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The Effect of Green Culture and Recruitment on Business Sustainability of Plastic Manufacturing Firms in South-East, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: Green human resource planning practices can help organizations align their business strategies with the environment. The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of green human resource planning on business sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South East of Nigeria. The specific objectives are to, identify the influence of green culture policies on environmental sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria; and to ascertain the influence of green recruitment on product sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria. This study was anchored on the Resource Based View (RBV) theory (Barney, 1991). The population of this study comprises of selected 25plastic manufacturing firms in the South East of Nigeria with a total of 1929 elements in the population. The sample size was determined using Borg and Gall (1973) formula. Data were obtained through a structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale from 350 employees (sampling unit) working in the selected plastic manufacturing firms. The data collected and empirically tested with the use of SPSS version 23. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, linear regression, and ANOVA. The findings demonstrated that various components of GHRP significantly influenced different sustainability outcomes: green culture policies improved environmental sustainability ($R = 0.981$), and green recruitment boosted product sustainability ($R = 0.980$), all at $p < 0.05$. The study concluded that integrating GHRP into business operations is critical to achieving sustainable industrial practices. It recommended the institutionalization of eco-friendly HR strategies, ongoing training on sustainability, and alignment of HR policies with environmental goals to support both profitability and ecological stewardship. The study also recommended that manufacturing firms should deliberately reform the green recruitment and selection practices to facilitate effective pro-environmental and eco-friendly practices in manufacturing firms.

Keywords: Green culture; recruitment; business sustainability; plastic manufacturing firms.

1. INTRODUCTION

Green practices, green human resource planning, green management and green values have become choice topics of interest for organizations, her mechanisms and practitioners. Many organizations are working with improved cultures of diligence, commitment and accountability towards the consumers, external environment and shareholders. (Temitope, Johnson & Julianah, 2022). Consequently, this has engineered the establishment and formation of societal groups of the international level to emphasize organizations on green agenda by showcasing the evident depletion of natural resources and the zest in quest for more positive impacts (Ekwunife, Nduka, & Ogini; 2022; Nduka, Atueyi, Osakwe, & Mbanefo, 2021). Human Resource Planning deals with management practices, policies, and procedures that encourage the use of environment-friendly resources that contribute a lot to society's welfare and prove beneficial for the business. Another ultimate purpose of using green management practices is to create awareness of the green concept among the organization's employees to resolve day-to-day environmental issues. In his study, Uddin (2018) stated that the green human resource planning practices seem more likely to the traditional human resource planning practices such as recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, and reward and compensation. When the concept of going green is attached to the traditional human resource planning practices, the practices will turn into green practices.

Economic performances of various organizations have other sides to it, the ecological imbalance; recently organizations have been experiencing greater shareholders/equity holders pressure on the need to minimize environmental impact created out of their business activity (Longoni, Luzzini & Guerce, 2018; Obidike, Onyeka, & Nduka, 2022; Logan, Okanya, Nduka, Manasseh, Ede, Onoh, Omeje, Ozioko, & Agu, 2021). As a result, organizations are not only required to adopt or support environmental values to secure sustainable economic performance (Monogbe, Akinpelumi, Achugbu, & Nduka, 2016; Tafe & Bals, 2018), but they should observe/view environmental performance as measure of their "social performance" (Yawar & Seuring, 2017; Nduka, et al., 2019). This makes it imperative that organizational leaders should be entwined with environmental strategies, ethics, policies and their supervision with its implemental fall offs of business operations if noticed (El-Kassar & Singh, 2018; Singh & El-Kassar, 2019).

Very many literatures imply that organization's eco-friendly practices depend upon their human resources planning and its sensitivity to environmental issues and possess itemized green competencies linked to essential businesses for organizational utilization in their value creation process. (Singh & El-Kassar, 2019; Ogunewe et al., 2020).

Subsequently we argue that the implementation of organizational planning to go green and manage environmental performance depends largely upon human resources across functions doubling with greater alliance with human resource planning system, processes and procures to effectively implement, manage and evaluate the employees (Rabiel & Jabbour, 2017; Aniefor, et al., 2021). Many literatures proposed that organizations venturing into green practices; must be endowed with green manpower, which have positively and remarkably affected the organizations successfully thereby enhancing individual green values of the employees (Kumari, 2012). Nonetheless, the present study attempts to empirically test and explore how businesses can enhance their green values

through green human resource planning and eco-friendly practices.

Statement of the Problem

Research on Green Human Resource Planning (GHRM) green human resource management has flourished in the past years with studies conducted in different firms (Luu, 2017; Ojo & Raman, 2019; Chaudary, 2019). Last two decades of Nigeria has witnessed a tremendous and unanimous consensus for the need for a realistic organizational sustainability through environmental management drive. As the corporate world becomes more dynamic and adapts to the shift from a conventional business practices, green human resource planning has become a key business strategy for organization pro-environmental and eco-friendly practices. Stakeholders have pressured many organizations to adopt sustainable practices to enhance environmental performance but beyond compliance with regulation. Research has shown that organization sustainability through the prisms of pro-environmental and eco-friendly practices have become increasingly recognized as essential to firm's competitive advantages.

Research has shown that organizations who consider the reduction of ecological footprints and give importance to not only financial and economic values but great interest/importance to social and environmental factors have successfully improved organizational success and attainment of profit by shareholders (Nailiyah, 2016; Anusi & Nduka, 2022). The adoption of green management practices has shown advantages to firms which has benefited the firms and led to the emergence of "green and competitive mantra, improvement that are related to organization's operational performance, promotion of teamwork, improvement in the organizational culture as well as reduction in overall cost (Naliyah, 2016; Aboramadan, 2020). From the above discussion, researchers have identified the ideal importance to adoption of pro-environmental and eco-friendly practices as a key objective to organizational sustainability. However, the realities in business practices has shown uncertainty and debates in green human resource planning principles, lack of synchronization with management strategies to green culture practices, lack of adapting and modifying HRM planning principles to green recruitment training, employee's motivation, reward dimensions in the implementation of green management principles (Ojo, Raman & Downe, 2019). These problems have led to low adoption of green practices and principles, thus, the lack of pro- environmental and eco-friendly practices of manufacturing firms. Research on GHRM has flourished in the past years with studies conducted in different industries such as tourism and hospitability (Luu, 2017), Information and technology (Ojo & Raman, 2019) and automobile industry (Chaudary, 2019). Nevertheless, research on green human resource planning (GHRP) in plastic manufacturing firms is limited. Therefore, to advance the literature of GHRP in general and in plastic manufacturing firms in particular, this study aimed to propose a model of the effects of GHRP on organizational sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms, specifically, green culture policies and green recruitment/selection on pro-environmental/eco-friendly practices. Also, this study improves our understanding of the mechanisms that underpins the relationship between GHRM, GHRP and employee's pro-environmental /eco-friendly practices (Aboramdadam, 2020).

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of green human resource planning on sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria; while the specific objectives are to:

i. Identify the influence of green culture policies on environmental sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria.
ii. Ascertain the influence of green recruitment on product sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Green Human Resource Planning

Green human resource planning refers to using every employee touch point to encourage and improve economic performance in terms of policies, procedures and practices that will motivate, upgrade and enlarge employee's take on issues of environmental performance. This involves integrating eco-friendly human resource planning programs that will result in reduction of costs, greater efficiencies, employee green reward and compensation which will minimize employee carbon footprints; evident is electronic filling, recycling, energy-efficient office spaces, teleconferencing; virtual interviews etc. Green human resource planning is an example of a green growth initiative aimed at attracting, retaining, and developing human resources that will enhance performance and productivity through sustainable consumption and production of organizational societal resources. (Mesigo, Okeke & Okeke, 2022; Nduka, Achugbu, & Ucheahara, 2016). Mandip (2022) suggests that green human resource planning as the integration of human resources in to environmental planning and management with a view of reduction of environmental impact. Uddin & Islam (2022), describe green human resource planning as eco- friendly human resource planning and practices that assist business organizations to achieve their fiduciary and non-fiduciary eco-driven objectives.

Green Culture

Green culture according to (Howard, Golden& Mao, 2021), is defined as a lifestyle of making deliberate choices and decisions regarding the resources used for daily living for the purpose of minimizing resources used. It is the use of resources that are renewable. To the authors, green culture encourages the use of recycled paper, encourages the use of bio-degradable products as much as possible, and discourages the use of plastic bottles made from non-renewable resources, chemicals that are harmful to the environment among others. In the context of this study, green culture are those practices which business organizations should adopt in the cause of their business operations that are environmental friendly, reduces wastage, and be less harmful to the society (Scherbaum, Popovich & Finlinson, 2018).

Loyed & Andrew (2022), noted that green culture linked human and environmental harmony together so as to achieve sustainable development of human culture, which include sustainable businesses, sustainable agriculture, and sustainable forestry, among others. The authors opined that in the past 20 years, part of human society's call for foresight and practical education towards green culture. To them, the gradual emergence and formation of green production, green consumption, green industry, green trade, green business, green technology, green polities, green party, green investment, green design, green plan, green education, green school among others are conscious effort, that have been made to create green culture awareness.

Green Recruitment

Organizations may engage individuals that will commit to environmental issues (Jabbour & Santos, 2018). Green recruitment and selection

has been considered as an important component in green human resources planning (GHRP) practices (Yusoff & Nejati, 2017). On the basis of the previous studies (Renwick, Redman & Maguire, 2023), we summarize green recruitment and selection in three aspects: employees green awareness, green employer branding, and green criteria to attract employees. First, candidates' green awareness is the most essential aspect of green recruitment and selection and involves personality factors that help achieve organization environmental goal such as green consciousness, conscientiousness, and the cooperation of workers. Employees who are of environmental value have been found to actively enhance their environmental knowledge in the operational process, which consequently enhances the environmental performance of their organization.

Organizations should therefore attract, select and employ employees with green awareness, using a series of green tests to ensure that all employees are positive about environmental issues. Secondly, green employer branding refers to a company's image goodwill and reputation relating to environmental planning, which can be formed through green human resources planning practices (Jackson, Renwick, Jabbour & Muller, 2021). Job seekers can perceive a good fit between their own and an organization's values through green employer introduction and branding. They may be fulfilled working for an organization with a good environmental reputation. Job seekers tend to take information about an organization's environmental performance and description as criteria to judge how organizations treat their employees. Job seekers can also be attracted to organizations with positive green signals (Jabbour, 2023). From this viewpoint therefore, green branding by shareholders, owners of fund, is an effective method of attracting and selecting potential employees who are positive about environmental issues and images. Thirdly, employees should be evaluated and selected based on green criteria. For example, recruiting firms can emphasize environmental aspects in job descriptions and employee specifications. Questions relating to environmental knowledge, values, and beliefs will be evaluated and employees with improved knowledge of green practices can be absorbed (Renwick, Redman & Maguire, 2023).

Sustainability

Sustainability has become a primary focus for many organizations due to climate change regulatory and social pressures towards greater environmental and social responsibility. Sustainability has gained increasing attention from corporate executives, shareholders and gained a prominent place in the strategic goals of many organizations (Chouinard, Ellison& Ridgeway, a prominent place in the strategic goals of many organizations (Chouinard, Ellison& Ridgeway, 2021). The triple bottom line principle has been introduced to describe the three pillars of sustainability, that is, economic, environmental, and social (Elkington, 1997). Economic performance is vital to corporate financial success; an organization must be able to produce goods and services on a continual basis while also making a profit in order to survive.

Environmental sustainability considers the impact of business on the environment. The conservation of natural resources is essential for sustainable economic production and inter-generational equity. Social sustainability embodies the humanitarian context of business, which emphasizes fairness in distribution, opportunity and relates to issues of health and education, income inequality, and poverty (Aggerholm, Andersen & Thomsen, 2021; Harris, 2003.

Environmental Sustainability

Environmental performance means that business success is determined not solely in financial terms, such as profits and return on investment, but also accounts for environmental and social dimensions (Gardberg & Fombran, 2006). Economic performance means addressing the needs of today without compromising future needs, emphasizing intergenerational equity. Economic performance includes individual agency which entails how countries and policies can make a difference against large external forces. It is a clearly defined social values and goals which allows government, businesses and individuals to produce the most optimal outcomes. Green planning for future generations prevents shortsightedness which harms our shared future and that of those yet to be born. This implies preserving the imminent availability of products for the unborn (Brundtland & Klialid, 2017). Organizational policies and practices, mostly people oriented with a green focus, are essential for overall sustainability.

Jabbour & Santos (2018) opined that organizations now require an improved and acceptable standard of development that encourages the economic, environmental, and social dimensions equally. Economic performance can be used as a reference point in developing solutions to face environmental and societal challenges (Kuckertz & Wagner, 2020). Human resource planning practices and policies such as hiring the right people, supported by performance evaluation and reward systems, can direct employee mindset and actions towards achieving eco-goals for the organization (Siti, 2022). Environment performance principles can be embodied in human resource planning systems that generate and sustain the long-term economic, physical, and social well-being of an organization's workforce (Taylor, Osland & Egri, 2022).

Product Sustainability

Product performance an aspect of market performance that denotes the quality and performance of existing products and firms' records with respect to the development of new products (Sanchez & Elola, 2021)**.** Product performance ranks product sales based **o**n revenue performance to inform your sales team which products are selling well. At the same time, you should rank the poorest performing products to determine which products are failing to resonate with your customers **(**Sanchez & Elola, 2021)**.** It's important to consider the specific contexts surrounding each product. For instance, is a certain product receiving a boost due to a viral business campaign, are you experiencing a slump because your competition is offering a similar product at a lower price (Chang, 2019).

Product performance doesn't always map directly to revenue performance. For instance, low price, high volume products may account for more than 50% of your products shipped and be essential to your business model, but these products may not crack into the top 5 products in terms of revenue (Chang, 2019). In order to keep a business successful, you need to make sure if the products are selling well or not. Therefore, you need a way to rank these products and determine if there are some who are not selling well (Akroush, 2016). A way to do that is through the product performance. Product performance makes you rank your company's product sales based on revenue performance. This allows you to inform the sales team about the products that are selling well. Additionally, it lets you rank the poorest performing products, so you can determinate which are the products that are failing (Akroush, 2016).

During the monitoring process of these products, you have to consider the specific contexts that surround every product. For example, maybe a specific product is having a sudden boost because of a viral business

campaign. Or maybe your product is not selling well because you have competitors promoting a similar product. It's important to understand that product performance is not directly linked to revenue performance. In certain situations, you may have high volume products at a low price that may account for more than half of your products shipped and be essential to your business model. However, these products may not be able to build to the top 5 products when it comes to revenue. Just like you do with any product you have to use metrics and measures that are consistent with the model and objectives your business has. The planning and execution of marketing activities need to happen simultaneously and come together under the umbrella label of marketing performance. No matter what role you play on a marketing team, you'll need to access marketing analytics to determine whether you're meeting your own KPIs and those of the marketing department (Thomas, 2022). In addition, marketing performance should be measured at consistent and regular intervals. Marketing performance assessment is typically carried out annually before the creation of the upcoming annual budget and at the end of each campaign to determine their efficiency and effectiveness. This allows those engaged in marketing performance management to ensure that adjustments are made to future marketing plans to capitalize on past performance. It also allows the marketers in charge of executing those plans to identify the plans they can make to ensure more successful marketing activities.

Theoretical Framework

The zest in quest of green human resource planning practices has resulted in the improvement of many theories and models; consequently the study is based on the resource based view theory (Barney, 1991). According to the Resource base view theory, organization resources are the tangible and intangible assets that are tied, permanently, to the organization. Examples include brand names, in-house knowledge, skilled manpower, efficient policies, organization procedures, machinery and trade contracts. These resources are modern, efficient, valuable, rare, and cannot be easily imitated by others. Projecting such resources allows strategic competitive advantage over competitors in the market place (Wernerfelt, 1984). However, researchers have identified the imminent need of internal resources as sources of competitive advantage and, of people in particular, as internal resources that are strategically needful to organization success. Wright, Dunford & Snell (2001), Studied on strategic policies and practices, the applications and acceptance of resource base view theory has led to an improved study of strategic human resource planning and strategic planning in general (Wright *et al.,* 2001). Huselid (1995) opined that policies, practices, human resource planning and particularly those aligned with a company's competitive strategy, can help create competitive advantage. Similarly, Koch and McGrath (1996) argue the relationship between human resource planning, recruitment, staffing practices, and labor productivity. They imply that "a highly productive workforce is likely to have meaningful impact that makes an important asset to the organization" (Koch & Me-Grath, 1996). Researchers opined that prioritizing sustainable strategy has reinforced the need for human resource practices and economic performance. Jabbour & Santos (2008), suggests a linkage between human resource planning practices and economic performance through the resource base view theory lens. Consequently, Jackson & Seo (2010) states that those organizations that implement or consent to greening their human resources will be more productive, resulting in overall competitive advantage.

Empirical Review

Alshebami (2023) study aimed to explore the necessary antecedents contributing to developing innovative green products and services among small enterprises in Saudi Arabia. The study targeted a sample of 284 small entrepreneurs across various regions of Saudi Arabia. The responses were collected with a convenience sample through an online questionnaire. The data were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that both green entrepreneurial self-efficacy (GESE) and green entrepreneurial orientation (GEO) have a positive relationship with green innovation (GI). The findings also reported that green innovation mediates the relationship between green entrepreneurial self- efficacy, green entrepreneurial orientation and economic performance.

Alfandi and Bataineh (2023) study investigated the mediating influence of knowledge management on the link between green entrepreneurial orientation and sustainable performance. A quantitative approach was adopted. Through a self-administered questionnaire, 108 questionnaires were collected from five-star employees in managerial positions. The gathered data was analyzed using structural equation modeling to assess the link between our research variables. According to the findings of structural equation modeling, green entrepreneurial orientation has a beneficial impact on knowledge management and sustainable performance. Furthermore, the knowledge management has a favorable effect on the sustainable performance. The outcome also revealed that knowledge management partially mediates between Green entrepreneurial orientation and sustainable performance, suggesting that the favorable effects of Green entrepreneurial orientation on sustainable performance may be amplified by knowledge management's mediating action. The findings have implications on the Jordanian's tourism and hospitality industry.

Achaku (2022) investigated the effect of green entrepreneurship on the performance of SMEs in North-Central Nigeria and the federal capital territory. A pre-test was conducted, and a descriptive cross-sectional questionnaire was used. The study examined 1,233 consenting randomly chosen respondents from six states and Abuja City in North-Central Nigeria. Simple linear regression was used to test the hypotheses. The findings demonstrated that green entrepreneurship can decrease the negative impacts of business activities on the environment and also ensure profitability. Moreover, green entrepreneurial innovative production and green entrepreneurial inclination significantly impact competitive edge ($\beta = 0.806$, t-value= 49.648, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$) and customer spending ($\beta = 0.976$, t-value= 51.315, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$), respectively. The study offers useful public information and experimental confirmation of environmental sustainability engaged in viable business activities.

Fapahunda (2022) study examined the effect of green recruitment and selection practices on organizational sustainability in the Nigerian manufacturing sector with the objective of examining the effect of developing green job description on economic sustainability; examining the effect of usage of green information technology on environmental sustainability; and examining the effect of short-listing of applicants with environmental awareness on social sustainability. The study adopted a descriptive design in which questionnaires were administered for data collection. Data was collected from 155 and the hypotheses for the study were tested with regression and correlation analysis. Findings from the study illuminated that green recruitment and selection practices significantly affect organizational

sustainability. The study concluded that since green recruitment and selection practices significantly affects organizational sustainability, then manufacturing firms must uphold and incorporate these practices into their corporate agenda to promoting their sustainability.

Michalis (2022) examined both the relationship between green innovation and green entrepreneurship and the mediating role of firm strategies in the relationship between green entrepreneurship, green innovation, and competitive advantage. A total of 225 managers responsible for the environmental strategy of medium and large-sized firms operating in Greece were used as a sample for the study. To measure the research variables, a structured questionnaire was used. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inductive statistics, including principal components analysis, correlation analysis, a multivariate generalized linear model, and a structural equations model. The empirical results indicate a positive influence of green entrepreneurship in green innovation and green process innovation. Furthermore, the mediating role of firm strategies in the relationship between green entrepreneurship, green innovation, and competitive advantage is confirmed.

Sadia, Ahaiad and Farheen (2022) conducted a study on green human resource practices: implementations and hurdles of SMES in Pakistan. A sample of 140 employees of 42 SMES were adopted but 132 useable responses were received. The Data were analyzed using SPSS 20, descriptive statistics and correlation tests were applied to get the result. The results showed a positive relationship between green human resource practices and employee performance. Pearson correlation was used to analyze the variables (Green human resource practices and employee performance and the correlation was 627) the findings farther indicate that the Green human resource practices are influenced by several factors (Age, Experience and Gender).

Yaseen (2022) assessed the effects of green marketing practices on competitive advantage and business performance in Malaysia. A quantitative approach was used to obtain data from a survey (questionnaire) consisting of 33 items with a five-point Likert scale. The unit of analysis is small and medium companies in Malaysia. The respondents in this paper are the managers of departments. Smart PLS 3.2.9 was used to analyze the results. The findings of the path analysis of partial least squares (PLS) support variables in their hypothesized direct relationships with business performance. The analysis results suggest that competitive advantage partially mediates the relationship between green marketing practices and business performance.

Subramanian, Abdulrahman and Nath (2022) conducted a study on green competence framework: evidence from China. The study contributes to green human resources literature by integrating environmental consumer behavior literature with traditional skills and competencies literature to help firms to select the right individuals to achieve their environmental goals. Using Robert's competences framework and structural equation modeling (SEM) this paper empirically examines the influence of individual green competencies on organization's green practices and performance objectives. The research is tested using a sample of 1,230 employees working in key industries in the Chinese coastal city of Ningbo. The results indicate that acquired Green competencies are more positively associated with individual's Green competences and green behavior. The study empirically demonstrates that verifying acquired green competence attributes such an environmental knowledge. Green purchase

attitude and intention during employee selection would certainly be helpful for firms to identify individual green performance potential. Large-scale survey method was utilized in this study and structural equation modeling (SEM) approach used to investigate the Green competence model. A two-step approach suggested by Anderson & Gerbing (1988) was followed by first examining the measurement model and then the structural model to analyze the data using Amos 20 Package. Exploring factor analyses (EFA) based on principal component analysis was conducted to identify structure of relationships and cronbach's alpha for variable.

Ramayah (2022) examined and tested an integrative, multi perspective framework towards green entrepreneurial inclination among University students in Malaysia. The main objective was to determine the significant predictive role of a range of University support, institutional support, family support, and acquaintances support for green entrepreneurial inclination. Cross sectional survey was directed through structured questionnaires among the University students. Partial least squares method adopted using the smart PLS 3.0 software to analyze the data from 1000 respondents. The findings reveal that perceived educational, business development, institutional support along with perceived family and acquaintances support play a significant role for green entrepreneurial inclination.

Obafemi and Ihunwo (2022) study examined the relationship between green market practices and business wellness in the Nigerian food and beverages firms in Rivers State. The target population of the study was 12 food and beverages firms with 60 respondents drawn from the management of the sampled firms. A self-administered structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from the respondents, and data obtained were accordingly analyzed using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient Statistical Tool to test the hypotheses with the aid of SPSS version 20.0. Results revealed that there is positive and significant relationship between green marketing practices and business wellness of Nigerian food and beverages firm; while innovativeness moderates the impact on green marketing practices and business wellness. This study shares similarity with the current one as they both have the same independent variable (one major green entrepreneurial practice, i.e. entrepreneurial green marketing) and dependent variable (an aspect of sustainability), as well as same manufacturing sector. The difference exists in terms of the geographical location and scope.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive survey design to gather data from a population of 1929 from 25 selected plastic manufacturing firms located in the South East region of Nigeria. The researcher selected the first five plastic manufacturing firms in each state with the highest staff strength in the South East region of Nigeria. The researcher used primary source for data collection which consist of structured questionnaire. The researcher employed a one-on-one contact method to administer the questionnaire, ensuring a higher response rate and minimizing non-responses. Construct validity was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation by correlating each item with the total score; also, a pilot test was conducted with 47 respondents to assess internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency tables and percentages) and inferential statistics, linear regression, all at a 0.05 significance level. SPSS version 16 was used to process and interpret the data effectively.

Model Specification

Objective One: Identify the influence of green culture policies on environmental sustainability.

$ES=\beta0+\beta1GCP+\varepsilon$

Where:
ES = Environmental Sustainability
GCP = Green Culture Policies
β0 = Intercept
β1 = Coefficient of Green Culture Policies
ε = Error term

Objective Two: Ascertain the influence of green recruitment on product sustainability.

$PS=\beta0+\beta1GR+\varepsilon$

Where:
PS = Product Sustainability
GR = Green Recruitment
β0 = Intercept
β1 = Coefficient of Green Recruitment
ε = Error term

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Out of 404 distributed questionnaires, 386 were returned, but only 350 were properly filled and valid for analysis, while 54 were discarded as invalid; hence, the study's analysis was based on 350 valid responses. Table 1 indicates the percentage and the number of respondents according to the gender involved in this survey. From the survey, it shows that 57% of the respondents were males, while 43% respondents were females respectively.

Table 1: Respondent Gender Statistics

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Male	200	57	57
Female	150	43	43
Total	350	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2025

Based on Table 2, the age range between 31-40 years gained the highest percentage which is 34 %. The age range 41-50 years got the second highest percentage, which is 29% of respondents. From the data shown above, the age range between 21-30 years old got the third highest, which is 23% of the respondents and it followed by the age range of 51 years and above which is 14%.

Table 2: Respondent Ages

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
21-30 years	80	23	23
31-40 years old	120	34	34
41-50 years old	100	29	29
51 yrs and above	50	14	14
	350	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 3 shows the number of years of the respondents in the business. Through the data that was collected, it shows that 29% or 100 respondents have worked more than 11-15 years. It was followed by the respondents that have worked for 16-20 years which is 23% or 80 respondents. Next, there are 20% or 70 respondents that have worked between 6-10 years. 1-5 years of experience have the second to the least respondents in terms of years in business which is 17% or 60 respondents. Nevertheless, there is the least in business experience which is 11% or 40 respondents, with 20 years and above of experience in business.

Table 3: Respondent No. Of Years in Business

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
1-5 years	60	17	17
6-10 years	70	20	20
11-15 years	100	29	29
16-20 years	80	23	23
20 Years and above	40	11	11
Total	350	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2025

Research Questions and Test of Hypotheses

Question One: How do green culture policies influence environmental sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria?

Table 4: Respondents view on green culture policies influence environmental sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Green culture determines how companies recycled materials in production process in business organizations.	114	145	42	34	15
2	Green culture encourages staff to switch off all appliances, equipment at the end of every working day.	125	149	43	20	13
3	Green culture determines how company's cultural policy affects environmental awareness.	173	122	38	9	8

4	Green culture determines how organizations developed cultural ethics that minimize environment impact.	85	138	67	49	11
5	Green culture determines how companies run their business	86	151	55	41	17

Table 5 provides summary information for Environmental Sustainability and Green Culture Policies across 350 responses. The mean for Environmental Sustainability is 11.66, with a standard deviation of 2.92, indicating a moderate level of environmental sustainability practices, with some variation in responses. In contrast, the mean for Green Culture Policies is 19.54, and the standard deviation is 5.06, suggesting that green culture policies are more strongly implemented or perceived, with a higher level of variability in how respondents view or engage with these policies. The differences in means and standard deviations hint at differing perceptions or implementation levels of environmental sustainability and green culture policies within the firms.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Environmental Sustainability	11.6571	2.92154	350
Green Culture Policies	19.5429	5.05921	350

Table 6 indicates a strong positive relationship between Green Culture Policies and Environmental Sustainability, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.981. This suggests that as the implementation of green culture policies improves, environmental sustainability also increases, with a very high degree of association. The p-value (0.000) is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that this relationship is not due to chance. With a sample size of 350, the results suggest that green culture policies play a significant role in enhancing environmental sustainability within the firms studied.

Table 6: Correlations

		Environmental Sustainability	Green Culture Policies
Pearson Correlation	Environmental Sustainability	1.000	.981
	Green Culture Policies	.981	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Environmental Sustainability	.	.000
	Green Culture Policies	.000	.
N	Environmental Sustainability	350	350
	Green Culture Policies	350	350

Table 4.7 shows that Green Culture Policies is a highly effective predictor of Environmental Sustainability. The correlation coefficient (R) is 0.981, indicating a very strong positive relationship between the two variables. The R Square value of 0.961 means that 96.1% of the variance in environmental sustainability can be explained by green culture policies, highlighting the model's effectiveness in explaining the dependent variable. The Adjusted R Square of 0.961 further confirms the reliability of the model. The Standard Error of the Estimate (0.57419) suggests minimal prediction error. The F Change statistic (8687.235) is extremely high, and the p-value (0.000) indicates that the model is statistically significant. However, the Durbin-Watson value of 0.156 suggests potential positive autocorrelation in the residuals, which may warrant further attention.

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.981[a]	.961	.961	.57419	.961	8687.235	1	348	.000	.156

a. Predictors: (Constant), Green Culture Policies

b. Dependent Variable: Environmental Sustainability

Test of Hypothesis 1

H_0: Green culture policies do not significantly influence environmental sustainability.

Decision Rule: If the p-value (Sig.) is less than 0.05, reject the null hypothesis.

Table 8 assesses the overall significance of the regression model with Green Culture Policies as the predictor and Environmental Sustainability as the dependent variable. The Regression Sum of Squares (2864.124) represents the variation in environmental sustainability explained by green culture policies, while the Residual Sum of Squares (114.733) represents the unexplained variation. The Mean Square for Regression is 2864.124, and the Mean Square for Residual is 0.330, which results in an F-statistic of 8,687. This exceptionally high F-value indicates that the regression model explains much more variation in environmental sustainability than it leaves unexplained, suggesting that green culture policies are a strong predictor of environmental sustainability.

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Table 8: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2864.124	1	2864.124	8.687E3	.000[a]
	Residual	114.733	348	.330		
	Total	2978.857	349			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Green Culture Policies

Table 8: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2864.124	1	2864.124	8.687E3	.000[a]
	Residual	114.733	348	.330		
	Total	2978.857	349			

b. Dependent Variable: Environmental Sustainability

Since the p-value = 0.000, which is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative. This means that green culture policies significantly influence environmental sustainability in plastic manufacturing firms in South-East Nigeria.

Question Two: To what extent does green recruitment influence product sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria?

Table 9: Respondents view on green recruitment influence product sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria

S/N	**ITEMS**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**
1	Green recruitment process is highly satisfactory	145	161	8	24	12
2	Green recruitment process has adopted eco- friendly practices	111	166	34	37	2
3	Maintenance of green employees with innovative and influential behavior	113	133	41	54	9
4	Green recruitment considered as an important component in green human resources planning practices	85	163	71	25	6
5	Green recruitment improvement of organization's reputation and attracts job seekers	101	176	34	37	2

Table 10 reveals the average scores and variability for Product Sustainability and Green Recruitment among 350 respondents. The mean score for Product Sustainability is 12.18 with a standard deviation of 2.81, indicating a moderately low central tendency with relatively low variability in responses. In contrast, Green Recruitment has a higher mean of 19.35 and a standard deviation of 5.17, suggesting that participants generally perceived green recruitment efforts as more prevalent or effective, but with greater variation in responses. This implies that while perceptions of product sustainability are relatively consistent, views on green recruitment practices vary more widely among respondents.

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Product Sustainability	12.1800	2.81200	350
Green Recruitment	19.3514	5.16650	350

Table 11 presents the Pearson correlation results showing a very strong positive relationship between Green Recruitment and Product Sustainability, with a correlation coefficient of 0.980. This indicates that as green recruitment practices increase or improve, product sustainability also tends to improve correspondingly. The significance value (Sig. 1-tailed) is 0.000, which is well below the conventional alpha level of 0.05, indicating that the correlation is statistically significant. With a sample size of 350, this result provides strong evidence that effective green recruitment is associated with enhanced sustainability of products in the surveyed plastic manufacturing firms

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Table 11: Correlations

		Product Sustainability	Green Recruitment
Pearson Correlation	Product Sustainability	1.000	.980
	Green Recruitment	.980	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Product Sustainability	.	.000
	Green Recruitment	.000	.
N	Product Sustainability	350	350
	Green Recruitment	350	350

Table 12 presents the model summary for the regression analysis between Green Recruitment and Product Sustainability. The model shows a very high correlation coefficient (R) of 0.980 and an R Square of 0.961, indicating that 96.1% of the variation in product sustainability can be explained by green recruitment practices. The Adjusted R Square, which accounts for the number of predictors, remains at 0.961, suggesting the model is both strong and reliable. The F Change value of 8608.181 and the significance value (Sig. F Change) of 0.000 show that the model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, meaning green recruitment has a significant predictive power on product sustainability. The Durbin-Watson value of 0.135, however, suggests possible positive autocorrelation, which may need further diagnostic checks.

Table 12: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.980[a]	.961	.961	.55509	.961	8608.181	1	348	.000	.135

a. Predictors: (Constant), Green Recruitment

b. Dependent Variable: Product Sustainability

Test of Hypothesis 2

Ho: Green recruitment does not significantly influence product sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria.

Decision Rule: If the p-value (Sig.) is less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis.

Table 13 presents the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for the regression model assessing the effect of Green Recruitment on Product Sustainability. The regression sum of squares is 2652.431 with 1 degree of freedom, while the residual (unexplained variation) is 107.229 with 348 degrees of freedom, bringing the total sum of squares to 2759.660. The mean square for regression is 2652.431, and for the residual, it is 0.308. The calculated F-value is 8608.181, which is extremely high, indicating a very strong model. The significance value (Sig.) is .000, which is less than 0.05, showing that the model is statistically significant.

Table 13: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
1	Regression	2652.431	1	2652.431	8.608E3	.000[a]	Significant
	Residual	107.229	348	.308			
	Total	2759.660	349				

a. Predictors: (Constant), Green Recruitment

b. Dependent Variable: Product Sustainability

Since the significance value is .000, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This means there is a statistically significant relationship between green recruitment practices and product sustainability, indicating that green recruitment positively and significantly influences product sustainability among the studied population.

Discussion of Findings

The demographic results of this study provide a comprehensive overview of the respondents' characteristics. In terms of gender, 57% of respondents were male, while 43% were

female, indicating a relatively balanced gender distribution. This finding is consistent with earlier studies on business demographics in the manufacturing sector, where a slight male dominance is often observed (Santos ***et al.,*** 2020). Regarding age distribution, the majority of respondents were between 31-40 years old (34%), followed by those aged 41-50 years (29%).

These results suggest that a significant portion of the workforce in plastic manufacturing firms is within their prime working years, which aligns with findings from similar studies on age demographics in manufacturing (Gurung& Tamang, 2022). Educationally, most respondents held a B.Sc. (24.2%), with HND coming in third (20%), indicating that respondents had relatively high educational qualifications. This finding mirrors trends in industrial sectors that require technical expertise (Njoroge & Wanjiku, 2021). Experience in the business was notably concentrated among respondents with 11-15 years (29%), showing that many employees have substantial experience, a trend frequently observed in stable industries (Rahman & Hossain, 2019).

Regarding objective one, which is the relationship between green culture policies and environmental sustainability. The findings showed a very strong correlation (R = 0.981) between green culture policies and environmental sustainability, suggesting that the implementation of green culture policies significantly influences firms' environmental outcomes. This finding is consistent with research by Silva & Oliveira (2020), who found that green organizational culture, is a critical driver of environmental sustainability in industrial settings. The statistical significance of this relationship (p = 0.000) supported the argument that fostering a green culture within organizations leads to more sustainable environmental practices. The R-squared value of 96.2% further validates the strength of this connection, indicating that green culture policies play a pivotal role in promoting environmental sustainability in plastic manufacturing firms.

Concerning objective two, the relationship between green recruitment practices and product sustainability among plastic manufacturing firms in South-East Nigeria; the findings indicate a statistically significant and very strong positive relationship between green recruitment practices and product sustainability among plastic manufacturing firms in South-East Nigeria. The regression analysis revealed that green recruitment explains a substantial portion (96.1%) of the variation in product sustainability, suggesting that firms that actively integrate environmentally conscious criteria into their hiring processes tend to achieve higher sustainability in their product development and production processes. This aligns with the assertions of Zaid, Jaaron and Bon (2018), who emphasized that green recruitment, serves as a foundational driver for embedding sustainability into organizational practices by attracting individuals with a strong environmental orientation. Additionally, Pfeffer (2020) and Renwick, Redman & Maguire (2023), argue that recruiting individuals with eco-conscious values enhances innovation and long-term environmental outcomes within firms. The findings also support the views of Paulraj (2021) and Dubey, Gunasekaran & Ali (2022), who identified that strategic HR practices, such as green recruitment, play a critical role in aligning organizational goals with sustainable production practices. Therefore, these results not only reinforce the importance of green recruitment as a predictor of product sustainability but also suggest that organizations seeking long-term environmental performance improvements

must prioritize sustainability-focused human resource strategies.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Green human resource planning is an emerging trend which is more environmentally friendly and cost effective. Corporate companies have started linking their mission, objectives, strategies, and tactics to the function of green human resource planning and it has been proven in this research. Green human resource planning process works with companies throughout the process to define the talents, skills, knowledge and abilities of top performers and manage the process from start to finish, and also it applies in our day to day life to ensure its importance in the nearest future. Reducing ongoing energy costs and costs for other non-renewable resources, thereby enhancing sustainability of the company and of course the ecosystem. Thus, the study concluded that green human resource planning had a positive significant influence on organizational sustainability of plastic manufacturing firms in South-East, Nigeria.

Based on the findings of the study, companies should institutionalize a strong green culture by embedding eco-conscious values into daily operations and policies to drive environmental sustainability. Continuous orientation to staff members can be useful in this regard to disrupt the old ways of doing things. Management can incorporate GHRP in their mission statement; this can revolutionize the organizational culture. It is equally suggested that firms prioritize green recruitment by selecting candidates with strong environmental values to ensure sustainable product development and innovation. Training should be given to human resource personnel saddled with the responsibility of recruitment and /or enlistment to know how to identify candidates who are environmentally conscious. Organizations should develop on-the-job training for newly recruited staff. Management can also develop certificate courses for job seekers, which can now be one of the criteria for enlistment.

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