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# The Role of Effective Leadership in Achieving Organizational Success of Food Companies in Saudi Arabia

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## Abstract

This research investigates the role of effective leadership in achieving organizational success within food companies in Saudi Arabia. Employing quantitative research methodology, a structured questionnaire was utilized as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire, comprising 27 statements related to various aspects of effective leadership and organizational success, was administered to a sample of 50 participants selected through random sampling from employees within the Saudi Arabian food industry. Analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed a generally positive perception of effective leadership practices, with participants acknowledging the importance of leadership in fostering collaboration, promoting accountability, and enhancing communication effectiveness. However, variations in

agreement levels across different dimensions of leadership were observed, indicating areas for further improvement. Based on the findings, recommendations include conducting further research to explore specific leadership behaviors contributing significantly to organizational success, implementing tailored leadership training programs, fostering knowledge sharing among food companies, investigating policy implications of effective leadership practices, and exploring cross-cultural perspectives on leadership effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Food, Organizational Success, Saudi Arabia.

## Introduction

The food industry is witnessing constant evolution in Saudi Arabia. In the light of scarcity of water resources, Saudi Arabia is planning to support and grow the production of crops with relatively limited water needs. However, the bulk of food consumption in Saudi Arabia is of imported products. Food companies in Saudi Arabia are not only in the agriculture sectors, but they are also found in the service, retail, and manufacturing sectors. Notable factors supporting the flourishing and boom of food companies in Saudi Arabia include the low cost of exporting as well as the growth of domestic consumption (1). In the light of this challenging environment, Saudi companies are in dire need of the ability to achieve and maintain organizational success.

One of the most important factors that influence an organization's ability to achieve success is leadership. Leaders are responsible for developing strategies and

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<sup>(1)</sup> Aly F. El Sheikh, "Food safety issues in Saudi Arabia." *Nutrition and Food Technology*, vol. 1, no. 1 (2015): 2. <http://dx.doi.org/10.16966/nftoa.103>

transforming them into action by subordinates for the purpose of achieving success for the organization <sup>(2)</sup>.

According to Singh <sup>(3)</sup>, effective leadership is the most important requirement for attaining organizational success and advancement. This may be attributable to that effective leadership is associated with improved ability among employees to perform and work achieving organization success in goal attainment <sup>(4)</sup>.

An organization's ability to successfully achieve development and growth is largely dependent on the style of leadership adopted by the leader. Although the effectiveness of leadership is largely reliant on the leaders' competencies, adopting an inappropriate leadership style will lead to resentment among followers <sup>(5)</sup>.

Noteworthy is the fact that leadership does not solely revolve around charisma. An effective leader knows that they are not the center of focus in an organization. Rather, they practice leadership as a form of work. This involves setting clear priorities and goals, while adhering to standards. Moreover, an effective leader views leadership as responsibility, rather than a source of prestige. The purpose of effective leadership is to gain others' trust, as the lack thereof will lead to failure in having followers (Meraku, 2017, 336) <sup>(6)</sup>.

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<sup>(2)</sup> Kehinde James Sunday, Idris Adekunle and Oluitan Roseline, "Organizational survival: The effects of leadership skill and strategy." *Science Journal of Business and Management*, vol. 2, no. 2 (2014): 44. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.sjbm.20140202.11>

<sup>(3)</sup> Aarya Singh, "Role of transformational leadership in enhancing employee engagement: evolving issues and direction for future research through literature review," (presentation: The 10th International Conference on Digital Strategies for Organizational Success, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India, 5-7 January 2019), 1.

<sup>(4)</sup> Dewi Jannah et al., "A Qualitative Study of Transformational Leadership and Organization Success," (presentation: The 11th Annual International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management, Singapore, 7-11 March 2021), 5036.

<sup>(5)</sup> Maurice Potopregha, Edwinah Amah and Belemenanya Friday Okocha, "Leadership Styles on Employees' Performance: A Theoretical Perspective." *Journal of Research in Business and Management*, vol. 10, no. 4 (2022): 18.

<sup>(6)</sup> Anjeza Meraku, "Role of leadership in organizational effectiveness." *Journal of Economics, Business and Management*, vol. 5, no. 11 (2017): 336.

An effective leadership approach is associated with a variety of outcomes that lead, in turn, to organizational success. For example, an effective leadership helps in reducing losses that may often result from inconsistencies in the organization's operation. As a result, the organization becomes more capable of attaining improved profitability, organizational performance, and productivity (Atan, 2020, 21)<sup>(7)</sup>.

### **Importance of the Study**

- The present study aims to fill the research gap on the impact of effective leadership in achieving organizational success at food companies.
- Findings of the present study may be a starting point for conducting further research on the role of effective leadership in achieving organizational success in the Saudi context.
- Findings of the present study may provide valuable recommendations for selecting and adapting leadership practices to meet the requirements of achieving organizational success at food companies.
- Recommendations of the study may be of value to managers in identifying and harnessing the factors that influence the ability to achieve organizational success for their organizations.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- Investigating the role of effective leadership in achieving organizational success of food companies in Saudi Arabia.
- Unveiling the status quo of implementing effective leadership at food companies in Saudi Arabia.

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<sup>(7)</sup> Jamsari Bin Atan, "Leadership Style in Enhancing Employees' Competency for Organizational Performance in Food Industries" (PhD diss., Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 2020), 21.

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- Investigating the levels of achieving organizational success of food companies in Saudi Arabia.

### Questions of the Study

- Is there a role of effective leadership in achieving organizational success of food companies in Saudi Arabia?
- What is the status quo of implementing effective leadership at food companies in Saudi Arabia?
- What are the levels of achieving organizational success of food companies in Saudi Arabia?

### Literature Review

The food industry in Saudi Arabia is a significant and important one. Saudi Arabia is one of the largest countries in the Middle East and has one of the fastest expanding economies in the world. Effective leadership is a key element in the success of a healthcare organization, and it is especially critical in the food industry. It is important in any field, but in the food industry there is naturally a greater chance of error when it comes to consumer health and comfort. The wrong decision can lead to serious issues for a company, possibly even ruining the company's reputation or concessions. So, the whole process could not produce any effective resolution which can enhance the business welfare. This potential failure would impact both financially and emotionally on the side of the leaders of the related organizations.<sup>(8)</sup>

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<sup>(8)</sup> Alrobaish, Waeel Salih, Peter Vlerick, Pieternel A. Luning, and Liesbeth Jacxsens. "Food safety governance in Saudi Arabia: Challenges in control of imported food." *Journal of Food Science* 86, no. 1 (2021): 16-30.

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## Definition and Characteristics of Effective Leadership

Effective leaders motivate, inspire, and convince by innovation and change. Using leadership qualities such as delegating, coaching, influencing, and team building, leaders in the food industry can contribute to the creation of a sustainable business. Effective leadership in the food industry plays a key role in driving the competitiveness of a business and its economic and social impact. Hambrick and Evans (1996) have defined effective leadership as "the creation of an environment in which an organizational mission, objectives, strategies, and plans can be transformed into action and in which employees can perform to their full potential"<sup>(9)</sup>

## Importance of Effective Leadership in the Food Industry

At the heart of a functioning and fruitful food industry - regardless of whether the organization is a major or little scope - everything comes down to powerful initiative. It is basically difficult to overestimate the significance of powerful authority in the food business, and it can have a significant effect in a wide range of ways. There are incalculable models that can be referred to that show why compelling initiative is significant, however, numerous individuals accept that the enduring accomplishment of a task is likely the main factor<sup>(10)</sup>

In a food creation mode, compelling initiative isn't about the task opening consistently, it's the straightforward strategies and courses of action that are made by administrators consistently to keep an operational and flourishing work environment. From an inventory network and coordination perspective, powerful authority is significant as it keeps individuals persuaded and concentrated on the goals of the

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<sup>(9)</sup>Aggestam, F., A. Konczal, M. Sotirov, I. Wallin, Y. Paillet, R. Spinelli, M. Lindner, J. Derks, M. Hanewinkel, and G. Winkel. "Can nature conservation and wood production be reconciled in managed forests? A review of driving factors for integrated forest management in Europe." *Journal of Environmental management* 268 (2020): 1-9.

<sup>(10)</sup> Akyazi, Tugce, Aitor Goti, Aitor Oyarbide, Elisabete Alberdi, and Felix Bayon. "A guide for the food industry to meet the future skills requirements emerging with industry 4.0." *Foods* 9, no. 4 (2020): 492.

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organization, everything from cutoff times to quality confirmation and consumer loyalty stays significant <sup>(11)</sup>

Without compelling initiative and the executives, the principles in cleanliness, quality, and authoritative will gradually slide, and this can prompt an entire host of issues for both the business and the client. Moreover, for an assembling chief in the food business, pioneers are required to consistently be ensuring that the labor force is including the payable hours and that they are kept up to exclusive requirements all through with customary quality evaluations.

### **Role of Leadership in Achieving Organizational Success**

It is important to note that organizational success does not happen by chance, but it is a deliberate effort by all the parties involved. For an organization to succeed there must be a supportive and effective leadership to help steer the affairs of the business. The role of leadership in achieving organizational success is well documented in management literature. Leadership is pivotal in establishing and maintaining a successful business. The way in which the leadership tasks are carried out determines the running of the entire organization. The leaders make it possible for a healthy work environment to be created. A healthy work environment is key to employee retention and high morale <sup>(12)</sup>

On the same note, leaders provide support to the employees as well as to the business challenges. In ensuring the success of a business, it is important for top managers to create a stable, strong, and sustainable organization. The leaders must have a long-

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<sup>(11)</sup> Nataraj, Shanthi, Howard J. Shatz, Louay Constant, Matthew Sargent, Sean McKenna, Yousuf Abdelfatah, Florentine Eloundou Nekoul, and Nathan Vest. *A targeted industry approach for raising quality private-sector employment in Saudi Arabia*. RAND, 2021.

<sup>(12)</sup> Naushad, Mohammad. "Investigating determinants of entrepreneurial leadership among SMEs and their role in sustainable economic development of Saudi Arabia." *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business* 8, no. 4 (2021): 225-237.

term and wider view of the organization based on the visions and missions of the organization. The first element of leadership in relation to achieving organizational success is in establishing clarity among the employees by providing guidance of the company's vision and mission. The employees must understand what the organization can do and where it is headed to. This helps to reduce any chances of conflicts among the employees themselves and between employees and the day-to-day running of the business as there are fewer interruptions<sup>(13)</sup>

### Leadership Styles

- **Autocratic Leadership Style**

Autocratic leadership style is centralized and focuses on the "micro-management" approach to leading a group in the food industry in Saudi Arabia. The leader has total authority and makes all the decisions. Employees and staff are not involved in the decision-making process. An autocratic leader believes in controlling others, giving orders, and making decisions with little or no consultation with others. This is the most extreme type of leadership, in which the leader makes decisions without any interference from employees right from outlining the goals to the methods of achieving those goals<sup>(14)</sup>

- **Democratic Leadership Style**

The democratic leadership style is also called the participative style as it relies on the input of the team, but the manager makes the final decision. He or she is not autocratic, or like a dictator, in the way he or she interacts with staff. This is a well-known and popular style of leadership for the following reasons: - Staff are more

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<sup>(13)</sup> Al Thumairy, Khalid. "Developing a framework for performance management at a Saudi food company." PhD diss., 2021.

<sup>(14)</sup> Alsharqi, Omar, Takrouni, Yousef. "Impact of Leadership Style on Employee Commitment in King Abdullah Medical City." *Journal of Nursing and Health Science* 10, no.1 (2021): 22-51



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productive because they have a bigger say in how the business is run. - Staff retention is more likely as staff feel valued and their jobs are more enjoyable. - By taking on board the views of the team, it is more likely that a decision made is well supported with all team members 'on side' and drive the business forward. - People feel in control of their day-to-day job<sup>(15)</sup>

### **The Significance of Effective Leadership in Driving Organizational Success**

In the contemporary competitive world of the food industry, leaders are exploring new management and leadership styles. Leaders are discovering advanced technology, implementing it in their food business and in food processing practices to face new competitive challenges and raise the level of food quality and safety. The potential for technology to improve the ways that leadership is provided and how professionals teamwork and communicate with each other in the realm of the food industry is greater than might be expected. many studies point to point to growing interest in leadership and management in the Southeast. This demonstrates the importance of having reliable and detailed information concerning leadership in the food industry, as supply chain positions in the food industry leadership opportunities there is a continuous increase in job opportunities for individuals looking to work in the field<sup>(16)</sup>

### **Definition and dimension of Organizational Success**

According to scholars, organizational success could be defined as the ability of an organization to achieve its goals and fulfill its mission. For example, Norman (2011) stressed that organizational success may include, but is not limited to, quality service,

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<sup>(15)</sup> Heibach, Jens. "Public diplomacy and regional leadership struggles: The case of Saudi Arabia." *International politics* (2021): 1-23.

<sup>(16)</sup> Rejeb, Abderahman, John G. Keogh, Suhaiza Zailani, Horst Treiblmaier, and Karim Rejeb. "Blockchain technology in the food industry: A review of potentials, challenges and future research directions." *Logistics* 4, no. 4 (2020): 1-27.

satisfied customers, profit-making, market share enhancement, progress, better internal communication, motivated and happy workforce, meeting expectations, and ability to adapt to changes<sup>(17)</sup>

However, scholars like Miroslav Rebernak argue that organizational success is purely concerned with profit-making, and this view is shared by shareholders and top management. On the contrary, Thompson (2003) emphasized that organizational success should be assessed periodically, and changes and modifications may be required. It is a challenge that management has to face at every step of the organizational life cycle<sup>(18)</sup>

According to KPI (Key Performance Indicators) in the food industry, the growth, market share, and innovation are considered as the most popular indicators for success. There is good reason to believe that food is one of the highest growing markets in Saudi Arabia<sup>(19)</sup>. This can be proved by the growth of mobile food delivery platforms like Hunger Station or Talabat which attract many customers and investors through serving food and creating business opportunities. In order to explore the level of success in the food industry, the growth is always a widely used KPI to measure a company's success<sup>(20)</sup>

<sup>(17)</sup> Ismail Albalushi, Khalid, and M. Muzamil Naqshbandi. "Factors affecting success and survival of small and medium enterprises in the middle east." *Knowledge* 2, no. 3 (2022): 525-538.

<sup>(18)</sup> Werdhiastutie, Any, Fendy Suhariadi, and Sri Gunani Partiw. "Achievement motivation as antecedents of quality improvement of organizational human resources." *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)* Vol 3 (2020): 747-752.

<sup>(19)</sup> Euromonitor International. (2019). *Evolving Trends in Food and Nutrition in 2019*. <https://go.euromonitor.com/anufood20.html>

<sup>(20)</sup> Mohammed, Abdul Alem. "What motivates consumers to purchase organic food in an emerging market? An empirical study from Saudi Arabia." *British Food Journal* 123, no. 5 (2021): 1758-1775.

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## **Brief overview of The Importance of Effective Leadership in Organizational Success in the Food Industry in Saudi Arabia**

It's clear that effective leadership is a key driver of an outstanding and functional organization. However, things are quite difficult and challenging due to demanding, complex, and knowledgeable workers and fast change in technology. The significance of effective leadership is obvious. It increases confidence and support among the workers. It provides the energy and motivation to achieve the goal. It builds power and personal impact for a more sound and strategic decision, and it propels innovation and drives change. It sounds like a good recipe for success. But remember, all the good managers need to get the basic, "the understanding of effective leadership," and critical challenges of today's organizational and industry.

It is mostly accepted among researchers that an effective leader usually adopts situation-based and team-based leadership styles. It is not surprising that such leaders produce a better organizational climate. However, unlike in the past, the modern business environments are characterized by rapid, substantial, and unpredictable changes, ambiguous or unclear objectives, and myriad impediments. There, it's the effective leader who stands up to those situations, accepts the changes, and constructs the avenues to achieve the objectives. On the other hand, it's his/her strategic augmentation that ensures the mitigation of impediments so that the predetermined goal could be achieved. And it's the ingenuity and teamwork that lead the organization to continuous progress and sustainability. Various modern business studies demonstrate that an effective leader in an organization is far more than just a person with an impressive title. The effective leader doesn't just make decisions for the company, but rather ensures that best practices are followed throughout the organization and that those around him are positioned to take over as needed and continue with the leadership as a team. It has also been observed that managers who

have eager enthusiasm to lead the industry and empower with leadership responsibility encounter workers who are satisfied, perform well, and have a peaceful mind. However, workers also contribute to maintaining a well and good environment and culture assigned by the leader. But it is the leader's zeal, spirit, and incorruptible passion that really cherish to win the industry in all aspects from (intra and extra) over the progress. Effective leadership is an essential element of any successful, prosperous, and well-functioning organization or company. It plays a vital role in achieving the goals and objectives of the operation. However, the selection of a suitable leadership style and effective leader in an organization depends on the organization's culture, structure, type of industry, as well as the nature of the product<sup>(21)</sup>.

### **Focus on the Food Industry in Saudi Arabia**

Not only will this research provide evidence that improved leadership strategies do have an impact on the levels of performance, but it will also help to make these strategies more accessible to businesses in the food industry in Saudi Arabia and organizations from similar industries. It is important that the correct kind of structure and management style is adopted by companies in the food industry in Saudi Arabia. By being able to provide a number of different leadership and operational strategies that are most effective, the gap between what companies is currently achieving and what they are potentially able to achieve can be reduced or eliminated. Such alignment strategies are especially crucial if high levels of performance are to be achieved within the food industry in Saudi Arabia<sup>(22)</sup>.

<sup>(21)</sup> Alshayhan, Norah Abdullah A. *Collaborative Leadership Skills and Competencies in Emergency Management and Resilience: Lessons and Implications from the Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic*. Old Dominion University, 2023.

<sup>(22)</sup> Bin Sunaid, Faisal Fahad, Ayoub Al-Jawaldeh, Meshal Wasel Almutairi, Rawan Abdulaziz Alobaid, Tagreed Mohammad Alfuraih, Faisal Naser Bensaidan, Atheer Shayea Alragea et al. "Saudi Arabia's healthy food strategy: Progress & hurdles in the 2030 road." *Nutrients* 13, no. 7 (2021): 1-14.

Finally, the food industry in Saudi Arabia is still heavily reliant on imports. This is despite efforts from the Saudi government to significantly increase investment in the domestic production of food over the last decade and plans to spend billions on improving the country's food security. This kind of challenging environment requires strong and effective leadership to ensure that companies can thrive and succeed. This example shows how leadership and efficiency in an organization are linked to high performance. However, the food industry in Saudi Arabia faces several challenges, particularly in relation to leadership and operational efficiency. Firstly, the industry is highly fragmented, with many small to medium-sized enterprises operating in the market. This can make it difficult for these companies to benefit from economies of scale. In addition, many firms in the food industry operate on a family-owned and run basis, which can hinder the introduction of professional management processes and leadership structures. The food industry in Saudi Arabia accounts for 7% of the country's gross domestic product, making it the single largest sector in the Kingdom. It is estimated that the sector will continue to grow at a rate of around 8% per year. In 2016, the food industry in Saudi Arabia was valued at around 70 billion dollars, and this figure is projected to rise to approximately 90 billion dollars by 2021. Saudi Arabia has a rapidly growing population - it is estimated that there will be 38.3 million people living in the country by 2021. Most of this population will be young, with around 60% of the population under the age of 40. This means that there is a high demand for food products in the Kingdom, particularly for products that are quick and easy to prepare. <sup>(23)</sup>.

### **Importance of Organizational Success for Food Companies in Saudi Arabia**

Organizational success is crucial for business continuity and sustainable development. It is even more important for certain industries that operate in a highly

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<sup>(23)</sup> Alrobaish, "Food safety governance in Saudi Arabia"

competitive environment and complex market system, such as the food industry in Saudi Arabia. According to Restaurant managers in Saudi Arabia must continuously strive for organizational success due to a number of reasons. First, achieving and maintaining organizational success can help food companies to survive and sustain in the competitive market. This is because the market is dynamic, and many challenges exist in the business environment. For those companies that fail to meet the specific goals that their stakeholders have set for them, including profitability, survival, growth, market standing and service, survival, and independence etc., they are deemed to have not succeeded. Furthermore, businesses are under immense pressure to cut costs and improve efficiency, and with the increased focus on value for money and customer service, it is critical for the organizations to be successful. As rightly pointed out, success is something that is desired yet difficult to define because it means different things to different people. However, the main factors that lead to a firm's success are an increase in profit (41%), increase in volume of business (20%), expansion of the business (15%) and continuing existence of the business (11%). However, the environment is uncertain and full of turbulence which makes it even more difficult for the managers to set up a view on sustainability<sup>(24)</sup>.

### **Studies Focusing on the Role of Leadership in Saudi Arabia Food Companies**

There is a book by Dr. Khadijah Al Amoudi dedicated to exploring studies that specifically analyze the role of leadership in Saudi Arabian food companies. Dr. Khadijah Al Amoudi, who is an accomplished business manager and a widely celebrated academic, explains how food sector businesses in Saudi Arabia are deeply rooted in the country's culture and are significantly affected by the country's historical, social, and political context. In the book, Dr. Al Amoudi and her research

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<sup>(24)</sup>Ismail. "Factors affecting success and survival "

team build on the definition that has been provided, which defines leadership as a collective process that is a result of people working together<sup>(25)</sup>.

The book explains that the context leadership model provided by Dr. Al Amoudi, which is unique in its concentration on the nature and effect of leadership practices in Saudi Arabian food sector management and in influencing quality management system practices in these organizations, also the unique socio-cultural aspects of Saudi Arabian society through analyzing different leadership styles and investigating how the quality management systems are inspired, adopted, and implemented by the influence of leaders on their organization and the employees<sup>(26)</sup>.

### **Review of Existing Literature on Leadership and Organizational Success in the Food Industry**

The discussion in the literature shows that successful leadership behavior may have different effects on the subordinates and accordingly there might be changes on the ultimate organizational performance as described next. The literature has debated on this issue from different perspectives by providing case studies from different countries and proposal of theoretical models or methodology that in leadership succession in various approaches and techniques in leadership and management are reviewed. However, it is unlikely that a leader can use only one style because the successful leader should be able to adapt to the context. Finally, power and politics and their implications were discussed as well<sup>(27)</sup>.

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Alrobaish, "Food safety governance in Saudi Arabia"

<sup>(26)</sup> Rizwan, Ali, H. E. M. A. I. D. Alsulami, Atif Shahzad, Nabilah Elnahas, Shahad Almalki, Rahaf Alshehri, Malak Alamoudi, and Hind Alshoaibi. "Perception gap of Employability skills between Employers' and female Engineering graduates in Saudi Arabia." *International Journal of Engineering Education* 37, no. 2 (2021): 341-350.

<sup>(27)</sup> López-Cabarcos, M. Ángeles, Paula Vázquez-Rodríguez, and Lara M. Quiñoá-Piñeiro. "An approach to employees' job performance through work environmental variables and leadership behaviours." *Journal of Business Research* 140 (2022): 361-369.

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The reviewed studies indicate that power in the organization is essential to make decisions, but the leaders have the added complication of needing to determine what type of power to use with different followers and in different situations. However, as suggested in reviewed literature, the autocratic and democratic leadership styles may intertwine with the transformational style. Therefore, more investigation is needed to develop further understanding<sup>(28)</sup>.

### Key Findings and Gaps in the Literature

The literature is rich with theories and debates on the issue of leadership, whether in the world or in Saudi Arabia. However, none of the scholars recently proposed a unified definition of leadership. Also, literature did not provide a hint as to the question of how a manager can tell the difference between leaders and followers, or if they are able to do so. What scholars did was focus on exploring different angles of leadership, such as servant versus leader, how followers know who to follow, and the cultural effects on the definitions. It is great to get the journal articles on leadership and management, and most of the scholars proposed valuable ideas to the academic world<sup>(29)</sup>.

However, finding the correct and most relevant literature is quite challenging because so many articles have been written and it is not practical to read all of them. The research gaps here are: the literature did not point out the answer to how to differentiate leaders from non-leaders; existing studies on leadership mostly focus on comparing different types of leadership and how to achieve effective leadership, with not much hint to the side of the follower<sup>(30)</sup>.

<sup>(28)</sup> Giliç, Fahrettin, and Yusuf İnanđi. "The relationship between school administrators' leadership styles and organisational cynicism from teachers' perspectives." *South African Journal of Education* 41, no. 1 (2021): 1-12.

<sup>(29)</sup> Naushad. "Investigating determinants of entrepreneurial leadership".

<sup>(30)</sup> Hanaky, Khaled A. Leadership development in Saudi Arabia's private sector: *A mixed methods approach*. University of San Diego, " (PhD diss., University of San Diego, 2021),134.



But this is also important because in organizations, leaders need to adjust their strategy based on the needs of the standardized employees. About the literature in Saudi Arabia, it mainly focuses on the public sectors. As a result, limited articles discuss the private sectors, especially the dynamic food industry. The cultural effects on leadership are always inevitable in Saudi Arabia because it is quite special in the Middle East area<sup>(31)</sup>.

However, none of the literature has touched on these aspects. Also, no article provides practical guidance to managers, and thus they do not understand what should be focused on when seeking leadership in organizations. All these research gaps have posed an uncertainty in the literature as to whether the existing theories and propositions can be applied to the Saudi Arabian food industry.<sup>(32)</sup>

## Previous Studies

Due to the growing awareness of the significance of effective leadership in contemporary organizational context, it is unsurprising that it has attracted growing research attention in recent years. Several studies investigated the role that leadership plays, directly or indirectly, in achieving organizational success. One such study is that of Vele<sup>(33)</sup> investigated the relationship between effective leadership and of creativity in organizations. The sample of the study included (200) employees working at organizations located in Northwestern Romania. The study adopted a quantitative approach, and data was collected via questionnaire. Findings of the study include the following: effective leadership was found to positively influence creativity; elements of effective leadership that are associated with fostering

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<sup>(31)</sup> Sobaih, "Going green together: effects of green transformational".

<sup>(32)</sup> Alrobaish, "Food safety governance in Saudi Arabia"

<sup>(33)</sup> Vele, "Enhance creativity."

creativity include encouraging employees to view things from different perspectives and encouraging employees to work toward exceeding their own expectations.

Pranitasari<sup>(34)</sup> investigated the impact of effective leadership and organizational trust on organizational commitment and work motivation among teachers. The population of the study consisted of teachers working at a private secondary school located in Rawamangun, Pulo Gadung, East Jakarta, Indonesia; the final sample included (115) teachers. Findings of the study include the following: effective leadership and was found to have a positive impact on organizational commitment and work motivation; organizational trust was found to have a positive impact on organizational commitment.

Some studies investigated the impact of various leadership styles on organizational success. Jony et al.<sup>(35)</sup> highlighted the impact of three leadership styles (democratic, autocratic, and laissez faire) on organizational success. The population of the study consisted of employees working at popular restaurants located in Mymensingh, Bangladesh; the final sample included (60) employees. The study adopted a descriptive approach, and data was collected via questionnaire. Findings of the study include the following: democratic leadership was found to have a positive impact on organizational success, while the impact of autocratic leadership was found to be found negative, and laissez faire leadership had a neutral impact; and organizational performance in influenced by factors that include decision making, advice, consultation, involvement.

Another study that discussed a similar topic is that of Al Khajeh<sup>(36)</sup> explored the effect of leadership styles on organizational performance. The sample of the study

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<sup>(34)</sup> Pranitasari, "Influence of effective leadership."

<sup>(35)</sup> Jony, "Leadership styles."

<sup>(36)</sup> Al Khajeh, "Organizational performance."

included (20) employees representing twenty banks operating in UAE. The study adopted a descriptive approach, and data was collected via questionnaire. Findings of the study include the following: bureaucratic, charismatic, and transactional leadership styles were found to have a positive effect on organizational performance; and autocratic, transformational, and democratic leadership styles were found to have a negative effect on organizational performance.

The study of Liphadzi et al.<sup>(37)</sup> provided partly similar findings. The study examined the relationship between different styles of leadership and success of projects in the construction industry in South Africa. The population of the study consisted of construction and project managers working in the construction industry in South Africa; the final sample included (110) managers. The study adopted a descriptive approach, and data was collected through questionnaire and literature review. Findings of the study include the following: a positive relationship was found between transactional leadership and success of projects; and no relationship was found between laissez faire leadership and success of projects.

Some studies focused on the factors that influence the ability to achieve organizational success. The study of Ahmed and Abdullahi<sup>(38)</sup> investigated the relationship among operational efficiency, success of projects, and leadership, in general, with special focus on transformational leadership. The population of the study consisted of employees (from top, middle, and lower management levels) working at national and international organizations in the development sector in Pakistan; the final sample included (200) employees. The study adopted an analytical approach, and data was collected via questionnaire. Findings of the study include the following: positive relationships were found among operational efficiency, success

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<sup>(37)</sup> Liphadzi, Aigbavboa and Thwala, "Project success."

<sup>(38)</sup> Ahmed and Abdullahi "Development sector."

of projects, and leadership; and transformational leadership was found to have a positive effect on the success of projects.

Noteworthy is the dearth of studies that investigated the factors that influence organizational success in food companies. One study that explored this research area is that of Kamilah et al. <sup>(39)</sup>. This study examined the factors that influence the success of Food panda, which is a company specialized in online food delivery services. The population of the study consisted of employees and customers of Foodpanda in Malaysia; the final sample included (22) employees and (22) customers. The study adopted a descriptive approach, and data was collected via questionnaire. Findings of the study include the following: factors that influence the organizational success of Food panda include customer satisfaction, job satisfaction, and employee loyalty.

The preceding discussion provides an overview of relevant studies on the role of effective leadership in achieving organizational success. The main relevant topics discussed by studies are as follows:

1. The role of various leadership styles in the ability to achieve organizational success.
2. The impact of effective leadership on outcomes related to organizational success.

However, a dearth of studies is noticed with regards to investigating the direct relationship between effective leadership and organizational success. Moreover, studies have largely neglected the contexts of food companies. Therefore, it is important to shed more light on the role of effective leadership in achieving organizational success, with focus on the context of food companies.

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<sup>(39)</sup> Kamilah, "Case study of Food panda."

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## Research Methodology

The objective of this study is to investigate the Role of Effective Leadership in Achieving Organizational Success of Food Companies in Saudi Arabia. In order to obtain exhaustive insights into this dynamic relationship, the primary methodological framework consists of a quantitative approach complemented by a meticulously designed questionnaire. This introductory section explains the justification, structure, and implementation of the selected research approach, emphasizing its suitability for the aims of the study.

## Research Design

### Methods

The present study used Quantitative research methods. Quantitative research methods offer a structured and systematic approach to gather empirical data, enabling the rigorous examination of relationships between variables. Given the complexity of organizational dynamics and the multi-faceted nature of leadership within the food industry, a quantitative methodology provides a robust framework for capturing diverse perspectives and discerning patterns across a wide spectrum of organizational settings. By employing statistical analysis techniques, this approach facilitates the identification of significant correlations and trends, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

### Utilization of Questionnaire

A precisely developed questionnaire is at the heart of the quantitative technique. The questionnaire is a flexible tool for gathering data directly from participants, allowing for a systematic study of their opinions, attitudes, and experiences related to leadership effectiveness and organizational success. The questionnaire, which includes a complete set of items and organized response styles, assures data

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consistency, and allows for quantitative evaluation of essential factors. Furthermore, the questionnaire provides a cost-effective and efficient method of acquiring large-scale data from varied stakeholders across different organizational levels inside food companies.

### **Population of the Study**

This study's demographic comprises employees from several Saudi food sectors. These food companies represent a diverse range of enterprises participating in various phases of the food supply chain, such as production, processing, distribution, retail, and hospitality. The population spans various organizational structures, sizes, and operating methods, from global corporations to locally held businesses in industries such as agriculture, manufacturing, logistics, and food service.

Employees in this category have a variety of responsibilities and positions within their firms, including frontline personnel, supervisors, middle managers, and executives. They contribute to a variety of functional areas, including manufacturing, quality control, sales, marketing, procurement, logistics, customer support, and administration. The population is made up of people from various origins, talents, and experiences, representing Saudi Arabia's diversified talent and competence in the food business.

### **Sample Characteristic**

Describes the demographics of the Participants.

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Table 1: Demographic data of participants

Demographic variables		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	45	90%
	Female	5	10%
Educational level	Bachelor	38	76%
	Master	8	16%
	Doctorate	4	8%
Years of experiences	Less than 5 years	11	22%
	5- 10 years	20	40%
	10 – 15 years	10	20%
	More than 15 years	9	18%
Job level	Employee	29	58%
	Junior managerial level	12	24%
	Senior managerial level	9	18%

50 participants from various cities in Saudi Arabia were included in our study: 45 Males (90% of total participants) and 5 females (10% of the participants)

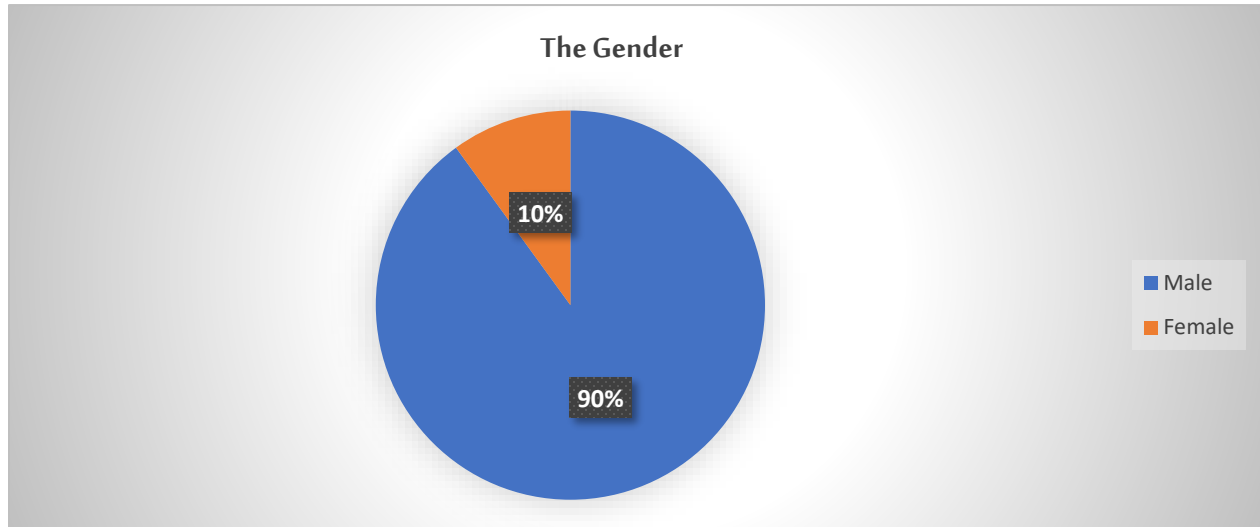


Fig (1) the gender

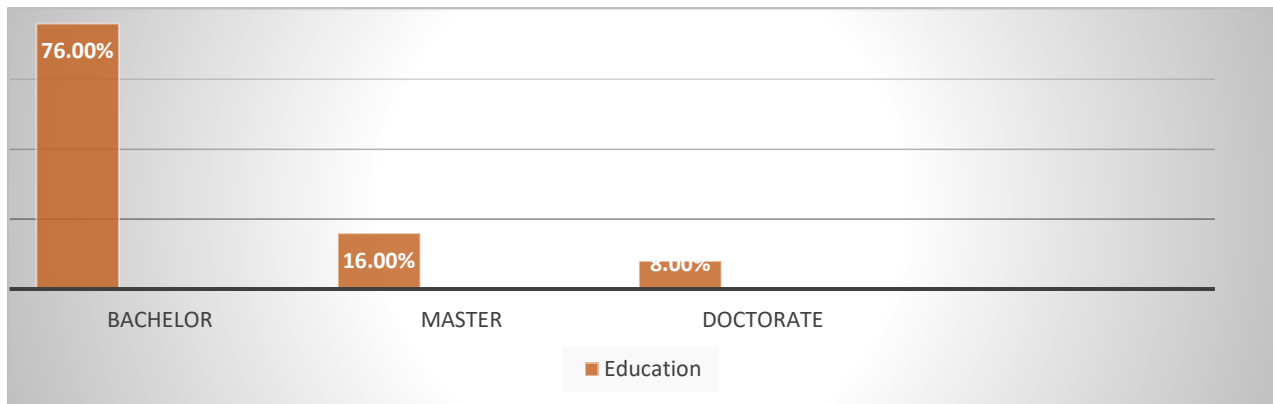


Fig (2) the educational level



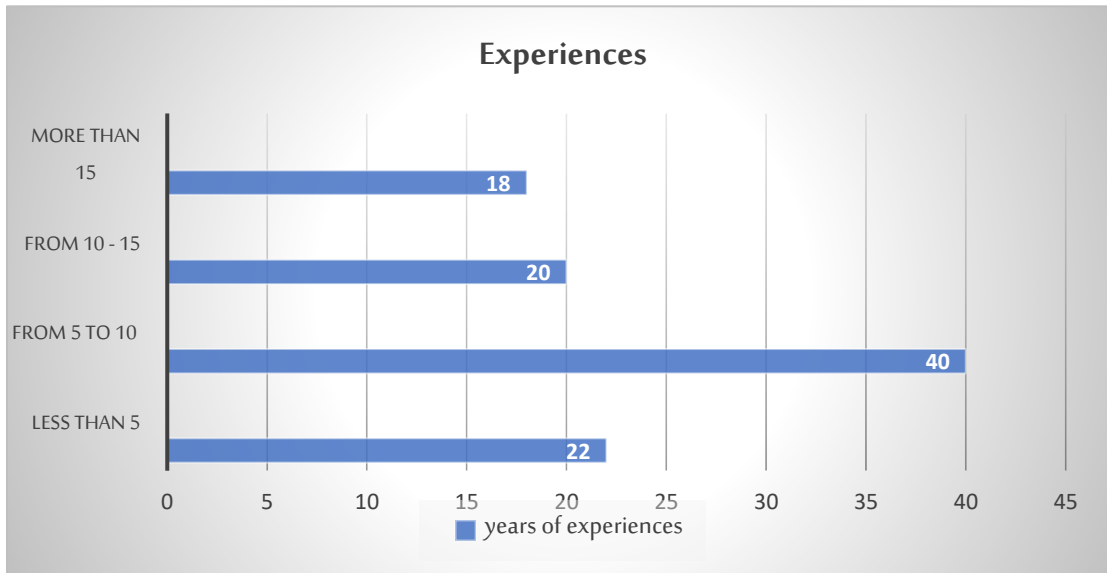


Fig (3) the Experiences

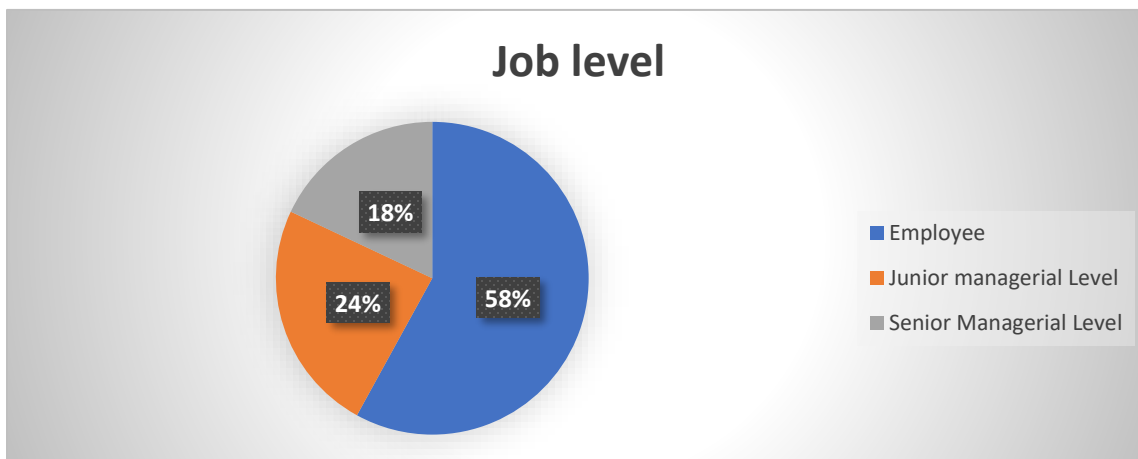


Fig (4) Job level

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## Sampling Size Determination

- ✓ The determination of sample size is a crucial step in research studies. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, it is important to calculate an appropriate sample size.
- ✓ The sample size is 50 participants (by using the random sampling formula). The sample will be employees, junior managers, and senior managers.

## Sampling Technique

The study approach utilizes random sampling as the sampling strategy. Random sampling is the process of selecting participants from a population in such a way that each member has an equal probability of being picked. This technique assures that the sample is representative of the larger population of interest, which improves the findings' generalizability to the broader context of Saudi food companies. The research uses random sampling to reduce sample biases and improve the validity of study results.

## Data collection Procedures

### Design and Development of Questionnaire

A 30-question questionnaire was created by the researcher to gather data. The questionnaire was designed to capture participants' perceptions and experiences. The questionnaire was available in the English language and was administered using Google Forms. The questionnaire utilized a Likert scale to measure participants' responses. The Likert scale consists of a series of statements related to different aspects, and participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a 3-point scale: "Agree," "Neutral," or "Disagree" see table (1). Care was taken to ensure that the questions were clear, relevant, and aligned with the

research objectives. The questionnaire underwent a pilot testing phase to assess its validity and reliability.

Table 2: Likert scale

Degree	disagree	Neutral	Agree
Respond	1	2	3

Table 3: Acceptance degree according to Likert scale

Acceptance degree	Range
Low	1- 1.66
Medium	1.67- 2.32
High	2.33 - 3

### Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire

For reliability, the researcher used “Pearson Correlation Coefficient” and the results were as follows: for the first variable “The effective leadership in achieving organizational success of food companies in Saudi Arabia.” Sentences 1 -11 serve as exemplary examples of the variable.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Coefficient for V1

The sentence	correlation coefficient	The sentence	correlation coefficient
1	0.295*	6	0.492**
2	0.676**	7	0.414**
3	0.490**	8	0.648**
4	0.547**	9	0.648**
5	0.772**	10	0.562**
		11	0.552**

Correlation is significant at (0.01\*\*) for all the sentence except 1 which its correlation is significant at (0.05\*). From the previous results the whole variable 1 in the questionnaire is significant.

For the second variable “The status quo of implementing effective leadership at food companies in Saudi Arabia” Sentences 12- 20 serve as exemplary examples of the variable.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation Coefficient for V2

The sentence	correlation coefficient	The sentence	correlation coefficient
		16	0.742**
12	0.732**	17	0.811**
13	0.548**	18	0.560**
14	0.611**	19	0.495**
15	0.598**	20	0.730**

Correlation is significant at (0.01\*\*) for all the sentences. From the previous results the whole variable 2 in the questionnaire is significant.

For the third variable “3. The levels of achieving organizational success of food companies in Saudi Arabia” Sentences 21- 30 serve as exemplary examples of the variable.

Table.6: Pearson Correlation Coefficient for V3

The sentence	correlation coefficient	The sentence	correlation coefficient
21	0.641**	26	0.226
22	0.383**	27	0.07
23	0.604**	28	0.360*
24	0.768**	29	0.381**
25	0.615**	30	0.514**

Correlation is significant at (0.01\*\*) for sentence 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, and 30. And the correlation is significant at (0.05\*) for sentence 28. and not significant for the sentences 26 and 27. From the previous results the whole variable 3 in the questionnaire is significant except 26 and 27.

For the whole questionnaire:

Table 7: Pearson Correlation Coefficient

The sentence	correlation coefficient	The sentence	correlation coefficient	The sentence	correlation coefficient
1	0.303*	11	0.529**	21	0.567**
2	0.504**	12	0.687**	22	0.336*
3	0.368**	13	0.500**	23	0.680**
4	0.507**	14	0.616**	24	0.685**
5	0.633**	15	0.582**	25	0.599**
6	0.598**	16	0.610**	26	0.333*
7	0.328*	17	0.695**	27	0.227
8	0.602**	18	0.446**	28	0.229*
9	0.670**	19	0.487**	29	0.224
10	0.459**	20	0.758**	30	0.435**

Correlation is significant at (0.01) for sentence 2,3,4,5,6,8,9,10, 11,12,13, 14,15,16,17, 18, 19,20,21,23,24,25 and 30. And the correlation is significant at (0.05) for sentences 1,7,22,26 and 28. And not significant for the sentences 27 and 29. From the previous results the whole questionnaire is significant except 26, 27 and 29.

The researcher uses the Cronbach's Alpha, and the result was as follows:

Table.8: Cronbach's Alpha factor

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
0.889	30

The Cronbach's Alpha factor for all sentences of the questionnaire is 0.889. This indicates high stability for all the sentences as well as the questionnaire in general.

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## Results

- Contribute to a high degree of acceptance among participants regarding the critical role of effective leadership in organizational success within the food industry in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- The positive impact of successful leadership strategies, such as fostering a collaborative environment, on organizational success within food companies in Saudi Arabia.
- The mixed perceptions among respondents highlight the complexity of assessing the relationship between leadership effectiveness and financial outcomes, reflecting the diverse perspectives and experiences within the surveyed population.
- High degree of acceptance among participants regarding the basic nature of effective leadership in facing challenges within the food industry in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- High degree of acceptance among respondents regarding the role of effective leadership in fostering a culture of accountability and responsibility within food companies in Saudi Arabia.
- There is a strong consensus among participants about the importance of effective leadership in achieving organizational success.
- There is a correlation between successful leadership strategies and styles, such as enhancing collaboration and accountability.
- There is a positive relationship between effective leadership and financial performance.
- There is a high degree of agreement regarding the impact of leadership on employee morale, productivity, and engagement.

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## The Discussion of the Results

In conclusion, the findings of the questionnaire provide valuable insights into the perceived effectiveness of leadership practices within food companies in Saudi Arabia. The strong consensus among respondents underscores the importance of effective leadership in driving organizational success and fostering a positive work culture. These insights contribute to the existing body of literature on leadership effectiveness and offer practical implications for organizational leadership development and strategic management in the food industry. However, future research could delve deeper into specific leadership behaviors and their impact on organizational outcomes, considering contextual factors unique to the Saudi Arabian business environment.

## Research Recommendations

- Conduct further research to explore specific leadership behaviors and styles that contribute most significantly to organizational success within the Saudi Arabian food industry.
- Undertake longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of effective leadership on organizational performance and sustainability in the Saudi Arabian food industry.
- Investigate the effectiveness of leadership training and development programs tailored specifically for the Saudi Arabian food industry.
- Further explore the role of ethical leadership in promoting trust, credibility, and organizational success within the Saudi Arabian food industry.
- Examine the implementation and impact of sustainability initiatives within food companies in Saudi Arabia, with a focus on leadership involvement and stakeholder engagement.



- Facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration among food companies in Saudi Arabia by disseminating best practices related to leadership effectiveness and organizational success.
- Investigate the policy implications of effective leadership practices for the Saudi Arabian food industry, with a focus on regulatory frameworks and government incentives.
- Conduct studies focusing on the perspectives of employees within food companies to gain deeper insights into their experiences with leadership practices and organizational culture.
- Explore the relationship between leadership practices and organizational outcomes across different sectors within the Saudi Arabian economy.

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