

Strategic Leadership and Innovation Culture as Drivers of Public Sector Performance: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

In the public sector, strategic leadership and an innovation-oriented culture stand out as decisive factors behind organizational performance. As government agencies come under pressure to deliver services that are both efficient and adaptive, leaders' capacity to build environments conducive to innovation grows increasingly important. This holds particularly true in tourism governance, where institutions must keep pace with rapid technological shifts and intensifying global competition. Although the body of literature continues to expand, the way strategic leadership and innovation culture jointly explain public sector performance is still theoretically scattered and has received limited empirical attention. Through a systematic literature review, this study brings together existing scholarship on this relationship. Applying the PRISMA protocol, the review identifies and analyzes peer-reviewed articles from international journals to map research themes and trajectories. The findings show that strategic leadership is central to shaping organizational vision and mobilizing resources, whereas innovation culture operates as a mediating mechanism that reinforces knowledge sharing and collaborative behavior. Several gaps nonetheless persist: leadership and innovation continue to be examined as separate subjects, empirical work situated in tourism governance remains scarce, and issues surrounding digital transformation and collaborative governance receive insufficient attention. To address these gaps, the study puts forward a conceptual framework that integrates these elements, offering both theoretical grounding and practical guidance for policymakers aiming to strengthen institutional performance through leadership-driven innovation.

Keywords: *Strategic leadership, Innovation culture, Public sector performance, Tourism governance, Organizational innovation.*

INTRODUCTION

Amid digital transformation and mounting global

complexity, public sector organizations are pressed to build adaptive, innovative capacities capable of supporting their strategic goals. Governments today are not only tasked with formulating policy but also with making sure public institutions function efficiently, work collaboratively, and respond promptly to emerging challenges. Against this backdrop, leadership and organizational culture become decisive factors in determining how well public institutions can deliver effective governance and quality public services. The Ministry of Tourism, tasked with strengthening national tourism competitiveness and advancing the creative economy, confronts substantial obstacles in sustaining the performance of its officials. Because the tourism sector is inherently dynamic and exposed to global shocks—economic downturns, technological disruption, and public health emergencies among them—the capacity of government officials to design and execute strategic policy stands as a decisive factor for the sector's resilience and long-term competitiveness.

Recent evidence points to steady gains in the performance of public officials overseeing tourism governance, most notably in the rebound of international tourist arrivals after the COVID-19 pandemic. International visitor numbers climbed sharply, from 1.56 million in 2021 to 3.8 million in 2022, then to 11.7 million in 2023, before reaching 13.8 million in 2024. Such figures point to the government's capacity to roll out recovery measures and drive tourism growth via integrated digital campaigns coupled with international partnerships. Yet gains in tourism indicators do not automatically translate into optimal institutional performance. Persistent challenges remain around the pace of decision-making, coordination across organizational

units, and the formulation of outcome-oriented policies within the ministry.

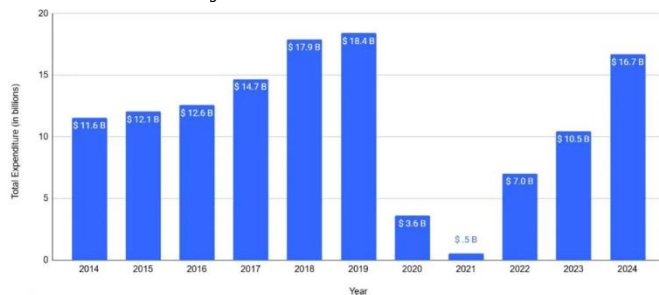


Figure 1. Growth of International Tourist Spending in Indonesia, 2014–2024

Source: Author's compilation based on Road Genius Tourism Statistics and Statistics Indonesia (BPS).

Indonesia's international tourism expenditure figures reveal a sustained upward trajectory before the COVID-19 outbreak, followed by a steep drop and a gradual climb back during the post-pandemic phase. Between 2014 and 2019, international tourist spending rose consistently, moving from roughly US\$11.6 billion to US\$18.4 billion—evidence of vigorous growth in Indonesia's tourism industry and rising global interest in the country's destinations. Figure 1 shows how the pandemic triggered a severe contraction in tourism activity, with expenditure falling to about US\$3.6 billion in 2020 and then to a mere US\$0.5 billion in 2021, the lowest recorded point for the period.

As Figure 1 shows, the sector started recovering meaningfully once international travel restrictions were lifted and recovery-oriented policies took effect. Spending climbed to US\$7.0 billion in 2022, then to US\$10.46 billion in 2023, and reached US\$16.7 billion by 2024—a 59.7% jump from the prior year, though still marginally under the pre-pandemic 2019 high. This upward trajectory reflects the success of tourism recovery measures, digital marketing initiatives, and the reopening of cross-border travel routes that helped rebuild traveler confidence. Taken together, the figures point to the resilience of Indonesia's tourism sector while underscoring how vital strategic governance, adaptable policymaking, and innovation are to sustaining performance amid ongoing global uncertainty. Such a gap underscores the need to strengthen strategic leadership while cultivating an innovation-friendly culture inside public institutions. Strategic leadership furnishes direction, vision, and the capacity to navigate uncertainty within fast-moving environments (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Boal & Schultz, 2022). Leaders within public

organizations are called upon to function as sense makers and sense givers, aligning organizational resources and rallying staff around shared strategic objectives. Because policy outcomes in tourism hinge so heavily on collaboration and adaptability, strategic leadership emerges as a key driver of organizational transformation and sustained competitiveness. Innovation culture, meanwhile, acts as a core organizational mechanism that promotes experimentation, creativity, and joint problem-solving. Where innovation culture is strong, employees are better positioned to generate fresh ideas, embrace new technologies, and continually raise the standard of public service delivery (Martins & Terblanche, 2003; Jaskyte, 2021). Within public institutions, such a culture can also sharpen policy effectiveness, boost administrative efficiency, and build public trust.

Even as scholarly interest in leadership and innovation within organizational studies continues to grow, the existing literature still treats strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance as largely disconnected topics. Much of the available research examines leadership or innovation on its own rather than probing how the two combine to shape institutional performance. Empirical work situated specifically in tourism governance remains especially thin, despite the sector's clear need for robust leadership and innovation capacity to keep up with rapid global change. This study therefore undertakes a systematic review of the literature connecting strategic leadership and innovation culture to public sector performance. By drawing together prior research, it seeks to clarify the theoretical links among these constructs and surface emerging trends and gaps, with the ultimate aim of informing a more integrated conceptual framework for strengthening the performance of public officials in tourism governance. Guided by this background and the gaps identified, the study is structured around the following research questions:

RQ1: Which theoretical perspectives and research trends dominate the literature linking strategic leadership and innovation culture to public sector performance?

RQ2: In what ways does strategic leadership shape the development of innovation culture inside public organizations?

RQ3: In what ways do strategic leadership and innovation culture together contribute to strengthening the performance of public officials in tourism governance?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) offers a useful lens for understanding why certain organizations outperform others despite operating under comparable external conditions. According to RBV, organizational performance stems largely from internal resources and capabilities that are valuable, rare, hard to imitate, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). Seen through this lens, leadership capability and organizational culture are not simply administrative attributes but intangible strategic resources capable of generating lasting organizational advantage.

RBV retains its relevance for public organizations because institutional performance today hinges not only on formal structures or policy mandates but also on internal capacities such as strategic vision, a learning orientation, and adaptive culture. Strategic leadership can be understood as a valuable organizational capability that lets institutions align resources, make sense of environmental shifts, and mobilize collective effort toward long-term goals. In parallel, innovation culture functions as an intangible organizational asset that nurtures creativity, experimentation, and knowledge exchange. Viewed through an RBV lens, the interplay between strategic leadership and innovation culture can bolster institutional effectiveness by producing a distinctive internal capability that other public organizations find difficult to replicate. RBV thus reinforces the claim that stronger public sector performance stems not merely from regulatory compliance or resource abundance, but also from how public institutions build and deploy strategic leadership and an innovation-oriented culture as strategic assets in their own right.

Dynamic Capability Theory

Where RBV highlights the value of internal strategic resources, Dynamic Capability Theory takes the argument further by stressing an organization's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure resources in step with environmental change (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). This lens fits particularly well with volatile, complex sectors such as tourism governance, where organizations must constantly adjust to policy shifts, technological disruption, crises, and evolving stakeholder demands. Dynamic capabilities encompass sensing threats and opportunities, seizing openings as they arise, and reshaping organizational structures and routines accordingly (Teece, 2007). Within this framework, strategic leadership takes on a pivotal role, since leaders bear responsibility for reading

environmental signals, translating them into strategic implications, and steering organizational adaptation. Innovation culture, in turn, functions as an enabling condition that makes adaptation more effective through openness to experimentation, collaboration, and ongoing learning.

For public sector organizations, dynamic capability theory helps explain why certain institutions demonstrate greater responsiveness, resilience, and adaptability than others. Within the Ministry of Tourism, strategic leadership and innovation culture can be viewed as complementary capabilities enabling the organization to respond to shifting global tourism trends, digital transformation, and increasingly complex governance demands. Dynamic Capability Theory thus lends support to the view that leadership and culture function not as fixed traits but as transformative mechanisms through which public institutions maintain performance amid changing circumstances.

Public Value Theory

Alongside RBV and Dynamic Capability Theory, Public Value Theory supplies a lens specific to the public sector for assessing organizational performance. Moore (1995) contends that public organizations ought to be judged not merely by efficiency or output but by their capacity to generate value for society. Public value spans effectiveness, legitimacy, trust, responsiveness, and the broader societal outcomes that public action produces. From this vantage point, public sector performance goes beyond bureaucratic compliance and target-hitting to encompass institutions' ability to meet citizens' needs, produce meaningful outcomes, and generate lasting societal benefit. Within this framework, strategic leadership is indispensable, as leaders set institutional purpose, establish legitimacy, and align organizational efforts with the public interest. Innovation culture matters for a parallel reason: innovation within public organizations is not pursued for its own sake but as a means of raising policy quality, service responsiveness, and public trust. Public Value Theory speaks directly to tourism governance, given that the Ministry of Tourism sits at the crossroads of economic growth, destination sustainability, stakeholder coordination, and national competitiveness. The performance of public officials, accordingly, must be gauged by their capacity to generate value not just for their own organization but for the wider tourism ecosystem and society. This theoretical grounding justifies treating strategic leadership and innovation culture as key antecedents of public sector performance.

Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership occupies a central place in organizational and public management scholarship, particularly within settings marked by uncertainty, fast-moving technological change, and rising stakeholder expectations. Ireland and Hitt (2005) describe strategic leadership as leaders' capacity to anticipate future trends, chart strategic direction, sustain organizational flexibility, and empower individuals toward long-term goals. Where operational leadership centers on short-term efficiency, strategic leadership prioritizes long-term vision, adaptability, and the alignment of organizational resources with a shifting environment. Within public sector organizations, strategic leadership carries added complexity, since leaders must simultaneously navigate bureaucratic procedure, political accountability, and public service obligations.

Boal and Schultz (2007) describe strategic leaders as sense makers who interpret complex environmental cues and as sense givers who convey strategic meaning throughout the organization. Through this dual role, leaders shape not just formal decision-making structures but also the informal organizational behaviors that underpin institutional performance. More recent scholarship suggests that strategic leadership drives organizational transformation by promoting learning, collaboration, and innovation (Hitt et al., 2021). Within fast-changing sectors like tourism governance—where policy must adapt swiftly to global trends, crises, and technological disruption—strategic leadership becomes a critical capability for maintaining institutional competitiveness and resilience (Sotarauta, 2018).

Innovation Culture

Innovation culture denotes the shared values, norms, and practices that a workplace uses to encourage experimentation, creativity, and ongoing improvement. Martins and Terblanche (2003) contend that organizational culture exerts a strong pull on innovation because it molds employees' attitudes toward risk-taking, knowledge sharing, and collaborative problem-solving. Organizations with a robust innovation culture tend to cultivate environments where staff feel free to propose new ideas and question established practices. Within the public sector, innovation culture has drawn growing attention as governments work to raise efficiency, service quality, and policy responsiveness. Jaskyte (2021) observes that innovation culture in public organizations typically develops through leadership support, organizational learning, and a willingness to absorb new knowledge. Such

cultures allow public institutions to respond to complex social challenges and craft policies attuned to shifting societal needs.

Empirical studies further indicate that innovation culture serves as a mediating organizational capability connecting leadership to performance. Donate and de Pablo (2015) find that leadership practices geared toward knowledge development can reinforce knowledge-sharing processes and innovation outcomes. In a similar vein, Anderson et al. (2021) argue that organizational innovation rests not only on individual creativity but also on institutional mechanisms that support experimentation, collaboration, and learning. Even so, innovation culture within public organizations remains hampered by bureaucratic structures, aversion to risk, and layered decision-making processes—making leadership support essential for cultivating conditions in which innovation can take root.

Public Sector Performance

Public sector performance denotes government institutions' capacity to deliver public services that are effective, efficient, and accountable while meeting policy objectives. Historically, such performance was gauged mainly through compliance with administrative procedure and the attainment of output targets. Contemporary governance frameworks, however, place growing weight on outcome-based performance—centered on policy impact, service quality, and the creation of societal value (Vera & Crossan, 2023). Leadership and organizational culture, in this light, are recognized as central determinants of institutional performance. Strategic leadership contributes by furnishing vision, coordinating resources, and aligning organizational behavior with long-term policy goals (Hitt et al., 2021), while innovation culture bolsters organizational adaptability and helps institutions craft more effective policy solutions.

Within tourism governance, public sector performance takes on particular importance because tourism development depends on coordination across a wide range of stakeholders, spanning government agencies, private industry, and local communities. Effective governance in this sector therefore rests on public institutions' ability to implement adaptive policy, foster cross-sector collaboration, and respond swiftly to global shifts such as economic fluctuation, technological disruption, and public health crises. The interplay between strategic leadership and innovation culture consequently plays a decisive role in shaping how well public institutions perform in tourism governance. Leaders who cultivate an innovation-oriented culture are more likely to deepen institutional learning,

sharpen coordination, and lift overall public sector performance.

Research Gap Matrix

Table 1. Research Gap Matrix

Auth or(s)	Focus of Study	Main Contribution	Limitation / Gap	Relevance to the Present Study
Barney (1991)	Firm resources and competitive advantage	Laid the foundation for RBV as a framework for explaining performance gaps through internal resources	Centers on firms rather than public organizations ; does not explicitly address leadership or innovation culture	Supports treating leadership and culture as strategic intangible resources
Ireland & Hitt (2005)	Strategic leadership	Clarified strategic leadership's role in sustaining competitiveness	Mostly corporate and conceptual in scope; limited application to the public sector	Provides a foundational understanding of strategic leadership for this study
Martins & Terblanche (2003)	Organizational culture and innovation	Showed that culture drives creativity and innovation	Does not address public sector performance or strategic leadership	Provides theoretical grounding for innovation culture
Vera & Crossan (2004)	Strategic leadership and organizational learning	Showed that leadership supports organizational learning and adaptation	Does not directly examine innovation culture or public sector institutions	Helps clarify indirect pathways from leadership to performance
Donatelli & de Pablo (2015)	Knowledge-oriented leadership and innovation	Found that leadership positively shapes innovation through knowledge management	Set within a private-sector context; lacks a public-value orientation	Suggests leadership may shape performance through organizational mechanisms
De Vries et al. (2016)	Public sector innovation	Synthesized the antecedents and outcomes of	Broad focus on innovation; does not combine	Justifies the need for a more integrated review

Auth or(s)	Focus of Study	Main Contribution	Limitation / Gap	Relevance to the Present Study
		innovation within public organizations	strategic leadership and innovation culture into one model	
Mousa et al. (2018)	Innovation in public organizations	Identified leadership and organizational climate as drivers of public innovation	Centers on climate rather than innovation culture; limited strategic framing	Strengthens the public-sector relevance of the leadership – innovation link
Backhaus & Vogel (2022)	Public sector leadership outcomes	A meta-analysis confirming leadership's positive effect on public-sector outcomes	Does not incorporate innovation culture as an explanatory mechanism	Supports the performance relevance of leadership
Huang & Villadsen (2023)	Top managers in public organizations	Highlighted the strategic role played by senior public managers	Broad focus on managerial roles; limited attention to culture and innovation	Reinforces leadership's strategic importance within public institutions
Maqdlan et al. (2023)	Public sector organizational innovation	Showed that innovation contributes to institutional performance	Treats innovation as a central construct while leaving the leadership–culture interaction underdeveloped	Supports the performance dimension of this study

This matrix points to four notable gaps in the existing literature. First, the body of research remains theoretically scattered, with strategic leadership and innovation culture more often studied in isolation than as mutually reinforcing capabilities. Second, even though both leadership and innovation are tied to organizational outcomes, the specific mediating or enabling role that innovation culture plays in linking strategic leadership to public sector performance has not been adequately theorized. This gap is compounded

by the fact that much of the available empirical evidence draws on private firms, nonprofit organizations, or general public administration—leaving tourism governance institutions notably underexamined. Finally, the literature tends to measure public sector performance through narrow administrative indicators, giving limited weight to broader public-value dimensions such as responsiveness, cross-unit coordination, and institutional adaptability.

METHODOLOGY

Systematic Literature Review Approach

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to synthesize and critically evaluate existing knowledge on strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance. The SLR method allows researchers to gather, assess, and integrate scholarly evidence systematically, producing a comprehensive picture of theoretical developments, methodological approaches, and emerging gaps within a given research domain (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003). Compared with traditional narrative reviews, SLR offers a more rigorous and transparent way of identifying relevant studies while limiting selection bias. A structured review protocol ensures the literature selection process remains systematic, replicable, and grounded in explicit criteria—making SLR especially well suited to drawing together fragmented research streams into a coherent theoretical foundation for future inquiry.

To strengthen methodological rigor and transparency, this study follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Page et al., 2021), which set out a standardized procedure for identifying, screening, evaluating, and selecting relevant studies through a multi-stage filtering process. This structured approach enhances the reliability of the resulting literature synthesis and keeps the study-selection process transparent and reproducible.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

The literature search drew on two internationally recognized academic databases, Scopus and Web of Science (WoS), chosen for their indexing of high-quality peer-reviewed journals and their standing as authoritative sources for international scholarship. Both databases offer broad coverage of management, organizational studies, and public administration research. To locate relevant studies, a structured search strategy combining keywords tied to the study's core constructs was developed. The search string used was as follows:

("strategic leadership" OR "public leadership") AND

("innovation culture" OR "organizational innovation") AND ("public sector performance" OR "government performance")

The search was restricted to peer-reviewed journal articles written in English, to preserve academic quality and comparability across studies, and to publications appearing between 2003 and 2024. The year 2003 marks the starting point because it coincides with Martins and Terblanche's influential work on innovation culture, which went on to shape much of the subsequent research in this field.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To secure a high-quality and relevant pool of literature, explicit inclusion criteria were set before screening began. The review targeted articles published in peer-reviewed international journals indexed in reputable databases such as Scopus or Web of Science. Thematically, the scope covered studies on leadership, innovation, organizational culture, or public sector performance, with particular weight given to empirical or conceptual research on strategic leadership, innovation culture, or organizational innovation. The search window spanned twenty-one years, from 2003 to 2024, to ensure a review that was both thorough and current.

Several exclusion criteria were applied during screening to preserve the review's focus and academic rigor. Conference proceedings, book chapters, dissertations, and other non-peer-reviewed materials were excluded to maintain evidentiary quality. Studies unrelated to the core themes of leadership, innovation, or organizational performance were also dropped. Finally, articles concerned exclusively with private-sector contexts were excluded unless they offered meaningful conceptual or theoretical insight applicable to public sector governance.

Article Screening Process Using PRISMA

Article selection followed the four stages set out in the PRISMA framework—identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion—illustrated in Figure 2, which presents the study's PRISMA flow diagram.

(i) Identification Stage

During the identification stage, an initial search across Scopus and Web of Science produced 480 records in total—312 from Scopus and 168 from Web of Science. Once these results were merged, 96 duplicate entries were identified and removed, leaving 384 unique articles to carry forward into the next stage.

(ii) Screening Stage

In the screening stage, titles and abstracts of the 384 remaining articles were examined for relevance to the research topic. This process excluded 276 articles: 82

unrelated to leadership, 94 unrelated to innovation or organizational culture, 63 not addressing public sector performance, and 37 falling outside the study's research fields. This left 108 articles for further evaluation.

(iii) Eligibility Stage

At the eligibility stage, the full text of the remaining 108 articles was reviewed against the established inclusion criteria, resulting in the exclusion of 64 articles. Of these, 21 were conference papers or book chapters, 19 focused solely on private-sector contexts, 11 lacked adequate methodological clarity, and 13 failed to address the research variables jointly. Applying these criteria left 44 articles eligible for the final analysis.

(iv) Inclusion Stage

In the final stage, 44 articles were carried into the qualitative synthesis underpinning this systematic literature review. These studies were then examined in depth to surface dominant research themes, theoretical perspectives, methodological choices, and key empirical findings. Figure 2's PRISMA flow diagram traces the entire selection process, from initial identification through to the final set of included studies. The selected articles were subsequently examined using thematic and content analysis to draw out core research themes, theoretical perspectives, and emerging gaps in the field.

Drivers of Public Sector Performance

Data Analysis Procedure

The selected articles were examined through a thematic synthesis approach, which lets researchers organize and interpret literature around recurring conceptual patterns and themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method suits systematic reviews well, as it draws together findings spanning diverse methodologies and theoretical perspectives. Following this procedure, the literature was sorted into three major thematic clusters: strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance.

Within each cluster, studies were reviewed to identify prevailing theoretical frameworks, research methods, empirical findings, and emerging gaps. This thematic analysis offers a structured way of understanding how strategic leadership and innovation culture interact to shape public sector performance. Through this synthesis, the study helps clarify the theoretical relationships linking leadership capability, an innovation-oriented culture, and institutional performance in the public sector—shedding light in particular on how strategic leadership can cultivate innovation culture and, in turn, strengthen the performance of government institutions operating in dynamic governance settings.

RESULTS

Descriptive Analysis of the Selected Articles

This study builds on a substantial body of prior research emphasizing leadership's central role in driving organizational transformation, innovation capability, and institutional performance. Across both private and public sector settings, leadership is widely regarded as a core mechanism enabling organizations to adapt to environmental change, handle complexity, and pursue long-term strategic goals. Figure X presents a bibliometric map of the research landscape around leadership and strategic leadership, tracing conceptual links between prior scholarship and this study's focus.

The first cluster spans roughly 2012 to 2016 and centers on public leadership, public value, and public service logic. Studies in this cluster largely examine leadership within public governance systems, with an emphasis on public sector accountability, service quality, and citizen-oriented policy delivery. These works link leadership in the public sector closely to institutional legitimacy, governance effectiveness, and the creation of public value, laying an early theoretical foundation for understanding how

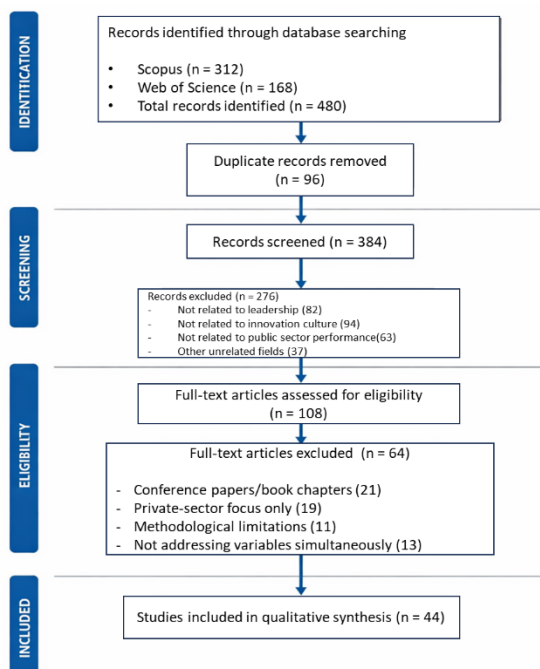


Figure 2. PRISMA Flow Diagram for the Systematic Review of Strategic Leadership and Innovation Culture as

leadership shapes governance structures and administrative performance in public organizations.

The second cluster covers 2017 through 2020 and broadens the discussion to organizational leadership, sustainability, and digital transformation. Research from this period explores how leadership fosters organizational adaptability and innovation amid rapid technological change and global challenges. Themes such as sustainability leadership, change management, and digital transformation gained prominence, reflecting leadership's growing importance in guiding organizations through complex socio-economic shifts. This body of work underscores leadership's role in integrating organizational knowledge, cultivating innovation-oriented cultures, and building institutional resilience.

The third cluster, spanning 2021 to 2024, turns to strategic leadership, top management teams, corporate governance, and upper echelons theory. Studies here foreground the strategic dimension of leadership—particularly how senior executives and top management teams shape organizational strategy, decision-making, and institutional performance. These findings tie strategic leadership increasingly to organizational adaptability, knowledge integration, and innovation capability within complex governance settings, while also highlighting the importance of leadership structures, governance mechanisms, and managerial cognition in shaping strategic outcomes.

Notwithstanding the expanding body of research on leadership and strategic leadership, notable gaps persist. Most studies concentrate on leadership within corporate or private-sector settings, leaving public governance institutions comparatively underexamined. Existing work also tends to approach leadership from either a governance-structure or managerial-behavior standpoint, without fully connecting leadership to organizational innovation and institutional performance.

This points to a meaningful research gap around how strategic leadership interacts with organizational culture and innovation capability to strengthen public sector performance, particularly within complex policy domains such as tourism governance. This study aims to close that gap by systematically examining the relationship between strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance—contributing a more integrated understanding of how leadership drives institutional transformation within public sector organizations.

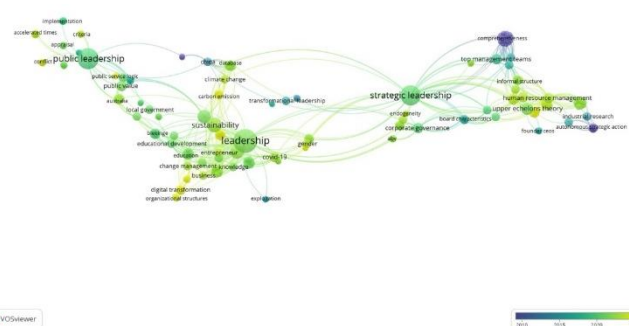


Figure 3. Bibliometric Map of Leadership and Strategic Leadership Research, Generated via VOS Viewer

The bibliometric map generated through VOS viewer surfaces several interconnected clusters representing the major thematic strands within the leadership literature. The cluster on the left side of the map centers on public leadership, public value, and public service logic, pointing to sustained research interest in leadership within public governance systems. Studies here highlight leaders' role in strengthening public accountability, policy implementation, and institutional legitimacy within government bodies. Leadership in the public sector has long been tied to public value creation and improved governance outcomes (Moore, 1995; Hartley, 2005), while research on public leadership also stresses the importance of leadership capability in managing stakeholder complexity and ensuring effective policy delivery in government institutions (Van Wart, 2013). Collectively, these studies indicate that leadership plays a central role in shaping governance quality and institutional performance across public organizations.

Viewed over time, the leadership literature has moved through several distinct phases. Early work concentrated on public leadership and governance mechanisms, examining how leadership underpins administrative effectiveness and institutional legitimacy within government institutions (Hartley, 2005; Van Wart, 2013). A subsequent phase broadened the focus to organizational leadership, sustainability, and change management, mirroring growing global concern with environmental sustainability, organizational resilience, and digital transformation, with scholars increasingly examining how leadership integrates sustainability into organizational strategy and drives adaptive organizational change (Senge et al., 2015; Sengur, 2023). More recently, attention has shifted toward strategic leadership and top-management decision-making, often through the lens of Upper Echelons Theory, which holds that organizational outcomes are

shaped by the characteristics and strategic choices of top management teams (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Hambrick, 2007). This trajectory reflects growing recognition that leadership capability is essential for navigating complex organizational environments and shaping long-term strategic outcomes.

The clusters surfaced through the bibliometric analysis line up closely with this study's core variables. The strategic leadership cluster highlights leadership's role in shaping organizational strategy, coordinating resources, and steering institutional transformation (Ireland & Hitt, 2005). These leadership capabilities help build the organizational conditions that give rise to innovation culture, particularly through knowledge sharing, a learning orientation, and openness to experimentation (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). An innovation-oriented culture, in turn, allows organizations to keep adapting and generate creative responses to emerging challenges—ultimately strengthening organizational performance (Anderson, Potočník, & Zhou, 2014). Within public organizations specifically, innovation culture is increasingly viewed as a key mechanism for improving public sector performance, helping government institutions raise policy responsiveness, service quality, and institutional effectiveness (De Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2016). The bibliometric findings, taken together, reinforce this study's proposed relationship: strategic leadership drives the development of innovation culture, which in turn contributes to stronger public sector performance.

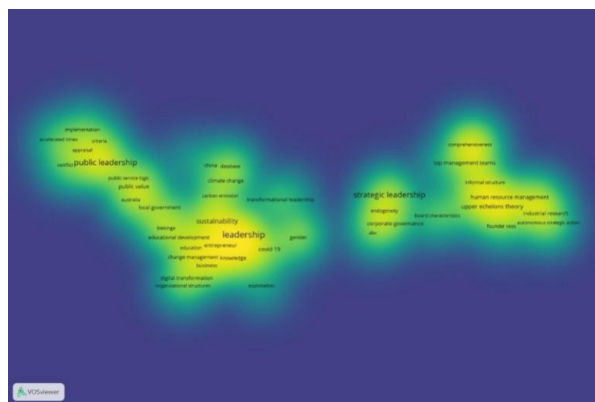


Figure 4. Density Map of Leadership Research Themes, Based on Keyword Co-Occurrence Analysis (VOS Viewer)

Figure 5 traces the temporal distribution of influential authors within leadership and strategic leadership research, illustrating how scholarly contributions in this space have shifted over time. A number of prominent researchers have

shaped the trajectory of leadership studies, especially in relation to strategic leadership, organizational behavior, and public sector governance. Melissa A. Wheeler and Jost Sieweke, for instance, have made extensive contributions to contemporary discussions on leadership and organizational performance, particularly within management and behavioral decision-making, with their work showing how leadership behavior and managerial cognition shape strategic decision-making and organizational outcomes (Wheeler, 2012; Sieweke & Santoni, 2020). Nicolas Bastardoz, likewise, has approached leadership from a behavioral and strategic angle, examining how leadership styles and leader characteristics affect team dynamics and organizational performance (Bastardoz & Van Vugt, 2019). Collectively, these contributions point to a growing research focus on how leaders shape organizational strategy, team performance, and decision-making within complex settings.

Earlier scholars such as Daniel L. Gamage and Dimitrios Georgakakis laid foundational groundwork on leadership within organizational and governance contexts, emphasizing leadership's role in shaping institutional effectiveness through the interplay between leadership capability, organizational structures, and strategic decision-making (Georgakakis, Heyden, Oehmichen, & Ekanayake, 2022). Building on this, Jana Oehmichen and Lykke Margot Ricard extend the leadership literature by examining how top management teams and leadership diversity influence strategic outcomes and organizational performance—work closely tied to Upper Echelons Theory, which holds that organizational outcomes are shaped in part by the traits and choices of top executives (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Hambrick, 2007). Taken together, these contributions trace how leadership research has evolved from a focus on managerial behavior toward a broader strategic perspective that ties together leadership capability, governance structures, and organizational performance.

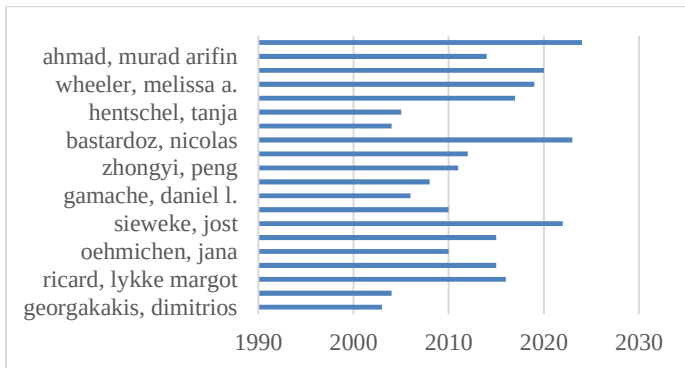


Figure 5. Temporal Distribution of Influential Authors in Leadership and Strategic Leadership Research

Figure 6 maps the geographical spread of scholarly publications on leadership, strategic leadership, and innovation within the public sector, showing that research output is concentrated in a handful of developed countries. The Netherlands leads with six publications, followed by Switzerland and Australia with five each, while the United States and Denmark also register a notable presence. These patterns reflect the strong tradition of leadership and public administration research within European and Anglo-Saxon academic systems, where governance innovation and public sector management remain central research priorities. Scholars from these countries have devoted considerable attention to leadership capability, governance reform, and innovation within public organizations, particularly regarding public sector performance and institutional effectiveness (De Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2016; Hartley, 2005). The prominence of European countries in this dataset also signals a growing emphasis on public sector innovation and collaborative governance models within the European public administration research community.

Contributions from Singapore, China, Germany, Spain, Sweden, and South Korea point to expanding global interest in leadership and innovation research across varied institutional contexts. Emerging economies and Asian nations, in particular, have stepped up their engagement with leadership research as governments look to strengthen administrative efficiency, digital governance, and policy innovation amid intensifying global competition and technological change. Recent studies suggest that leadership capability and strategic decision-making are crucial for reinforcing public sector innovation and organizational adaptability, especially within rapidly evolving governance environments (Moussa, McMurray, & Muenjohn, 2018; Georgakakis et al., 2022). Even so, the

uneven spread of publications across countries suggests that leadership and innovation research remains clustered within a limited set of academic hubs—pointing to the need for broader empirical work in developing countries and emerging governance contexts to better understand how strategic leadership and innovation culture shape public sector performance across different institutional settings.

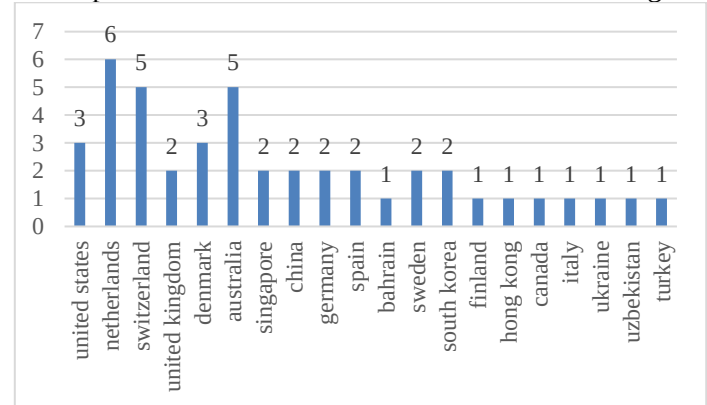


Figure 6. Geographic Distribution of Articles Included in the Systematic Literature Review

Figure 7 presents the distribution of selected publications by academic publisher within the field of strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance. MDPI leads with nine articles, followed by Emerald Publishing with seven, while Taylor & Francis, Wiley, and Elsevier each contribute six. These publishers are well established as outlets for research in management, public administration, and organizational studies, and their prominence in the dataset reflects the significant role international academic publishers play in shaping leadership and innovation scholarship—particularly within governance, organizational behavior, and public sector management. Prior studies likewise point to journals from these major publishers as primary venues for research on leadership and innovation in organizations, offering theoretical and empirical contributions that shape management scholarship on a global scale (Anderson, Potočník, & Zhou, 2014; De Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2016).

Beyond the leading publishers, additional outlets such as SAGE Publications, Springer Nature, Routledge, the Cognition Foundation, and the Institute of Advanced Engineering and Science also contribute to the dissemination of leadership and organizational innovation research, albeit with fewer publications. This spread of publishers points to the inherently interdisciplinary nature

of strategic leadership and innovation culture as a research topic, cutting across journals in management, public administration, organizational studies, and innovation research. Journals under publishers such as Springer Nature and Routledge, for example, frequently feature studies on leadership behavior, governance innovation, and organizational performance across both public and private sector settings. This diversity of publishing outlets reflects growing interest in how leadership capability, organizational culture, and strategic decision-making shape institutional performance across differing governance environments (Hambrick, 2007; Georgakakis et al., 2022). Altogether, this distribution shows that leadership and innovation research is disseminated widely across leading academic publishing platforms, reflecting its expanding significance within contemporary management and public administration scholarship.

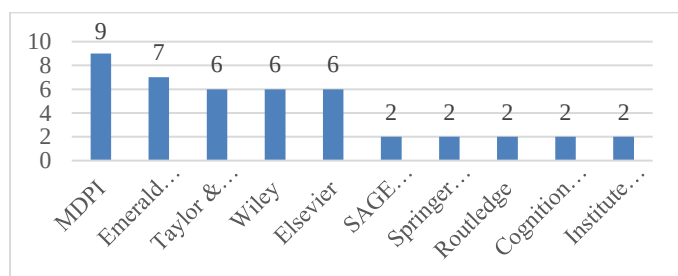


Figure 7. Distribution of Selected Articles by Publisher

RQ1: What are the dominant theoretical perspectives and research trends linking strategic leadership and innovation culture in the context of public sector performance?

This first research question sets out to identify the theoretical frameworks and emerging trends that connect strategic leadership with innovation culture in public sector organizations. Prior studies suggest that leadership research within public administration has increasingly drawn on perspectives from strategic management, organizational behavior, and innovation management. Strategic leadership theory stresses leaders' role in shaping long-term organizational direction, aligning resources, and building adaptive capability within dynamic environments (Ireland & Hitt, 2005), while research on organizational culture points to innovation-oriented cultures as drivers of creativity, experimentation, and continuous improvement (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Within the public sector, scholars have increasingly examined how leadership practices shape innovation processes and institutional performance, often through the lens of public value theory

and governance innovation (Moore, 1995; Hartley, 2005). Systematic reviews of public sector innovation likewise indicate that leadership capability, organizational culture, and institutional context are key determinants of innovation outcomes within government institutions (De Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2016). This research question therefore aims to draw together existing theoretical perspectives and identify the dominant research streams explaining how strategic leadership and innovation culture jointly shape public sector performance.

RQ2: How does strategic leadership influence the development of innovation culture within public organizations?

This second research question centers on the mechanisms through which strategic leadership contributes to the formation and growth of innovation culture within public organizations. Strategic leaders play a decisive role in shaping the organizational values, norms, and behaviors that foster creativity and knowledge sharing. Strategic leadership theory holds that leaders shape organizational culture by articulating a clear vision, building learning-oriented environments, and encouraging experimentation in decision-making (Ireland & Hitt, 2005), while research on innovation culture points to supportive leadership as a key driver of innovative behavior, since it fosters psychological safety and openness to new ideas within organizations (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Within the public sector, leadership matters especially because bureaucratic structures often constrain flexibility and innovation. Empirical work suggests that transformational and strategic leadership styles can promote innovation by empowering staff, strengthening collaboration, and encouraging knowledge exchange across organizational units (Anderson, Potočník, & Zhou, 2014). Leadership also plays a critical role in integrating organizational resources and knowledge capabilities essential for sustaining innovation within complex governance systems (Donate & de Pablo, 2015). This research question, accordingly, explores how leadership behaviors and strategic capabilities give rise to innovation culture within public institutions.

RQ3: How do strategic leadership and innovation culture jointly contribute to improving the performance of public officials in tourism governance?

This third research question examines the combined influence of strategic leadership and innovation culture on the performance of public officials, with particular focus on tourism governance. Public sector performance increasingly hinges on government institutions' ability to

adapt to complex policy environments and deliver innovative public services. Strategic leadership contributes by setting long-term policy direction, coordinating resources, and enabling institutional transformation (Hambrick, 2007), while innovation culture strengthens public organizations' capacity to develop new policy solutions, improve service delivery, and respond effectively to stakeholder needs (De Vries et al., 2016). Within tourism governance, where policy outcomes depend on collaboration among government agencies, industry actors, and local communities, leadership and innovation are essential for ensuring policy responsiveness and institutional effectiveness. Scholars argue that leadership-driven innovation enables public organizations to build adaptive governance systems capable of tackling complex challenges such as digital transformation, sustainability, and destination competitiveness (Moussa, McMurray, & Muenjohn, 2018). This research question, therefore, seeks to examine how the interplay between strategic leadership and innovation culture can strengthen the performance of public officials and reinforce tourism governance systems within dynamic policy settings.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 8 sets out the proposed relationship linking strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance. Strategic leadership functions as the primary driving capability shaping organizational direction, resource alignment, and decision-making within public institutions (Boal & Hooijberg, 2001; Ireland & Hitt, 2005). Leaders with a strategic orientation are able to build long-term vision, promote organizational learning, and facilitate adaptive responses to complex governance environments (Hambrick, 2007; Northouse, 2019)—capabilities that matter especially within the public sector, where institutional constraints and bureaucratic structures often limit organizational flexibility (Bryson, Crosby, & Bloomberg, 2014). Research indicates that leadership practice substantially shapes the development of organizational innovation and performance outcomes by influencing values, norms, and strategic priorities within organizations (Jansen, Vera, & Crossan, 2009; Mumford, Scott, Gaddis, & Strange, 2002).

Within this framework, innovation culture operates as the mediating mechanism through which strategic leadership shapes organizational outcomes. A culture that supports experimentation, knowledge sharing, and collaborative problem-solving allows public organizations to generate innovative solutions and improve service delivery (Hartley,

2005; Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Innovation-oriented cultures have been shown to strengthen institutional performance by helping governments respond more effectively to dynamic policy environments and societal demands (Walker, Damanpour, & Devece, 2011). Within public sector organizations, innovation culture contributes to stronger governance effectiveness, service quality, and policy responsiveness—ultimately lifting public sector performance (Damanpour & Schneider, 2009; Osborne & Brown, 2011).



Figure 8. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH GAP AND NOVELTY

Despite growing scholarly attention to leadership and innovation within organizational studies, several critical gaps remain in understanding how these concepts interact within public sector contexts. First, existing research on strategic leadership has centered predominantly on private sector organizations and corporate governance environments, giving comparatively limited attention to leadership dynamics within public institutions and government agencies (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Hambrick, 2007). As a result, the mechanisms through which strategic leadership shapes administrative effectiveness and policy outcomes in public sector organizations remain only partially understood.

Second, while research on innovation culture has emphasized the role of organizational values, learning orientation, and knowledge sharing in fostering innovation, much of this work is grounded in corporate or entrepreneurial settings rather than public governance systems (Martins & Terblanche, 2003; Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou, 2014). Public organizations operate under distinct institutional constraints—bureaucratic structures, regulatory accountability, and political oversight—that can significantly shape how innovation-oriented cultures develop. The relationship between leadership practice and innovation culture within public institutions therefore warrants further systematic investigation.

Third, research on public sector performance has increasingly stressed the importance of innovation and governance transformation for institutional effectiveness. Yet previous studies tend to treat leadership, innovation, and performance as separate constructs rather than as an integrated governance mechanism (Hartley, 2005; De

Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers, 2016). This fragmented treatment limits understanding of how leadership-driven innovation can strengthen public officials' performance and policy outcomes, particularly within complex policy sectors such as tourism governance.

Finally, despite growing recognition of innovation as a key driver of public sector reform, the literature still lacks a systematic synthesis that examines strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance together within a single conceptual framework. Existing studies have generally adopted single-theory perspectives or sector-specific analyses, leaving a gap in comprehensive theoretical understanding that integrates leadership capability, organizational culture, and governance performance (Georgakakis et al., 2022; Moussa, McMurray, & Muenjohn, 2018). This study addresses these gaps through a systematic literature review (SLR) that synthesizes existing research and identifies the dominant theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and emerging research directions linking strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance within contemporary governance contexts.

Even with the expanding body of literature on leadership and innovation within organizations, existing studies tend to treat these constructs in isolation rather than as interrelated drivers of public sector performance. Research on leadership has focused predominantly on transformational or managerial leadership styles and their bearing on organizational effectiveness, largely within corporate or private sector settings (Ireland & Hitt, 2005; Hambrick, 2007). Studies on innovation culture, similarly, emphasize internal organizational dynamics that foster creativity, experimentation, and knowledge sharing, but rarely link these cultural attributes explicitly to strategic leadership capability within public institutions (Martins & Terblanche, 2003; Damanpour & Schneider, 2009). The result is a fragmented literature offering limited insight into how leadership-driven cultural transformation shapes innovation processes and performance outcomes within government organizations—a limitation especially pronounced in the public sector, where institutional rigidity, bureaucratic procedure, and complex governance structures often constrain organizational adaptability and innovation capacity (Osborne & Brown, 2011; Van Wart, 2013).

Furthermore, although public administration scholarship increasingly recognizes innovation's importance within governance systems, the role of strategic leadership as a catalyst for building innovation-oriented cultures within

government institutions remains underexplored (Hartley, 2005; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). Existing research tends to emphasize policy reform, administrative capacity, or institutional design rather than the leadership mechanisms that enable cultural transformation toward innovation (Walker, Damanpour, & Devece, 2011). This gap becomes even more pronounced within tourism governance, where public institutions must navigate complex stakeholder networks, rapidly shifting market dynamics, and sustainability pressures (Hall, 2011; OECD, 2019). To address this gap, the present study builds an integrated conceptual framework linking Strategic Leadership, Innovation Culture, and Public Sector Performance, drawing on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) grounded in PRISMA methodology to synthesize existing knowledge and chart emerging research directions. By situating this analysis within tourism governance, the study contributes to the literature by showing how leadership-driven innovation culture can strengthen institutional performance and policy responsiveness within contemporary public sector settings.

Research Future Agenda

The future research agenda in Table 3 sets out several promising directions for advancing scholarship on strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance. Existing studies have concentrated mainly on leadership and innovation within corporate settings, leaving limited understanding of how these dynamics play out within government institutions and public governance systems. Future research should therefore examine the mechanisms through which strategic leadership fosters innovation-oriented organizational cultures and strengthens institutional performance within the public sector. The tourism sector offers a particularly valuable empirical setting, given that tourism governance demands coordination across multiple stakeholders, adaptive policymaking, and sustained innovation. Pursuing these directions can help future studies build more comprehensive governance models that integrate leadership capability, organizational culture, and public sector performance.

Table 2. Research Gap Matrix

No	Author	Research Focus	Context	Key Findings	Type of Gap	Research Identified	Gap	Contribution of This Study
1	Martins & Terblanche (2003)	Organizational culture and innovation	Private organizations	Organizational culture strongly shapes creativity and innovation	Contextual Gap	Centers on private sector organizations; does not examine innovation culture in public sector governance		Examines innovation culture within public sector institutions
2	Ireland & Hitt (2005)	Strategic leadership and competitiveness	Corporate strategy	Strategic leadership helps organizations adapt and maintain competitiveness	Contextual Gap	Examined mainly in corporate settings rather than public governance systems		Applies strategic leadership theory within the context of public sector organizations
3	Hartley (2005)	Public sector innovation	Public administration	Innovation strengthens governance and public service delivery	Conceptual Gap	Limited integration between leadership capability and innovation culture in public sector research		Integrates leadership and innovation culture as complementary governance mechanisms
4	Anderson, Potočník, & Zhou (2014)	Creativity and innovation in organizations	Organizational behavior	Leadership and organizational climate shape employee creativity and innovation	Contextual Gap	Centers on organizational behavior within private organizations rather than public sector institutions		Extends innovation research into the public sector governance context
5	Donate & de Pablo (2015)	Knowledge-oriented leadership and innovation	Organizational knowledge management	Leadership supports knowledge sharing and innovation capability	Conceptual Gap	Emphasizes knowledge management without analyzing innovation culture within public organizations		Links strategic leadership to the development of innovation culture
6	De Vries, Bekkers, & Tummers (2016)	Public sector innovation	Public governance	Leadership, resources, and institutional context shape innovation within the public sector	Integration Gap	Does not explicitly integrate strategic leadership with innovation culture and performance outcomes		Develops an integrated framework linking leadership, culture, and performance
7	Moussa, McMurra, & Muenjohn (2018)	Innovation in public sector organizations	Public administration	Leadership and organizational factors shape innovation practices	Empirical Gap	Limited exploration of the link between innovation culture and public sector performance		Examines innovation culture as a driver of performance improvement
8	Bastardo & Van	Leadership and	Organizational leadership	Leadership behavior shapes	Conceptual Gap	Centers on behavioral		Highlights the strategic dimension

No	Author	Research Focus	Context	Key Findings	Type of Gap	Research Identified	Gap	Contribution of This Study
	Vugt (2019)	followership		team performance and organizational outcomes		leadership rather than strategic leadership within governance contexts		of leadership within public institutions
9	Sieweke & Santoni (2020)	Leadership decision-making	Management research	Leadership decisions meaningfully shape organizational outcomes	Methodological Gap	Limited systematic synthesis of leadership research within the public sector context		Conducts a systematic literature review synthesizing leadership and innovation research

The synthesis in Table 2 reveals that the research gaps are not merely related to differences in organizational settings but also reflect a broader fragmentation in the theoretical understanding of leadership, innovation, and performance. Three interconnected patterns emerge. First, strategic leadership research has largely emphasized organizational competitiveness and managerial decision-making, with relatively limited attention to its application within public governance systems. Second, innovation research demonstrates the importance of organizational culture, knowledge sharing, and collaborative practices, yet these elements are rarely examined as mechanisms through which strategic leadership influences institutional outcomes. Third, although public sector innovation has received increasing scholarly attention, its relationship with institutional performance remains insufficiently integrated

with leadership capability and innovation culture. These patterns suggest that the central research gap lies in the absence of an integrated perspective explaining how strategic leadership cultivates innovation culture and how this organizational mechanism contributes to public sector performance. This issue becomes particularly relevant in tourism governance, where institutional effectiveness depends on policy responsiveness, inter-organizational coordination, stakeholder collaboration, and adaptability to changing tourism environments. Accordingly, the present study advances the discussion by connecting strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance within an integrated conceptual framework, while positioning tourism governance as an important context for further theoretical and empirical investigation.

Table 3. Research Future Agenda

No	Research Theme	Current Limitations in Literature	Future Research Direction	Potential Methods	Expected Contribution
1	Strategic Leadership in Public Sector	Most studies examine strategic leadership within corporate or private organizations	Investigate how strategic leadership functions within public governance systems and government institutions	Survey, SEM-PLS, case studies	Expands strategic leadership theory within public sector contexts
2	Leadership and Innovation Culture	Few studies connect leadership capability with an innovation-oriented organizational culture	Examine how leadership behaviors shape the development of innovation culture within public organizations	Mixed methods, organizational culture analysis	Strengthens understanding of leadership-driven innovation
3	Innovation Culture in Public Administration	Innovation culture remains centered on private organizations	Explore innovation culture within bureaucratic institutions and government agencies	Qualitative studies, comparative institutional analysis	Offers insight into innovation management within public institutions
4	Leadership and Public Sector Performance	Leadership and performance are often studied separately	Analyze how strategic leadership shapes public sector performance both directly and indirectly	Structural equation modeling (SEM), longitudinal studies	Develops integrated models of governance performance

No	Research Theme	Current Limitations in Literature	Future Research Direction	Potential Methods	Expected Contribution
5	Governance and Institutional Innovation	Studies emphasize organizational innovation but rarely connect it to governance systems	Investigate leadership's role in enabling policy innovation and institutional reform	Policy analysis, governance studies	Advances research on policy innovation and governance
6	Leadership in Tourism Governance	Leadership within tourism policy and destination governance remains under-researched	Examine leadership capability within tourism governance systems involving multiple stakeholders	Case studies, network analysis	Deepens understanding of leadership in tourism policy management
7	Digital Governance and Leadership	Few studies address leadership capability amid digital transformation within public institutions	Explore how strategic leadership supports digital governance and smart tourism systems	Big data analytics, digital governance frameworks	Contributes to smart governance and digital public administration
8	Cross-Country Comparative Leadership Studies	Most leadership studies are situated in developed countries	Conduct comparative studies across different governance systems and institutional environments	Cross-country analysis, comparative governance research	Broadens the global understanding of leadership and innovation

The future research agenda presented in Table 3 highlights the need for a more integrated understanding of strategic leadership, innovation culture, and public sector performance. Three research directions emerge. First, further studies should examine how strategic leadership shapes innovation culture through organizational learning, knowledge sharing, and collaborative practices within public institutions. Second, research should explore the relationship between leadership and institutional performance by considering policy responsiveness, organizational adaptability, and public value creation. Third, greater attention should be given to strategic leadership in digital governance and tourism governance, particularly in managing cross-sector collaboration and institutional innovation.

Overall, these directions emphasize the need to move beyond examining leadership and innovation separately toward understanding how they jointly strengthen public sector performance. This provides a foundation for developing more integrated and context-sensitive governance frameworks.

CONCLUSION

Strengthening strategic leadership within public organizations is essential for lifting public sector performance and fostering innovation within governance systems. Integrating strategic leadership with an innovation-oriented culture allows public institutions to build greater capacity for navigating complex policy environments and delivering more effective public services. This study's findings show that leadership practices—vision development, organizational learning, collaborative decision-making, and knowledge sharing—play a significant role in shaping innovation-oriented organizational cultures. Where these leadership capabilities are put into practice effectively, they contribute to stronger institutional performance, greater policy responsiveness, and improved service quality across government organizations. The findings underscore the importance of embedding leadership-driven innovation across public sector institutions to strengthen governance effectiveness and institutional sustainability.

These findings also carry practical value for policymakers and public managers, particularly within sectors such as tourism governance where adaptive leadership and policy innovation are indispensable. By fostering a culture that supports experimentation, collaboration, and continuous learning, public organizations can better respond to emerging challenges and stakeholder expectations. The conceptual framework linking strategic leadership,

innovation culture, and public sector performance offers a useful lens for understanding how leadership-driven innovation contributes to institutional effectiveness.

This study nevertheless carries certain limitations. As a systematic literature review, it centers on theoretical relationships among leadership, innovation culture, and organizational performance, without fully capturing empirical variation across different institutional contexts. Nor does the review comprehensively address other factors that may shape public sector performance, such as governance structures, digital transformation, and inter-organizational collaboration. Future research should therefore explore these dimensions through empirical analysis, comparative governance studies, and broader performance indicators—covering institutional responsiveness, service quality, policy effectiveness, and collaborative governance mechanisms. Building on these approaches, subsequent studies can develop more comprehensive governance models that integrate leadership capability, organizational culture, and innovation-driven performance within public sector institutions.

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ETHICAL APPROVAL

No ethical approval was required for this study, as it relied on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology using data drawn exclusively from published scientific literature. The research involved no human participants, personal data, or confidential information.

INFORMED CONSENT

Informed consent was not applicable, as this study did not involve human participants, interviews, surveys, or any form of direct data collection; the research was carried out entirely through the analysis of previously published

literature.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data underpinning this study's findings consist of published articles drawn from the Scopus and Web of Science databases in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines. All data used in the analysis are publicly accessible through their respective databases, and further details on the article selection process can be obtained from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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