

The Influence of Visionary Leadership on innovation mindset of Employees in manufacturing firm: A study of 7up Nigeria Plc Benin City, Edo State. Nigeria

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Abstract

Visionary leadership falters when strategic vision is not aligned with an employee's mindset, limiting the big picture goals. Hence, this study investigates the influence of visionary leadership on the innovative mindset of employees in manufacturing firms. Grounded in communication theory and leadership theory, the study draws on the linear model of communication and its evolution toward an interactive leadership model, highlighting how visionary leaders communicate goals, values, and shared meaning to inspire innovation. It examines how psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, and strategic leadership decision-making mechanisms sharpen creativity, adaptability, and innovation-oriented behavior. A quantitative research design using a survey method was adopted. The population comprised 460 employees of 7up Nigeria Plc a manufacturing firm in Edo State, Nigeria. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire derived from validated scales. The sample size was determined by the Taro Yamane formula, 214 was the sample size. Out of 214 questionnaires distributed, 173 valid responses were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics, correlation, and multiple regression analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses. Results revealed that visionary leadership significantly predicts innovative mindset, explaining 64.3% of the variance in innovation-related outcomes. The ANOVA ($F = 101.600, p < 0.05$) confirmed the model's validity, and the Durbin-Watson statistic (1.270) indicated no serial correlation. Psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, and strategic leadership decision-making were identified as strong predictors of creativity, competence, and performance improvement. Organizations should integrate effective communication, empowerment, and emotional intelligence training into leadership frameworks to enhance innovation capacity and business sustainability. By linking communication and leadership theories, this study advances understanding of how visionary leadership transforms communication into a strategic tool that shapes employees' innovative mindsets, thereby promoting sustainable business development.

Keywords: Visionary leadership, psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, strategic leadership, innovative mindset.

1.1 Introduction

Organizations today operate in an environment characterized by technological changes and complexity. The emergence of digitalization, and artificial intelligence has compelled firms to continuously adapt their goals and practices to remain competitive. This shift places significant responsibility on managers and stakeholders to operate effectively within dynamic and uncertain environments. Consequently, modern leaders are required to embrace creativity to enhance organizational performance and meet stakeholder expectations. Within this context, visionary leadership has emerged as a critical driver of business development. It enables organizations to align strategic goals with innovative practices that sustain long-term competitiveness (Sainger, 2018). While numerous leadership styles such as ethical, authentic, and servant leadership have been studied, visionary leadership remains distinct due to its strong influence on creativity, and strategic foresight (Wang, Jin, & Yoo, 2024).

Visionary leaders inspire employees to pursue collective goals and foster adaptability within dynamic environments Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn, & Wu, (2016); Kara Akbaba, Yakut Cetinel, & Pasli, (2023). However, some studies (eg. Kraft, Sparr & Pens, 2018; Chen, Liu & Zhung, 2024) indicate that Visionary Leadership may also produce unintended effects including cognitive overload and misalignment between vision and operational realities. For example, Kraft et al (2018) noted that although Visionary Leadership is widely presented in extant literature as a clearly positive and effective leadership style, the empirical evidence supporting its effectiveness is actually mixed and inconsistent, specifically its study suffers from conceptual ambiguity and methodological shortcomings, making it hard to isolate the unique effects of Visionary leadership. Also, Chen et al (2024) study on Visionary Leadership found that Visionary leadership can increase cognitive strain and psychological contract violation which then increase work withdrawal behaviour among employees. This suggests a negative pathway where visionary leadership may intentionally harm employee outcome instead of improving them, it therefore means that Visionary leadership is not uniformly positive, its effect depends on how employees cognitively and emotionally respond to the leader vision.

These inconsistent findings highlight the need for further investigation into the mechanisms linking visionary leadership and innovative business development. Thus,

extant literature by MARAM, Baldegger and Klosel (2022) explored the relationship between these concepts in a related outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational change, and creativity (Zhou & Ye, 2022; Puni, Hilton, Mohammed, & Korankye, 2022; Zhao, Li, & Pang, 2023). Nonetheless, limited attention has been given to the roles of strategic leadership, emotional intelligence, and psychological empowerment. This study therefore examines how visionary leadership through these dimensions enhances innovative mindsets among managers in Nigerian manufacturing firms, specifically Edo State. Visionary leadership plays a central role in shaping organizational culture, adaptability to change among team members 4 key attributes for long-term sustainability. Examining it is an avenue for valuable insights to leadership qualities and strategic programs for managerial skills. Moreover, it contributes to effective implementation of governmental policies that leads to actionable goals. Understanding visionary leadership is therefore essential for organizations seeking to strengthen performance, encourage innovation, and build resilience in today's rapidly changing environment. The study aims to provide empirical evidence to guide entrepreneurs and managers in adopting leadership strategies that promote productivity, innovation, and competitiveness. It also contributes to understanding visionary leadership within the context of developing economies, where management capacity remains constrained and leadership practices are evolving.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to assess the impact of visionary leadership on the innovative mindset of managers and entrepreneurs in business development. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the effect of psychological empowerment on the innovation mindset for business development.
2. investigate the effect of emotional intelligence on the innovation mindset for business development.
3. assess the effect of strategic leadership decisions on the innovation mindset for business development.

2.2 Literature Review

Visionary leadership represents a transformative and forward-looking approach that plays a critical role in shaping organizational strategy, operations, and performance. It entails defining a long-term direction, allocating resources efficiently, and making strategic trade-offs in complex and uncertain environments. Beyond economic considerations, it incorporates social, technological, and human well-being dimensions, positioning it as a multidimensional construct essential for sustainable business development. Wingard (2020) illustrated this through the example of FedEx, whose leadership demonstrated strategic foresight by implementing teleworking systems before the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring operational continuity and data security. Similarly, technological innovation enabled Netflix to redesign its operations to deliver online streaming services, reflecting adaptability and responsiveness to external changes (Profit, 2019). These examples reveal how visionary leaders anticipate environmental shifts to reconfigure organizational systems for sustained competitive advantage. In contemporary business environments characterized by volatility, Piwowar-Sulej and Iqbal (2023) argue that such leaders promote innovation, sustainability, and resilience through a non-punitive approach that encourages experimentation

and learning from failure. The challenges faced by visionary leaders exist at multiple interrelated levels. At the individual level, leaders must cultivate cognitive flexibility, self-efficacy, and creativity to manage uncertainty. At the organizational level, they must design systems that respond effectively to technological disruptions. At the governmental level, visionary leaders must navigate policy reforms and regulatory frameworks that affect strategic decisions. Collectively, these dimensions highlight the need for leadership systems that integrate innovation, learning, and adaptability as core strategic imperatives. Kotter (1982) and Westley and Mintzberg (1989) identified five archetypes of visionary leaders: the creator, who generates original visions; the proselytizer, who promotes future opportunities; the idealist, who envisions perfection beyond current realities; the bricoleur, who synthesizes diverse elements into new solutions; and the diviner, who interprets insights and processes for future direction. These leadership forms emphasize foresight, innovation, and purpose-driven management; transforming abstract ideas into reality (Cheem, Akram & Javeed, 2015). In essence, visionary leadership acts as a strategic mechanism for aligning human capital, innovation, and technological adaptability to achieve sustainable business growth. It fosters a mindset oriented toward transformation, creativity, and resilience—attributes vital for navigating the complexities of modern business environments. Through continuous learning, empowerment, and the capacity to envision future possibilities, visionary leaders not only ensure organizational survival but also stimulate long term competitiveness and development.

2.3 Conceptualizing Visionary Leadership

A vision represents a tangible articulation of an organization's long-term goals, encapsulating its desired future state and strategic aspirations (Yukl & Gardner, 2020). According to Sibeko and Barnard (2020), organizational visions can be categorized into four main types: tactical visions, which address short-term objectives; strategic visions, which outline long-term directions; expansionary visions, which emphasize growth and accomplishment; and specialist expertise visions, which promote continuous improvement and knowledge development. Visionary leadership, therefore, can be conceptualized as a dynamic leadership style that integrates these vision types into coherent strategic direction and daily organizational practices. Visionary leaders create a unifying framework that aligns followers' individual goals with the broader organizational mission. This alignment ensures that employees' activities are purpose driven and directed toward achieving the organization's ideal future state (Gordon & Martin, 2019). A well-communicated vision provides clarity, coordination, and motivation, enabling members to act cohesively toward shared goals. Empirical studies have shown that visionary leadership is positively associated with organizational adaptability (Venus et al., 2018), business expansion (Filion, 1991), and employee performance (Kearney et al., 2019). Historical and contemporary examples further illustrate the power of visionary leadership. President John F. Kennedy's 1961 declaration to land an American on the moon within a decade epitomizes how visionary goals can mobilize collective effort and transform abstract ideas into reality (Benjamin, 2020); Taylor et al. (2014). The defining characteristics of visionary leadership include emotional intelligence, open communication, and the ability to craft

and communicate an inspiring vision. It is not merely the existence of a vision that drives transformation but the internalization (Kearney et al. 2019). At the organizational level, visionary leaders embed core values into strategic planning and operational processes, ensuring that these values guide decision-making and daily activities. This value alignment fosters cohesion, and long-term competitiveness. A prominent illustration of visionary leadership is Martin Luther King Jr.'s "*I Have a Dream*" speech, which not only articulated a compelling vision of social justice but also acted as a strategic and emotional catalyst for BLACT emancipation in America.

2.4 Conceptualizing Innovative Mindset

The concept of mindset originates from research on learning, capacity building, and cognitive development, particularly within educational and organizational contexts. Foundational studies in mindset theory suggest that individuals with a fixed mindset perceive their intelligence and abilities as static and unchangeable, whereas those with a growth mindset believe such capacities can be developed through creativity (Dweck, 2006; Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Within organizational contexts, an innovative mindset extends this framework by emphasizing openness to change as mechanisms for sustaining competitiveness in dynamic markets. An innovative leadership mindset represents a critical organizational capability that enhances competitiveness, adaptability, and long-term sustainability. It shapes how leaders think, feel, and act, and how they inspire similar attitudes among employees. Leaders who possess an innovative mindset actively seek new opportunities, embrace change, and encourage experimentation within their teams. This perspective aligns with Keating and Haslim's (2015) conceptual model, which identified five mechanisms through which employees' mindsets can drive business development: enthusiasm for growth, constructive interpretation of effort, focused attention, adaptive response to setbacks, and positive interpersonal interactions. Collectively, these mechanisms cultivate a workplace culture that views challenges as opportunities for novelty. Prior research supports the relationship between mindset and a range of positive work outcomes, including resilience (Yeager & Dweck, 2012), leadership effectiveness (Hoyt et al., 2012), performance appraisals (Heslin & Vande Walle, 2011), employee coaching (Heslin et al., 2006), negotiation performance (Kray & Haselhuhn, 2007), work passion (Chen et al., 2015), and job satisfaction (Burnette et al., 2013). These studies collectively emphasize the significance of innovative mindset both at individual and organizational level. When aligned with visionary leadership, an innovative mindset becomes an even more powerful catalyst for internalizing challenges as opportunities for creativity rather than threats to competence. Conversely, employees with a fixed mindset tend to avoid uncertain or demanding situations, limiting their ability to respond to visionary leaders' expectations and to contribute to organizational transformation. The link between vision and innovation underscores the strategic relevance of an innovative mindset in achieving long-term business objectives. For example, in the 1980s, CNN's leadership pursued the ambitious vision of becoming a global news leader not through competition but through creating distinct value in continuous, real-time news broadcasting a strategic innovation that transformed the media landscape (Sibeko & Barnard, 2020).

2.4.1 Psychological Empowerment and Innovative Performance

Psychological empowerment is a key multi-dimensional construct that reflects an individual's intrinsic sense of control, competence, and purpose at work. Spreitzer (1995) conceptualized psychological empowerment as a multidimensional construct comprising four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. *Meaning* refers to the perceived significance and value of one's work; *competence* reflects confidence in one's ability to perform tasks effectively; *self-determination* denotes autonomy in initiating and regulating work behaviors; and *impact* represents the perceived influence one has over organizational outcomes. Collectively, these dimensions reflect an internalized sense of motivation that enables employees to approach work proactively and creatively. Psychological empowerment enhances an employee's self-efficacy and motivation by fostering perceptions of significance, autonomy, and capability (Li & Sun, 2022). Within a visionary leadership framework, empowerment serves as a critical mechanism for stimulating innovation and commitment; (Klosel, 2021). Empirical studies demonstrate that high levels of psychological empowerment break down barriers to creativity and enhance employees' ability to generate and implement novel ideas (Groselj et al., 2021). Empowered employees perceive themselves as capable of effecting meaningful change, leading to greater initiative, curiosity, and problem-solving behaviors (Dedahanou et al., 2019). Similarly, Zhang and Bartol (2010) emphasized that empowered employees, equipped with sufficient information and autonomy, are more likely to identify problems accurately and develop innovative solutions. When employees experience a strong sense of control over their work, it fosters personal initiative, engagement, and experimentation key precursors of innovative performance (Helmy, Adawiyah & Banani, 2019; Gao & Huang, 2022; Jing & Bai, 2021). Thus, psychological empowerment not only enhances employees' intrinsic motivation but also strengthens their cognitive and emotional resources to pursue creativity and innovation. In visionary-led organizations, empowerment serves as a bridge between leadership vision and employees' innovative behaviors, ensuring alignment between strategic intent and creative execution. It promotes confidence, responsibility, and the freedom to experiment factors that collectively improve innovative performance. Based on this theoretical discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H01: Psychological empowerment influences employees' innovative mindset negatively.

2.4.2 Emotional Intelligence and Innovative Performance

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others, enabling effective interpersonal relationships and adaptation to organizational challenges (Cakar & Arhak, 2014). It encompasses four key components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and empathy. Within organizational contexts, emotional intelligence has been associated with essential competencies such as innovative mindset, resilience, and creative problem-solving, all of which contribute to sustainable business development (Buenechea-Elberdin, 2017). Emotionally intelligent leaders are better equipped to empathize with their employees, communicate effectively, and create emotionally supportive work environments. This capacity enhances morale,

engagement, and collaboration conditions that foster innovation (Lumpkin & Achen, 2018). From a visionary leadership perspective, emotional intelligence serves as a core human capital skill that enables leaders to align emotional awareness with strategic vision. Visionary leaders leverage EI to inspire commitment, manage diversity, and encourage employees to apply their knowledge toward innovative outcomes (Madanaguli et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022). Scholarly evidence underscores the integral role of EI in sustaining organizational innovation. Visionary leaders who demonstrate high emotional intelligence promote continuous improvement through participatory management and creative exploration (Janssen, 2000; Jeroen, Jong & Hartog, 2008). Moreover, emotional intelligence enhances the effectiveness of heterogeneous teams by reducing conflict and promoting adaptive collaboration (Paik et al., 2019). Recent findings by Jegerson et al. (2023) reveal that EI positively influences innovative capabilities through the development of inclusive climates and innovation-oriented cultures. Thus, emotional intelligence strengthens employees' innovative performance by fostering a supportive emotional climate, enhancing adaptability, and enabling the exploration of new ideas aligned with visionary leadership goals.

Ho2: Emotional intelligence has a negative impact on employees' innovative mindset.

2.4.3 Strategic Leadership and Innovative Mindset

Strategic leadership encompasses the ability to make forward-looking and creative decisions that sustain organizational competitiveness through innovation, market development, and continuous adaptation. It involves the effective utilization of assets, capabilities, and knowledge-sharing systems to identify opportunities and respond to environmental changes (Papadakis & Bourantas, 1998). From the perspective of the Dynamic Capabilities Theory, strategic leaders enhance the organization's ability to sense environmental changes, seize emerging opportunities, and reconfigure resources to sustain innovation and growth (Teece et al., 1997). Thus, strategic leadership is not only about decision-making efficiency but also about building the adaptive capacity that underpins an innovative organizational mindset. Developing an innovative mindset within organizations is inherently complex, requiring the re-evaluation of underlying assumptions, unlearning obsolete routines, and overcoming resistance to change. Strategic leadership plays a crucial role in aligning departmental goals, facilitating cross-functional collaboration, and embedding innovation as a core organizational value. Through their strategic position, leaders interpret environmental trends and communicate a coherent vision that connects short-term operations with long-term innovation objectives (Hansen & Kahnweiler, 1997). Drawing on the Upper Echelons Theory, strategic leadership behaviour reflects the cognitive base, values, and experiences of top executives, which shape organizational outcomes, including innovation performance (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Leaders with an innovative orientation tend to encourage creativity, risk-taking, and openness to change across hierarchical levels. By promoting an empowering climate, rewarding creative contributions, and offering constructive feedback, strategic leaders nurture employees' intrinsic motivation and innovative capacity (Avolio, 1999; Amabile, 1997). Empirical evidence supports the link between strategic leadership and innovation. Transformational leadership

behaviours such as acting as role models, supporting experimentation, and providing developmental feedback have been found to enhance creativity and risk-taking within organizational units (Howell & Avolio, 1993; Tierney et al., 1999). Such practices reflect leaders' ability to translate strategic intent into a culture of continuous improvement and learning. In this way, strategic leadership fosters an innovative mindset, enabling employees to explore new ideas, embrace uncertainty, and contribute to organizational development.

Ho3: Strategic leadership decisions negatively impact employees' innovative mindset.

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

Communication theory originally propounded by Claude Shannon in 1948 and later expanded by Warren Weaver in 1949, explain communication as a linear process including a sender, message, channel, and noise, emphasizing how distortions can affect message effectiveness. The theory explain communication as a systematic process involving message transmission from sender to receiver, highlighting the role of encoding, channels, and noise in determining communication effectiveness.

This theory provides a conceptual framework for understanding how messages are disseminated, interpreted within human and organizational interactions. It offers insights into the fundamental processes through which information is shared among individuals and groups (Liu, Volcic, & Gallois, 2019). At its core, communication involves the transmission and reception of information, shaped by contextual, relational, and cultural factors that influence decision-making (Li, Volcic, & Gallois, 2019). One of the most enduring models of communication is the Linear Model, or Transmission Model, developed by Shannon and Weaver (1949). This model conceptualizes communication as a one-way process in which a sender transmits a message through a channel to a receiver, with potential interference or noise

affecting the accuracy of the message. Although the model originated in the field of information engineering, its principles have since been adapted to describe interpersonal and organizational communication. The model is foundational for understanding how leaders disseminate their ideas across different levels of an organization. In the context of visionary leadership, the Linear Model of Communication illustrates the process by which leaders articulate and project a compelling vision that can inspire followers and shape organizational direction. The leader acts as the source of inspiration and innovation, communicating a clear and future-oriented message that defines a desired state of organizational achievement. The vision functions as the message, while the communication channels such as corporate meetings, digital media, speeches, or strategic plans serve as conduits through which the vision is transmitted. The followers or employees, as receivers, interpret this vision and translate it into aligned actions that support the leader's strategic goals (Lin et al., 2019). However, while the Linear Model offers an essential foundation for understanding message dissemination, it is limited in addressing the interactive and interpretive nature of visionary leadership. Inspiring a mindset for business development requires communication that moves beyond one-way transmission toward interactive, dialogic, and feedback-based processes. In these transactional communication models, both leaders and followers engage in reciprocal sense-making, co-creating meaning and aligning shared values that drive collective motivation and

innovation (Lin et al., 2019). Through this dynamic exchange, visionary leaders not only communicate direction but also inspire creative thinking, for adaptive mindsets essential for business growth and sustainability. In essence, communication within visionary leadership serves not merely to inform but to transform shaping how individuals within the organization perceive opportunities, approach challenges, and commit to shared goals. By fostering interactive communication, visionary leaders cultivate a development-oriented mindset, enabling businesses to remain agile, innovative, and strategically aligned in a competitive environment.

Linear model of communication is shown below.

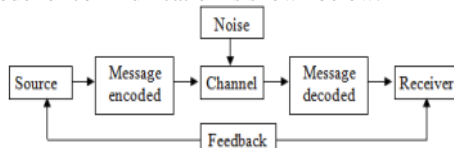


Fig. (1): Linear model of communication (Lin et al., 2019).

Research Methods

The study employed a survey research design, allowing data to be collected directly from participants within the total population. This approach enables the examination of leadership styles and their influence on employee mindset and performance across diverse organizational contexts. Given that leadership approaches vary among different work units, adopting a single case study design was considered appropriate to provide in-depth insights aligned with the research objectives. The study population comprises 460 employees drawn from various department of 7up Nigeria Plc A manufacturing firm in Edo State. This firm was selected due to its significant contribution to fostering an innovative work environment, where proactive personality and a growth mindset are recognized as essential employee attributes.

Sample Size and Demographics

The sample size was determined by Taro Yamane formula (1967) for a finite population

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = required sample size

N = total population

e = margin of error (level of precision)

N = 460 (population size)

e = 0.05 (margin of error = 5%)

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$$n = \frac{460}{1 + 460(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{460}{1 + 460(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{460}{1 + 1.15}$$

$$n = \frac{460}{2.15} = 214$$

n = 214

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study sample comprised a total of 214 employees. The gender distribution indicates that 81.4% of the respondents were male, while 18.6% were female, reflecting the male-dominated nature of the manufacturing sector in Edo State. The age distribution shows that 24% of participants were under 30 years, 33.1% were between 31 and 40 years, 19.8% were aged 41 to 50 years, and 23.1% were above 50 years. In terms of educational qualification, 47.9% of

respondents possessed Bachelor's degrees (B.Sc/B.Ed), 38.4% held Master's degrees, and 13.6% had Diplomas. Regarding employment status, the majority (89.2%) were full-time employees, while 15.7% served as adjunct or part-time staff. Analysis of work experience revealed that 7% of respondents had less than one year of experience, 30.6% had 1–5 years, 24.8% had 6–10 years, and 37.6% had over 11 years of experience. Leadership experience ranged from less than one year (7.4%) to over 10 years (46.7%), indicating a considerable proportion of seasoned professionals in leadership roles. Regarding job titles, 13.6% occupied managerial or executive positions, 14% held technical roles, 4.5% were in marketing, 5.4% worked in purchasing, and 62.4% were engaged in other operational roles within their organizations. This demographic distribution reflects a diverse workforce representative of the manufacturing sector in Edo State.

Data Collection

This study utilized a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire consisted of five sections designed to assess the following key constructs: visionary leadership, psychological empowerment, strategic leadership decision-making, emotional intelligence, and innovative mindset. All measurement scales were adapted from validated instruments established in prior research, as detailed below. Visionary leadership was assessed using a five-item scale developed by Kearney et al. (2019). The scale measures the extent to which leaders articulate and communicate a clear vision for goal achievement. A sample item includes: "My supervisor communicates a clear pathway for goal accomplishment." Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Psychological empowerment was measured using the Spreitzer (1995) instrument, which operationalizes the construct into four core dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. The scale comprises 12 items, each rated on a five-point Likert scale from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). This measure captures employees' intrinsic motivation and perceived influence within their organizational context. Emotional intelligence was evaluated using the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) developed by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2002). The instrument is structured around four branches: perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Five representative items were adapted and rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Strategic leadership decision-making, a relatively newer construct, was measured using the scale developed by Rowe (2001). The instrument includes five items capturing key dimensions such as determining strategic direction, exploiting and maintaining core competencies, developing human capital, and establishing balanced organizational control. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). Innovative mindset was measured using the scale developed by Davis, Hall, and Mayer (2016). This instrument draws from the fields of innovation management, creativity, and organizational psychology, and includes dimensions such as curiosity, risk-taking, resilience, creativity, and imagination. Items were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1).

Procedures

Data collection commenced in December 2024 and began with a pilot study involving 20 participants to evaluate the clarity, structure, and comprehensibility of the survey instrument. Feedback from the pilot phase was used to refine the questionnaire for the main study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, emphasizing voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality of responses. In addition, ethical approval was secured from the human resource departments of the participating organizations prior to data collection. To ensure data integrity, quality control measures were implemented at each stage of the research process. The survey was administered over a 12-week period, yielding 214 responses. After thorough data screening, eight responses were found invalid and nine did not meet the inclusion criteria, resulting in 197 valid responses for analysis. The study employed a quantitative analytical approach, utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for data coding and analysis. The analytical process began with an evaluation of the measurement model to ensure reliability and validity. Convergent validity was established by assessing factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct, thereby confirming the robustness and internal consistency of the measurement scales. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and percentages were used to present the demographic characteristics of respondents. Means and standard deviations were computed to determine the degree of agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire items. To test the study hypotheses and examine relationships among the variables, multiple regression analysis was conducted at a 0.05 level of significance. This analytical approach provided empirical insights into the impact of visionary leadership, psychological empowerment, strategic leadership decisions, and emotional intelligence on employees' innovative mindset within the manufacturing sector.

Model Specification

The model specification for the study takes an econometric model specification adapted from Spreitzer, (1995) that uses psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, strategic and visionary leaderships as predictors using the Baseline Linear Regression (OLS). This is the primary specification used in this study;

$$IM = \beta_0 + \beta_1 VL + \beta_2 PE + \beta_3 EI + \beta_4 SL + YX + E$$

Where;

= indexes individual (respondents)

IM = innovative mindset score for individual (i.e. scale score or mean across items) VL, PE, EI, SL = scale scores for the 4 predictors

X = vector of control variables (e.g. age, gender, education, tenure, job level). E = error term

B B_n are coefficient of interest

Hypotheses (examples signs)

$\beta_1 > 1$, $\beta_2 > 1$, $\beta_3 > 1$, $\beta_4 > 1$ (each predictor positively

Model R R² Adj. R^s Stdd. err. of estimate

Durbin Watson

associated with innovation mindset).

Estimation: OLS with robust (Hc) standard errors if participant are clustered (e.g. by department/school) duster standard errors at that level.

Results

A total of 214 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 173 were found valid for analysis. Ten questionnaires were incorrectly completed, and twenty-one contained incomplete responses. Thus, the valid responses represented a response rate of 80.84%. The data were analyzed using standard multiple regression to examine the effect of visionary leadership measured through psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, and strategic leadership decision-making on innovative mindset, operationalized through creativity, competence, and capability dimensions. Prior to analysis, preliminary tests were conducted to ensure compliance with key statistical assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity. The data satisfied all these assumptions, confirming its suitability for regression analysis. The results, summarized in Table 1, present the frequencies and percentages of responses. Further analysis in Table 1.10 shows the outcome of the ANOVA test, where the F-value was 101.600, indicating that the regression model was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This result demonstrates that the model was well-specified and appropriate for assessing the relationships among the study variables. The findings suggest that visionary leadership through its underlying dimensions of psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, and strategic leadership decision-making has a significant positive effect on employees' innovative mindset. This implies that leaders who effectively articulate vision, foster empowerment, and exhibit emotional and strategic awareness contribute meaningfully to enhancing innovation-oriented behavior within the manufacturing sector.

Table (1): ANOVA

Model SS Df MS F Sig.

Regression 4502.477 3 1500.83 101.60 0.000

Residual 2496.50 169 14.770

Total 6998.00 172

Source: Authors desk (SPSS), 2025.

Also, the result of regression as contained in table (1.10), model summary, shows that R² gave a large value of 64.30%, this means that the model (which include psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, and strategic leadership) explained above 64.30% variance of innovative mindset for business development. The Durbin-Watson statistic gives 1.270 coefficients which indicates that there is absence of serial correlation in the error terms of the model as such negates out problems associated with previous regressions.

Table (1.10): Model Summary

I 0.802 0.643 0.638 2.9701100 1.2690

Source: Authors desk (SPSS), 2025.

Specifically, the regression as contained in table (1.121), regression coefficient tests the three hypotheses of this study.

Table (1.121): Regression Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized coefficient		Std. coefficient	T	Sig.
	B	Std. err.			
Constant	0.5740	1.2070		0.476	0.635
Psychological empowerment	0.2270	0.0650	0.2270	3.4960	0.001
Emotional intelligence	0.2420	0.0750	0.2090	3.2420	0.001
Strategic leadership	0.2950	0.0730	0.2590	4.0210	0.000

Source: Author's desk (SPSS), 2025.

Ho1: Psychological empowerment impacts innovative mindset negatively. There is a positive correlation of psychological empowerment and innovation mindset for business development such that it enhances employee's intrinsic motivation, perceived impact, and belief in their capabilities caused about 0.227-unit motivation for innovation. Scores which were statistically significant at 1% with (P = 0.001). This implies that psychological empowerment change will result in 22.70% change in innovative mindset. Based on the premise, the null hypothesis is rejected, thus, psychological empowerment judiciously impacts innovative mindset for business development by the visionary leadership position. **Ho2: Emotional intelligence negatively impacts innovative mindset for business development.**

Also, emotional intelligence positively impacts innovative mindset such that when the employees/entrepreneur cultivate self-awareness, resilience, adaptability and effectively communicate, this causes about 0.242 increase in innovative mindset for business development which was statistically significant at about 1% with the aid of the (P < 0.001). This implies that improvement in emotional intelligence will result in 24.2% change in the innovative mindset of business development. Based on the premise, the null hypothesis is ignored, thus emotional intelligence impacts innovative mindset positively in manufacturing industries.

Ho3: Strategic leadership decisions impact innovative mindset of business development negatively.

Moreso, strategic leadership positively impacts innovation mindset such that strategic decisions on ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility cause about 0.295 increase in employee's innovative mindset which was statistically significant at 1% with the aid of (P < 0.001). This implies that when a better decision emerges this will result in 29.50% changes and improvement in creativity, dynamism, championing innovative mindset for business growth and development. Hence, the null hypothesis is not accepted, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. Thus, strategic leadership decisions impact innovative mindset for business development in manufacturing firms in Edo State.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that visionary leadership serves as a strategic enabler of an innovative mindset, particularly within problem-solving contexts that demand flexibility, creativity, and resilience among employees, managers, and entrepreneurs. By leveraging motivational, cognitive, and structural mechanisms, visionary leaders transform complex challenges into viable opportunities for innovation. This leadership approach not only enhances organizational competitiveness but also strengthens employees' adaptive capabilities in dynamic business environments. Psychological Empowerment and Innovative Mindset The results revealed that psychological empowerment has a significant positive effect on employees' innovative mindset. This finding aligns with the works of *Jing and Bai (2021)*, *Geo and Huang (2022)*, *Groselj et al. (2021)*, *Dedahanov et al. (2019)*, *Zhang and Bartol (2010)*, and *Helmy et al. (2019)*, thereby supporting the alternate hypothesis (H1). The study argues that when employees experience greater levels of psychological empowerment, they exhibit stronger intrinsic motivation and a heightened drive for innovation and performance. As a psychological mechanism influencing organizational behavior, empowerment fosters autonomy, competence, and a sense of purpose, all of which enhance creative problem-solving and innovation orientation. Organizations can thus leverage psychological empowerment as a key pathway through which visionary leadership shapes employees' mindsets, aligning individual behaviors with organizational vision. By promoting trust, participation, and self-determination, visionary leaders cultivate a culture that stimulates innovation and value creation.

The second hypothesis (H2) established that emotional intelligence exerts a positive influence on innovative mindset for business development thereby rejecting the null hypothesis, and accepting the alternate hypothesis. Emotionally intelligent managers and employees demonstrate superior abilities in collaborative problem-solving, relationship management, and adaptation to changing business environments. This finding concurs with the research of *Paik et al. (2019)* and *Jegerson et al. (2023)*, which emphasize the pivotal role of emotional intelligence in promoting creativity and effective team dynamics. Emotional intelligence enables employees to manage emotions constructively, foster empathy, and enhance communication skills that are essential for organizational innovation and inclusivity. Consequently, organizations should prioritize emotional intelligence training and recruitment strategies that identify and develop emotionally competent individuals. Such initiatives strengthen interpersonal relationships, support diversity, and foster an environment conducive to creative thinking and sustainable innovation.

The third finding of this study indicates that strategic leadership is positively associated with executive influence on innovation processes thereby rejecting the null hypothesis, and accepting the alternate hypothesis even beyond the effects of organizational size or CEO personality traits. These findings are consistent with previous research by *Howell and Avolio (1993)*, *Amabile (1997)*, and *Tierney et al. (1999)*, which highlighted the integral role of leadership vision and strategy in driving innovation. Strategic leaders play a critical role in fostering both product-market and administrative innovation by articulating clear strategic direction, aligning resources, and inspiring collective commitment. The findings suggest that effective executives do not rely solely on hierarchical authority; rather, their strategic insight, foresight, and adaptability determine their ability to influence innovation outcomes. Hence, developing strategic leadership

competencies is essential for organizations seeking to embed innovation as a core organizational value.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that the dimensions of visionary leadership specifically psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, and strategic leadership decision making are critical determinants of innovative performance within manufacturing firms and other industries. The results provide strong empirical evidence that visionary leadership enhances innovation capability and drives sustainable organizational change. This study further establishes that visionary leadership fosters psychological empowerment through effective communication, which clarifies employee goals and strengthens their connection to the organization's vision. When a leader articulates a clear and compelling vision, followers develop a better understanding of their roles, align their actions with organizational objectives, and derive meaning from their contributions. For a vision to inspire a performance-oriented mindset, it must stimulate employees cognitively by defining actionable goals and conveying the broader significance of their work. Moreover, the study highlights that visionary leadership interacts synergistically with employees' empowerment, emotional intelligence, and strategic orientation. Leaders who encourage a growth mindset among employees amplify the effectiveness of visionary leadership in driving innovation and business development. This interaction underscores the importance of fostering leadership cultures that emphasize adaptability, empowerment, and emotional awareness. However, several areas warrant further exploration. Although the findings confirm that visionary leadership contributes to an innovative mindset for business development, the precise mechanisms underlying this relationship remain insufficiently understood. Future research should therefore investigate how and through which processes visionary leadership influences innovative behavior, potentially incorporating longitudinal or multi-level designs. In conclusion, this study contributes to leadership and innovation scholarship by illustrating the complex interrelationships between visionary leadership and innovation-related constructs. It also addresses the long-standing gap in literature regarding the behavioral and cognitive pathways through which visionary leaders cultivate innovation, adaptability, and sustainable growth in organizations.

Recommendation

To maximize the influence of Visionary Leadership on Employee innovation mindset at 7up plc, the study recommends the following

1. The company should focus on strengthening leadership communication for efficiency
2. Aligned human resource practices with innovative goals for strategic leadership
3. Empower employees psychologically to enhance autonomy in decision and resource control
4. Establish a robust system that monitor, reward, and sustain innovative behaviour which promote emotional intelligence

Contribution to Knowledge

The study contributes to literature in the following ways

1. The study provides a dynamic insight for managerial practice, regarding the challenges that may constrain visionary leadership effectiveness in pursuit of excellence within manufacturing firms.
2. The study also explores mindset as a personal resource that can be nurtured and stimulated to enhance conscious

awareness, focus, and adaptability among managers and employees within manufacturing firms.

Limitations of the Study

Although the study carefully sought to mitigate potential biases, the interpretation and implications of the findings should be considered in light of certain limitations. These limitations provide critical direction for future research. First, the cross-sectional design of this study restricts the ability to establish causal relationships among the examined variables. Longitudinal or experimental designs would be more appropriate for determining the directionality and temporal sequence of the observed effects. Second, the use of self-reported measures may introduce common method bias and subjective interpretation, as respondents' perceptions could have been influenced by personal attitudes, mood, or social desirability tendencies. Incorporating multiple data sources such as supervisor assessments or objective performance indicators could strengthen the robustness of future findings. Finally, the study's focus on a specific sample and contextual setting within manufacturing firms in Edo State may limit the generalizability of the results to other industries or geographical regions. Future research should therefore consider comparative studies across sectors and cultural contexts to enhance the external validity and applicability of the findings.

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