



Green Reward Management and Employee Performance of Public Universities in Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Original Research Article

This study examined the effect of green reward management on employee performance in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. Three research questions were raised with three hypotheses developed on green recognition and incentive programmes, eco-friendly compensation structures, and sustainable career development rewards on the performance of university employees. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 332 respondents drawn from a population of 1,950 staff across selected public universities in Delta State. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression. The findings revealed that all three dimensions of green reward management significantly influenced employee performance. The regression results showed a strong relationship ($R = 0.898$; $R^2 = 0.797$), indicating that 79.7% of the variation in employee performance could be explained by the combined influence of green recognition and incentive programmes, eco-friendly compensation structures, and sustainable career development rewards. Specifically, sustainable career development rewards ($\beta = 0.601$, $p < 0.05$) and eco-friendly compensation structures ($\beta = 0.479$, $p < 0.05$) had the most substantial positive effects on employee performance, while green recognition and incentive programmes had a statistically significant but negative coefficient ($\beta = -0.081$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that current recognition practices may need to be reviewed or realigned. From the findings, the study recommended that university administrators should incorporate robust green reward strategies into their human resource management frameworks. This includes aligning compensation with sustainability goals, embedding green competencies into career progression pathways, and re-evaluating recognition programmes to ensure their relevance and impact, so as to drive both environmental responsibility and improved employee productivity.

Keywords: Eco-friendly compensation structures, Green recognition and incentive, Green competencies, Sustainable career development rewards.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, environmental sustainability has emerged as a critical concern for organizations

worldwide, including public institutions such as universities. The increasing threats posed by climate change, pollution, and unsustainable



practices have compelled organizations to rethink their human resource strategies to align with eco-friendly principles. This has led to the emergence of Green Human Resource Management (GHRM), an approach that integrates environmental sustainability into human resource practices. GHRM plays a vital role in promoting green culture within organizations through environmentally-conscious recruitment, training, and reward systems (Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2013; Dumont, Shen, & Deng, 2017). In this context, green reward management is essential in motivating employees to adopt and sustain environmentally responsible behaviour.

Reward management is a core aspect of human resource practices that influences employee motivation and performance. In a GHRM context, reward systems are designed to reinforce behaviours that contribute to environmental goals such as energy conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable innovation (Singh, 2020). Green rewards can be monetary or non-monetary and often include incentives, recognition, and opportunities for eco-based career advancement. When employees perceive that their environmental efforts are recognized and rewarded, they are more likely to be committed to sustainability goals and improve their overall performance (Jabbour & Santos, 2023). This positions green reward management not just as an environmental initiative, but also as a strategic tool for enhancing employee performance.

Public universities, especially in developing economies like Nigeria, are gradually embracing sustainability agenda, yet there remains a significant gap in the integration of green human resource practices within their administrative and operational frameworks. Despite various national and global efforts to promote sustainability in higher education institutions, the actual implementation of green reward systems remains underexplored in Nigerian universities (Aina & Salau, 2020). There is a need to examine how such practices can influence employee behaviour and performance, particularly within public institutions that serve as models for societal development. Employees in these institutions play a central role in policy

implementation and resource management, making their performance pivotal to the realisation of environmental goals.

Delta State, located in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria, faces peculiar environmental challenges such as pollution, deforestation, and climate vulnerability. In response, public universities in the state are increasingly being called upon to play a role in environmental awareness and sustainability. However, little empirical evidence exists on the influence of green human resource reward practices on employee performance within these institutions. Understanding the dynamics between green rewards and performance could provide valuable insights into how public universities in the region can promote both sustainability and staff effectiveness.

Despite growing global advocacy for environmental sustainability, many public institutions in Nigeria, including universities, are yet to fully incorporate green human resource management practices into their operational systems. While public universities are expected to serve as agents of change in promoting sustainability, the integration of environmentally-aligned reward systems such as green incentives, compensation structures, and career development opportunities remains largely inadequate or superficial. This gap is particularly concerning in Delta State, where environmental degradation and climate-related issues require proactive institutional responses supported by committed and high-performing employees.

Employee performance is a key driver of institutional effectiveness, yet there is limited empirical understanding of how green reward management influences performance outcomes in academic environments. Traditional reward systems in universities often emphasize academic achievements and administrative output, with little or no consideration for environmental contributions or sustainable work behaviours. As a result, employees may lack the motivation to engage in environmentally responsible actions that could support broader institutional and societal sustainability goals.

Furthermore, existing studies on GHRM in

Nigeria have predominantly focused on the private sector, with minimal attention given to public universities and their unique organizational dynamics. The few available studies (Kundu & Gahlawat, 2022; Rawashdeh, 2023; Jia, Zhan, & Wang, 2023) often generalize findings without exploring specific green reward dimensions such as recognition programmes, eco-friendly compensation, and sustainability-based career progression. This lack of contextual evidence hinders policy formulation and the strategic design of reward systems that can simultaneously promote environmental consciousness and enhance employee performance in the public education sector. In the context of Delta State public universities, where financial constraints and administrative challenges already impact employee morale, there is an urgent need to explore innovative human resource strategies that can improve performance without necessarily increasing operational costs. Green reward management offers a viable pathway by aligning employee motivation with institutional sustainability goals. However, the absence of concrete data on the effectiveness of such practices creates uncertainty about their potential value.

Given this backdrop, this study seeks to examine the effect of green reward management, particularly green recognition and incentive programmes, eco-friendly compensation structures, and sustainable career development rewards, on employee performance in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria. By bridging the gap in literature and practice, the study aims to contribute to the growing discourse on sustainable human resource management in Nigeria and offer practical strategies for enhancing performance through environmentally aligned reward systems.

The following research questions have been raised for the study: To what extent do green recognition and incentive programmes affect employee performance in public universities in Delta State? What is the effect of eco-friendly compensation structures on employee performance in public universities in Delta State? How do sustainable career development rewards influence employee performance in public universities in Delta State? The following

hypotheses guided the study: H₁: Green recognition and incentive programmes have no significant effect on employee performance in public universities in Delta State. H₂: Eco-friendly compensation structures have no significant effect on employee performance in public universities in Delta State. H₃: Sustainable career development rewards have no significant effect on employee performance in public universities in Delta State

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Review

Amid growing global emphasis on sustainable development, organizations are increasingly integrating GHRM practices, particularly green reward systems, to foster pro-environmental behaviour and enhance performance (Jabbour & de Sousa Jabbour, 2023; Pham et al., 2020). However, the adoption of such practices in higher institutions, especially in developing contexts like Nigeria, remains limited. This section of conceptual review focuses on the proxies of green reward strategies and employee performance in public universities and addressing the gap in aligning HR practices with institutional sustainability objectives (Bui et al., 2022; Oyedele & Ogunyomi, 2023).

2.1.1 Green Recognition and Incentives Programmes

Green recognition and incentive programmes refer to organizational efforts to acknowledge, reward, and reinforce environmentally responsible behaviours and practices among employees. These programmes are designed to create a culture where eco-conscious actions are valued and celebrated, thereby motivating employees to incorporate sustainability into their daily work routines. Recognition can be formal or informal, including verbal appreciation, green awards, eco-certificates, or public commendations for sustainability efforts. Incentives, on the other hand, may take the form of financial bonuses, additional leave days, or career advancement opportunities tied to an employee's contribution to environmental goals (Pham et al., 2020; Othman et al., 2021). These programmes play a critical role in shaping

organizational behaviour by aligning individual motivation with corporate sustainability objectives.

Recent studies have shown that green recognition and incentive initiatives positively influence employees' environmental commitment and overall job performance. When employees feel that their contributions to environmental sustainability are valued, they are more likely to internalize green values and demonstrate proactive behaviours that support organizational performance (Bui et al., 2022; Rawashdeh, 2023). In the context of public universities, such programmes are particularly important as they can foster a sense of environmental responsibility among academic and non-academic staff, which plays a pivotal role in modeling and spreading sustainability awareness within the larger educational community. Therefore, integrating green recognition and incentive programmes into HRM practices not only enhances employee engagement but also contributes to achieving long-term institutional sustainability goals.

2.1.2 Eco-friendly Compensation Structures

Eco-friendly compensation structures are a pivotal component of GHRM, designed to incentivize employees for adopting environmentally responsible behaviours and practices. These structures integrate sustainability metrics into compensation packages, rewarding employees for contributions that align with the organization's environmental goals. Such rewards can encompass financial incentives, bonuses, or non-monetary benefits like additional leave or public recognition. By linking compensation to eco-friendly actions, organizations aim to foster a culture of sustainability and motivate employees to engage in practices that reduce environmental impact (Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2024; Shoaib et al., 2023).

Implementing eco-friendly compensation structures has been shown to positively influence employee performance and organizational commitment to sustainability. Research indicates that when employees perceive a direct link between their environmental contributions and

tangible rewards, their engagement in pro-environmental behaviours increases, leading to enhanced overall performance. This alignment not only supports the organization's sustainability objectives but also contributes to improved employee morale and retention (Berrone & Gomez-Mejia, 2024; Shoaib et al., 2023). In the context of public universities, such compensation structures can be instrumental in promoting green initiatives and achieving environmental performance targets.

2.1.3 Sustainable Career Development Rewards

Sustainable career development rewards are integral to GHRM, focusing on aligning employees' career growth with environmental sustainability objectives. These rewards encompass opportunities for professional advancement, skill development, and recognition that emphasize eco-friendly practices and values. By integrating sustainability into career development, organizations not only enhance employees' competencies but also foster a culture of environmental responsibility. This approach ensures that career progression is not solely based on traditional performance metrics but also on contributions to sustainable practices, thereby motivating employees to engage in behaviours that support the organization's green goals.

Recent studies highlight the positive impact of sustainable career development rewards on employee motivation and organizational commitment. For instance, Elrayah and Semlali (2023) found that sustainable total reward strategies, including career development opportunities linked to sustainability, significantly enhance employee performance, satisfaction, and motivation in the educational sector. Similarly, research by Alshuaibi et al. (2024) emphasizes that integrating green career development rewards fosters employee engagement in environmentally responsible practices, leading to improved organizational sustainability performance. These findings underscore the importance of aligning career development with sustainability objectives to achieve both individual and organizational

growth.

In the context of public universities, implementing sustainable career development rewards can be particularly effective in promoting green initiatives. By offering career advancement opportunities tied to environmental contributions, universities can encourage staff to actively participate in sustainability efforts. This approach not only supports the institution's environmental goals but also enhances employee job satisfaction and retention. As such, sustainable career development rewards serve as a strategic tool in GHRM, aligning individual career aspirations with broader organizational sustainability objectives.

2.1.4 Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the extent to which an individual effectively fulfills their job responsibilities, achieves set objectives, and contributes to organizational goals. It encompasses various dimensions, including task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance. Task performance pertains to the execution of core job duties, while contextual performance involves behaviours that contribute to the organizational environment, such as citizenship behaviours and adherence to

organizational norms. Adaptive performance reflects an employee's ability to adjust to changes and challenges in the workplace (Visier, 2025).

Recent research underscores the multifaceted nature of employee performance, highlighting the interplay between individual capabilities and organizational factors. For instance, studies have shown that a positive work environment, characterized by supportive leadership and a culture of trust, significantly enhances employee performance. Additionally, the alignment of individual goals with organizational objectives fosters motivation and commitment, leading to improved performance outcomes (Professional Management Certification, PMC, 2022).

Furthermore, advancements in performance management practices, such as the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in performance evaluations, are reshaping how employee performance is assessed. AI tools assist in providing objective, data-driven insights into employee contributions, reducing biases and enhancing the accuracy of performance reviews. This technological integration supports more personalized development plans and fosters a culture of continuous improvement, ultimately driving higher levels of employee performance (Business Insider, 2025).

Conceptual Framework

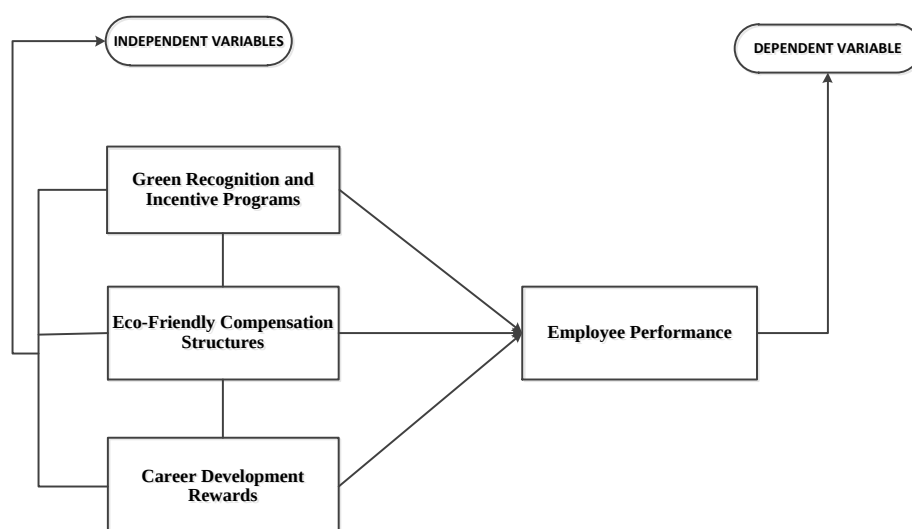


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework for the Green human resource reward Management and Employee Performance

Source: Researchers' Model, 2026

2.2 Theoretical Review

This study is hinged on Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) Theory. The theory emphasizes the integration of environmental sustainability into HR practices to promote eco-friendly behaviours among employees. By aligning HR strategies with sustainability objectives, organizations can cultivate a workforce that is committed to environmental stewardship, leading to improved organizational performance (Jia et al., 2023). In the context of Nigerian public universities, implementing GHRM practices can serve as a strategic approach to address environmental challenges while simultaneously enhancing employee performance. By embedding sustainability into HR policies, universities can foster a culture of environmental responsibility, leading to improved operational efficiency and a positive institutional image.

2.3 Empirical Review

Empirical studies were reviewed in line with the study variables and are presented as follows:

Tanova and Bayighomog (2022) conducted a study to explore the impact of GHRM practices on employee innovative work behaviour in hospitals. The research involved a sample of 200 employees and utilized quantitative methods to analyze the data. The findings revealed that GHRM practices, such as green training and performance management, positively influenced employees' innovative work behaviour. This indicates that implementing GHRM practices can foster creativity and innovation among healthcare employees. The study suggests that hospitals should integrate GHRM practices to enhance employee performance and contribute to organizational success. These results are particularly relevant for healthcare institutions aiming to improve service delivery through innovative approaches.

Elrayah and Semlali (2023) explored the relationship between GHRM practices and employee performance in the public sector. The research involved a sample of 150 public sector employees and employed quantitative research methods to gather data. The findings indicated that GHRM practices positively influenced

employee performance, including higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This suggests that GHRM practices can enhance employee performance in the public sector. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating GHRM practices to improve public sector performance and service delivery. These findings are particularly relevant for public institutions seeking to enhance employee engagement and organizational effectiveness.

Shoaib et al. (2023) investigated the relationship between GHRM practices and employee performance in Indian pharmaceutical firms. The research involved a sample of 100 employees and employed quantitative research methods to gather data. The findings indicated that GHRM practices, such as employee involvement, training, and performance management, positively impacted employee performance, including higher job satisfaction and reduced turnover intention. This emphasizes the need for strategic GHRM practices to improve employee performance and retention in the pharmaceutical sector. The study suggests that pharmaceutical firms should integrate GHRM practices to enhance employee engagement and organizational commitment. These findings are particularly relevant for firms seeking to improve operational efficiency and employee satisfaction.

Alshuaibi et al. (2024) examined the impact of GHRM on work performance in manufacturing organizations. The study utilized a sample of 150 organizations implementing GHRM practices and employed quantitative research methods to analyze the data. The findings revealed that GHRM practices positively affected organizational performance, indicating that green initiatives can lead to improved business outcomes. This suggests that organizations should adopt GHRM practices to enhance overall performance and competitiveness. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating green practices into HRM to achieve sustainable development goals. These findings are particularly relevant for manufacturing organizations aiming to improve environmental performance and operational efficiency.

Akinyele and Oyesola (2024) explored the relationship between GHRM practices and

employee engagement in Nigerian manufacturing firms. The research involved a sample of 202 employees and employed quantitative research methods to gather data. The findings indicated that GHRM practices, such as green training and performance management, positively influenced employee engagement. This indicates that implementing GHRM practices can enhance employee engagement in the manufacturing sector. The study suggests that manufacturing firms should integrate GHRM practices to improve employee motivation and organizational commitment. These findings are particularly relevant for firms seeking to enhance employee performance and satisfaction.

Idowu et al (2025) investigated the relationship between perceived green reward and employee work engagement in the Nigerian workplace. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design and obtained data from 140 respondents selected through random sampling. The data were analysed using exploratory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. The findings revealed that perceived green reward had a significant positive effect on employees' work engagement, indicating that rewarding employees for environmentally responsible behaviours can strengthen their involvement and commitment to organisational activities. The study demonstrates that green reward practices can serve as an important motivational mechanism for influencing positive employee outcomes.

Similarly, Mbogo et al. (2025) examined the effect of green reward management practices on employee retention in export processing zones in Athi River, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive research design and collected data from 377 employees drawn from 56 export processing zones using stratified random sampling. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression techniques. The findings showed that green reward management had a positive and significant effect on employee retention, suggesting that organisational rewards linked to environmental responsibility can influence favourable employee outcomes.

In an empirical study Melati and Kustiyadji (2026) examined green human resource management and green transformational leadership in relation to sustainable employee performance at PT Semen Indonesia, Tuban Plant. The study used data from 104 unit leaders and applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Although the study examined GHRM more broadly rather than green recognition alone, its model incorporated green rewards and incentives as part of the sustainability-oriented human resource system. The findings showed that GHRM did not have a statistically significant direct effect on sustainable employee performance, whereas green transformational leadership significantly affected sustainable employee performance; organizational agility also significantly influenced performance and mediated the relationships involving GHRM. Pandey et al. (2026) investigated green human resource management as a driver of sustainability outcomes and specifically examined environmentally oriented human resource practices, including green compensation practices, using data from 205 employee responses. The study employed a cross-sectional quantitative design and PLS-SEM, and found that green compensation practices contributed positively to organizational image, while organizational image provided an important mechanism through which green compensation was associated with employee engagement.

Zahrah, Basit, and Gumilar (2026) investigated the effects of green human resource management and green economy implementation on green career development among employees of a geothermal power unit in Indonesia. The study used a quantitative explanatory survey and employed a saturated sample of 134 employees, with data analyzed using PLS-SEM. The findings showed that GHRM had a positive and significant effect on green career development, while green economy implementation also had a positive and significant effect; together, the predictors explained 45.4% of the variance in green career development.

Adegbuyi and Shonowo (2026) examined the relationship between green performance appraisal and employee behavioral engagement

among employees of selected Fintech organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study analysed 118 responses, and used regression and structural equation modelling. The study found that green performance appraisal had a positive and statistically significant effect on behavioral engagement, though the model explained 19.2% of the variance in behavioral engagement. Although behavioral engagement is not identical to employee performance, the finding is relevant because it demonstrates that incorporating environmental expectations into formal HR systems can strengthen employee involvement in sustainability-related activities. This provides contemporary Nigerian evidence supporting the broader argument that environmentally oriented HR practices can influence employee-level outcomes.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and Procedures

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researchers to collect and analyse data from a large group of respondents with the aim of describing the prevailing conditions and determining the influence of green human resource reward management practices on employee performance in public universities in Delta State, Nigeria.

There are seven public universities in Delta State out of which four are owned by the state government as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of Public University in Delta State

S/N	Name of University
1	Delta State University, Abraka
2	University of Delta, Agbor
3	Southern Delta University, Ozoro
4	Dennis Osadebe University, Asaba
5	Nigerian Maritime University, Okerenkoko
6	Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun (Warri)
7	Federal University of Medical and Health Sciences, Kwale

Source: Researchers' compilation, 2026

However, the study targeted the population from three state owned public universities which consisted of 1,080 academic staff and 870 non-academic staff totaling 1,950 staff. The sample for the study was determined using the Taro Yamane formula, which provided a manageable sample size from the total population of 1,950. The formula yielded a sample size of approximately 332 respondents. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed. In the first stage, random sampling was used to select the three universities. In the second stage, stratified sampling was used to divide the population into

academic and non-academic staff. Finally, simple random sampling was used to select the required number of respondents from each stratum proportionately.

3.2 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured, self-designed questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section covered demographic information of the respondents, while Section B focused on the key variables of

the study, namely: green recognition and incentive programmes, eco-friendly compensation structures, sustainable career development rewards, and employee performance. Items in Section B were measured on a Four-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).

The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's Alpha test and the result is presented in Table 2. A reliability coefficient aggregate of 0.84 was found which exceeded 0.5 benchmark, indicating that the instrument was highly reliable for the study (Osazevbaru & Isiaka, 2026).

Table 2: Reliability Test Result

Variables	Reliability
Green Recognition and Incentive Programmes	0.84
Eco-friendly Compensation Structures	0.85
Sustainable Career Development Rewards	0.78
Employee Performance	0.89
Aggregate	0.84

Source: Researchers Compilation, 2026

3.3 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were coded and analyzed using SPSS 25. To test the hypotheses, multiple regression analysis was employed at a 0.05 level of significance. This method was chosen to determine the individual and combined effects of the independent variables on employee performance.

The multiple regression model used for analysis was specified as:

$$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 GRIP + \beta_2 ECS + \beta_3 SCDR + \varepsilon$$

Where:

EP = Employee Performance (Dependent Variable)

GRIP = Green Recognition and Incentive Programmes

ECS = Eco-friendly Compensation Structures

SCDR = Sustainable Career Development Rewards

β_0 = Intercept (constant term)

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ = Coefficients of the independent variables

ε = Error term

4. Results and Discussion of Findings

4.1 Data Presentation

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
GRIP	301	1.00	4.00	3.0598	0.83611
ECS	301	1.00	4.00	3.0140	0.85865
SCDR	301	1.00	4.00	3.0339	0.86042
EP	301	1.00	4.00	3.0233	0.87032

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2026

The descriptive statistics in Table 3 present the distribution of responses across the four core variables: Green Recognition and Incentive Programmes (GRIP), Eco-friendly Compensation Structures (ECS), Sustainable Career Development Rewards (SCDR), and Employee Performance (EP), based on a sample of 301 respondents. All variables have a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 4.00, indicating the full use of the Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The mean values for the variables are fairly close, suggesting a generally positive perception among respondents. GRIP recorded the highest mean score of 3.0598 and the standard deviation of 0.83611, indicating

stronger agreement regarding the implementation of green recognition and incentives. This is followed by SCDR at 3.0339 and the standard deviation of 0.86042, EP with mean score of 3.0233 and standard deviation of 0.87032, and ECS with mean of 3.0140 and standard deviation of 0.85865, all showing consistent but slightly lower levels of agreement. The standard deviations, ranging from 0.83 to 0.87, suggest a moderate spread in responses, implying that while most respondents agree with the items, there is some variation in perception. Overall, the data reflect a positive yet slightly varied attitude toward green HR practices and their influence on employee performance.

Table 4: Correlation Matrix

Variables	GRIP	ECS	SCDR	EP
GRIP	1.000			
ECS	0.492	1.000		
SCDR	0.596	0.698	1.000	
EP	0.292	0.398	0.698	1.000

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2026

The correlation matrix in Table 4 reveals the strength and direction of relationships among the study variables: green recognition and incentive programmes (GRIP), eco-friendly compensation structures (ECS), sustainable career development rewards (SCDR), and employee performance (EP). GRIP shows a moderate positive correlation with ECS ($r = 0.492$), indicating that as recognition and incentive programmes improve, eco-friendly compensation structures tend to also improve. GRIP also has a moderate correlation with SCDR ($r = 0.596$) and a weak but positive correlation with EP ($r = 0.292$), suggesting that while green recognition contributes to employee

performance; its effect is less direct. ECS is strongly correlated with SCDR ($r = 0.698$), implying a close relationship between compensation strategies and opportunities for sustainable career growth. ECS also shows a moderate correlation with EP ($r = 0.398$), indicating that green compensation contributes to performance. Most notably, SCDR is strongly correlated with EP ($r = 0.698$), highlighting that sustainable career development rewards are highly influential in enhancing employee performance. All relationships are positive, implying that improvements in green HR practices are associated with better employee outcomes.

4.2 Testing the Hypotheses

Table 5: Summary of Multiple Regression Result for Hypotheses 1 to 3

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate				
0.898 ^a	0.797	0.787	0.04846				
ANOVA							
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
Regression	226.540	3	75.513	32151.568	0.000		
Residual	0.698	297	0.002				
Total	227.237	300					
Coefficients							
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	-0.025	0.011		-2.262	0.024		
GRIP	-0.084	0.036	-0.081	-2.316	0.021	0.008	1.381
ECS	0.485	0.048	0.479	10.184	0.000	0.005	1.845
SCDR	0.608	0.064	0.601	9.424	0.000	0.003	3.302

a. Dependent Variable: EP

b. Predictors: (Constant), SCDR, GRIP, ECS

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2026

The results presented in Table 5 summarize the outcome of a multiple regression analysis conducted to test the hypotheses. Looking at the coefficients, SCDR had the highest standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.601$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting it is the most significant positive predictor of employee performance among the three variables. ECS also significantly predicts EP ($\beta = 0.479$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that eco-friendly compensation contributes meaningfully to performance outcomes. Surprisingly, GRIP has a small negative coefficient ($\beta = -0.081$, $p = 0.021$), implying a slight inverse relationship with performance, which may suggest that recognition programmes alone, without tangible rewards or career opportunities, may not

effectively drive performance.

The model produced a high R-value of 0.898, indicating a strong correlation between the independent variables and employee performance. The R-Squared value of 0.797 suggests that approximately 79.7% of the variance in employee performance is jointly explained by GRIP, ECS, and SCDR. The Adjusted R-Squared of 0.787 further confirms the model's robustness, adjusting for the number of predictors. The ANOVA result shows a significant F-statistic of 32151.568 with a p-value of 0.000, indicating that the overall model is statistically significant.

The low tolerance values and VIFs within

acceptable limits suggest that multicollinearity is not a concern in this model. Overall, the findings support the hypotheses that ECS and SCDR positively and significantly affect employee performance, while GRIP shows a weaker and inverse effect.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

Green Recognition and Incentive Programmes (GRIP) and Employee Performance (EP).

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that Green Recognition and Incentive Programmes (GRIP) had a negative and significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = -0.084$, $p = 0.021$). This implies that the implementation of GRIP, as practiced in the selected public universities, did not translate positively into enhanced performance of employees. This could suggest a possible mismatch between recognition mechanisms and employees' values or expectations in the institutions studied. This finding contrasts with the assertion of Jabbour and Santos (2023), who emphasized that well-structured green recognition programmes enhance employees' morale and engagement in environmentally responsible behaviours. Similarly, Kundu and Gahlawat (2022) found that green rewards promote eco-conscious behaviour and performance outcomes. However, the present study indicates that in Delta State public universities, such programmes may be symbolic or inadequately implemented, thus weakening their potential impact. This highlights the need for strategic design and alignment of GRIP with institutional goals and employee motivations.

Eco-friendly Compensation Structures (ECS) and Employee Performance (EP).

The second hypothesis demonstrated that Eco-friendly Compensation Structures (ECS) significantly and positively has effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.485$, $p = 0.000$). This underscores the importance of incorporating green-related incentives in compensation models to drive desirable performance among staff in public universities.

The finding aligns with the views of Renwick et al. (2023), who argued that compensation linked to environmental initiatives reinforces employee efforts toward sustainability goals. Additionally, Opatha and Arulrajah (2021) maintained that integrating eco-incentives into salary structures can stimulate motivation and accountability in eco-responsible actions. The result affirms that public universities that reward staff for environmental contributions can foster higher commitment, job satisfaction, and ultimately, improved performance. It also implies that eco-sensitive remuneration is a viable lever for embedding environmental consciousness into university operations.

Sustainable Career Development Rewards (SCDR) and Employee Performance (EP).

Results from the third hypothesis indicated that Sustainable Career Development Rewards (SCDR) had a positive and significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.608$, $p = 0.000$). This suggests that when career growth opportunities are linked to green practices, such as training in environmental innovation or promotions tied to sustainability engagement, employees are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of performance. This is consistent with the work of Shaikh et al. (2022), who affirmed that career development aligned with environmental goals promotes proactive behaviour and professional commitment. Furthermore, Singh and Verma (2023) found that sustainable development programmes attract and retain talent who value environmental responsibility, leading to better organizational outcomes. Therefore, the present study reinforces the role of SCDR in nurturing a workforce that is not only environmentally aware but also motivated to deliver optimal performance in public university settings.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated *green reward management and employee performance of*

public universities in Delta State, Nigeria, It established that green reward management significantly influences employee performance in public universities. Specifically, eco-friendly compensation structures and sustainable career development rewards emerged as strong positive predictors of improved employee output, highlighting the importance of integrating environmental sustainability into HR reward strategies. Conversely, the negative influence of green recognition and incentive programmes suggests a need for reassessment and enhancement of such initiatives to ensure they effectively motivate staff. The findings affirm that adopting comprehensive and well-structured green HR practices not only promotes environmental responsibility but also enhances institutional performance by aligning employee goals with sustainability objectives.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are worthnoting: (i) Public universities should redesign and strengthen green recognition and incentive programmes to ensure they are meaningful, motivating, and aligned with employees' values and contributions. (ii) Management should integrate eco-friendly compensation structures into employee reward systems to foster commitment toward sustainability goals. (iii) Sustainable career development rewards should be institutionalized to encourage long-term employee engagement in green practices and performance excellence.

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