fostering transformational leadership and a positive culture; and building locally rooted models that reflect community values, thereby enriching OB with a Global South perspective.

b) Practical Implications

Based on theoretical analysis and literature on Organizational Behavior (OB), the practical implications of the research in the context of the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSSI) show great opportunities to increase the effectiveness, satisfaction and motivation of employees. MSSSI is a public institution whose mission is to promote social welfare and inclusion of vulnerable communities, requiring humanized management and transformational leadership.

CONCLUSION

This study examines how leadership capacity motivates employees in public services to improve institutional performance and client satisfaction,

especially in remote areas. Findings from the Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion (MSSI) in Timor-Leste indicate growing potential despite organizational immaturity. Employee motivation relies on both monetary rewards and intrinsic drivers service to community, empathy, and professional pride supporting Herzberg and Maslow. Transformational leadership is needed to inspire, innovate, and enhance collaboration, aligning with Bass and Avolio. Organizational culture rooted in solidarity should be structured through clear systems and communication. Weak interdepartmental coordination calls for communicative leadership, robust information systems, and motivational training. Practical steps include: adopting transformational leadership; running programs that frame public service as a moral mission; implementing transparent communication and international collaboration; and promoting an inclusive, empathy-based culture. Applying Organizational Behavior theory can improve operations while strengthening humanistic capacity and the social mission. Additional priorities: design incentives that recognize moral service, policy participation, and individual contributions; foster solidarity, collaborative leadership, and horizontal communication; and invest in continuous capacity development and training.

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