


Chapter 3

Enhancing Leadership and Management Research Skills in Namibia's Agro- Education: An Evaluative Mixed Methods Approach

Hildegardt Martin-Kangandjera

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-4794-2476>

University of Witwatersrand, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the enhancement of leadership and management research skills in Namibia's agro-education sector, focusing on digital agro-processing transformation. It identifies gaps in research skills, curriculum, and interdisciplinary collaboration that hinder digital adoption. Using a mixed-methods approach, the paper explores how research designs like convergent parallel, explanatory sequential, exploratory sequential, and embedded can address these challenges. Findings suggest the need for specialized training, curriculum updates, and institutional support for digital initiatives. Recommendations include fostering collaboration, integrating digital leadership modules, and securing funding for research. In conclusion, improving research skills is crucial to empowering leaders for successful digital transformation in agro-processing and agro-education.

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INTRODUCTION

The digital transformation of agro-processing and agro-education in Namibia is critical for enhancing productivity, economic growth, and workforce development. However, a significant gap exists in leadership and management research skills, limiting the effective integration of digital technologies in agro-processing education. The complexity of digital transformation requires comprehensive leadership capabilities, strategic management, and evidence-based decision-making. Without a strong research foundation, the sector may struggle to adopt innovative digital tools, optimize supply chains, and equip agricultural educators with the necessary competencies to drive technological advancements. Addressing these challenges necessitates a comprehensive research approach that evaluates the role of leadership and management in facilitating digital transformation within agro-education.

This study explores the potential of an evaluative mixed methods approach to enhance leadership and management research skills in Namibia's agro-education sector. By integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies, this research seeks to assess the effectiveness of digital agro-processing frameworks and identify leadership strategies that support sustainable implementation. The study aims to provide insights into best practices, capacity-building initiatives, and policy recommendations that can strengthen digital adoption in agro-processing. Through this approach, the research will contribute to bridging the knowledge gap, empowering educators and industry stakeholders to leverage digital technologies for improved agricultural productivity and educational outcomes.

BACKGROUND

Critical leadership and management research skills are essential to drive change in agro-education and agro-processing sectors. Despite ongoing efforts toward digital transformation, many Namibian institutions lack the capacity to evaluate and refine digital initiatives due to underdeveloped mixed methods research skills. Mixed methods research—integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches—provides a comprehensive framework to understand and overcome the challenges inherent in digital transformation. This background sets the stage for exploring how different mixed methods designs can be applied to evaluate leadership and management within agro-education.

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