

**ETHICAL ACCOUNTING PRACTICES AND THE PRODUCTIVITY OF
MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN NIGERIA**

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**BEING A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING,
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN
CITY, EDO STATE, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) DEGREE IN
ACCOUNTING**

OCTOBER, 2025

DECLARATION

I, Okonkwo Joel Chukwudi, do hereby declare that this project is undertaken by me in the Department of Accounting, Faculty of Management Science, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State under the supervision of Dr (ms). Emoarehi Eriki. The work embodied in this project has not previously been submitted in candidature for any other degree and is not concurrently being submitted for any other degree. All reference made to work of other persons have been duly acknowledged.

Any litigation or liability arising from this work is wholly borne by me and not the supervisor for this work.

Okonkwo Joel Chuwudi

Date

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research project was carried out by **Okonkwo Joel Chukwudi** with matriculation number: **MGS2104626** of the Department of Accounting, Faculty of the Management Science, University of Benin, Benin City Edo State, in partial fulfilment of part of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) degree in Accounting. To the best of my knowledge, this work is adequate in scope and quality and it has not been done by other researchers

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Head of Department

Date

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty in heaven for his kind protection, love, Grace and mercy during my study in University of Benin. This research work is also dedicated to my lovely parents: Mr and Mrs Okonkwo for their great support and abundant care.

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ABSTRACT

Study investigates the relationship between ethical accounting practices and the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. In an era where transparency, accountability, and corporate governance are becoming increasingly important, ethical accounting has emerged as a crucial determinant of firm performance. The research explores how adherence to ethical standards in financial reporting, cost management, and internal control systems affects the operational efficiency and overall productivity of manufacturing firms. The study adopted the use of a structured questionnaire from selected manufacturing companies across Lagos, Ogun, and Edo states, the application of descriptive and inferential statistical methods was applied including regression analysis, to examine the impact of ethical accounting variables on productivity metrics such as output growth, cost efficiency, and return on assets. The findings revealed that firms that consistently implement ethical accounting practices demonstrate significantly higher levels of productivity compared to those that do not. The study concludes that ethical accounting is not only vital for regulatory compliance and investor confidence but also enhances operational performance. It recommends continuous training, enforcement of ethical guidelines by regulatory bodies, and the integration of ethical accounting frameworks into corporate strategy to foster long-term growth in the manufacturing sector.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Ethical accounting practices have evolved over centuries, shaped by the growing complexity of commerce, financial reporting, and the need for trust in economic relationships. The roots of accounting ethics can be traced back to ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia, where temple accountants recorded grain and livestock trades. However, formal ethical guidelines in accounting began to take shape during the Industrial Revolution when corporations began to separate ownership from management, necessitating the need for transparent financial reports and oversight. The professionalization of accounting in the late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the emergence of accounting bodies like the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) in 1880, which established formal codes of conduct for accountants. In the U.S., the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) introduced its first ethics code in 1905. These early frameworks emphasized integrity, independence, and public interest.

By the late 20th century, globalization and the rise of multinational corporations prompted the development of international ethical standards. The International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), founded in 1977, played a key role in harmonizing ethical practices globally through the issuance of the Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (now maintained by the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants - IESBA). The code is built on fundamental principles such as integrity, objectivity, professional competence, confidentiality, and professional behavior (IESBA, 2020). Scandals such as Enron (2001), WorldCom (2002), and

Lehman Brothers (2008) intensified the global focus on ethics in accounting, showing how unethical financial reporting could destroy entire corporations, mislead investors, and destabilize economies. These cases catalyzed reforms such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (2002) in the U.S. and accelerated ethical oversight globally. In Nigeria, ethical accounting practices gained prominence with the development of professional bodies like the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) in 1965 and the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) in 1979. These bodies incorporated ethics into their professional training and examinations, following IFAC guidelines. The Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN), established in 2011, was tasked with overseeing corporate financial disclosures and ethical standards.

Despite these frameworks, the Nigerian business landscape continues to experience a high rate of financial misconduct, including falsification of financial statements, asset misappropriation, and manipulation of earnings. Scholars such as Ezeani and Oladele (2012) and Adeyemi and Fagbemi (2011) have noted that ethical failures in accounting have led to audit failures, investor distrust, and in some cases, the collapse of firms. A notable example is the Cadbury Nigeria Plc scandal (2006), where top executives manipulated financial results to mislead investors. The incident exposed the weakness of internal controls and the failure of accounting professionals to uphold ethical standards. The manufacturing sector is critical to Nigeria's economic transformation, with potential to drive industrialization, reduce unemployment, and improve the balance of trade. However, its performance has been consistently below expectations due to challenges such as high production costs, power supply instability, foreign exchange constraints, and poor governance. One often-overlooked contributor to the sector's underperformance is weak financial accountability. Ethical lapses in accounting, such as cost inflation, inventory mismanagement, and falsification of records, have led to poor strategic decisions, inefficiencies, and financial losses. Ogundana et al. (2017) argue that ethical accounting is essential for productivity, especially in cost-sensitive industries like manufacturing. Their study on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) showed that ethical behavior in financial reporting positively influences firm survival and profitability. Similarly, Olowookere and Inneh (2016) highlight the link between ethics and internal

control efficiency, which is vital for operational productivity. Yet, these studies often focus on SMEs or general corporate behavior, rather than the manufacturing sector as a unique economic driver with complex cost structures and capital needs.

Although existing literature acknowledges the role of accounting ethics in corporate governance and financial reporting quality, few studies have directly examined how ethical accounting practices influence productivity in Nigeria's manufacturing sector. Most research has focused on ethical awareness and compliance (e.g., Okafor & Ezejiofor, 2013), emphasized audit quality or public sector accountability (e.g., Ewa & Udoayang, 2012), used perception-based or qualitative data, limiting generalizability. These studies fail to explore how ethical practices in budgeting, cost control, revenue recognition, and asset valuation affect real productivity metrics like output per unit, efficiency ratios, or operational profitability. This study, therefore, fills a critical research gap by providing an in-depth, empirical analysis of how adherence to ethical accounting practices can improve the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. It aims to link ethics directly to operational and financial outcomes, rather than treating it as a compliance issue alone. Additionally, this study integrates agency theory which highlights the importance of aligning the interests of managers (agents) with those of shareholders (principals) and stakeholder theory, which emphasizes accountability to all parties affected by corporate decisions, including employees, creditors, and society at

large. By adopting a mixed-method approach and drawing on data from multiple firms across different regions, this study will provide robust insights into the practical role of ethics in driving productivity. It will also offer recommendations for regulators, corporate boards, accountants, and policymakers on how to strengthen ethical culture as a tool for economic development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The accounting profession faces significant ethical challenges that can compromise the quality and reliability of financial reporting. Despite the existence of well-established ethical guidelines and frameworks, unethical practices such as misreporting, manipulation of financial data, and conflicts of interest continue to persist within the industry (Hassan & Mollah, 2020). These breaches in ethical conduct often result in misleading financial statements, which can undermine stakeholder trust and tarnish the reputation of organizations. The persistence of unethical practices highlights the need for robust ethical standards that safeguard the integrity and transparency of financial reports.

Several studies have underscored the damaging impact of unethical behavior on financial reporting. For example, Healy and Palepu (2003) explored the infamous Enron scandal, where the manipulation and misrepresentation of financial data led to the company's collapse, resulting in severe consequences for employees, investors, and the broader economy. Similarly, Watts and Zimmerman (1986) examined the relationship between

accounting choices and earnings management, showing how unethical accounting practices can distort financial reports and mislead stakeholders. In another study, Lobo and Zhou (2001) highlighted the role of corporate governance in reducing earnings manipulation, emphasizing that a lack of adherence to ethical principles can lead to financial misstatements that misguide stakeholders.

However, while these studies have explored the relationship between unethical behavior and financial reporting quality, there remains a gap in understanding how specific ethical principles such as Integrity (INTEG), Professional Behavior (PROB), Objectivity (OBJECT), Confidentiality (CONFID), and Professional Competence (PROFCON) directly contribute to the prevention of unethical financial reporting practices. Existing literature predominantly focuses on the consequences of unethical reporting without sufficiently investigating how the proactive application of these ethical principles can enhance the overall quality of financial reporting. Additionally, the majority of research has been limited to case studies in Western economies, leaving a gap in understanding how these principles operate in different cultural and regulatory environments.

This research aims to fill this gap by examining how adherence to these core ethical principles can prevent unethical financial practices and improve the quality of financial reporting. By focusing on the relationship between ethics and financial reporting quality,

this study seeks to provide insights into how ethical standards can be more effectively implemented and enforced within the accounting profession. This research will not only contribute to the theoretical understanding of accounting ethics but also offer practical recommendations for accountants, organizations, and regulators to enhance financial reporting transparency and reliability.

1.3 Research Questions

This study will address the following research questions

1. What is the extent of professional competence on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between integrity and the productivity of Nigerian manufacturing firms?
3. what is the effects of confidentiality on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria?
4. How effective is objectivity in ensuring ethical compliance on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria?

1.4 Research Objectives

This study aims to explore how the ethical principles of Integrity Professional Behavior, Objectivity, Confidentiality and Professional Competence influence the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To assess the level of professional competence among manufacturing firms in Nigeria.
2. To examine integrity on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.
3. To identify confidentiality on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.
4. To evaluate the role of objectivity in promoting the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

To test the relationship between accounting ethics and the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria, the following null hypotheses (H_0) are proposed:

1. H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between integrity on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.
2. H_{02} : Integrity does not significantly affect the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

3. H₀₃ Confidentiality does not significantly affect the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

4. H₀₄: The role of objectivity does not affect the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the relationship between accounting ethics and the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Specifically, the research investigates the influence of key ethical principles—Integrity (INTEG), Professional Behavior (PROB), Objectivity (OBJECT), Confidentiality (CONFID), and Professional Competence (PROFCON)—on the quality of financial reports. The scope is confined to the examination of how adherence to these principles prevents unethical financial practices such as misreporting, manipulation of financial data, and conflicts of interest.

The study is scoped to cover accounting professionals within various organizations, including both public and private sector entities. However, the research will primarily focus on the accounting profession within Nigeria, examining the regulatory environment and the practices of accountants working in the country. The study aims to provide insights into the role of ethical principles in enhancing the transparency, reliability, and accuracy of financial reports, which are critical for informed decision-making by stakeholders such as investors, regulators, and management.

The research does not extend to other professions or industries, and while it draws on case studies from global incidents of financial misreporting, it will concentrate on the specific context of accounting ethics within Nigeria. Furthermore, the study will examine the relationship between ethical behavior and the quality of financial reporting in terms of both the preventive measures against unethical practices and the overall enhancement of financial report integrity.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it contributes to the existing body of knowledge on accounting ethics and the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The findings of this research will offer valuable insights into the role of ethical principles in improving the accuracy, reliability, and transparency of financial statements. By examining the relationship between ethical standards and financial reporting quality, this study will inform policy recommendations for enhancing ethical practices in the accounting profession. Moreover, it will assist accounting professionals, regulatory bodies, and organizations in fostering ethical behavior to ensure high-quality financial reporting.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature on ethical accounting practices and their influence on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The review is structured to provide conceptual, theoretical, and empirical insights that form the foundation for the study. It begins with an examination of the concept of ethical accounting practices, highlighting principles such as transparency, integrity, accountability, and compliance with professional standards. It further explores the concept of productivity within the context of manufacturing firms, emphasizing its determinants and measurement. This chapter also presents theoretical frameworks that link ethical practices with organizational performance, followed by a review of empirical studies conducted both locally and internationally. Finally, the chapter identifies gaps in the existing literature that this study seeks to address.

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Ethical Accounting Practices

Ethical accounting practices refer to the consistent application of professional values, integrity, fairness, transparency, and accountability in the preparation, presentation, and auditing of financial information. These practices aim to ensure that financial statements truthfully represent the financial position and performance of firms while providing stakeholders with reliable information for decision-making (Hassan & Mollah, 2020). Ethical conduct in accounting is critical, as financial reporting serves as the primary basis for strategic, managerial, and investment decisions. When ethical practices are upheld, trust is built between organizations and stakeholders, which in turn enhances organizational reputation and long-term sustainability (Okafor & Ijeoma, 2021).

The foundation of ethical accounting rests on principles such as integrity, objectivity, professional competence, confidentiality, and professional behavior as outlined by the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA, 2021). Integrity ensures that financial reports are prepared with honesty and free from manipulation, while objectivity safeguards accountants against personal bias or undue influence. Professional competence and due care demand continuous learning and diligence in financial reporting, whereas confidentiality protects sensitive organizational data. Professional behavior

requires adherence to relevant laws, standards, and norms, ensuring that the accounting profession is not discredited (Adegbie & Fakile, 2021).

In practice, ethical accounting extends beyond mere compliance with professional codes; it reflects a commitment to fairness in corporate governance and accountability to stakeholders. Firms that embed ethical accounting into their operations are better positioned to maintain credibility with investors, creditors, employees, and regulatory bodies (Ogbonna & Ebimobowei, 2022). In contrast, unethical accounting practices such as misrepresentation of assets, earnings manipulation, and creative accounting often lead to corporate scandals, loss of investor confidence, and in severe cases, firm collapse (Oboh & Ajibolade, 2020).

In the Nigerian context, ethical accounting practices are reinforced by regulatory and professional institutions such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN), and the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN). These bodies emphasize adherence to global ethical standards, including International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), and impose sanctions for ethical breaches (ICAN, 2022; FRCN, 2021). However, despite these frameworks, cases of financial impropriety remain prevalent in the Nigerian corporate landscape, with issues such as poor audit quality, weak internal control systems, and

managerial pressure to manipulate earnings undermining ethical compliance (Okafor & Ijeoma, 2021; Oboh & Ajibolade, 2020).

Scholars further argue that ethical accounting practices have a direct link to organizational performance and productivity. By fostering transparency and accountability, firms are able to allocate resources more efficiently, attract foreign investment, and sustain competitive advantage (Aliyu & Bello, 2022). In the manufacturing sector, where capital intensity and cost management are crucial, adherence to ethical accounting ensures that decisions on pricing, production, and investment are grounded in accurate and reliable financial data, thereby improving both short-term efficiency and long-term sustainability (Ogbonna & Ebimobowei, 2022). In summary, ethical accounting practices serve not only as a moral and professional obligation but also as a strategic tool for enhancing trust, improving productivity, and securing organizational sustainability in the competitive business environment of Nigeria.

The International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants (IESBA, 2021) outlines five fundamental principles that form the bedrock of accounting ethics globally:

Integrity

Integrity is the cornerstone of ethical accounting, requiring accountants to be straightforward, honest, and truthful in professional and business relationships. It

demands that financial statements present an accurate picture of an organization's financial performance without manipulation or misrepresentation (IESBA, 2021). In practice, this means avoiding fraudulent reporting, falsification of records, or any deliberate action that misleads stakeholders. Integrity builds trust between firms and their stakeholders, ensuring that decision-making is based on accurate data. In Nigeria, where corporate scandals and misreporting have eroded public confidence in financial disclosures, upholding integrity is vital to rebuilding credibility in both the accounting profession and the manufacturing sector (Adegbie & Fakile, 2021).

Objectivity

Objectivity emphasizes impartiality and freedom from bias, conflict of interest, or undue influence in the discharge of accounting duties (IESBA, 2021). Accountants are expected to exercise sound judgment and avoid situations where personal or corporate interests interfere with professional responsibilities. A lack of objectivity often results in distorted financial reporting, which undermines investor confidence and may expose firms to regulatory penalties. In the Nigerian context, instances of undue influence by management on auditors or accountants remain a major challenge, as pressure to report favorable results often compromises objectivity (Oboh & Ajibolade, 2020). Strengthening independence and professional skepticism is therefore crucial in maintaining the credibility of financial reporting.

Professional Competence and Due Care

Professional competence and due care require accountants to maintain up-to-date knowledge, skills, and technical expertise in order to provide high-quality financial reporting and decision-making support (IESBA, 2021). It emphasizes continuous professional development and diligence in applying accounting standards. Without competence, financial statements may be misleading, inaccurate, or non-compliant with regulations, thereby affecting organizational productivity and stakeholder trust. Professional bodies in Nigeria, such as ICAN and ANAN, mandate periodic training and continuing professional education to ensure that accountants remain competent (ICAN, 2022). However, lapses still occur, often due to insufficient training, lack of adherence to global standards, or negligence in applying due care (Ogbonna & Ebimobowei, 2022).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality requires accountants to respect and safeguard sensitive financial information acquired in the course of their work, ensuring it is not disclosed to unauthorized parties or misused for personal gain (IESBA, 2021). Breaches of confidentiality not only damage the reputation of the accountant but also expose firms to legal risks, competitive disadvantages, and loss of stakeholder trust. In Nigeria, cases of

insider trading, data leaks, and unauthorized disclosure of corporate financial information highlight the importance of this principle (Okafor & Ijeoma, 2021). Upholding confidentiality strengthens the security of financial systems and reinforces stakeholder confidence in the accounting profession.

Professional Behavior

Professional behavior requires accountants to comply with laws, regulations, and professional standards while avoiding actions that could discredit the profession (IESBA, 2021). This principle extends beyond technical compliance to encompass ethical conduct in all professional activities. It requires accountants to act responsibly, avoid fraudulent practices, and maintain the dignity of the profession. In Nigeria, weak enforcement mechanisms and instances of professional misconduct such as collusion in tax evasion, falsification of accounts, and non-compliance with IFRS pose significant challenges to ethical behavior (Aliyu & Bello, 2022). Promoting a culture of professional discipline, coupled with effective enforcement by regulatory bodies like the FRCN, is essential for sustaining trust in the financial system.

2.2.2 Productivity in Manufacturing Firms

Productivity in manufacturing refers to the efficiency with which firms transform various inputs—such as labor, capital, raw materials, energy, and technology—into finished goods that create value for consumers and stakeholders. It is a critical determinant of industrial

growth, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability (Ojo & Bello, 2020). Productivity can be measured through different indicators, including output per unit of input, labor productivity, total factor productivity, profitability, efficiency ratios, and capacity utilization. High productivity reflects optimal resource allocation, cost efficiency, and competitiveness in both domestic and international markets (Adenikinju & Olayiwola, 2021).

In the Nigerian context, the manufacturing sector plays a central role in economic transformation, contributing to employment generation, technological advancement, and industrial diversification. Despite its potential, the sector continues to operate below capacity. Estimates suggest that capacity utilization in Nigerian manufacturing firms has fluctuated between 45% and 60% over the past decade, reflecting inefficiencies and underutilization of resources (Manufacturers Association of Nigeria [MAN], 2022).

Several systemic challenges hinder productivity in Nigeria's manufacturing industry. High production costs, weak infrastructure, poor access to finance, unstable power supply, and persistent foreign exchange fluctuations have constrained growth and efficiency (Ogunyomi & Oyesola, 2020). Additionally, the prevalence of corruption and bureaucratic bottlenecks further erodes investor confidence and increases the cost of doing business.

Ethical lapses in financial management exacerbate these challenges. Cases of cost inflation, misappropriation of funds, misrepresentation of financial statements, and inventory mismanagement undermine operational efficiency and profitability (Okoye & Alao, 2019). For example, falsified financial reports may distort managerial decision-making, leading to inefficient resource allocation and long-term productivity decline. According to Eneh and Eneh (2022), unethical accounting practices contribute significantly to firm failures in Nigeria, as they weaken transparency, disrupt internal controls, and reduce the availability of reliable data for performance evaluation.

Therefore, improving productivity in Nigerian manufacturing firms is not solely a matter of addressing infrastructure and macroeconomic challenges but also requires strengthening ethical financial management. When accountants and managers uphold integrity, transparency, and accountability, firms are better positioned to achieve accurate cost management, effective budgeting, and reliable performance evaluation, all of which directly enhance productivity and competitiveness.

2.2.3 Ethical Accounting and Productivity Link

The relationship between ethical accounting and productivity is increasingly recognized as fundamental to the growth and sustainability of organizations. Ethical accounting provides a framework for transparency, accountability, and accuracy in financial reporting, all of which are essential for improving organizational efficiency and long-

term competitiveness (Hassan & Mollah, 2020). By ensuring that costs, revenues, and financial positions are accurately represented, managers and stakeholders are better equipped to make informed decisions that enhance resource allocation and strategic planning.

Misrepresentation of financial information, on the other hand, undermines productivity by creating distortions in cost measurement, budgeting, and investment decisions. When expenses are understated or revenues inflated, firms risk engaging in unsustainable strategies that eventually weaken operational performance (Okafor & Ijeoma, 2021). In the Nigerian manufacturing sector, where firms often operate with slim profit margins and high production costs, the consequences of unethical accounting can be particularly severe. For example, inflated cost structures or manipulated inventory valuations may result in poor pricing strategies, inefficiencies, and loss of competitiveness in both domestic and international markets (Eneh & Eneh, 2022).

Empirical studies provide evidence that ethical practices directly contribute to organizational productivity. Ogundana et al. (2017) found that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that adhered to ethical financial reporting experienced higher profitability, operational efficiency, and survival rates compared to firms with weak ethical standards. Similarly, Olowookere and Inneh (2016) reported that firms with strong ethical controls and transparent accounting practices recorded better internal control

efficiency, which translated into improved productivity and financial stability. These findings reinforce the argument that ethics is not only a matter of compliance but also a strategic driver of performance.

In the context of manufacturing, ethical accounting practices play a unique role in cost allocation, inventory valuation, and revenue recognition. Proper cost allocation enables accurate determination of production costs, which informs pricing strategies and resource utilization. Ethical inventory valuation ensures that financial statements reflect true asset values, thereby enhancing working capital management and operational efficiency. Similarly, ethical revenue recognition provides reliable data for assessing profitability and growth potential, reducing the risks associated with financial misstatements (Adenikinju & Olayiwola, 2021).

Ultimately, the integration of ethical accounting practices strengthens decision-making processes, improves investor confidence, and fosters an environment of trust that supports long-term productivity. In Nigeria, where weak corporate governance and frequent financial scandals continue to challenge the manufacturing sector, promoting ethical financial practices is essential for driving industrial transformation and achieving sustainable economic development.

2.3 Theoretical Review

This study draws upon several theories that explain the role of ethics in organizational performance, particularly in the context of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. These theories provide a framework for understanding how ethical accounting practices influence decision-making, transparency, and overall productivity.

2.3.1 Agency Theory

Agency Theory, developed by Jensen and Meckling (1976), emphasizes the inherent conflict of interest between principals (shareholders) and agents (managers). Shareholders expect managers to act in their best interest by maximizing returns, but managers may pursue personal benefits such as inflated earnings, diversion of funds, or manipulation of financial statements. These practices create agency costs and reduce organizational efficiency.

Ethical accounting mitigates agency problems by promoting transparency, accountability, and accurate financial reporting. For manufacturing firms in Nigeria, where weak corporate governance and high incidences of financial mismanagement are common, applying ethical accounting standards helps reduce information asymmetry, build investor confidence, and ensure that resources are allocated efficiently (Egbi, Adegbite, & Ogunleye, 2019). Thus, agency theory underscores the importance of ethical financial reporting as a mechanism to align managerial actions with shareholder interests, thereby enhancing productivity.

2.3.2 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder Theory, advanced by Freeman (1984), argues that organizations have responsibilities not only to shareholders but also to a wide range of stakeholders, including employees, customers, creditors, regulators, and the broader society. Manufacturing firms depend on multiple stakeholders for survival, and unethical financial practices can damage these relationships, leading to reputational loss and declining performance.

Ethical accounting ensures that financial information is fair, reliable, and accessible to all stakeholders. For instance, employees benefit from transparent payroll accounting, creditors rely on accurate financial statements to assess solvency, and regulators depend on compliance for policy enforcement. In the Nigerian manufacturing sector, ethical accounting builds stakeholder trust, promotes industrial harmony, and enhances long-term productivity (Okoye & Alao, 2019). Therefore, stakeholder theory highlights the broad role of ethics in sustaining organizational legitimacy and competitiveness.

2.3.3 Legitimacy Theory

Legitimacy Theory posits that organizations must operate within the norms, values, and expectations of society to maintain their social license to operate (Suchman, 1995). In contexts where financial scandals and corruption are widespread, as in Nigeria, firms that

engage in unethical accounting risk losing credibility, market share, and even operational licenses.

Ethical accounting helps manufacturing firms secure legitimacy by ensuring compliance with accounting standards, laws, and societal expectations. Transparent reporting fosters public trust, strengthens corporate reputation, and positions firms as responsible contributors to national economic development (Owolabi & Makinde, 2020). Consequently, legitimacy theory emphasizes that ethical financial practices are not just compliance tools but strategies for sustaining public approval and long-term productivity.

2.3.4 Stewardship Theory

Stewardship Theory, articulated by Donaldson and Davis (1991), takes a more optimistic view of management compared to agency theory. It assumes that managers, when entrusted with resources, act as stewards whose interests are aligned with those of the organization and its stakeholders. This theory suggests that managers are motivated not by self-interest but by the desire to achieve organizational goals and long-term value creation.

Ethical accounting supports stewardship by fostering responsibility, accountability, and professional integrity in financial reporting. For Nigerian manufacturing firms, stewardship is reflected in managers who prioritize sustainable growth over short-term personal gains. By adopting ethical accounting practices such as proper cost allocation,

accurate inventory valuation, and transparent revenue recognition, managers strengthen organizational capacity, improve productivity, and build trust among stakeholders (Adenikinju & Olayiwola, 2021).

2.4 Empirical Review

The empirical review presents findings from prior studies that examined the relationship between ethical accounting practices and the productivity of firms, with particular emphasis on manufacturing firms in Nigeria and other emerging economies. Each principle of ethical accounting is linked with firm productivity as the dependent variable.

Ogundana, Ojeka, and Ojua (2017) examined the role of integrity in the financial reporting practices of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria between 2010 and 2015. Using survey research design with 150 SMEs, they employed regression analysis to test the relationship between integrity and firm performance. Their findings revealed that SMEs adhering to ethical integrity in financial disclosures reported higher profitability and survival rates. They suggested that regulators should strengthen ethical compliance monitoring to enhance trust in financial reporting.

Akintoye and Salawu (2020) conducted a study on Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2012 and 2017, focusing on the influence of integrity-driven reporting. Employing panel data regression on 25 quoted firms, their study showed that integrity in financial reporting reduced fraudulent activities, improved accountability, and enhanced

long-term productivity. They recommended that management should promote ethical culture in reporting to build resilience against financial misconduct.

Onyali and Okafor (2021) studied the consequences of weak integrity in financial reporting among 30 Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2014 and 2019. Using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, they discovered that low levels of integrity led to resource misallocation, reputational damage, and decreased competitiveness. Their recommendation emphasized that firms should embed ethical integrity into internal control systems to improve productivity.

Chukwuma and Adeyemi (2019) investigated the relationship between accounting integrity and productivity in Nigerian textile firms during 2011–2016. With a sample of 20 firms and correlation analysis, they found that integrity in cost reporting reduced waste and improved operational efficiency. They suggested continuous training of accountants on integrity-focused financial management.

Adams and Zongo (2020) carried out a study across Ghanaian manufacturing firms between 2013 and 2018 using 18 firms as a sample and applying structural equation modeling. Their results indicated that integrity in reporting enhanced access to credit facilities and investor confidence, thereby improving firm productivity. They advised policymakers to enforce strict sanctions against firms engaging in unethical accounting.

Eze and Nwankwo (2022) focused on integrity in Nigerian cement manufacturing firms between 2016 and 2021. Employing regression analysis with data from 10 firms, they established that integrity in revenue recognition and cost allocation significantly boosted profitability and long-term survival. Their suggestion highlighted the need for auditors to prioritize integrity as part of compliance checks.

Nwoye and Osho (2018) studied objectivity in financial reporting and its effect on the productivity of 20 Nigerian manufacturing firms from 2012 to 2016. Using multiple regression analysis, they discovered that objectivity significantly improved accuracy in cost allocation and budgeting, which enhanced overall firm productivity. They suggested that objectivity should be embedded into decision-making processes through transparent reporting frameworks.

Hassan and Mollah (2020) conducted a cross-country study on objectivity in financial reporting across 40 manufacturing firms in Nigeria and Ghana between 2014 and 2018. Using panel regression methodology, they found that firms with unbiased reporting attracted more foreign investment, which directly boosted productivity. Their recommendation was that corporate governance codes should place more emphasis on financial objectivity to sustain competitiveness.

Egbide et al. (2019) investigated biased reporting practices in 15 Nigerian firms between 2010 and 2015 using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Their findings

revealed that lack of objectivity in reporting discouraged investors and reduced firm performance. They suggested stricter enforcement of reporting standards to limit conflicts of interest.

Abubakar and Musa (2021) examined the role of objectivity in enhancing productivity in Nigerian food and beverage firms during 2013–2019. With a sample of 12 firms, and applying correlation analysis, they found that impartiality in accounting enhanced decision-making efficiency and resource management. They recommended regular ethical training for accounting professionals to maintain objectivity.

Karim and Adepoju (2020) analyzed the impact of objectivity in financial practices on productivity in West African manufacturing firms between 2012 and 2017. They used survey design with responses from 200 finance managers and regression techniques. The study revealed that firms with objective reporting were more competitive internationally. They suggested adoption of international financial reporting standards (IFRS) to promote consistency and objectivity.

Oladipo and Ibrahim (2022) assessed objectivity in cost reporting among Nigerian cement manufacturing firms between 2016 and 2021. Using regression analysis on data from 8 listed firms, they observed that objectivity improved resource allocation efficiency and long-term growth. They advised that internal auditors should serve as watchdogs to maintain unbiased reporting.

Okafor and Ijeoma (2021) examined the relationship between professional competence and productivity in Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2015 and 2020. Using survey data collected from 120 accountants across 15 firms and employing regression analysis, they found that firms with professionally trained accountants demonstrated improved decision-making outcomes, enhanced compliance with financial regulations, and better operational performance. They suggested that firms should continuously invest in staff training and certification programs to sustain competence and productivity.

Adenikinju and Olayiwola (2021) studied professional competence in 18 quoted Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2014 and 2019. Applying panel data regression, they discovered that professional competence reduced incidences of financial misstatements, minimized waste, and improved resource utilization efficiency. Their recommendation emphasized mandatory training on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) for accountants to align reporting practices with global standards.

Owolabi and Makinde (2020) investigated professional competence in 10 manufacturing firms in Lagos State between 2013 and 2018 using correlation analysis. Their findings showed that firms with low professional competence often faced frequent audit queries, regulatory sanctions, and declining productivity. They advised that firms should develop a strong culture of professional due care by recruiting certified professionals and encouraging continuing professional education.

Aliyu and Danjuma (2019) analyzed professional competence and productivity among 200 finance staff across 20 Nigerian manufacturing companies between 2012 and 2017 using survey design and regression modeling. The results indicated that professional competence directly enhanced strategic planning, improved financial transparency, and boosted productivity. They recommended continuous professional development (CPD) workshops for accountants and finance managers.

Mensah and Boateng (2020) conducted a study on Ghanaian manufacturing firms between 2011 and 2016, covering 16 firms with panel regression methodology. Their findings showed that professional competence ensured compliance with dynamic regulatory frameworks, improved reporting quality, and sustained organizational competitiveness. They suggested that professional bodies should enforce minimum annual training requirements for members to maintain competence.

Ojo and Adebayo (2022) investigated professional competence in Nigerian beverage manufacturing firms between 2016 and 2021 using data from 12 firms through descriptive and inferential statistics. Their findings revealed that professional competence in cost reporting and financial analysis significantly improved productivity and profitability. They recommended the institutionalization of ethics and competence as part of internal performance appraisal systems.

Uwuigbe et al. (2019) studied the role of confidentiality in Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2012 and 2017, focusing on 15 quoted firms and employing regression analysis. Their findings showed that firms with strong confidentiality practices in financial management retained investor trust, minimized information leakages, and sustained better productivity. They recommended that confidentiality policies should be integrated into corporate governance codes.

Adeyemi and Fagbemi (2020) examined confidentiality breaches among 12 manufacturing firms in Nigeria during 2014–2019. Using survey and regression approaches, they found that unauthorized disclosure of financial data contributed to insider trading, financial losses, and weakened organizational performance. They advised that firms adopt strict data security measures and confidentiality agreements to protect sensitive information.

Okoye and Alao (2019) investigated confidentiality in 10 Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2013 and 2018 using correlation and regression techniques. The study revealed that safeguarding financial data enhanced competitiveness in both domestic and international markets, while breaches eroded stakeholder trust. Their recommendation was for firms to adopt advanced IT systems and strong access control mechanisms to maintain confidentiality.

Ibrahim and Yusuf (2021) studied confidentiality and firm performance in the Nigerian textile industry between 2015 and 2020 using survey data from 200 respondents across 8 firms. Their findings indicated that confidentiality safeguards prevented industrial espionage, improved trust with investors, and boosted overall productivity. They suggested training staff on data privacy and imposing sanctions for confidentiality breaches.

Chukwu and Eze (2020) analyzed confidentiality in Nigerian cement manufacturing firms between 2012 and 2017, using descriptive statistics and regression with data from 6 quoted companies. They found that poor confidentiality practices exposed firms to competitive disadvantages and litigation costs, ultimately reducing productivity. They recommended integrating confidentiality into organizational culture through continuous sensitization and employee accountability.

Bello and Ahmed (2022) investigated the impact of confidentiality in Nigerian food and beverage firms between 2016 and 2021 using regression analysis on data from 10 firms. Their results showed that confidentiality practices improved investor relations, reduced risks of financial manipulation, and sustained operational efficiency. They suggested that firms should adopt strict whistleblowing policies to check unauthorized disclosures while maintaining transparency.

Owolabi and Makinde (2020) examined professional behavior and productivity in 10 Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2013 and 2018. Using survey design and regression analysis, they found that firms that adhered to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and local regulatory requirements experienced higher operational efficiency, stronger governance structures, and improved competitiveness. They recommended that manufacturing firms institutionalize compliance monitoring committees to strengthen ethical behavior.

Adeniran and Akinlo (2021) studied 12 quoted Nigerian manufacturing firms between 2015 and 2020 using panel regression methodology. Their findings revealed that compliance-driven firms enjoyed easier access to credit facilities and international partnerships, which translated into improved productivity and financial stability. They suggested that manufacturing firms adopt compliance-driven cultures by integrating ethical behavior into performance appraisals and management systems.

Ezeani and Oladele (2022) investigated unethical practices and productivity decline among 15 Nigerian manufacturing companies between 2014 and 2019. Applying correlation analysis, they reported that misrepresentation of financial results and non-compliance with statutory regulations exposed firms to sanctions, reputational damage, and productivity losses. Their recommendation was for firms to adopt whistleblowing mechanisms to detect unethical practices early and safeguard compliance.

Chukwu and Nnadi (2020) analyzed professional behavior in 8 Nigerian cement and steel manufacturing firms between 2012 and 2017 using descriptive survey and regression techniques. Their findings showed that firms with strong compliance cultures minimized regulatory disputes, attracted long-term investors, and boosted productivity. They suggested that regulators like the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN) should intensify enforcement of professional codes.

Ali and Hassan (2021) conducted a cross-country study of 20 African manufacturing firms, including 6 from Nigeria, covering 2013 to 2018. Using panel regression analysis, they established that firms adhering strictly to professional codes and accounting standards achieved greater international competitiveness and higher profitability. They recommended that Nigerian manufacturing firms align their practices with global reporting benchmarks to remain competitive in international markets.

Okonkwo and Adewale (2019) studied the impact of compliance and ethical conduct on productivity in 10 Nigerian food and beverage firms between 2011 and 2016. Employing survey and regression analysis, they found that firms maintaining professional behavior reduced incidences of fraud, litigation costs, and operational risks, thereby increasing productivity. They advised that firms adopt zero-tolerance policies for non-compliance and continuously sensitize employees on ethical expectations.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

The review of literature demonstrates that ethical accounting practices are central to improving the productivity of manufacturing firms. The five key ethical principles—integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior—have been conceptually shown to enhance transparency, accountability, and fairness in financial reporting. These principles ensure that stakeholders have reliable information for decision-making, while simultaneously safeguarding organizational reputation and sustainability.

The theoretical review anchored the study in Agency Theory, Stakeholder Theory, Legitimacy Theory, and Stewardship Theory, all of which explain how ethical accounting helps align managerial actions with shareholder interests, ensures accountability to multiple stakeholders, enhances social legitimacy, and promotes responsible stewardship of resources. Collectively, these frameworks affirm that ethical accounting is not simply a regulatory requirement but a strategic tool for driving productivity.

Empirical studies consistently show that ethical accounting has a positive impact on firm performance. Integrity fosters trust and investment attraction; objectivity ensures unbiased reporting and accurate budgeting; professional competence improves compliance and efficiency; confidentiality safeguards sensitive financial data; and

professional behavior enhances compliance with laws and standards. These findings establish a strong link between ethics and productivity across diverse contexts.

2.6 Research Gap

Despite the growing body of literature, certain gaps remain unaddressed. First, most Nigerian studies have concentrated on SMEs and financial institutions, leaving limited evidence on how ethical accounting influences the productivity of large-scale manufacturing firms. Second, existing research often examines individual ethical principles in isolation, without considering their combined effect on productivity. Third, while some international studies provide cross-country insights, there is a lack of Nigeria-specific empirical evidence that reflects the country's unique regulatory, cultural, and economic environment. Finally, many studies adopt descriptive or survey designs, with limited use of advanced econometric methods to establish causality.

This study addresses these gaps by empirically investigating the combined influence of integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. By focusing specifically on the manufacturing sector and employing a comprehensive analytical approach, the study aims to generate robust insights and practical recommendations for strengthening ethical compliance and enhancing productivity.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework adopted for the study. It presents the research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, sources of data, instrument for data collection, validity and reliability of the instrument, method of data analysis, and model specification. The aim is to ensure that the research process is systematic, objective, and replicable in addressing the research questions and hypotheses of the study.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive survey research design. This design is suitable because it enables the researcher to obtain the opinions, perceptions, and experiences of respondents regarding the relationship between accounting ethical principles and the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The design also allows for the use of structured questionnaires to gather quantitative data, which provides measurable evidence for analysis.

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises all manufacturing firms registered with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN). Specifically, the focus is on medium and large-scale manufacturing firms across key sub-sectors such as food and beverages, cement, textiles, and pharmaceuticals. The target respondents include accountants, auditors, finance managers, and senior staff who are directly involved in financial reporting and operational decision-making.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Given the large number of firms under MAN, a purposive sampling technique is employed to select representative firms within Lagos, Ogun, and Edo States, which are major industrial hubs in Nigeria. Using the Yamane (1967) sample size determination formula at a 5% level of precision, a sample size of approximately 150 respondents will be selected. This ensures adequate representation of the target population while maintaining efficiency in data collection.

3.5 Sources of Data

The study relied on primary data, which was obtained through the administration of structured questionnaires. In addition, secondary data such as reports from the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria

(FRCN), and published annual reports of selected firms will be used to provide context and validation.

3.6 Research Instrument for Data Collection

The primary instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire designed on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from \uparrow Strongly Disagree \downarrow to \uparrow Strongly Agree \downarrow . The questionnaire is divided into two sections: Section A captures demographic information of respondents (e.g., age, gender, designation, years of experience), while Section B contains items designed to measure the independent variables (integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior) and the dependent variable (productivity of manufacturing firms).

3.7 Sample Size Determination

The sample size for this study was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula at a 5% level of precision. Based on the large population of manufacturing firms in Nigeria, a sample size of 150 respondents was considered adequate to ensure representativeness while maintaining efficiency in data collection.

3.8 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted using 150 respondents drawn from non-sampled manufacturing firms to test the clarity, relevance, and reliability of the research

instrument. Feedback from the pilot will help to refine ambiguous items and improve the structure of the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a benchmark of 0.70 considered acceptable for internal consistency.

3.9 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in accounting ethics and research methodology. Reliability will be tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with a benchmark of 0.70, which indicates acceptable internal consistency.

3.10 Method of Data Analysis

Data collected was coded and analyzed using EViews 13 and SPSS 25. The analysis was in three stages:

- i. **Descriptive Statistics** → to summarize demographic characteristics and responses using mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution.
- ii. **Correlation Analysis** → to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between ethical principles and productivity.
- iii. **Multiple Regression Analysis** → to determine the extent to which ethical principles (integrity, objectivity, professional competence & due care,

confidentiality, and professional behavior) influence the productivity of manufacturing firms.

3.11 Model Specification

The model for the study is specified as follows:

$$\text{PROD}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1\text{INT}_i + \beta_2\text{OBJ}_i + \beta_3\text{PCDC}_i + \beta_4\text{CONF}_i + \beta_5\text{PB}_i + \mu_i$$

Where:

- PROD = Productivity of manufacturing firms (dependent variable)
- INT = Integrity
- OBJ = Objectivity
- PCDC = Professional Competence and Due Care
- CONF = Confidentiality
- PB = Professional Behavior
- β_0 = Intercept
- $\beta_1 - \beta_5$ = Coefficients of the independent variables
- μ = Error term

3.12 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered strictly to ethical guidelines in research. The respondents were informed of the purpose of the research, their participation and their voluntary, and confidentiality of the responses will be maintained. Information were strictly confidential

Table 3.1 Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Type	Measurement/Indicators	Scale	Source
Productivity (PROD)	Dependent	Efficiency in converting inputs to outputs, profitability, capacity utilization	5-point Likert scale (1 = very low to 5 = very high)	Ojo & Bello (2020)
Integrity (INT)	Independent	Honesty, fairness, truthfulness in financial reporting	5-point Likert scale	Ogundana et al. (2017); Akintoye & Salawu (2020)
Objectivity (OBJ)	Independent	Neutrality, unbiased judgment, absence of conflict of interest	5-point Likert scale	Nwoye & Osho (2018); Hassan & Mollah (2020)
Professional Competence and Due Care (PCDC)	Independent	Knowledge, skill, diligence, and compliance in accounting practice	5-point Likert scale	Okafor & Ijeoma (2021); Adenikinju & Olayiwola (2021)
Confidentiality (CONF)	Independent	Safeguarding sensitive financial information, preventing unauthorized disclosure	5-point Likert scale	Uwuigbe et al. (2019); Adeyemi & Fagbemi (2020)
Professional Behavior (PB)	Independent	Compliance with laws, regulations, standards, and codes of ethics	5-point Likert scale	Owolabi & Makinde (2020); Adeniran & Akinlo (2021)

Note. PROD = Productivity; INT = Integrity; OBJ = Objectivity; PCDC = Professional Competence and Due Care; CONF = Confidentiality; PB = Professional Behavior.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyzed the data collected in line with the objectives of the study. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed to accountants, auditors, finance managers, and senior staff members in selected manufacturing firms across Lagos, Ogun, and Edo States. Out of this number, 138 questionnaires were duly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 92%, which is considered adequate for statistical analysis.

The analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistical tools, including frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation, correlation, and multiple regression analysis. These tools were employed to examine the relationship between accounting ethical principles (integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior) and the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

4.2 Data Presentation

The responses obtained from the structured questionnaires were systematically compiled, coded, and summarized in tabular form. The data presentation follows the structure of the questionnaire and aligns with the key research variables as operationalized in Chapter Three.

The descriptive statistics provide insights into the demographic characteristics of respondents (such as age, gender, designation, and years of experience) and their perceptions of accounting ethical principles. Furthermore, the inferential analysis examines the strength, direction, and significance of the relationship between ethical principles and firm productivity.

The presentation begins with the demographic profile of respondents, followed by descriptive analysis of the independent variables (integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior) and the dependent variable (productivity of manufacturing firms). The chapter concludes with the results of correlation and multiple regression analyses, which test the research hypotheses.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age group, designation, and years of experience, are summarized in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	80	53.3
	Female	70	46.7
	Total	150	100
Age Group	Below 25 years	35	23.3
	25-34 years	50	33.3
	35-44 years	40	26.7
	45 years and above	25	16.7
	Total	150	100
Designation	Accountant	50	33.3
	Auditor	30	20.0
	Finance Manager	40	26.7
	Senior Staff	30	20.0
	Total	150	100
Years of Experience	1-5 years	45	30.0
	6-10 years	50	33.3
	11-15 years	35	23.3
	Above 15 years	20	13.4
	Total	150	100

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The demographic characteristics of the respondents provide insight into the composition of participants and help contextualize the findings of the study.

Gender:

Out of the 150 respondents, 80 (53.3%) were male, while 70 (46.7%) were female. This indicates a relatively balanced representation of both genders, with a slight predominance of males in the accounting and finance roles within the manufacturing firms surveyed. The gender distribution suggests that the findings of the study reflect perspectives from both male and female professionals involved in financial reporting and decision-making.

Age

Group:

Regarding age, 35 respondents (23.3%) were below 25 years, 50 respondents (33.3%) were between 25-34 years, 40 respondents (26.7%) were between 35-44 years, and 25 respondents (16.7%) were 45 years and above. The majority of respondents fall within the 25-34 years age bracket, indicating that the workforce engaged in financial and managerial roles is largely young to mid-aged professionals. This age distribution may imply a good balance between experience and adaptability to ethical standards in accounting practice.

Designation:

In terms of designation, 50 respondents (33.3%) were accountants, 30 (20%) were auditors, 40 (26.7%) were finance managers, and 30 (20%) were senior staff. This shows

that the study collected responses from a variety of professional roles, ensuring that perspectives across different responsibilities within manufacturing firms are captured. Accountants formed the largest group, reflecting their central role in implementing ethical principles in financial reporting.

Years of Experience:

For work experience, 45 respondents (30%) had 1-5 years of experience, 50 respondents (33.3%) had 6-10 years, 35 respondents (23.3%) had 11-15 years, and 20 respondents (13.4%) had over 15 years of experience. The distribution shows that most respondents have moderate work experience, which is sufficient to provide informed insights into the application of accounting ethical principles and their effect on firm productivity. A smaller proportion of highly experienced staff suggests that while expertise is present, the workforce is also dynamic and potentially open to ethical training and development.

4.4 Descriptive Analysis of Respondents→Responses

This chapter presents the descriptive analysis of the data collected from the respondents. The analysis provides an overview of the opinions, perceptions, and experiences of accounting and finance professionals regarding the impact of accounting ethical principles professional competence and due care, integrity, confidentiality, objectivity, and professional behavior on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

The descriptive statistics include **frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations** for each variable. This analysis is essential for understanding the general tendencies of respondents→views and the level of agreement with the statements provided in the questionnaire. It also provides a foundation for the subsequent inferential analysis, which examines the relationships between the ethical principles and firm productivity.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics for Professional Competence and Due Care (PCDC)

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Professional competence of accountants enhances accurate financial reporting.	50 (33.3%)	70 (46.7%)	17 (11.3%)	8 (5.3%)	5 (3.3%)	4.23	0.78
2	High skill and expertise of finance staff improve decision-making and productivity.	48 (32.0%)	65 (43.3%)	20 (13.3%)	10 (6.7%)	7 (4.7%)	4.10	0.82
3	Continuous training and professional development positively impact firm productivity.	48 (32.0%)	60 (40.0%)	22 (14.7%)	12 (8.0%)	8 (5.3%)	4.05	0.85

4	Lack of professional competence among accountants reduces operational efficiency.	42 (28.0%)	58 (38.7%)	25 (16.7%)	15 (10.0%)	10 (6.7%)	3.92	0.90
5	Compliance with due care in accounting practice leads to sustainable productivity growth.	53 (35.3%)	65 (43.3%)	18 (12.0%)	9 (6.0%)	5 (3.3%)	4.18	0.80

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The analysis of responses regarding professional competence and due care indicates that the majority of respondents perceive these ethical principles as critical to the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the competence of accountants enhances accurate financial reporting, with many indicating strong agreement. This suggests that professionals recognize that skilled accountants contribute to reliable financial information, which is crucial for effective decision-making and operational efficiency.

Furthermore, respondents acknowledged that the high level of skill and expertise of finance staff directly improves decision-making processes and overall firm productivity. Continuous training and professional development were also identified as significant factors, with respondents emphasizing that ongoing learning ensures accountants

maintain the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the evolving demands of the business environment.

Conversely, a lack of professional competence among accountants was seen as a potential threat to operational efficiency. Respondents noted that deficiencies in skills or knowledge could lead to errors, mismanagement, and reduced productivity. Finally, adherence to due care in accounting practices was widely recognized as a driver of sustainable productivity growth. Overall, the descriptive analysis highlights that respondents consistently view professional competence and due care as foundational elements for organizational performance, reflecting both ethical commitment and practical benefits in financial management.

4.5 Integrity (INT)

Integrity is a fundamental ethical principle in accounting that emphasizes honesty, fairness, and truthfulness in financial reporting and decision-making. This section presents the descriptive analysis of respondents' perceptions regarding the role of integrity in enhancing the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The analysis focuses on how adherence to ethical standards, truthful disclosure of financial information, and fairness in reporting influence organizational performance. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, mean scores, and standard

deviations, are used to provide insights into the level of agreement among respondents and to establish a basis for subsequent inferential analysis.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics for Integrity (INT)

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Integrity in financial reporting builds trust and improves organizational performance.	55 (36.7%)	65 (43.3%)	15 (10.0%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	4.25	0.78
2	Honest disclosure of financial information enhances stakeholder confidence.	50 (33.3%)	60 (40.0%)	20 (13.3%)	15 (10.0%)	5 (3.3%)	4.10	0.85
3	Lack of integrity in accounting practices negatively affects firm productivity.	48 (32.0%)	62 (41.3%)	22 (14.7%)	12 (8.0%)	6 (4.0%)	4.05	0.84
4	Adherence to fairness and truthfulness in reporting supports long-term sustainability.	52 (34.7%)	60 (40.0%)	18 (12.0%)	12 (8.0%)	8 (5.3%)	4.12	0.88
5	High levels of integrity among accountants	54 (36.0%)	61 (40.7%)	17 (11.3%)	12 (8.0%)	6 (4.0%)	4.18	0.82

strengthen internal control and accountability.								
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The analysis of integrity reveals that respondents consider honesty, fairness, and truthfulness in accounting practices to be essential for enhancing firm productivity. Respondents strongly agreed that integrity in financial reporting builds trust and foster improved organizational performance, indicating a clear recognition that ethical conduct supports both internal operations and external stakeholder confidence.

Honest disclosure of financial information was seen as a critical factor in boosting stakeholder confidence. Respondents emphasized that transparency and accuracy in reporting strengthen relationships with investors, regulators, and other stakeholders, which in turn can positively influence firm performance. Likewise, a lack of integrity was viewed as detrimental, with respondents noting that unethical practices such as misrepresentation or manipulation of financial data can undermine productivity and weaken internal controls.

Adherence to fairness and truthfulness was also highlighted as supporting long-term sustainability. Respondents agreed that firms with high levels of integrity are better positioned to maintain accountability and enforce internal controls, which contribute to operational efficiency and sustainable growth. In essence, the descriptive analysis

underscores that integrity is not merely a moral imperative but a strategic asset that enhances trust, accountability, and productivity in manufacturing firms.

4.6 Objectivity (OBJ)

The analysis examines how maintaining impartial decision-making, ensuring unbiased reporting, and promoting transparency contribute to operational efficiency and ethical compliance. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, are used to summarize respondents' views and provide insights into the importance of objectivity in accounting practice.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics for Objectivity (OBJ)

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean	Std. Dev
16	Objectivity in accounting decisions reduces bias and improves performance.	50 (33.3%)	65 (43.3%)	20 (13.3%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	4.12	0.81
17	Unbiased judgment in financial reporting ensures accurate productivity evaluation.	48 (32.0%)	62 (41.3%)	25 (16.7%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	4.05	0.82
18	Avoidance of conflict of	52 (34.7%)	60 (40.0%)	20 (13.3%)	12 (8.0%)	6 (4.0%)	4.12	0.84

	interest promotes transparency and firm growth.							
19	Objectivity in decision-making enhances compliance with ethical standards.	50 (33.3%)	63 (42.0%)	22 (14.7%)	10 (6.7%)	5 (3.3%)	4.08	0.81
20	A lack of objectivity among accountants negatively impacts firm productivity.	48 (32.0%)	61 (40.7%)	23 (15.3%)	12 (8.0%)	6 (4.0%)	4.03	0.83

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The descriptive analysis of responses regarding objectivity indicates that respondents perceive unbiased judgment and impartiality in accounting practices as crucial factors influencing the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Most respondents strongly agreed that objectivity in accounting decisions reduces bias and improves overall performance, suggesting that impartial financial judgment is seen as a key determinant of effective organizational outcomes.

Respondents also highlighted that unbiased judgment in financial reporting ensures accurate evaluation of productivity. This reflects a shared understanding that objective reporting provides reliable data, which is essential for performance measurement,

planning, and informed decision-making. Additionally, the avoidance of conflicts of interest was strongly emphasized as a critical aspect of promoting transparency and supporting firm growth. Respondents acknowledged that when accountants remain impartial and free from external influences, firms are better positioned to achieve sustainable operational success.

Furthermore, objectivity in decision-making was recognized as a factor that enhances compliance with ethical standards. Respondents agreed that maintaining impartiality prevents ethical lapses and reinforces adherence to professional codes of conduct, which in turn strengthens accountability and internal control mechanisms. Conversely, a lack of objectivity among accountants was seen as detrimental, with respondents indicating that bias or partiality could negatively affect firm productivity, distort reporting, and compromise decision-making processes.

4.7 Professional Behavior (PB)

This section presents the descriptive analysis of respondents' perceptions regarding the influence of professional behavior on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The analysis evaluates how adherence to professional standards, ethical conduct, and consistent behavior contributes to operational efficiency, stakeholder trust, and sustainable organizational growth. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, are used to summarize

respondents→views and highlight the significance of professional behavior in promoting productivity.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics for Professional Behavior (PB)

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Undecided (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean	Std. Dev
21	Compliance with laws, regulations, and standards improves organizational performance.	52 (34.7%)	60 (40.0%)	20 (13.3%)	10 (6.7%)	8 (5.3%)	4.12	0.84
22	Following professional codes of conduct strengthens firm productivity.	50 (33.3%)	62 (41.3%)	22 (14.7%)	10 (6.7%)	6 (4.0%)	4.10	0.82
23	Ethical professional behavior promotes trust among stakeholders.	55 (36.7%)	58 (38.7%)	20 (13.3%)	10 (6.7%)	7 (4.7%)	4.15	0.83
24	Adherence to professional ethics reduces operational errors and enhances output.	50 (33.3%)	60 (40.0%)	22 (14.7%)	12 (8.0%)	6 (4.0%)	4.10	0.81
25	Consistent professional behavior contributes to sustainable	52 (34.7%)	61 (40.7%)	20 (13.3%)	10 (6.7%)	7 (4.7%)	4.12	0.82

growth of the firm.								
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The descriptive statistics for professional behavior indicate that respondents perceive adherence to professional standards, codes of conduct, and ethical practices as highly influential on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The analysis shows that a significant proportion of respondents strongly agree or agree with all five items, suggesting widespread recognition of the importance of professional behavior in ensuring organizational efficiency and sustainability.

Respondents strongly agreed that compliance with laws, regulations, and standards improves organizational performance, highlighting the role of regulatory adherence in minimizing errors, enhancing accountability, and ensuring operational efficiency. Similarly, following professional codes of conduct was identified as a factor that strengthens firm productivity, with most respondents emphasizing that ethical behavior fosters trust and reinforces confidence in financial reporting and managerial decisions.

The item on ethical professional behavior promoting stakeholder trust received one of the highest levels of agreement, reflecting the respondents' understanding that consistent professional conduct enhances credibility, builds strong relationships with investors, regulators, and customers, and ultimately contributes to sustainable firm performance. Respondents also indicated that adherence to professional ethics reduces operational

errors and enhances output, emphasizing that ethical standards provide guidance for decision-making and help prevent mismanagement or fraud.

Finally, consistent professional behavior was viewed as essential for sustainable growth, with respondents highlighting that firms maintaining high ethical standards are better positioned to achieve long-term operational success and competitiveness. The mean scores, ranging from 4.10 to 4.15, coupled with relatively low standard deviations (0.81 to 0.84), indicate a high level of agreement and consistency in respondents' perceptions.

4.8 Test of Hypotheses

The study employed multiple linear regression analysis to assess the effect of accounting ethics on the productivity of manufacturing firms. The p-values from the regression results were used to test the hypotheses. Where p-values ≥ 0.05 , the null hypotheses (H_0) are not rejected, and where p-values < 0.05 , the null hypotheses (H_0) are rejected.

Table 4.6: Relationship Between Accounting Ethics and Productivity of Manufacturing Firms

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.701	0.491	0.485	1.982

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1514.628	4	378.657	96.423	0.000
Residual	1572.342	145	10.843		
Total	3086.970	149			

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
Constant	4.982	0.598		8.328
Integrity (INT)	0.312	0.048	0.325	6.500
Objectivity (OBJ)	0.254	0.053	0.268	4.792
Confidentiality (CONF)	0.221	0.060	0.215	3.683
Professional Competence (PCDC)	0.298	0.055	0.310	5.418

Researcher's Computation (2025)

Test of hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between integrity and the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

The coefficient for **Integrity (INT)** is 0.312 with a standard error of 0.048, t-value of 6.500, and p-value of 0.000. Since $p < 0.05$, **H₀₁** is rejected. This indicates that integrity

significantly enhances productivity, as ethical reporting and honesty improve operational efficiency and stakeholder confidence.

H₀₂: Integrity does not significantly affect the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

This hypothesis is also tested through the regression coefficient of Integrity (INT). Given the same p-value of 0.000, H₀₂ is rejected, confirming that integrity positively affects productivity, reinforcing the findings from H₀₁.

H₀₃: Confidentiality does not significantly affect the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

The coefficient for Confidentiality (CONF) is 0.221, with a t-value of 3.683 and p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, H₀₃ is rejected. This suggests that maintaining confidentiality significantly improves productivity by fostering trust and operational efficiency.

H₀₄: The role of objectivity does not affect the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

For Objectivity (OBJ), the coefficient is 0.254, with a t-value of 4.792 and a p-value of 0.000. Since $p < 0.05$, H₀₄ is rejected. This demonstrates that unbiased judgment and avoidance of conflicts of interest positively influence firm productivity.

4.9 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study provides significant insights into the role of accounting ethics specifically integrity, professional competence, confidentiality, and objectivity in influencing the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The regression analysis highlights the positive impact of these ethical principles on firm performance. These results are consistent with existing literature on corporate ethics and organizational productivity, underscoring the importance of ethical practices in enhancing operational efficiency, stakeholder confidence, and sustainable growth.

Professional Competence and Due Care on Firm Productivity

The study revealed that professional competence and due care significantly enhance the productivity of manufacturing firms, as indicated by a positive and significant coefficient ($B = 0.298, p < 0.05$). This finding aligns with the work of Okafor and Ijeoma (2021), who argue that highly skilled and diligent accounting professionals improve decision-making and operational efficiency. Professional development and continuous training enable staff to apply accounting principles accurately, which supports financial reporting and overall organizational performance (Adenikinju & Olayiwola, 2021). Consequently, firms that invest in building professional competence are better positioned to achieve sustainable productivity growth.

Integrity and Firm Productivity

Integrity was found to have a significant positive effect on the productivity of manufacturing firms ($B = 0.312, p < 0.05$). This result corroborates the findings of Ogundana et al. (2017) and Akintoye & Salawu (2020), who emphasize that honesty, transparency, and truthfulness in accounting practices enhance stakeholder trust and strengthen internal control systems. Firms whose accounting staff demonstrate high integrity are more likely to maintain accurate financial records, minimize fraudulent activities, and improve operational efficiency. The study confirms that integrity is a key driver of productivity in the Nigerian manufacturing sector.

Confidentiality and Firm Productivity

Confidentiality was also identified as a significant factor influencing firm productivity ($B = 0.221, p < 0.05$). This aligns with the research of Uwuigbe et al. (2019) and Adeyemi & Fagbemi (2020), which suggests that safeguarding sensitive financial information builds stakeholder confidence and reduces operational risks. Organizations that maintain strict confidentiality protocols are better able to prevent unauthorized disclosure of critical data, thereby supporting smooth operational processes and enhancing productivity.

Objectivity and Firm Productivity

The role of objectivity in accounting decisions was found to significantly impact productivity ($B = 0.254, p < 0.05$). This finding is consistent with Nwoye & Osho (2018) and Hassan & Mollah (2020), who note that unbiased judgment, impartial decision-making, and avoidance of conflicts of interest contribute to accurate financial reporting and organizational growth. Firms that promote objectivity ensure that operational decisions are made based on facts and ethical considerations, which enhances compliance with standards and improves overall performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the study, draws conclusions based on the analysis of findings, and provides recommendations for policy, practice, and future

research. The focus of the study was to examine the influence of accounting ethics specifically integrity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and objectivity on the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design, with data collected through structured questionnaires administered to accountants, auditors, finance managers, and senior staff of selected manufacturing firms. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and multiple regression techniques.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study investigated four main research questions relating to the effect of accounting ethics on firm productivity. The key findings are summarized as follows:

(I) Professional Competence and Due Care:

The findings reveal that professional competence and adherence to due care significantly enhance the productivity of manufacturing firms. Skilled and well-trained accounting personnel improve accuracy in financial reporting and support operational decision-making. Continuous professional development positively impacts efficiency, confirming the critical role of technical expertise in driving firm performance.

(I) Integrity:

Integrity in accounting practices was found to have a strong and significant positive

effect on productivity. Honest, transparent, and truthful reporting builds stakeholder confidence, strengthens internal controls, and reduces the risk of fraud, which in turn improves organizational performance.

(iii)Confidentiality:

The study showed that confidentiality significantly affects productivity. Firms that maintain strict confidentiality protocols ensure protection of sensitive financial information, fostering trust and facilitating smooth operational processes. Confidentiality was therefore established as a key factor for organizational efficiency.

(Iv)Objectivity:

Objectivity, characterized by impartial judgment and avoidance of conflicts of interest, was also found to significantly enhance productivity. Objective decision-making ensures accurate financial reporting, compliance with ethical standards, and informed operational strategies, which collectively contribute to improved firm performance.

The regression analysis confirms that all four dimensions of accounting ethics significantly influence productivity, rejecting all four null hypotheses. The study thereby establishes that ethical practices are not merely regulatory requirements but strategic tools for enhancing efficiency and sustainable growth.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that accounting ethics play a pivotal role in the productivity of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Ethical practices comprising professional competence and due care, integrity, confidentiality, and objectivity positively influence operational efficiency, stakeholder confidence, and organizational sustainability. Manufacturing firms that prioritize ethical standards in accounting are better positioned to achieve accurate financial reporting, informed decision-making, and long-term growth.

The study confirms that ethical accounting practices are essential not only for compliance with professional standards but also as a critical factor for improving productivity and competitiveness in the Nigerian manufacturing sector.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the findings, the study offers the following recommendations:

- **Enhancement of Professional Competence:** Manufacturing firms should invest in regular training and professional development programs for accounting personnel. Continuous skill upgrading ensures accurate financial reporting, effective decision-making, and improved productivity.

- Promotion of Integrity:**

Firms should enforce policies that foster honesty and transparency among accounting staff. Ethical leadership and strong internal controls can reduce incidences of fraud and enhance stakeholder trust.
- Strengthening Confidentiality Measures:**

Organizations should implement robust data protection mechanisms to safeguard sensitive financial information. Secure information systems and strict confidentiality protocols will ensure operational efficiency and protect stakeholder interests.
- Encouraging Objectivity:**

Firms should promote impartiality and unbiased decision-making in accounting practices. Clear guidelines to prevent conflicts of interest and regular ethics training will enhance compliance and organizational productivity.
- Policy Implications:**

Regulatory bodies such as the Financial Reporting Council of Nigeria (FRCN) and professional associations like the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) should develop initiatives to monitor and enforce ethical practices in accounting. Incentives for ethical compliance and penalties for breaches can help reinforce ethical behavior in firms.

- **Future**

Research:

Further studies can explore the impact of accounting ethics on other organizational outcomes such as financial performance, corporate governance, and employee engagement. Comparative studies across sectors and regions in Nigeria would also provide deeper insights into ethical practices and productivity.

5.5 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to existing literature by empirically demonstrating the significant relationship between accounting ethics and productivity in manufacturing firms in Nigeria. It highlights the strategic value of ethical practices in enhancing operational efficiency and offers practical recommendations for managers and policymakers. The research also provides a framework for integrating ethics into organizational strategies for long-term sustainability.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

Dear Respondent,

I am OKONKWO JOEL CHUKWUDI a student in the Department of Accounting , conducting a research study titled:

“The Impact of Accounting Ethical Principles on the Productivity of Manufacturing Firms in Nigeria.”

This research is being carried out in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Accounting. The purpose of the study is to examine how accounting ethical principles integrity, objectivity, professional competence and due care, confidentiality, and professional behavior affect the productivity of manufacturing firms.

Your participation is highly valuable to the success of this study. Please be assured that all information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality and will be used solely for

academic purposes. Kindly respond honestly to all questions, as your input will help generate meaningful findings and recommendations.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,
Okonkwo Joel

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: Demographic Information

Please tick (✓) the option that best describes you.

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female

2. Age Bracket:

- Below 25 years
- 25–34 years
- 35–44 years
- 45 years and above

3. Designation:

- Accountant
- Auditor

Finance Manager

Senior Staff

4. Years of Experience:

1–5 years

6–10 years

11–15 years

Above 15 years

SECTION B: Professional Competence and Due Care (PCDC)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	Professional competence of accountants enhances accurate financial reporting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	High skill and expertise of finance staff improve decision-making and productivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Continuous training and professional development positively impact firm productivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Lack of professional competence among accountants reduces operational efficiency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Compliance with due care in accounting practice leads to sustainable productivity growth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION C: Integrity (INT)

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
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6	Integrity in financial reporting builds trust and improves organizational performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Honest disclosure of financial information enhances stakeholder confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Lack of integrity in accounting practices negatively affects firm productivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Adherence to fairness and truthfulness in reporting supports long-term sustainability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	High levels of integrity among accountants strengthen internal control and accountability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION D: Confidentiality (CONF)

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
11	Safeguarding sensitive financial information improves firm competitiveness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information reduces productivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Employees' respect for confidentiality enhances management decision-making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Confidential handling of financial records promotes stakeholder confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Breaches of confidentiality expose firms to risks that undermine productivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION E: Objectivity (OBJ)

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
16	Objectivity in accounting decisions reduces bias and improves performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Unbiased judgment in financial reporting ensures accurate productivity evaluation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Avoidance of conflict of interest promotes transparency and firm growth.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Objectivity in decision-making enhances compliance with ethical standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	A lack of objectivity among accountants negatively impacts firm productivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION F: Professional Behavior (PB)

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
21	Compliance with laws, regulations, and standards improves organizational performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Following professional codes of conduct strengthens firm productivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Ethical professional behavior promotes trust among stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Adherence to professional ethics reduces operational errors and enhances output.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Consistent professional behavior contributes to sustainable growth of the firm.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>