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EFFECT OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP ON THE PERFORMANCE OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN ENUGU STATE

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Abstract: The study evaluated the effect of ethical leadership on the performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. The specific objectives of the study are to; examine the effect of integrity on the output; and ascertain the effect of fairness on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. The descriptive survey design was used. The study adopted simple random sampling technique in selecting the sample unit and the sample size for the study which was, 266 academic staff out of a total population of 865 of the study organisations derived with the use of Ferund Williams's formula. A total of 251 staff returned the questionnaire accurately filled, which gave 94 percent response rate. Data were presented and analyzed using mean score and standard deviation using Sprint Likert Scale. The hypotheses were analyzed using the Pearson correlation (r). The findings indicated that Integrity had significant positive effect on the output, $Z(95, n = 251), 6.754 < 9.152 = p. < 0.05$ and Fairness had significant positive effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State $Z(95, n = 251), 5.681 < 9.231 = p. < 0.05$. The study concluded that integrity and fairness had significant positive effect on the output and profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. The study recommended among others that Leader's integrity sets the tone for the employees to improve their task performance.

Keywords: Ethical, Leadership, Performance, Integrity, Fairness & Profitability

Introduction

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1.1 Background of the Study

In exploring the intricate relationship between leadership and organizational performance, it becomes evident that leadership plays a crucial role beyond mere financial capacity. Studies by Hurduezeu (2015) underscore the significance of leadership in enhancing organizational performance, while Nandasinghe (2020) emphasizes its influence on shaping employee behavior. Indeed, effective leadership fosters resilience and boosts organizational performance, while ineffective leadership can detrimentally impact both organizational and individual performance (Abun, Julian, Acidera & Apollo, 2023). Leadership, fundamentally, is a process of guiding followers or groups towards shared goals. Within this framework, ethical leadership emerges as a pivotal component, promoting virtuous conduct among employees and ultimately enhancing organizational performance. Ethical leadership, which emphasizes ethical dimensions within management, encompasses values, traits, and behaviors that prioritize honesty, integrity, trust, and fairness (Buye, 2021).

Furthermore, ethical leadership is not only about influencing followers but also about validating and supporting good conduct to improve work performance (Gabriunas, 2017). This leadership style emphasizes respect for ethics, values, and the rights of others, aligning personal actions and interpersonal relations with normatively appropriate conduct (Adeoye, 2021). Consequently, ethical leadership integrates moral values into organizational practices, recognizing the critical role of ethics in shaping individuals' behavior, actions, and conduct (Rabie & Abdul Malek, 2020). The resilience of leaders' character, anchored in moral virtues, underscores the importance of leaders' moral character alongside their expertise and strategic prowess (Sharma, Agrawal & Khandelwal, 2019). This moral aspect not only empowers employees but also influences their motivation, performance, and satisfaction.

In light of these insights, the study delves into the effect of ethical leadership on the performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. By examining the nexus between ethical leadership and organizational performance within this specific industry context, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how leadership dynamics shape organizational outcomes.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The food and beverage manufacturing sector plays a crucial role in Enugu State's economy. However, recent trends indicate a concerning decline in the performance of these firms. This decline is manifested in lower output levels, potentially impacting product availability and consumer choice. Additionally, profitability appears to be stagnating or even decreasing, raising questions about the financial sustainability and future growth potential of these businesses.

While the exact causes of this underperformance require investigation, some argue that unethical leadership practices may be a contributing factor. Unethical leadership can manifest in various ways, such as prioritizing short-term profits over quality control, pressuring employees to cut corners, or misleading consumers about product ingredients. These practices can ultimately damage a company's reputation, erode consumer trust, and hinder long-term success. This underperformance can have a significant ripple effect. Reduced output can lead to shortages, price hikes, and ultimately, a decline in consumer confidence. Furthermore, stagnant profitability can hinder investment in new technologies, product development, and job creation, ultimately impacting Enugu's overall economic development.

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Therefore, it is imperative to identify the factors influencing the performance of food and beverage firms in Enugu State, with a particular focus on the potential role of unethical leadership practices. This study proposes to investigate the impact of ethical leadership, specifically through dimensions like integrity and fairness, on a firm's output and profitability. By understanding how leadership ethics influence performance, policymakers and industry leaders can develop targeted interventions to promote ethical leadership within these organizations. This, in turn, could lead to improved performance, a more robust food and beverage sector in Enugu State, and ultimately, protect consumers from the negative consequences of unethical practices.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of ethical leadership on the performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. The specific objectives of the study are to;

- i. Examine the effect of integrity on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State.
- ii. Ascertain the effect of fairness on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

- i. What is the effect of integrity on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State?
- ii. What is the effect of fairness on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State?

1.5 Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study;

- i. Integrity has no effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State.
- ii. Fairness has no effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to benefit various stakeholders within the food and beverage manufacturing industry in Enugu State. The study provides valuable insights for managers and leaders, empowering them to cultivate trust, fairness, and transparency in their practices, ultimately leading to improved output and profitability. Employees stand to gain from a positive work environment characterized by increased trust and job satisfaction, while suppliers and customers benefit from strengthened relationships and enhanced trust. Additionally, investors and shareholders are likely to see improved financial returns and reputational gains, and government and regulatory bodies can utilize the findings to inform policies aimed at promoting ethical conduct within the sector. Overall, the study's findings have the potential to contribute to the sustainability and success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study encompasses food and beverage manufacturing firms operating within Enugu State and focuses on examining the effect of ethical leadership on organizational performance within this specific industry context. The study will investigate the influence of integrity and fairness on key performance indicators such as output and profitability. It will involve gathering data from a sample of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State through surveys, interviews, or other relevant research methods. The study will not extend to other industries or regions outside of Enugu State, nor will it delve into broader aspects of organizational behavior beyond the realm of ethical leadership and its impact on performance in the specified industry.

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Ethics

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Organizational ethics express the values of an organization to its employees and/or other entities irrespective of governmental and/or regulatory laws. Ethics are the principles and values used by an individual to govern his or her actions and decisions. An organization forms when individuals with varied interests and different backgrounds unite on a common platform and work together towards predefined goals and objectives (Ubabuiké, 2020). Ethics refers to principles that define behavior as right, good and proper. Such principles do not always dictate a single "moral" course of action, but provide a means of evaluating and deciding among competing options (Abiodun, Osibanjo, Adeniji and Iyereokojie, 2014).

2.1.2 Leadership

Leadership and management are often used interchangeably, causing confusion among people. It is essential to understand the differences between the two roles to appropriately navigate situations. Leader-managers must be aware of their functions as both a leader and a manager. This knowledge enables them to determine when to assume each role, as they are inherently connected and exercised by the same person (Abun, 2018). Handy (as cited in Silva & Gomes, 2015) defines leadership as the capability to shape and share a vision that provides direction for others' work. A leader must not only provide a vision but also have the capability to implement it, which requires cooperation with employees (Abun et al. 2023).

2.1.3 Ethical Leadership

According to the research conducted by Brown, Treviño and Harrison (2005), ethical leadership is "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making. Ethical leadership is defined as a process in which predetermined goals within a company or organization are set and employees of the company or organization are directed to achieve these goals with the assistance of a leader role (Amirudin and Nugroho, 2022). Ethical leaders refer to the ethical consequences of their decision making, fair choices, and principles that can be observed. Ethical leadership has seven aspects: concern for sustainability, people-orientation, power distribution, role clarification, equality, reliability, and ethical supervision (Qasim, Rizvi and Irshad, 2020).

2.1.3.1 Integrity

Integrity is consistency and unwavering determination in upholding noble values and beliefs. Another definition of integrity is a concept that points to consistency between actions and values and principles. In ethics, integrity is interpreted as honesty and the truth of one's actions. Integrity becomes a key character for a leader. A leader who has integrity will get the trust of his employees. Leaders with integrity are trusted because what they say becomes their actions (Supriadi, Guswandi and Saragih, 2020). Integrity is a form of responsibility for what has been done and what has been produced and must be in accordance with the correct principles, norms and a firm standpoint in every situation without coercion from any party (Zahra, 2015).

2.1.3.2 Fairness

Fairness is needed to instill trust in the company among employees, which helps to build harmonious relationships between employers and employees and reduce wage disputes. When businesses fail to treat their employees well (for example, by having an unfair or inequitable reward structure), they are systematically weakening workers' trust and loyalty (Wahby, Ghany and Rasheed, 2022). Fairness relates to both outcomes (distributive justice) and process (procedural justice). Bailey and Madden (2016a, b, c) found that unfairness and injustice can make work feel meaningless. They found evidence of a lack of distributive justice (anticipated pay or pay rise not forthcoming) negatively impacting meaningful work.

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2.1.4 Performance

Organizational performance is an indicator of the level of achievement that can be achieved and reflects the success of an organization, as well as the results achieved from the behavior of organizational members (Supriadi, Guswandi and Saragih, 2020). Performance can also be said as a result (output) of a particular process carried out by all components of the organization against certain sources used (input). The performance of an organization depends on the individual work performance of employees. Thus, one of the focuses of management is managing individual work performance. But the discussion on the dimensions to be measured along with individual work performance drew different opinions. Abun et al (2021) defined work performance as “the act of doing a job and it is a means to reach the goal within a job or organization”. This definition emphasizes work performance as a means to achieve objectives and it has nothing to do with the output. Thus, measuring work performance is measuring the behavior of the employees that lead to the attainment of the goals.

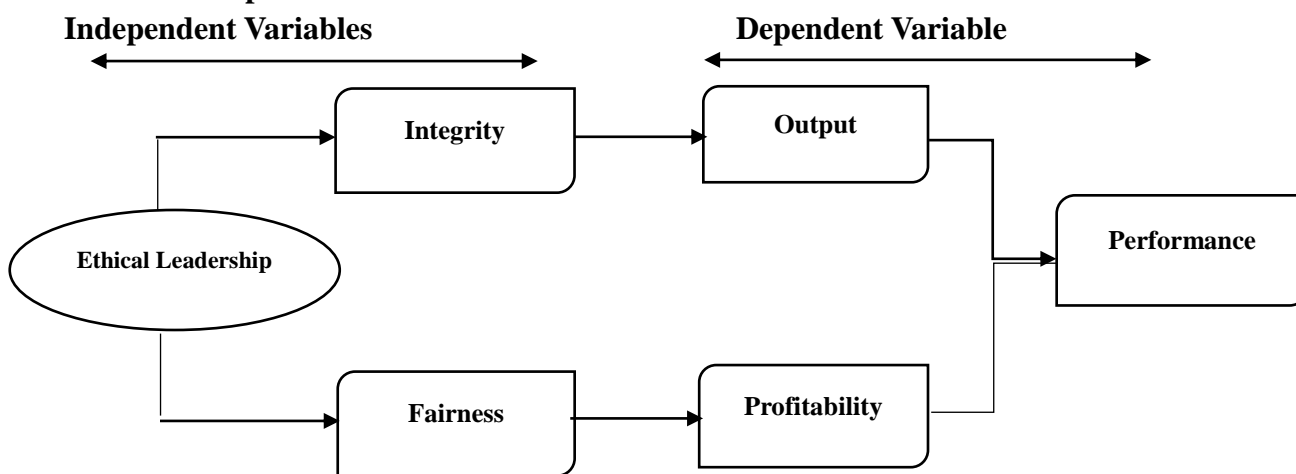
2.1.4.1 Output

Output refers to the amount or level of goods or services generated by a business within a specific timeframe. This encompasses physical products crafted by the SME, like items sold to consumers, alongside intangible services rendered, such as consulting or professional assistance (NBS, 2020). Output serves as a vital metric for SMEs, showcasing the efficiency and effectiveness of their production procedures, resource utilization, and ability to fulfill market demand (OECD, 2017; Bryson & Andresen, 2019). Enhancing output often corresponds with business expansion, profitability, and competitiveness, though SMEs might encounter obstacles like limited resources, market fluctuations, and competition.

2.1.4.2 Profitability

Profitability is the ability of a company to achieve a profit. Profitability is also an important factor to look for in a company. Increasingly high levels of profitability, it will be the greater the assets owned by the company. The greater the assets owned by the company, then it will attract the attention of investors to undertake capital investment in the company. Frequently changing profitability indicates that the company has risk in giving dividends to investors, so as to increase the confidence of the market manager will attempt to maintain profitability in order to remain consistent and stable (Tsuoyya and Astika, 2017). Profitability is closely linked to profit — but with one significant distinction. Profit is a relative concept whereas profitability is an absolute one. It is the statistic used to assess the extent of a company's profit in light of its market share. Efficiency is measured by profitability, which determines whether an endeavor succeeds or fails (Melissa, 2021).

2.6 Conceptual Framework



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Figure 2.1: Conceptual Linkages

Ethical leadership, marked by integrity and fairness, significantly impacts the performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms. Integrity fosters trust among stakeholders, enhancing employee adherence to quality standards and efficiency. Fair leadership practices lead to higher morale and productivity, reducing turnover rates and improving financial performance. Ultimately, ethical leadership positively influences both output and profitability, contributing to the firms' success and sustainability in Enugu State.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study reviewed two theories in line with the study objectives. However, the study is anchored on Social Learning Theory because it goes beyond observing leaders to understand how their behaviors are learned and adopted by employees. Social Learning Theory also acknowledges the negative impact of unethical leader behavior, making it a well-rounded approach to investigating the link between leadership and performance in the food and beverage industry.

i. Servant Leadership (Robert K. Greenleaf, 1970)

ii. Social Learning Theory (Albert Bandura, 1963)

2.2.1 Servant Leadership Theory

Founded in the 1970s by Robert K. Greenleaf (Greenleaf, 1970), Servant Leadership theory proposes a radical shift in leadership philosophy. It posits that leaders exist primarily to serve their followers, rather than the other way around. Greenleaf emphasized that leaders should prioritize the needs and well-being of their employees, focusing on their growth and development [Greenleaf, 1970]. This theory assumes a high degree of trust and open communication between leader and follower, fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment. Leaders who embody Servant Leadership principles empower their employees, delegate tasks effectively, and provide mentorship and coaching opportunities.

Servant Leadership aligns perfectly with the concept of ethical leadership by promoting fairness, integrity, and a focus on long-term sustainability. In the context of Enugu's food and beverage industry, leaders who embody Servant Leadership principles are more likely to prioritize employee well-being, leading to a more engaged and productive workforce (Ehrhart, 2003). Employees who feel valued and supported by their leaders are more likely to go the extra mile, take initiative, and contribute to the organization's success. This, in turn, could contribute to increased output and profitability. Additionally, a focus on employee growth can foster innovation and a commitment to quality, further enhancing performance. For instance, a company that invests in training its employees on food safety procedures and empowers them to raise concerns about quality control issues is more likely to maintain high standards and avoid potential scandals.

2.2.2 Social Learning Theory

Developed by psychologist Albert Bandura in the 1960s (Bandura, 1963), Social Learning Theory delves deeper than simply observing and imitating behaviors. It posits that learning occurs through a complex interplay of four factors: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Bandura, 1977). For attention, employees are more likely to focus on and learn from the behaviors of leaders they perceive as credible, competent, and worthy of emulation. Leaders who consistently demonstrate ethical decision-making and prioritize the well-being of their employees will garner greater attention and respect from their followers. When it comes to retention, simply

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observing ethical behavior isn't enough. For effective learning to occur, employees need to be able to remember and understand the leader's actions. This can be facilitated through clear communication, repetition of desired behaviors, and opportunities for employees to ask questions and discuss ethical dilemmas.

Once employees understand ethical behaviors, they need the opportunity to put them into practice. This requires a supportive work environment where ethical conduct is encouraged and rewarded. Leaders can create this environment by providing role-playing exercises, ethical decision-making frameworks, and opportunities for employees to voice concerns about unethical practices without fear of reprisal. Social Learning Theory recognizes that internal and external factors influence motivation to adopt observed behaviors. Intrinsically motivated employees are more likely to internalize ethical values and act accordingly. Leaders can foster intrinsic motivation by creating a culture of purpose, where employees feel their work contributes to a positive social impact. Additionally, extrinsic motivators such as recognition and rewards for ethical behavior can reinforce desired actions.

Social Learning Theory is highly relevant to ethical leadership. When leaders consistently demonstrate ethical behavior and decision-making, they act as role models for their employees (Yukl, 2019). Employees are more likely to emulate these behaviors, fostering a culture of ethical conduct within the organization. In the context of the Enugu food and beverage industry, ethical leaders set the tone for the organization. By prioritizing ethical practices throughout the production process, from sourcing ingredients to marketing products, they can create a strong foundation for ethical decision-making at all levels. This, in turn, can lead to improved product quality, consumer trust, and ultimately, a more sustainable and responsible industry in Enugu State.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Integrity and Output

Qasim, Rizvi and Irshad (2020) assessed the impact of ethical leadership on task performance and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), with the boundary condition of Islamic work ethics (IWE). Data were collected from 200 employees working in the public and private sector organizations in Islamabad, Pakistan. The data were analyzed through SPSS. The collected data revealed that ethical leadership has a positive and significant influence on task performance and OCB. Furthermore, IWE was also found a significant moderator by enhancing the relationship of ethical leadership and both the outcome variables. It concluded that ethical leadership sets the tone for the employees for improving their task performance and OCB. Additionally, Islamic work ethics can also enhance the positive outcomes of ethical leadership.

Supriadi, Guswandi and Saragih (2020) examine and analyze the integrity and compensation of organizational performance through job satisfaction at PT Puji Bijak Prestasi. The population and study sample were all company employees as many as 122 people. The sampling technique uses a saturated sample technique with data analysis using path analysis. The results showed that integrity variables affect organizational performance partially. The work compensation variable influences partially organizational performance. Job satisfaction variables partially affect organizational performance. Integrity variables affect job satisfaction partially. The compensation variable influences job satisfaction partially. The effect of integrity on organizational performance is 0.581. The effect of integrity on performance through job satisfaction is $0.676 \times 0.868 = 0.585$. In this case, the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect so it can be said that the job satisfaction

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variable is intervening. The effect of worker's compensation on organizational performance through job satisfaction is $0.767 \times 0.868 = 0.672$. In this case, the direct effect is smaller than the indirect effect so it can be said that the job satisfaction variable is intervening.

Rosmi and Syamsir (2021) determined the effect of integrity and professionalism on employee performance in the digital era. This study uses a quantitative approach. This study was conducted in the Bungo Regency Regional Secretariat Office, Jambi Province. The study population was all employees at the Bungo Regency Regional Secretariat Office, Jambi Province. The research sample of 104 respondents was calculated using the Slovin formula. Data in this study were analyzed with regression test formula. The results showed that there was a positive and significant effect between integrity and professionalism in improving employee performance in the digital era at the Bungo Regency Regional Secretariat Office, Jambi Province.

Amirudin and Nugroho (2022) analyzed the effect of ethical leadership on employee performance and incremental innovation with internal motivation as an intervening variable. The population in this study is the Small and Medium Industry (IKM) in Klaten Regency with a sample of 192 respondents. In accordance with the theoretical framework that was built, the analytical tool used is Smart PLS. The results of this study, among others. Ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Ethical leadership has a positive and significant effect on incremental innovation. Ethical leadership has a significant effect on internal motivation. Internal motivation has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Internal motivation has a positive and significant effect on incremental innovation. Internal motivation can mediate positively and significantly between leadership ethics on employee performance. Internal motivation can mediate positively and significantly between ethical leadership and incremental innovation.

Abun, Julian, Acidera and Apollo (2023) investigate the impact of ethical leadership on the individual work performance of employees. The study employed a descriptive assessment and correlational research design. The target population consisted of all employees at the Divine Word College of Laoag, and data were collected through research questionnaires. The gathered data were analyzed using the weighted mean and Pearson's correlation coefficient. The study's findings reveal a significant correlation between ethical leadership and both task performance and counterproductive work behavior. This research contributes to the existing literature by examining the impact of ethical leadership on individual work performance. Through a descriptive and correlational research design, the study comprehensively assessed the relationship between ethical leadership and different dimensions of work performance. The results suggest that ethical leadership has a positive influence on task performance and decreases counterproductive work behavior. However, there was no significant correlation found between ethical leadership and contextual performance, indicating that other factors may have a greater impact on this aspect of employee performance.

2.3.2 Fairness and Profitability

Krishnan, Ahmad and Haron (2018) investigated the relationship between employees' perceived fairness of performance appraisal (procedural justice, distributive justice, and interactional justice) and their commitment towards organization. The instruments used to measure the variables have been adapted from the previous researchers. A pilot study has been carried out in determining the suitability of the instrument and the research. This research used the probability sampling technique that is simple random sampling. Out of 155

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questionnaires that have been distributed to the non-executive employees in Malaysia's oil and gas industry, only 108 have been completed and valid for this study. The data were codified and analyzed by using SPSS. The results were basically in the form of reliability, frequency, correlations and multiple regressions. From the finding, interactional justice of performance appraisal was the significant predictor towards employees' organizational commitment behaviors.

Alvi, Lashari, Rehman, Kaur and Jawaaid (2019) explored the connection of employee voice with organizational justice and its ultimately impact on organizational performance. Banking sector of Lahore (Pakistan) has been considered as target population. 15 bank's branches were selected randomly for conducting the research. Overall, 220 questionnaires were distributed. 190 questionnaires were returned back and used for analysis. Results demonstrated the direct positive influence of organizational justice on employee voice and organizational performance. Moreover, results showed that the employee voice partially mediates the relationship between organizational justice and organizational performance along with its two dimensions (sales growth and profitability). These results will be very helpful in fostering the efforts of HR specialists towards formulating and embedding the employee's voice mechanism in service sector.

Bahadori, Ghasemi, Hasanpoor, Hosseini and Alimohammedzadeh (2021) examined the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational commitment in fire organizations of Tehran. A descriptive-correlational study was carried out in 2019. The sample consisted of 200 randomly selected participants, active in executive and headquarters divisions of fire department in Tehran. Data analysis was performed by AMOS24 and SPSS software, and data are presented as descriptive statistics of frequency, percentages, mean \pm standard deviation (SD) and Pearson's correlation coefficient. Mean and SD for organizational commitment and ethical leadership were 3.44 ± 0.7 and 3.66 ± 0.62 , respectively. Affective commitment had the highest average score among organizational commitment dimensions (3.63 ± 0.75). Among ethical leadership dimensions, ethical management showed the highest average (3.79 ± 0.70). Each component of organizational commitment, i.e. affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment, also showed a significant relationship with ethical leadership ($p < 0.05$). Model fit results revealed that independent variables could anticipate 87% of changes of dependent variables in organizational commitment.

Tan (2022) examined the influence of ethical leadership (based on leaders and followers' reports) and their impact on organizational performance. It also examines organizational trust and its role as a mediator in ethical leadership and its performance using partial least square (PLS-SEM) analysis. The findings show that ethical leadership (leaders and followers reports) can predict 17.6% of organizational trust while ethical leadership and organizational trust can predict organizational performance by as much as 20.4%. In addition, organizational trust is seen to act as a full mediation between ethical leadership and organizational performance (leaders' reports) and as a partial mediation in the case of ethical leadership based on followers' reports. This research can contribute to the development of a leadership profile especially for the civil service in Malaysia.

Taamneh, Aljawarneh, Al-Okaily, Taamneh and Al-Oqaily (2024) examined the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship, with organizational justice as a moderator. The study examined the proposed model in higher education institutions in northern Jordan and analyze the data using structural equation modeling. The data was gathered from 254 academic staff members employed by private universities.

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The data set revealed that ethical leadership significantly impacted organizational citizenship behavior in higher education institutions. However, as a moderating variable, organizational justice does not moderate the association between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in Jordanian higher education institutions. Through the moderating role of organizational justice, the authors investigate the effect of ethical leadership on organizational citizenship behavior. This study's findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing evidence from a non-western country, such as Jordan.

2.3 Summary of Empirical Review

The existing literature lacks a comprehensive understanding of the specific mechanisms through which ethical leadership influences the performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. While previous research has established a general association between ethical leadership and organizational outcomes, such as increased productivity and profitability, there is a dearth of studies focusing specifically on the food and beverage industry within the Enugu State context. Furthermore, the nuanced effects of integrity and fairness, two key components of ethical leadership, on performance indicators like output and profitability remain underexplored within this industry setting. Therefore, there is a notable gap in knowledge regarding the precise pathways through which ethical leadership influences the performance of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State, necessitating further empirical investigation.

Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study employed descriptive survey design. The survey research is one in which a group of people or items is studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group. The survey design was adopted because the study requires a technique of observation such as questionnaire and or interview, the population of the study must be carefully chosen, clearly defined and specifically delimited and roles upon observation for the acquisition of data.

3.2 Source of Data

Data are classified as either primary or secondary data. The classification was based on the two possible sources: primary source and secondary source.

3.2.1 Primary Source

The primary source was questionnaire. A primary data source is the one which the data is collected directly (usually first-hand) by the researcher.

3.2.2 Sources of Secondary Data

Secondary data source is the one which the data is obtained from published materials, internet websites, reports, dailies, text books and so on from the library of the institutions understudy. Sources of secondary can be split into two parts internal and external sources.

3.3 Area of Study

The area of the study was Enugu metropolis, Enugu state, Nigeria. The organisations include: Nigerian Breweries Plc, Nigerian Bottling Company Plc, Aqua Ralph Investment, 7up Bottling at 9th Mile corner, and Juhel Company Emene.

3.4 Population of the Study

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The population of the study was eight hundred and sixty-five (865) selected staff from the organisations understudy. Nigerian Breweries Plc, (232) Nigerian Bottling Company Plc (211), Aqua Ralph Investment (178), 7up Bottling (100), and Juhel Company (144). To determine the adequate sample size, the study used Freund and William's statistic formula as quoted by (Uzoagulu 2011). Table 3.1 for details.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 N(pq)}{N(e)^2 + Z^2(pq)}$$

Where n = Sample Size

N = The population

p = Probability of success/proportion

q = Probability of failure/proportion

Z = Standard error of the mean

e = Limit of tolerable error of 0.05 (or level of significance)

N = 865

p = .5

q = (1 – .5) = .5

Z = 95 percent = 1.96

e = 0.05 percent

$$= \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 865 \times .5 \times .5}{865(0.05)^2 + (1.96)^2 \times .5 \times .5}$$

$$\frac{3.8416 \times 865 \times .25}{2.165 + 3.8416 \times .25}$$

$$\frac{830.746}{2.165 + .9604} = \frac{830.746}{3.125} = 265.84 \simeq \underline{266.}$$

3.5 Sample Size Determination

Bowley's (1937) proportional allocation statistic was utilized to ensure equitable representation of the organisations. Bowley's (1937) Formula:

$$N_h = \frac{n \times N_h}{N}$$

Where nh = number of questionnaires allocated to each of the organisations

n = Total sample size

Nh = Number of proposed lecturers to be used from the selected organisations

N = Population size.

Table 3. 1: Questionnaire Allocation to Each University

	Name of the organisations	Population	Calculation	Sample
1.	Nigerian Breweries Plc,	232	$\frac{232 \times 266}{865}$	71
2.	Nigerian Bottling Company Plc	211	$\frac{211 \times 266}{865}$	65
3.	Aqua Ralph Investment	178	$\frac{178 \times 266}{865}$	55
4.	7up Bottling	100	$\frac{100 \times 266}{865}$	31
5.	Juhel Company	144	$\frac{144 \times 266}{865}$	44
	Total	865		266

Source: field survey, 2024

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3.6. Sampling Technique

The stratified random sampling with a random start was adopted so as to give every unit of the population under study equal opportunity of being selected into sample. The secondary data were collected from firms, journals, publication, textbooks and the internet. Ten questions (10) in the questionnaire were ranged.

3.7 Instrument for Data Collection

The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. Copies of the questionnaire were administered to the staff. Ten (10) designed questionnaire was used. The responses generated were used thereafter for data analyses.

3.7 Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was given to two experts from the industry and academia to measure face and content validity. To make sure that the research instruments applied in the work are valid, the research ensured that the instrument measure the concept they are supposed to measure.

3.8 Reliability of the Research Instrument

This was done by administering 10 copies of the prepared questionnaire to the sample of the study. Cronbah's Alpha was used in determining the extent of consistency of the reliability. The formula is as follows: $\alpha = \frac{K}{(Cov/Var)}; 1 - (k-1) (Cov/Var)$. Where: K = number of items on the survey; Cov = Average inters item covariance; Var = Average item variance and I = Constant. A Cronbach's alpha value (α) of greater 0.820 indicated very strong reliability. **Scale: ALL VARIABLES**

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	10	100.0
	Excluded	0	.0
	Total	10	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.82	10

Scale reliabilities were calculated using Cronbach's Alpha; the result obtained was 0.820. This shows that the internal consistency of the scale is good for the purpose of this study because it is greater than 0.82 which was good.

3.9 Method of Data Analyses

Data from the questionnaire were analyzed with the aid of SPSS version 23 using simple, percentages and correlation co-efficient. Data from the questionnaire were further analyzed using simple percentages, mean and standard deviation. For the 5-point likert scale questions, the scale and decision rule stated below were used in analysing the findings.

Scale: Strongly Agree (SA) -5, Agree (A) - 4, Neutral(N) -3, Disagree (D) -2, Strongly Disagree (SD),1

Decision Rule: If mean ≥ 3.0 , the respondents agree and If mean ≤ 3.0 , the respondents disagree. The decision rule is to accept the null hypothesis if the computed r is less than the tabulated or otherwise rejects the null hypothesis and Z - test was used to test the hypotheses and analyzed with the aid of SPSS.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSES AND INTERPRETATION

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4.1 Distribution and returned Questionnaire

The chapter presents and analyzes the data collected for the study. The presentation and interpretation of data were based on the questionnaire administrated to the staff of the organisations under study. Table 4.1 shows the Distribution and Return of the Questionnaire from the Universities.

Table 4.1 Distribution and Return of the Questionnaire

Firms	Distributed	No Returned	percent	No not Returned	Percent
1. Nigerian Breweries Plc,	71	68	26	6	2
2. Nigerian Bottling Company Plc	65	60	22	7	2
3. Aqua Ralph Investment	55	53	20	1	-
4. 7up Bottling	31	30	11	3	1
5. Juhel Company	44	40	15	5	1
Total	266	251	94	15	6

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Two hundred and sixty-six (266) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents and two hundred and fifty-one (251) copies were returned representing Ninety-four (94) percent, while fifteen (15) copies of the questionnaire were not returned representing six (6) percent. That showed a high rate of response.

4.2 Data presentation

4.2.1 The effect of integrity on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

Table 4.2.1: Responses on the effect of integrity on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

		5 SA	4 A	3 N	2 DA	1 SD	ΣFX	- X	SD	Decision
1	The employee readiness to work increases productivity of the organisations.	535 107 42.6	80 20 8.0	192 64 25.5	50 25 10.0	35 35 13.9	892 251 100%	3.55	1.464	Agree
2	Being courteous during conflicts promotes effectiveness in the organisations.	600 120 47.8	184 46 18.3	99 33 13.1	46 23 9.2	29 29 11.6	958 251 100%	3.82	1.411	Agree
3	Taking responsibility promotes growth of the organisations.	725 145 57.8	148 37 14.7	66 22 8.8	52 26 10.4	21 21 8.4	1012 251 100%	4.03	1.356	Agree
4	The level of employee accountability increases physical expansion of the organisation.	550 110 43.8	228 57 22.7	54 18 7.2	84 42 16.7	24 24 9.6	940 251 100%	3.75	1.408	Agree
5	Management and employee consistency promotes outcomes.	575 115 45.8	268 67 26.7	57 19 7.6	30 15 6.0	35 35 13.9	965 251 100%	3.84	1.418	Agree
Total Grand mean and standard deviation								3.798	1.411	4

Source: Field Survey, 2024

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Table 4.2.1, 127 respondents out of 251 representing 50.6 percent agreed that the employee readiness to work increases productivity of the organisations 3.55 and standard deviation of 1.464. Being courteous during conflicts promotes effectiveness in the organistions 166 respondents representing 66.1 percent agreed with mean score of 3.82 and standard deviation of 1.411. Taking responsibility promotes growth of the organisations 182 respondents representing 72.5 percent agreed with mean score of 4.03 and standard deviation of 1.356. The level of employee accountability increases physical expansion of the organisation 167 respondents representing 66.5 percent agreed with mean score of 3.75 and 1.408. Management and employee consistency promotes outcomes 182 respondents representing 72.5 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.84 and standard deviation 1.418.

4.2.2 The effect of fairness on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State
Table 4.2.1: Responses on the effect of fairness on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

			5	4	3	2	1	ΣFX	-	SD	Decision
			SA	A	N	DA	SD		X		
1	Being approachable to management increases the income of the organisation.	730 146 58.2	252 63 25.1	54 18 7.2	12 6 7.4	18 18 7.2	1066 251 100%	4.25	1.157	Agree	
2	Listening to customers actively attracts new ones.	635 127 50.6	316 79 31.5	39 13 5.2	36 18 7.2	14 14 5.6	1040 251 100%	4.14	1.154	Agree	
3	Respecting of confidentiality of employees and customers promotes the organization success.	430 86 34.3	348 87 34.7	39 13 5.2	86 43 17.1	22 22 8.8	925 251 100%	3.69	1.333	Agree	
4	The honest relationship with customers makes them loyal and attraction of new ones.	450 90 35.9	80 20 8.0	237 79 31.5	80 40 15.9	22 22 8.8	869 251 100%	3.46	1.348	Agree	
5	Provision of accessible problem-solving options increases income generation of the organisation.	675 135 53.8	80 20 8.0	117 39 15.5	62 31 12.4	26 26 10.4	960 251 100%	3.82	1.448	Agree	
Total Grand mean and standard deviation									3.87 2	1.288	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 4.2.1, 209 respondents out of 251 representing 83.3 percent agreed that being approachable to management increases the income of the organisation 3.25 and standard deviation of 1.157. Listening to customers actively attracts new ones 206 respondents representing 82.1 percent agreed with mean score of 4.14 and standard deviation of 1.154. Respecting of confidentiality of employees and customers promotes the

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organization success 173 respondents representing 69.0 percent agreed with mean score of 3.69 and standard deviation of 1.333. The honest relationship with customers makes them loyal and attraction of new ones 110 respondents representing 43.9 percent agreed with mean score of 3.46 and 1.348. Provision of accessible problem-solving options increases income generation of the organisation 155 respondents representing 61.8 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.82 and standard deviation 1.448.

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

4.3.1 Hypothesis One: Integrity has no effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

Table 4.3.1 Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z on Integrity has no effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

	The employee readiness to work increases productivity of the organisations.	Being courteous during conflicts promotes effectiveness in the organisations.	Taking responsibility promotes growth of the organisations.	The level of employee accountability increases physical expansion of the organisation.	Management and employee consistency promotes outcomes.
N	251	251	251	251	251
Uniform Minimum	1	1	1	1	1
Parameters ^{a,b} Maximum	5	5	5	5	5
Most Absolute	.426	.478	.578	.438	.475
Extreme Positive	.139	.116	.084	.096	.139
Differences Negative	-.426	-.478	-.578	-.438	-.475
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	6.754	7.574	9.152	6.943	7.527
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. Test distribution is Uniform.

b. Calculated from data.

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – value of $6.754 < 9.152$ and on Asymp. Significance of .000, the responses from the respondents as display in the table is normally distributed. This affirms that integrity had significant positive effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

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Decision

Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value of $6.754 < 9.152$ against the critical Z- value of .000 (2-tailed test at 95% level of confidence) the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that integrity had significant positive effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

4.3.2 Hypothesis two: Fairness has no effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

Table 4.3.2 Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z on fairness has no effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

	Being approachable to management increases the income of the organisation.	Listening to customers actively attracts new ones.	Respecting of confidentiality of employees and customers promotes the organization success.	The honest relationship with customers makes them loyal and attraction of new ones.	Provision of accessible problem-solving options increases income generation of the organisation.
N	251	251	251	251	251
Uniform Minimum	1	1	1	1	1
Parameters ^{a,b} Maximum	5	5	5	5	5
Most Absolute	.583	.571	.439	.359	.538
Extreme Positive	.072	.056	.088	.088	.104
Differences Negative	-.583	-.571	-.439	-.359	-.538
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	9.231	9.042	6.959	5.681	8.521
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. Test distribution is Uniform.

b. Calculated from data.

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – value of $5.681 < 9.231$ and on Asymp. Significance of .000, the responses from the respondents as display in the table is normally distributed. This affirms that fairness had significant positive effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

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Decision

Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value of $5.681 < 9.231$ against the critical Z- value of .000 (2-tailed test at 95% level of confidence) the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that fairness had significant positive effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

4.4. Discussion of Findings

4.4.1 Integrity had significant positive effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

The result of hypotheses one showed the calculated Z- value of $6.754 < 9.152$ against the critical Z- value of .000, which implies that integrity had significant positive effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. In line with these hypotheses, Supriadi, Guswandi and Saragih (2020) examined and analyze the integrity and compensation of organizational performance through job satisfaction at PT Puji Bijak Prestasi. The results showed that integrity variables affect organizational performance partially. The work compensation variable influences partially organizational performance. Job satisfaction variables partially affect organizational performance. Integrity variables affect job satisfaction partially. The compensation variable influences job satisfaction partially. The effect of integrity on organizational performance is 0.581. The effect of integrity on performance through job satisfaction is $0.676 \times 0.868 = 0.585$. ethical leadership has a positive influence on task performance and decreases counter productive work behavior. However, there was no significant correlation found between ethical leadership and contextual performance, indicating that other factors may have a greater impact on this aspect of employee performance (Abun, Julian, Acidera & Apollo, 2023).

4.4.2 Fairness had significant positive effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State

Hypotheses two revealed that furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value of $5.681 < 9.231$ against the critical Z- value of .000, which implies that fairness had significant positive effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. In line with these result, Krishnan, Ahmad and Haron (2018) investigated the relationship between employees' perceived fairness of performance appraisal (procedural justice, distributive justice, and interactional justice) and their commitment towards organization. The results were basically in the form of reliability, frequency, correlations and multiple regressions. From the finding, interactional justice of performance appraisal was the significant predictor towards employees' organizational commitment behaviors. Also, Taamneh, Aljawarneh, Al-Okaily, Taamneh and Al-Oqaily (2024) examined the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship, with organizational justice as a moderator. The data set revealed that ethical leadership significantly impacted organizational citizenship behavior in higher education institutions. However, as a moderating variable, organizational justice does not moderate the association between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in Jordanian higher education institutions.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Summary of Findings

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- i. Integrity had significant positive effect on the output of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. $Z(95, n = 251), 6.754 < 9.152 = p. < 0.05$.
- ii. Fairness had significant positive effect on the profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State $Z(95, n = 251), 5.681 < 9.231 = p. < 0.05$.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that integrity and fairness had significant positive effect on the output and profitability of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Enugu State. Ethical leadership emerges as a pivotal component, promoting virtuous conduct among employees and ultimately enhancing organizational performance. The resilience of leaders' character, anchored in moral virtues, underscores the importance of leaders' moral character alongside their expertise and strategic prowess. This moral aspect not only empowers employees but also influences their motivation, performance, and satisfaction. Employees stand to gain from a positive work environment characterized by increased trust and job satisfaction, while suppliers and customers benefit from strengthened relationships and enhanced trust

5.3 Recommendations

The study made the following recommendations

- i. Leader's integrity sets the tone for the employees to improve their task performance. Hence, individuals chosen to be leaders in the organization should be assessed in all round both with work performance, social and other relationship performance outside the organisation.
- ii. Organizational leaders should be fair and equitable in dealing with employees and handling of issues as it will foster motivation and as well increase team work in the organization.

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