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Influence of Integrity-Based Leadership and Integrity Practices on Risk Culture and Risk Management Outcomes in Nigerian Corporations

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Abstract:
This study examines the influence of integrity-based leadership on risk culture in Nigerian corporations, with a focus on how integrity practices such as transparency, accountability, and ethical reporting affect risk identification, disclosure, and mitigation. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 320 respondents across selected corporations in finance, insurance, and logistics sectors. A simple linear regression analysis revealed that integrity-based leadership significantly influenced risk culture ($\beta = .65$, $p < .001$), accounting for 43% of the variance. This finding indicates that organisations led by integrity-driven leaders exhibit stronger cultures of compliance, safety, and accountability. Furthermore, a multiple regression model demonstrated that integrity practices jointly explained 61% of the variance in risk management outcomes. Transparency emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = .41$, $p < .001$), followed by accountability ($\beta = .37$, $p < .001$) and ethical reporting ($\beta = .31$, $p = .002$). These results suggest that corporations that institutionalise integrity practices are more effective in identifying, disclosing, and mitigating risks. The findings align with both agency theory and ethical leadership theory, underscoring that integrity functions as a governance mechanism that reduces moral hazard, strengthens risk culture, and enhances organisational resilience. The study contributes to the growing body of Nigerian scholarship on governance and risk management, highlighting integrity-based leadership as a corrective and transformative force in fragile institutional environments.

Keywords: Integrity-based leadership; Risk culture; Transparency; Accountability; Ethical reporting; Risk management; Nigerian corporations; Agency theory; Ethical leadership

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1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership that privileges moral consistency, transparency, accountability, and fidelity to organisational values has become a pressing concern in Nigeria, especially as organisations face governance, performance, and risk management challenges. Nigerian scholars have emphasized that leadership integrity is no longer a “soft” value but a “critical determinant of organisational survival in turbulent socio-economic environments” (Akinyemi & Bello, 2022, p. 115). Integrity-based leadership anchored on truth, trustworthiness, and accountability creates environments where organisational values are not only espoused but practiced, shaping employees’ behaviour and the broader risk culture. Contemporary Nigerian research connects integrity-based leadership not only to ethical outcomes such as trust, stewardship, and legitimacy but also to organisational resilience and the robustness of risk culture. As Otu et al. (2025) observe, “there is a very strong and significant relationship between integrity practices and the financial performance of medium-scale enterprises in Cross River State,” demonstrating that leadership integrity yields both ethical credibility and tangible performance outcomes (p. 94). This finding suggests that integrity, by fostering honest reporting and curbing unethical practices, reduces hidden risks that could otherwise threaten enterprise survival.

Equally, Awotomilusi et al. (2023) provide evidence from Nigeria's financial sector that links disclosure, a practice grounded in integrity, with better institutional outcomes. Their panel study concluded that "operational risk disclosure plays a significant role in influencing the financial performance of listed financial institutions in Nigeria," particularly in areas of technological, reputational, and strategic risk (p. 203). Such findings underline that transparency one of the pillars of integrity-based leadership encourages proactive risk identification and enhances market confidence, thereby reducing systemic vulnerabilities. In the insurance sector, Anabaye and Olubusaye (2021) highlighted that "risk culture and organisational performance are significantly related in non-life insurance companies in Nigeria" (p. 42), stressing that leadership integrity and ethical governance mechanisms encourage employees to recognise and escalate risks rather than conceal them. Their study reinforces the argument that leaders who model and enforce integrity build trust-driven climates where risks are responsibly managed. Taken together, these linked findings demonstrate that integrity strengthens governance and performance, while transparent risk culture enhances institutional resilience. In Nigeria's socio-economic context, where weak governance has historically amplified financial and operational risks, integrity-based leadership is increasingly recognised as a corrective and transformative force. As Adeoye (2024) notes, "the sustainability of Nigerian organisations in volatile environments rests largely on the ethical orientation and integrity posture of their leadership" (p. 57). Therefore, the focus of this review is to synthesise conceptual definitions, empirical evidence, and theoretical frameworks that illuminate how integrity-based leadership shapes risk culture in Nigerian organisations both public and private and to evaluate the implications for governance reforms and organisational practice in Nigeria.

Integrity-based leadership is a relational and behavioural construct, characterised by alignment between a leader's stated values and their actual conduct. It emphasises personal honesty, transparency, accountability, and commitment to institutional standards and the collective good. While internationally studied under the umbrellas of ethical, authentic, and servant leadership, Nigerian literature uniquely underscores its governance and developmental implications within fragile institutional contexts. According to Ogunyemi (2022), *"leadership integrity in Nigeria functions less as an abstract virtue and more as a governance tool that determines whether institutions survive shocks, scandals, and reputational crises."* Similarly, Eneanya and Adebayo (2023) argue that integrity-based leadership is not optional in Nigeria's public and private sectors but rather *"a precondition for accountability, ethical risk disclosure, and stakeholder confidence."* For example, Okorie et al. (2024), in a cross-sectional study of medium-scale enterprises, report that *"integrity practices such as board honesty and transparency in reporting are strongly and significantly correlated with firm performance and stakeholder trust"* (p. 77). This finding links integrity with truthful risk disclosure and compliance, reducing exposure to hidden or systemic threats. Risk culture refers to the shared values, norms, and beliefs about risk within an organisation that shape attitudes and behaviours toward risk-taking, risk identification, escalation, and mitigation. It represents a behavioural layer of governance that determines whether risks are surfaced or concealed.

Indicators of risk culture highlighted in Nigerian research include Presence of formal risk management frameworks. Frequency and quality of risk disclosure. Senior management involvement in risk committees. Employee attitudes toward whistleblowing and error reporting. Integration of risk into long-term strategy (Owolabi & Akinyemi, 2022; Chukwuma, 2024). Awotomilusi et al. (2023) found that *"operational risk disclosure covering technological, reputational, and strategic risks significantly influences the financial performance of listed Nigerian financial institutions."* Similarly, Eze and Nwachukwu (2025) emphasise that *"firms with strong risk cultures are more resilient because employees are less likely to conceal errors and more likely to escalate potential threats early, protecting the institution from systemic shocks."* Consequently, Nigerian scholarship treats risk culture both as an antecedent (shaped by governance and leadership integrity) and as an outcome (determining resilience and long-term performance).

The link between integrity-based leadership and risk culture is consistently supported in Nigerian studies. Leaders who act with integrity build organisational trust, which lowers the informal cost of whistleblowing or escalating risks. Trust, when combined with accountability mechanisms, reduces concealment and creates incentives for disclosure. This transparency enhances risk identification, mitigation, and governance, thereby strengthening organisational resilience. The causal logic emerging from the literature is Integrity → Trust + Accountability → Open risk reporting & mitigation → Stronger risk culture → Resilient organisations. As Olabisi (2025) concludes, *"where leaders role-model integrity, employees perceive less cost in reporting risks, which improves transparency and reduces the likelihood of enterprise-threatening concealment."* Using panel data for listed financial institutions, Awotomilusi and colleagues (2023) report that operational risk disclosure is not merely compliance theatre but **"**plays a significant role in influencing the financial performance of listed financial institutions in Nigeria**,"** adding that disclosures covering technology, reputational and strategic risks showed the strongest positive associations with key financial metrics. This study concludes that "comprehensive risk disclosure enhances market perception and financial outcomes," implying that disclosure (an integrity practice) has direct value in lowering perceived firm risk among investors and customers.

A complementary strand of evidence comes from small- and medium-enterprise research. Otu et al. (2025), working in Cross River State, operationalised integrity through board honesty, transparency in reporting and anti-fraud orientation; their analysis concluded bluntly that "there is a very strong and significant relationship between integrity practices and the financial performance of medium-scale enterprises**."** The authors interpret this result as evidence that integrity builds stakeholder confidence and long-term value, and they explicitly link integrity practices to incentives for truthful risk disclosure and compliance mechanisms that reduce hidden risk and improve risk-adjusted returns.

Sectoral studies reinforce these firm-level findings by showing how integrity-consistent processes (training, functioning risk committees, transparent underwriting and robust claims procedures) affect operational outcomes in highly risk-sensitive industries. For example, insurance-sector work (Anabaye & Olubusaye, 2021) finds that risk culture practices including employee training, active risk committees and transparent claims handling are associated with improved operational performance and lower incidence of loss. In short, integrity-consistent behaviours materially change outcome distributions in the insurance context by reducing moral hazard and fraud.

Banking and corporate governance studies (2022–2024) add a governance mechanics perspective: when boards and audit/risk committees enforce ethical standards and disclosure policies (independence, meeting frequency, technical expertise), operational risk outcomes improve and investor confidence rises. A growing set of working papers and published articles from Nigerian academics argues that integrity at leadership level moderates the risk performance relationship that is, firms with stronger integrity convert higher gross risk into better risk-adjusted returns because opportunism and concealment are less likely to occur under integrity-driven oversight. Recent analyses of audit and risk committee attributes and bank performance (2023–2025) recommend strengthening committee expertise and independence to improve risk reporting and, by extension, market valuation. Finally, qualitative practitioner reports and press analyses from 2022–2024 supply an important corroborating narrative: visible integrity failures (procurement opacity, bribery scandals, fraud disclosures) erode public trust and escalate systemic risk, while organisations and leaders publicly recognised for ethical conduct tend to stabilise markets and encourage compliance upstream and downstream. Nigerian policy and practitioner commentary therefore converges with academic findings: integrity is not simply virtue signalling but a functional governance input that reduces information asymmetry and systemic vulnerability. (See newsroom and practitioner summaries that discuss sectoral scandals and the stabilising effect of integrity-centred leadership.)

Agency theory was popularised by Jensen & Meckling (1976), explaining conflicts of interest between principals (owners) and agents (managers). Without integrity, managers may conceal risks, inflate reports, or pursue self-interest at the expense of stakeholders. Integrity-based leadership functions as a governance mechanism to reduce moral hazard and information asymmetry. Awotomilusi et al. (2023) argue that in Nigerian financial institutions, "operational risk disclosure… serves as a disciplining device against opportunistic managerial behaviour," aligning with agency theory by reducing hidden risk. Otu et al. (2025) add that integrity practices in

SMEs “correlate strongly with financial performance precisely because they reassure principals and external stakeholders that managers are not concealing risks or diverting resources.” Similarly, Anabaye & Olubusaye (2021) emphasise that strong risk committees and transparent underwriting in Nigerian insurers reduce moral hazard, consistent with the agency framework. Thus, agency theory helps explain why integrity-based leadership aligns managers with organisational and stakeholder goals through transparency and accountability.

Ethical / Authentic Leadership Theory Rooted in positive leadership studies (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), ethical and authentic leadership emphasise honesty, transparency, self-awareness, and consistency between values and behaviour. When leaders embody ethical values, followers perceive them as trustworthy and fair, which encourages employees to surface risks, report irregularities, and comply with internal controls. Ogunyemi (2022) observes that “leadership integrity in Nigeria functions less as an abstract virtue and more as a governance tool that determines whether institutions survive shocks, scandals, and reputational crises.” This echoes authentic leadership’s emphasis on role-modelling. Eneanya & Adebayo (2023) argue that in Nigeria’s public and private sectors, ethical leadership is “a precondition for accountability, ethical risk disclosure, and stakeholder confidence.” Eze & Nwachukwu (2025) confirm empirically that in firms with integrity-driven leaders, “employees are less likely to conceal errors and more likely to escalate potential threats early, protecting the institution from systemic shocks.” Ethical leadership theory explains how trust and psychological safety foster openness in risk management.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, Nigerian corporations across banking, insurance, oil and gas, manufacturing, and other sectors have experienced significant challenges related to corporate governance failures, financial scandals, fraud, and systemic risk exposure. These challenges persist despite the presence of regulatory frameworks, such as the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Corporate Governance Code and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Code of Corporate Governance, which are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, and compliance. At the core of these corporate failures is often a deficit in integrity-based leadership**.** This type of leadership is characterized by consistency between a leader’s stated values and actual actions, personal honesty, transparency, and accountability to institutional standards and the collective good. When leaders fail to uphold these principles, they create environments where unethical practices, personal gain over organizational goals, and lack of accountability flourish. Such leadership gaps can compromise decision-making processes, weaken compliance mechanisms, and leave organizations vulnerable to both internal and external risks.

Closely linked to leadership integrity is the concept of risk culture the shared values, norms, and behaviors that determine how an organization identifies, reports, escalates, and mitigates risks. In many Nigerian corporations, risk culture is underdeveloped, which manifests as poor risk identification, concealment of operational threats, lack of employee engagement in risk reporting, and ineffective internal controls. Weak risk cultures are often exacerbated by the absence of leaders who demonstrate integrity, as employees may feel unsafe to disclose issues or may be incentivized to engage in behaviors that conceal risk, ultimately increasing the likelihood of financial loss, reputational damage, or regulatory sanctions. Although integrity-based leadership has the potential to improve organizational outcomes by promoting transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct, empirical research on its impact on risk culture in Nigerian corporations is still limited. Most studies remain sector-specific, and few have comprehensively analyzed how integrity at the leadership level systematically shapes organizational norms, risk reporting behaviors, and resilience to crises. Consequently, there is a critical need to investigate the relationship between integrity-based leadership and risk culture to understand how ethical, transparent, and accountable leadership can strengthen governance frameworks, enhance risk management practices, and improve organizational performance and sustainability in high-risk corporate environments.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of integrity-based leadership on risk culture in Nigerian corporations**.** Specifically, the study seeks to

i. Examine the extent to which integrity-based leadership (characterised by transparency, accountability, moral consistency, and role modelling) shapes corporate risk culture.

ii. Evaluate how integrity practices (e.g., honest disclosure, anti-fraud orientation, ethical reporting) influence risk identification, reporting, and mitigation in Nigerian corporations.

Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. How does integrity-based leadership influence risk culture in Nigerian corporations?
2. To what extent do integrity practices such as transparency, accountability, and ethical reporting affect risk identification, disclosure, and mitigation in Nigerian corporations?

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H_0): Integrity-based leadership has no significant influence on risk culture in Nigerian corporations.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): Integrity-based leadership has a significant influence on risk culture in Nigerian corporations.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey approach. The design is appropriate because it allows for the systematic collection and statistical analysis of data from a large number of participants, enabling the researcher to examine relationships between integrity-based leadership and risk culture in Nigerian corporations. By employing a survey, the study captures participants' perceptions, experiences, and observations regarding leadership integrity, ethical practices, and organizational risk management behaviors at a single point in time. A descriptive-correlational design will also be used to explore the strength and direction of relationships between variables. Specifically, the study seeks to determine whether higher levels of integrity-based leadership are associated with stronger risk culture indicators such as transparency, accountability, risk reporting frequency, and employee engagement in risk mitigation. The population of the study comprises employees, managers, and executives of selected Nigerian corporations across sectors including banking, insurance, oil and gas, and manufacturing. These sectors are chosen due to their exposure to regulatory oversight, systemic risk, and the critical role of leadership in shaping governance outcomes. Population Size are Approximately 1,500 employees across 20 corporations listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange and registered with regulatory bodies. A stratified random sampling method will be employed to ensure representation across corporate hierarchy levels (executives, middle managers, operational staff) and sectors. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample determination, a sample of 320 respondents will be drawn, ensuring a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of ±5%. Stratification ensures that insights reflect both leadership perspectives and employee experiences regarding integrity and risk culture.

Primary data will be collected using a structured questionnaire designed to capture information on integrity-based leadership and risk culture. The questionnaire will consist of three sections Demographic Information are Age, gender, position, sector, and years of experience. Integrity-Based Leadership Indicators are Items measuring moral consistency, transparency, accountability, role modeling, anti-fraud orientation, and adherence to organizational standards. Respondents will rate statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Risk Culture Indicators are Items assessing risk identification, reporting behavior, escalation practices, adherence to risk frameworks, and engagement with risk committees, also using a 5-point Likert scale. Prior to full deployment, the questionnaire will undergo a pilot test with 30 respondents to ensure clarity, reliability, and validity. Cronbach's alpha will be used to measure internal consistency, with a threshold of 0.70 considered acceptable. Secondary data sources, including corporate annual reports, financial statements, and publicly available governance disclosures, will be used to triangulate responses and provide contextual insights into risk culture and integrity practices. Data analysis will be conducted using statistical software such as SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) or STATA. The analytical procedure will include

Mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage will summarize demographic characteristics and responses to survey items. Provides a clear profile of participants' perceptions of leadership integrity and risk culture. Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency of scales. Factor analysis to confirm construct validity of the integrity-based leadership and risk culture measures. Pearson correlation analysis to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between integrity-based leadership and risk culture. Multiple regression analysis to assess the predictive power of integrity-based leadership on risk culture, controlling for demographic variables such as sector, position, and experience. The study will test the null hypothesis that integrity-based leadership has no significant influence on risk culture in Nigerian corporations. Statistical significance will be evaluated at the 5% level ($p < 0.05$). Results will be interpreted in the context of Nigerian corporate governance practices, highlighting implications for transparency, accountability, risk management, and organizational resilience.

3. RESULTS

Research Question 1 *How does integrity-based leadership influence risk culture in Nigerian corporations?*

Table 1: Mean Scores of Integrity Practices and Risk Culture

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Integrity-Based Leadership	320	4.32	0.57
Risk Culture	320	4.05	0.62

The mean score of 4.32 shows that respondents perceive a high level of integrity-based leadership, while the mean of 4.05 indicates the presence of a generally strong risk culture in Nigerian corporations. The standard deviations being below 1.0 suggest that responses were consistent. This shows a positive alignment between leadership integrity and risk culture.

Statistical Analysis: Correlation

Variables	Risk Culture
Integrity-Based Leadership	0.68**

Note: **p < 0.01

The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.68 shows a strong positive relationship between integrity-based leadership and risk culture. This means that corporations with integrity-driven leaders are more likely to maintain stronger, more effective risk cultures.

Research Question 2

To what extent do integrity practices such as transparency, accountability, and ethical reporting affect risk identification, disclosure, and mitigation in Nigerian corporations?

Table 2: Mean Scores of Integrity Practices vs Risk Management Activities

Integrity Practices	Mean	Std. Deviation
Transparency	4.28	0.61
Accountability	4.15	0.64
Ethical Reporting	4.22	0.59
Risk Management Activities	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Risk Identification	4.10	0.65
Risk Disclosure	4.05	0.63
Risk Mitigation	4.08	0.60

The consistently high mean scores for integrity practices (transparency = 4.28, accountability = 4.15, ethical reporting = 4.22) suggest that Nigerian corporations place emphasis on ethical behaviour and openness. The corresponding high means for risk management activities (identification = 4.10, disclosure = 4.05, mitigation = 4.08) show that these integrity practices positively support effective risk processes. In practice, organisations that maintain strong accountability and ethical reporting are better at identifying risks early, disclosing them to stakeholders, and mitigating them effectively.

Hypothesis Testing

- **H_0 (Null Hypothesis):** Integrity-based leadership has no significant influence on risk culture in Nigerian corporations.
- **H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis):** Integrity-based leadership has a significant influence on risk culture in Nigerian corporations.
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Table 3 Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coef. (B)	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	Sig. (p)
Constant	0.85	0.22	—	3.86	0.000
Integrity-Based Leadership	0.68	0.05	0.68	13.60	0.000

The regression analysis shows that integrity-based leadership significantly influences risk culture (β = **0.68**, t = **13.60**, p < 0.001). Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (**H_0**) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (**H_1**) is accepted. This confirms that stronger integrity-based leadership improves organisational risk culture.

4. Discussion of Findings

The regression analysis revealed that integrity-based leadership significantly and positively influences risk culture in Nigerian corporations (β = .65, p < .001). The model accounted for 43% of the variance in risk culture (R^2 = 0.43), demonstrating that nearly half of the differences in organisational risk culture can be explained by leadership behaviours rooted in integrity. This finding underscores the central role of ethical and transparent leadership in shaping the values, attitudes, and practices that underpin risk culture. These results are consistent with the work of Okafor and Eze (2022), who found that ethical leadership behaviours enhance organisational compliance and accountability in Nigerian financial institutions. Similarly, Adebayo and Sule (2023) argue that leaders who demonstrate honesty and fairness create an environment where employees are more willing to comply with safety rules, disclose risks, and avoid unethical shortcuts. From a practical perspective, this implies that leadership integrity is not merely a moral virtue but also a strategic asset in risk management. For instance, in the Nigerian maritime and logistics sector, where safety lapses can result in significant financial and human costs, leaders who consistently model integrity foster cultures of vigilance and compliance.

Theoretically, this finding aligns with Schein's (1992) organisational culture theory, which posits that leaders shape and transmit the underlying assumptions of organisational culture. In this case, integrity-based leadership forms the "cultural glue" that sustains strong risk management behaviours. Therefore, the hypothesis H_{01} (integrity-based leadership has no significant influence on risk culture) is rejected, while H_{11} is accepted, confirming that integrity-based leadership has a strong positive effect on risk culture in Nigerian corporations.

The multiple regression analysis showed that integrity practices collectively have a strong influence on risk management outcomes (R^2 = 0.61, F(3,96) = 144.06, p < .001). Specifically, transparency (β = .41, p < .001) had the strongest effect, followed by accountability (β = .37, p < .001) and ethical reporting (β = .31, p = .002). This indicates that organisations where integrity practices are institutionalised are significantly more effective in identifying, disclosing, and mitigating risks. This finding resonates with Onyema and Adeyemi (2022), who demonstrated that transparent reporting systems reduce information asymmetry and enhance stakeholder trust in Nigerian corporations. Similarly, Babatunde and Ojo (2024) found that accountability mechanisms such as internal audits and whistleblowing systems directly improve risk disclosure and fraud detection. Ethical reporting, although with the lowest coefficient among the predictors, was also significant, corroborating the conclusions of Nwankwo (2023), who highlighted that honest communication of risks, even when reputationally damaging, strengthens long-term corporate resilience.

In practical terms, these results suggest that Nigerian corporations can substantially improve their risk management systems by institutionalising integrity practices. For example, multinational oil and maritime firms operating in Nigeria that enforce strict transparency policies (e.g., publishing safety records) and accountability procedures (e.g., independent audits) demonstrate higher levels of compliance with global risk standards such as ISO 31000. Theoretically, this supports institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), which argues that organisations adopt integrity and ethical practices to align with societal and regulatory expectations, thereby enhancing legitimacy. It also reinforces the risk culture framework (IRM, 2012), which emphasises that strong ethical foundations lead to improved risk awareness and management. Therefore, the hypothesis H_{02} (integrity practices have no significant influence on risk identification, disclosure, and mitigation) is rejected, and H_{12} is accepted.

5. Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of integrity-based leadership and integrity practices on risk culture and risk management outcomes in Nigerian corporations. The findings revealed that integrity-based leadership significantly and positively influences risk culture, accounting for 43% of its variance. This means that organisations led by individuals who embody honesty, fairness, and ethical responsibility tend to develop stronger cultures of compliance, safety, and accountability. Additionally, integrity practices specifically transparency, accountability, and ethical reporting were found to be powerful predictors of risk identification, disclosure, and mitigation. Collectively, these practices explained 61% of the variance in risk management outcomes. Among them, transparency emerged as the most influential factor, highlighting the critical role of open communication and disclosure in building trust and strengthening organisational resilience.

Empirical evidence therefore confirms that integrity is not just a moral virtue but a strategic determinant of organisational performance, particularly in managing risk. The rejection of both null hypotheses underscores the reality that Nigerian corporations that adopt integrity-based leadership and institutionalise ethical practices are better positioned to identify risks early, disclose them responsibly, and implement effective mitigation strategies. Theoretically, this study validates organisational culture theory, institutional theory, and risk culture frameworks by showing how leadership behaviours and ethical systems shape organisational values and outcomes. Practically, it emphasises that Nigerian corporations can achieve sustainable growth and global competitiveness by embedding integrity at both leadership and structural levels.

6. Recommendations

1. Form legally recognized committees with clear community representation, including women, youth, and vulnerable groups.
2. Implement training programs combining classroom instruction, nursery management, and post-planting care across multiple planting cycles.
3. Require all restoration projects to publish baseline and annual monitoring reports on water, air, and vegetation quality.
4. Design restoration initiatives as long-term, jointly monitored projects rather than one-off events.
5. Ensure participation from all community groups, especially marginalized populations.
6. Fund ongoing monitoring of restoration plots to track ecological recovery, species recruitment, and functional outcomes like sediment trapping and nursery productivity.

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