

CENTRALIZATION AND CORPORATE GREENING PRACTICES IN A HIGH-RISK SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The trend of an ongoing global environmental crisis amidst various devastating impacts on biodiversity is increasing. Unfortunately, while many organizations are indulging in unsustainable business practices by pursuing profitability at the expense of sustainability, only some committed to mitigating the worsening global humanitarian escalations are finding it difficult to attain their sustainability set goals due to unsupportive structures. Hence, the present study examined the effect of centralization structure (OSC) on corporate greening practices (CG) in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. To achieve the set objective, the study adopted a survey design and used a stratified random sampling technique, structured questionnaire (adapted), Survey Monkey Software, and Raosoft sample size calculator to select 410 respondents from 1,732 population of the lower-level managers. The 326 valid responses collected were analysed using the Categorical Regression Model at a 5% significance level because the data collected were categorical. The study findings showed that OSC, though it has a positive relationship with CG, but its effect was insignificant. The study concluded that OSC is not a good predictor of CG practices in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. Therefore, it is recommended that OSC be blended with other structural elements, particularly professionalization, to promote pro-environmental behaviours among the employees and foster a safe and conducive environment in the sector. Finally, the study findings offered valuable contributions that were useful for policymakers, stakeholders, and researchers, as well as adding to the existing body of knowledge in the field of management.

KEYWORDS: Centralization, Corporate greening, Downstream sector, Environmental crisis, Organizational structure, Sustainability

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to investigate the adoption level of corporate greening practices (CG) in a high-risk sector. This is because studies have shown that while some organizations are making genuine efforts to embrace sustainability practices, scores of them are still struggling to no avail. Generally, business organizations, irrespective of purposes, locations, and industry affiliations, are inclined to make decisions primarily for value optimization sake. Paradoxically, the chances that those decisions would affect the environment in some ways, which can either be positive and/or negative during the operations, are high. Since those decisions revolve around the resource acquisitions, transformations, allocations and reallocations, it is imperative for the business organizations to focus on minimizing every possible negative effect of their decisions on the environment where preferred complete eradication is impossible. Indeed, organizations need a provable means of checking employees to

ensure that they become sustainability-oriented entities (Keelson & Padi, 2024; Jiang et al., 2018). However, organizations must be ready to inculcate their members with pro-active environmental behaviours, which is a prerequisite for keying into the global sustainable development agenda (SDGs). Otherwise, making successful headway by the organization will remain mere daydreaming and fantasies (Berniak-Wozny et al., 2023).

Furthermore, unless the employees become sustainability compliant, exhibiting pro-environmental behaviours would be difficult. Of course, this can be particularly dangerous for high-risk industries like the oil and gas industry. Imbibing sustainability best practices while making business decisions is critical to ensure adequate attention is paid to the well-being of people, profit, and the planet towards making simultaneous success and maintaining a balance among them (Gupta et al., 2023). This is contrary to unsustainable business practices, which focus mainly on economic breakthroughs and probably on people's well-being without minding environmental sanctity despite the unimaginable consequences of such an approach, which may include the possible reversal of years of recorded socio-economic achievements. A clear example of the pervasiveness and indiscriminate impacts of unsustainability practices on biodiversity as we have witnessed include the Croatia and Greece's earthquakes; Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe tropical cyclones; Beirut and Nigeria conflagrations, among others (Centre for Disaster Philanthropy, 2023). In other words, the current trend of unsustainability around the world constitutes a serious threat to the peace and tranquillity of biodiversity.

In view of the foregoing, corporate greening, which is the practice capable of helping organizations to promote pro-environmental behaviors among their employees or control their environmental orientations when genuinely embraced, can help the world to minimize the menace of unsustainable practices on biodiversity at the organizational level. Of course, persistent unsustainable business practices would hinder the effective realization of sustainable development goals. So, any act capable of contributing to the present state of the global environmental crisis must be avoided. Otherwise, it would further worsen the global environmental crisis situation. This is because no organizations or sectors can realize their growth potential in a tumultuous and disorganized environment. None is immune from the consequential negative impacts of unsustainability. Not even the oil and gas which its products are predominantly hydrocarbons; volatile, flammable, and ever-prone to fires and explosions (Muo & Azeez, 2019). Against this backdrop, the oil and gas industry has traditionally disintegrated into three distinct sectors, namely, upstream, midstream, and downstream.

Indeed, while the division may be done using proximity to the end-users, it is basically for safety reasons. Also, while the prefixes "up", "mid," and "down" tend to describe operational locations of the sectors along the industry value chain, the affix "stream" tends to emphasize the inherent complexity of the industry as a whole. Undoubtedly, oil and gas have remained among the high-risk business milieus that cannot afford to ignore the adoption of sustainability practices. In other words, each sector of the industry contains its own fair share of sustainability-related challenges significant enough to warrant careful and meticulous operations through the corporate greening framework. However, the downstream sector tends to be peculiar due to the people's inability to avoid it at any point despite the depth of threats posed to them through socio-economic and political landscapes, especially when there is a serious safety breach. Hence, the downstream sector is a conventionally inescapable reality for average citizens, making the impacts of its safety breaches more pervasive compared to if similar safety breaches would have happened affecting the mid or upstream sector.

That notwithstanding, the significance of the downstream sector can be connected to a number of reasons. These may include its essentiality in dealing with refined petroleum products, its closeness to the populace, and the frequency with which the people interact with it for daily energy consumption. Given those enumerated peculiarities, the downstream sector is critical to the survival of the country. Specifically, the Nigerian downstream sector has witnessed a lot of transformative projects in the last

few years, albeit unstructured, marked by the obvious proliferation of petrol and gas stations within and around the neighborhoods and an astronomic increase in haulage transporting activities. Implicatively, a few the available precarious road networks have been experiencing unnecessary strains and pressures causing avoidable traffic gridlocks and road crashes daily. Taking a cue from such consequences of haphazard planning amidst poor coordination, adopting rails and/or pipeline transporting systems to complement the current transportation model may be necessary. In order words, instead of relying solely on heavily loaded trucks with dangerous substances to be plying those roads, many of which, to a larger extent, are ill-constructed. Hence, incorporating more sustainable systems would bring about the required relief.

That would suggest that Nigeria is in support of the global agreement concerning the net zero even though the Nigerian government has pleaded for tenure elongation to 2060 against the generally agreed 2050. The reason given by the Nigerian government is to enable it to prepare in terms of the necessary resources and capacity buildings required to achieve net zero set target. Based on that, scholars across different disciplines and practices have been investigating various variables relating to sustainability. Take, for instance, researchers (e.g., Dhali, Hassan. & Subramaniam, 2023; Balcilar, Usman & Ike, 2023) who have interrogated different types of variables to gain insights into the behaviors and practices connoting sustainability compliance. Generally, several researchers have been interrogating organizational structures in view to identify its appropriate dimensions capable of helping the organizations to identify behaviours necessary for sustainability practices to happen in different functional areas. Specifically, researchers such as Hassan (2018), Ogunkoya and Elumah (2015), Gulch et al. (2014), Donaldson (2018), and Pérez-Valls et al. (2017) among others, have to interrogated different aspects of organizational goal characteristics like improve-productivities goal-congruent, customer-satisfactions, ethical-behaviors.

Despite those aforementioned scholarly efforts, the forerunners have refused to isolate or interrogate any constructs relating to corporate greening practices in their studies. Not only that, they have also failed to interrogate any organizational structure constructs in relation to the corporate greening practices as far as the researchers are aware. Even though the researchers like Keelson and Padi (2024), Singh et al. (2020), Jackson et al. (2018) isolated some variables relating to the corporate greening practices, they did so in absence of any constructs relating to the organizational structure. However, the study of Keelson and Padi (2024), which appears to be closely related, at least in contents, also differs in the methodological approach to the present study. Similarly, researchers like Musanzikwa and Ramchander (2018), Sharma et al. (2016), Streimikiene, Mikalauskas, Lėckienė, Pisula and Mikalauskiene (2024), who investigated certain constructs relating to corporate greening practices in relation to certain organizational characteristics such as liquidity ratio, structural alignment, and organizational citizenships, did not only do so outside of the sector of interest but also focused in developed countries.

Specifically, Dhali, Hassan, and Subramaniam (2023), and Oladepo (2014), among others, despite that their studies focused on the Nigerian oil and gas industry, those studies failed to consider constructs relating to organizational structure. In other words, contextual differences established from the previous studies coupled with the multifaceted nature of organizational structures represent the gap in the literature. Hence, the present study has reduced organizational structure despite a number of its constructs to only centralization to ensure an in-depth interrogation regarding its effect on corporate greening practices in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria is done towards narrowing the gaps in the literature and extend the boundary of knowledge in the field of management. Finally, the study is sectionalized into different sections: section one contains the introduction; Section Two, the literature reviews; Section Three, the aim and methodological bases; Section Four, the results and discussion; Section Five, the conclusion; Section six, the recommendation and next to it is the references.

1 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Conceptual Review

1.1.1 Corporate Greening (CG)

Indeed, corporate greening can be seen as a management practice that concerns itself with the general good of the environment using active management control systems; it is the ability of an organization to establish a business process that attempts to guarantee environmental sanity and good public health. Rithwick et al. (2013) posit that corporate greening represents a management strategy to help an organization to promote pro-environmental behaviours among its members. Similarly, Zelm, et al. (2015) opine that corporate greening is a systematic and progressive way of reducing operational risks capable of affecting the environmental and the organizations negatively. More so, Kehbila et al. (2010) perceive corporate greening as a medium through which an organization can influence the public to perceive it positively thereby increasing the patronages of its products relative its competitors. On that note, Camillieri (2017) describe corporate greening as the practices that help the management to recognise the interplay between different interests competing for attention in the business environment with which the organization must evenly cater for to achieve its set goals efficiently and efficiently.

Environment is the host of all phenomena including the business organizations, owners, managers, employees, customers and other key business stakeholders (Yang et al. (2017; Sulistio & Rini, 2015). So, fostering environmental conduciveness through the use of appropriate control systems is better for the organizations themselves. Covertly or overtly indulging in ecocide through unsustainable business practices in the name of profit maximization connotes a disservice to all. This is because whatever adversely affects the environment would automatically affect everything else, including all the elements in the environment. Hence, it is advisable to always be mindful of organizational operations' impacts on the environment particularly, through the use of corporate greening. Corporate greening thus represents a thoroughfare through which serious organizations launched into sustainability domain before earning the credibility of a public friendly corporation, which leads to public perception of the organization making positive contributions to the society at large. Hence, organizations should always be mindful of their operational impacts on the environment, which are crucial to attaining corporate sustainability (Bari, Chimhundu & Chan, 2022; Takahashi & Nakamura, 2005).

1.1.2 Corporate Greening Practices (CGP)

According to Seidler *et al.* (2017), corporate greening practices represent a process through which an organization can equip its employees with pro-environmental lessons and behaviours towards preventing the environment from unnecessary abuse of business operations. Considering business organizations' relevance in the society especially, in terms of the number of individuals from different families and localities in their employments, imbibing corporate greening practices can make an appreciable difference in fostering collectively ameliorating negative environmental impacts (Alshura & Al Assuli, 2017). In order words, it is only the portion of the employees who have been given proper orientations through corporate greening practices that can help an organization to drive sustainability and thus, save it from the implications of bad reputation. Hence, the essence of corporate greening practices is to imbibe proactive approaches to improving the organization's environmental management profile (Ivancic *et al.*, 2017). By the same token, Basu *et al.* (2018) perceive corporate greening practices as an organization's ability to put a robust environmental management framework capable of inculcating employees with sustainability mind-sets. This encourages them to be continuously motivated to demonstrate high sense of care for the environment in the course of discharging their various duties.

The ability of an organization to make use of corporate greening practices to drive sustainability helps it to understand the nature of the relationship it would foster with its target market and society at large. By extension, this predicts the type of reputation (good or bad) it would reap viz-a-viz the level of market opportunity and productivity enjoyed at the end of the day. This is because if an organization is known with good environmental management practices, it tends to get a good and positive reputation with limitless advantages. The reason is that, people would perceive it as an environmentally friendly organization while, the reverse is the case for an organization with negative reputation. This is so because the people would perceive it as environmentally irresponsible thereby left with little or no capacity to broaden its market for increasing opportunities and business continuity. Certainly, bad reputation or environmentally irresponsible identity can only make an organization to receive negative and hostile responses from its stakeholders and contend with little or no opportunity for long term survival.

However, an organization can instil its employees with pro-environmental behaviours required to reduce unsustainable practices and thus proffer solutions to the global environmental crisis on biodiversity (Roibu *et al.*, 2019). An organization that is involved in unsustainable business practices and thus reckoned as an environmental polluter cannot advance prosperously in society. This is because no one is free from the consequences of unsustainable business practices. In other words, in as much as everything within the remit of the environment is a victim of environmental incidents, it is imperative for every organization to adopt corporate greening practices, which favour sustainability. Deducing from the foregoing, corporate greening practices if embraced sincerely, is capable of changing the popular short-term business rewards orientation which seeks to serve the interests of the few business owners, managers and staff at the detriment of the broader interests of the majority stakeholders in the larger environment (sustainability). In a sense, corporate greening practices remain a comprehensive management control system that combines qualitative and quantitative measuring framework towards guiding an organization to checkmate itself in determining whether it is maintaining equilibrium amongst the three focal points of sustainability namely; economic (profit), social (people) and environmental (planet).

1.1.3 Organizational Structure and Corporate Greening Practices

Organization as a social system needs a structure to effectively and efficiently harness, organize, control and coordinate its resources. The organizational structure is a simple and suitable platform that ensures structural fit for the nature and size of an organization towards facilitating effective and efficient achievements of goals and objectives. According to Winn and Angell (2000), it can be regarded as a tool for clarifying roles and responsibilities assigned to the organizational members to avoid conflicts while improving their productivities. On his own, Kuye (2004) perceives organizational structure as a framework for allocating resources, assign responsibilities and empower the employees to performing their assigned tasks. Similarly, Chung-Jen and Jing-Wen (2007) describe organizational structure as a framework for promoting corporate citizenships among the employees while Weihrich *et al.* (2008) conceptualized organizational structure as a tool for identifying, classifying and grouping activities among different organizational divisions to minimize rancorous relationship that can hinder effective realization of the organizational goals.

Furthermore, Shabbir (2017) opines that organizational structure represents a framework for establishing roles assigned to the employees across all levels to enable them function optimally. Johanna *et al.* (2017) on the other hand posit that organizational structure is a mechanism designed to guide the employees through the processes as well as coordinating their behaviours towards predetermined goals, which may be improved productivities or good organizational citizenships. In other words, organizational structure sees to the appropriateness of monitoring and control of

employees towards enhancing their contributions to the realization of the organizational set goals. Hence, organizational structure implies the systemic linkages between different components of an organization towards fostering a goal congruent irrespective of diversities among the members. Conceptually, enhancing commercially benefitted ideas for an organization demands a particular framework to distribute responsibilities and authorities among the members in a manner that is perceived to be fair to all. Otherwise, harnessing internal strengths to cultivate competitive advantage at minimum costs relative to the costs incurred in bringing them together and maintaining them might just be a wishful thinking.

In other word, an organizational structure is devised internally to coordinate the whole web of organization's configuration towards minimizing its internal weaknesses or enhancing internal strengths, maximizing the embedded advantages in the external environment. and minimising the threats within the external environment in the interest of the organization. Against this backdrop, several organizational structural dimensions such as mechanistic or bureaucratic structure (i.e., authority always flows from the top) and organic or decentralized (i.e., certain degree of authority flows from the bottom) have been examined (Atkinson *et al.*, 2000) but there has been little or no clear cut position on the prediction of organizational sustainability. Hence, the present study interrogated centralization structure towards determining the degree of its effectiveness for corporate greening practices.

1.1.4 Centralization Structure

Centralization is a form of organizational structure in which the locus of authority lies at the topmost part of the organization's hierarchy. This describes the direction through which authority flows during the process of decision-making, which is at times describe to the extent of decentralization. However, it is identified as 'centralization' in this study to reflect innovative stance of the corporate greening practices it tends to explain. Sustainability is much broader in concept and practice compared to the usual environmental management practices nomenclature applied in many studies. Thus, the assumption is that the top-level managers know better regarding the direction to which an organization should go to achieve its goals in the most effective and efficient manners (Maduenyi *et al.*, 2015). In other words, there would be enough clarity in the instructions issued in the centralized structural arrangement whenever instructions are issued to the employees.

While some scholars may have some reservation for pure hierarchical structural arrangement given its tendency to limit the lower level managers' decision making capacities (Siebert *et al.*, 2020; Caruana *et al.*, 1998; Pennings, 1973), centralization has a way to invigorate the lower level employees. This it does by instilling a sense of importance in those employees who are delegated to handle or facilitate the completion of certain assignments considered important and critical to the effective realization of organizational goals. However, the reverse may be the case if an organization is operating a highly-centralised structure. In such a structure, getting feedbacks often times become very difficult and are thwarted when come eventually. This may happen in the form of information hoarding or refusal to disclose every detail to the managers as a way to cover certain misdeeds. It may be to avoid blames or retributions or to demonstrate a loyalty for the existing relationships among the supervisors and subordinates which may not even be official. Still, the organization is at the receiving end especially when affect quality of work done and consequently result in reputational dent for such an organization especially if the matter is sustainability related.

Often times, that happens where some managers did not share their organization's vision in its wholeness and they are expected to implement decisions that are variant with their ideals. Of course, it would be poorly implemented and it may not be detected on the spot because top managers may not pay adequate attention to how effective the delegated decisions are being implemented . So, unless people shared their organization's vision which can be found in small proportion of highly-motivated

individuals managers who may be ready to take absolute responsibilities for their organizational success as distilled in corporate greening principles. Be that as it may, centralization can be more effective because in a centralized structure, strategic managers understand that until desired results sought are realized, the delegated authorities and responsibilities are nowhere completely implemented. Hence, they tend to pay adequate attention to details by keeping abreast to other level managers below them until assigned tasks are completely executed. In other words, operational mistakes by lower level managers may be minimize under centralized structure (Dedahanov *et al.*, 2017; Hassan, 2018).

This notwithstanding, every member of the organization is entitled to have a clear understanding of administrative flows of authority (i.e., from the top-down or bottom-up) in their organizations with clearly defined and integrated qualitative and quantitative key performance indicators (KPIs) linked to sustainability (Bicker & Waxenberger, 2002).

1.1.5 Centralization (OSC) and Corporate Greening Practices (CG)

There is a possibility that over-centralization would breed excessive control which can hinder knowledge transfer in the organization. That is not to say that centralization is not crucial as a structure for providing clarity for proper implementation of decisions to the employees. It does for the effective and efficient attainment of the organizational goals. However, the type of centralization being suggested here is one that is not overly rigid but the one that is adaptable enough to aid cross-fertilization of ideas required for innovation across the lengths and breadths of the organization. This is because unnecessary highhandedness can cause the learning and innovative drive curves required of successful propagation of corporate greening practices to be flatten (Dyson, 2019; Atkinson *et al.*, 2000). Indeed, constant transmissions of creative and innovative ideas within an organization are a prerequisite for solving sustainability related problems and facilitating ease attainment of sustainability set goals. So, knowledge flow must not be allowed to be interrupted at any time because that is what required for active participation of organizational members to actively involved in corporate greening practices. Ideally, no part of an organization should be excluded from the scheme of things or be deprived of necessary information concerning the corporate greening. Otherwise, solving sustainability-related problems and committed to true sustainability drive would remain impossible.

In view of the foregoing, Hassan (2018) argues that average employees have a way of reducing their contributions once they begin to feel unsecured. He goes on to suggest that organizations should try and grant certain levels of autonomy to their employees while performing their functions. While that may be logical on the basis that any form of restrictions capable of making the employees less-creative may lead to new bigger problems, it may not be true and applicable to the matter of corporate greening practices in all situations. This is because active involvement of strategic managers is highly advocated to set the pace in sustainability practices and always keep the throughway clear and unobstructed to really solve sustainability-related problems effectively within the system (Pérez-Valls *et al.*, 2017; Lamichhane & Shrestha, 2017). Under normal circumstances, the employees who perceived themselves to be discriminated against can hardly developed a sense of belonging let alone give their best to the organizations. So, in designing a structure, an organization must be deliberate and purposeful to ensure it does not discriminate against any employee. Otherwise, it will not serve the intended purpose of maintaining corporate greening-supportive environment with full supports of all the employees for an organization to achieve its sustainability set goals in the most effective and efficient manner (Dedahanov *et al.*, 2017).

Unless the employees are encouraged to think clearly, deeply and interpretatively, driving the creative and innovative ideas that required for an organization to thrive and survive in today's turbulent and fierce operating environment may be impossible. Hence, there has been a wide advocacy for the business organizations to join hands in the struggle to finding an enduring solution to an on-going

global environmental crisis orchestrated by the contemporary developments (Atkinson et al., 2000; Kallay & Lynn 2016). No doubt, the world is currently coping with sustainability challenges of different dimensions craving for proper attention. Therefore, controlling of the employees' environmental behaviours is critical to the attainment of sustainability set goals of an organization. While that demands collective participations of members of the organizations, centralization structure may be required to adequately moderate their behaviours towards minimizing operational errors that would surely inherent in their individual or collective tasks (Bamgbade *et al.*, 2017; Lambert *et al.*, 2006).

Based on that, an organization cannot afford to leave the employees alone in uncontrollable loops of systemic functions and expect them to behave in a sustainability manner. Indeed, the process of providing creative and innovative solutions to the sustainability related challenges confronting the society at the organizational level is full of trials and errors that pervade the whole systems hence, need for adequate control and coordination (Lamichhane & Shrestha, 2017). Against that backdrop, centralization structure can help to organize employees' efforts and activities in a manner that tend to prioritize sustainability while predicting successful corporate greening practices particularly, in high risk sectors like the oil and gas in Nigeria.

1.2 Theoretical Review

This section concerns itself with the review of theories concerning sustainability related constructs toward bringing them together for supporting the study's thesis. Therefore, The Tipple Bottom-Line (TBL) and Proto-Theory of Sustainability were considered relevant and reviewed accordingly.

1.2.1 Proto-Theory of Sustainability

The proto-theory of sustainability which argues that man must always exercise duty of care while performing their activities towards ensuring environmental wellbeing has its root traced to the American Economist and Sociologist, Thorsten Bunde Veblen (1857 – 1929) who was known for his staunch criticism of capitalism on the account of seeking profitability at the expense of sustainability. The intellectual forerunners who believed that the way and manner with which the owners of factors of production their era are carrying out the processing of raw materials extractions and productions were doing so with little or no recourse to sustainability hence, described the scenario as natural resources exploitation and ostentatious consumption (Michelle, 2001; Du Pisani, 2007). Historically, the concept of 'sustainability' which literally means durability was rooted in the word "durable" which first appeared in the Oxford English Dictionary during the last half of the 20th century and since then, the term "sustainability" has become a popular word in scientists' lexicon. who truly care about the wellbeing of the environment. Indeed, while some researchers argue that sustainability literature hardly progressing at an appreciable rate particularly, in business and management domains due to the perceived inability of rich theories that can explain sustainability for all to truly appreciate its importance (Starik & Kanashiro, 2013).

Considering the lingering conflict between the business and the environment despite the inseparable interdependence and interrelationship that exist between them, managers must be able to account for their operational stewardships always. Adherent to the corporate greening practices can instigate the organizations to assume their sustainability responsibilities towards resolving the prevailing conflict among humans, organizations and other constituents of the environment. So, if the intention is to promote harmony and tranquillity proper understanding of evolving nature of this phenomenon demands use of relevant lenses as proto-theory of sustainability to improve the literature especially, in the areas of organizations and business management. Unlike other perspectives which have inadvertently promoting unsustainable business practices in the name of profit maximisation which actually short run benefits, proto-theory of sustainability can help organizational to redirect their focus

to the long-term benefits by depriving or deferring immediate gratifications that are not translating to enduring benefits for the society as a whole (Forbes & Jermier, 2010; Norton, 2005; Bell & Morse, 2008; Manioudis & Meramveliotakis, 2022).

Through the lens of proto-theory of sustainability, taking cognizance of imperative complex interactions and relationships that is taking place within the environment can help the managers to deemphasize on short-term business reorientations. However, while proto-theory of sustainability has its own fair share of criticisms, its shortcomings limit its applicability. After all, a theory cannot explain everything in everywhere at a given period still, it is appropriate to visualize sustainable development goals and thus, it is relevant for the present study.

1.2.2 Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory

The triple bottom line theory was propounded by Spreckley in 1981 where he argues that the usual organizations' indulgence in practices that are injurious to the environment in the name of profit making must be stopped given enormous adverse effects it as on our wellbeing. Similarly, John Elkington, a proponent of Spreckley takes the message further in 1994 where he argues that it is in the best interest of all including the business organizations and their agents to take adequate care of the environment. The belief is that doing so would produce a better result beneficial for broad interests as against fewer interests of the business owners and managers. Given that tenet of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), it is more profitable to prevent the environment than for an organization to overtly or covertly indulge in unsustainable business practices. Especially, that it can be proved that the business organizations and their agents are equally elements and beneficiary of the environment that required prevention or protection. Therefore, organizations are expected to be environmentally friendly to make the environment conducive for all to fulfil certain set objectives. So, finding an enduring solution to the prevailing environmental challenges particularly, at the organizational level makes the TBL model imperative.

Through the TBL model lens, the employees can take responsibility for environmental sanity while taking necessary steps to avoid unsustainable business practices. Commonly, unsustainable practices usually manifest itself in excessive adherent to profit maximization to which the TBL model has come to correct for business organizations to begin to prioritize social and environmental wellbeing alongside economic profitability (Loknath & Azeem, 2019). It is arguably the environment remains an abode and it must always be made conductively habitable for all. If real contributions of an organization to society can best be assessed by its level of commitment to active environmental management, the extent of its achievable success is also depends on sanity and conduciveness of the environment (Spreckley, 1981). In its opinion, Bull (2018) considers TBL the right model for an organization to foster mutually beneficial relationships among different constituent within the environment. With that understanding, organizations can successfully drive sustainability via corporate greening practices. It then suffices to say that corporate greening practices and TBL model represent a gestalt seeking to awake the organizational members to their environmental management responsibilities. Undoubtedly, TBL model informs the organizations to create incremental values transcending the organizations' boundary to affect the larger society positively as against the usual pursuance of narrow gains that benefits a few interests (Yousuf et al., 2017).

It is on that basis of the importance of organizations' making normal profits in businesses and the organizational structures' ability to account for effective realization of sustainability set goals, the present study underpinned by the tenet of the TBL model. However, like any other model, the TBL has not existed without its own share of criticisms chief of which is premised on the perceived measurement difficulty. Consequently, the TBL is not only criticised but also tagged as "nearness to greenwashing". It suggests that some unscrupulous organizations often take advantage of TBL model

to deceive the public such that they present themselves as though, environmentally friendly and then begin to invest in sustainability reports manipulations. Meanwhile, they are far from understanding sustainability as a practice let alone demonstrating it in reality (Kallay & Lynn, 2016). Based on that, there are elements of truth in the critics' opinions which makes their position difficult to be completely refuted. However, some of the organizations that are presenting themselves sustainability oriented even while they do not are comfortable with rhetorical about it.

In fairness to the critics of the TBL model, the argument that TBL model lacks the precisions for proper evaluation of performances is a striking one. This is because setting sustainability tractable performance objectives for the employees to deliver can be somewhat difficult. It is on that aspect of difficulty in measuring performance standards that the TBL model critics perceived it unsystematic and thus good enough a mechanism for qualitative complaints and rankings analyses (Sridhar & Jones, 2013). Even at that, the TBL model if carefully fine-tuned as a process for critically evaluating employees' environmental behaviours can minimize those envisaged difficulties. However, in allaying the critics' fear towards retaining and maintaining the overall good of the TBL model, corporate greening practices seeks to help the organizations to encourage the employees owned sustainability practices process despite the stringent demands involved. Hence, the present study is anchored on the tenet of the TBL model to imbibe pro-environmental behaviours or active environmental management practices in the employees at all levels in the organizations.

2 AIM AND METHODOLOGICAL BASES

The aim of this study is to interrogate the effect of centralization structure on corporate greening practices (CG) in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. Hence, the hypothesis is set thus: there is no significant effect of centralization on the corporate greening practices in the downstream sector of the oil and gas industry in southwest Nigeria. To achieve the aim of the study, quantitative survey design, stratified random sampling technique and structured questionnaire were adopted for the collection of cross-sectional data from 410 out of 1732 lower-level managers determined through RAOSOFT sample size estimator software across the six strata of privately-owned downstream organizations under the aegis of Major Oil Marketers Association of Nigeria (MOMAN) comprised 11 Energy/Mobil Oil, Ardova/Forte Oil, Conoil Oil, MRS Oil, OVH/Oando Oil, Total Oil.

Table 1 Population and Sample Size Breakdown

Company	Staff strength	Sample size per firm
11 Energy/Mobil	250	$250 / 1732 \times 410 = 59$
Ardova/Forte Oil	302	$302 / 1732 \times 410 = 72$
Conoil Oil	230	$230 / 1732 \times 410 = 54$
MRS Oil	200	$200 / 1732 \times 410 = 47$
OVH/Oando Oil	300	$300 / 1732 \times 410 = 71$
Total Oil	450	$450 / 1732 \times 410 = 107$
Total	1,732	410

(Source: MOMAN Secretariat, 2021)

2.1 Research Instrument

The structured questionnaire was used for data elicitation as used by other researchers (e.g., Ilyas *et al.*, 2020; Chang *et al.*, 2019; Chukwuka & Nwomike, 2018; Horisch *et al.*, 2017). Hence, the instrument

which was based on the 5-point Likert scale rated as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither Agree, Nor Disagree, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree was considered suitable. Especially it affirmed respondents' confidentiality and anonymity, minimizing possible biases and errors. Consequently, the instrument was divided into two main parts, namely: demographic data, which comprises four (4) items; the independent variable (organizational structure (OS)) comprising 5 items and the dependent variable (corporate greening practice (CC)) consisting of 5 items, making fourteen (14) items in total. In that, the respondents' opinions concerning centralization (OSC) and corporate greening practices (CG) were sought and operationalised below.

Centralization structure (OSC) – is defined as the degree of reporting model towards promoting corporate greening practices in an organization.

Corporate Greening (CG) – is the degree of management orientation sustainability or a paradigm shift an organization tends to be having from unsustainable business practices to sustainability. Consequently, the items measured CG were adapted from McConnaughy (2014) and Seidler *et al.* (2017). The choice of Categorical regression was informed by its suitability in modelling relationships continuous and categorical variables effectively. Lastly, data cleansing was undertaken using the observation method to filter the data for outliers, remove irrelevant, fixed structural errors and missing data, and validate for quality assurance.

Table 2 Summary of Estimation Techniques

HYPOTHESIS	STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS	ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUE
Hypothesis 1	There is no significant effect of centralization on corporate greening practices in the downstream sector organizations in southwest Nigeria.	Categorical regression

(Source: Author, 2021)

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter depicts the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their opinions concerning the study variables, as well as a discussion of the hypotheses' results. Analysis of the 326 returned copies of the questionnaire (80 percent response rate) of concerning their perceptions regarding the degree of effects of OSC on CG in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria were analyzed with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS 23 version) using Categorical Regression at 5% level of significance statistical tool.

Table 3 Demographic Data (Descriptive Analysis)

Variable	Item	Count	%
Experience	Below 5years	101	31
	5years and above	225	69
	Total	326	100
Education	Undergraduate	23	7
	Graduate	199	61
	Postgraduate	104	32

	Total	326	100
Organization	11 Energy/Mobil Oil	41	13
	Arдова/Forte Oil	59	18
	Conoil	47	14
	MRS Oil	41	13
	Ovh/Oando Oil	62	19
	Total Oil	76	23
	Total	326	100
Department	Operation/production	35	11
	Sales/marketing	163	50
	Other	128	39
	Total	326	100

(Source: Survey, 2021)

Table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents have put in more than 4 years of experience, meaning that MOMAN has more experienced workers who are likely to be informed about sustainability practices. The negligible proportion of the respondents who are not yet a graduate also suggested that they are well-educated and likely to relate to the study's variables well. Again worth note is the table that shows a fair distribution of the respondents' feedback according to the surveyed organizations' staff strengths. Lastly, the table shows that the majority of the respondents belonged to the sales/marketing department, indicating that MOMAN organizations' core activity is sales/marketing. Taking a cue from those deductions suggested that the downstream sector of the oil and gas industry in Nigeria, to a large extent, fosters employees' development and empowerment and is thus sustainability-oriented. In other words, MOMAN organizations recognize multiple interests of stakeholders within their operating environment in which they must protect. Accordingly, MOMAN organizations tend to have a sustainability-oriented workforce capable of helping them to solve sustainability challenges rooted in the 21st century economy. In which case, emphasis is placed on centralization structure to keep them focus on minimizing sustainability-related mistakes capable of exposing them. Hence, poise to environmental conduciveness towards continuous strengthening of their employees' creative and innovative skills for problem-solving for competitive advantages.

3.1 Organizational Structure (OS) Variables

This subsection presents the level of opinions concerning the organizational structure of centralization on the corporate greening practices in the oil and gas downstream sector of the oil and gas industry in southwest Nigeria.

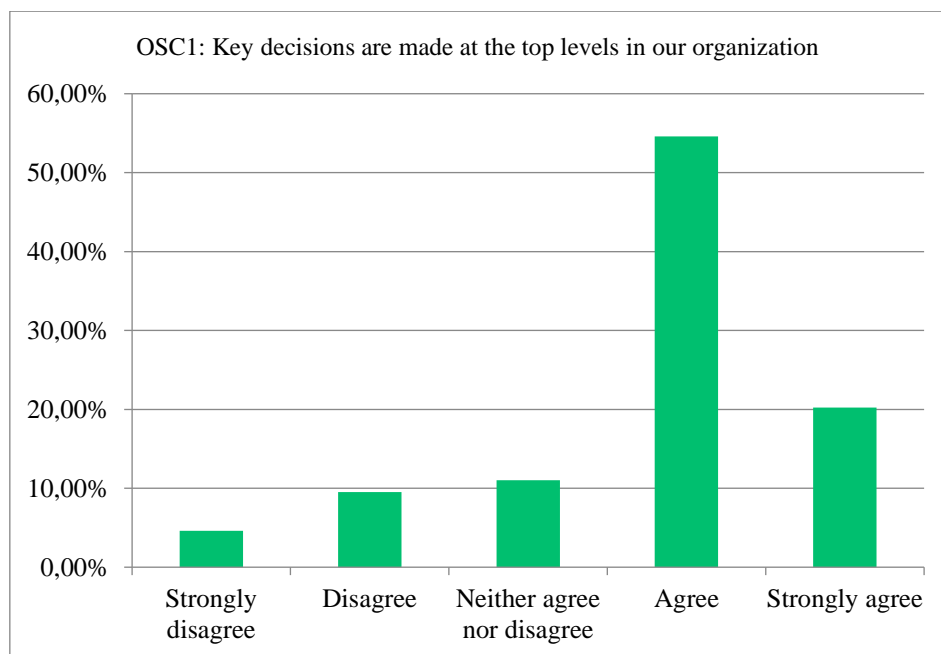
3.1.1 Centralization (OSC)

By centralization, the focus is on the appropriate guidance, direction, and recognition of the lower-level employees, who are the critical element of the organization and are also capable of proffering sustainable solutions to the problems of the increasing global environmental crisis in their respective organizations. Consequently, employees' opinions concerning the decision-making process, such as key decision-making patterns, involvement, delegation, fairness, and reporting models relating to corporate greening practices, were elicited. The results showed that centralization structure has a positive but insignificant effect ($\beta = 0.549$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$) on the corporate greening practices in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria and concluded that centralization structure may not necessarily be a good predictor of corporate greening practices in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. However,

interpretation of the result suggests that an improvement in centralization structure is not necessarily translating to a higher level of corporate greening practices in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. Compared that with the study of Pérez-Valls *et al.* (2017) shows some level of closeness due to the negative and insignificant relationship they also reported between centralization structure and sustainability practices in Spain's aviation sector. on the contrary, the result is inconsistent with Nasidi *et al.* (2018) and Kanimoli *et al.* (2020), who reported a positive and significant effect of centralization on environmental waste disposal management practices in the Malaysian construction sector. However, while the regression coefficient of 0.549 showed that, for every one-unit change in the centralization structure, the corporate greening practices will change by 0.549, and the null hypothesis is rejected, centralization alone is not enough to drive the corporate greening practices in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. More so, Usman, Johl, and Khan (2024), in their study on the nexus of green governance and sustainability performance in Nigeria's energy sector: An emerging paradigm, concluded that Nigeria's energy sector remains one of the main contributors to sustainability challenges significant enough to warrant them to imbibe sustainability practices across the board.

3.1.2 Pictorial Representation of Decision-making Process

Figure 1 Decision-making process

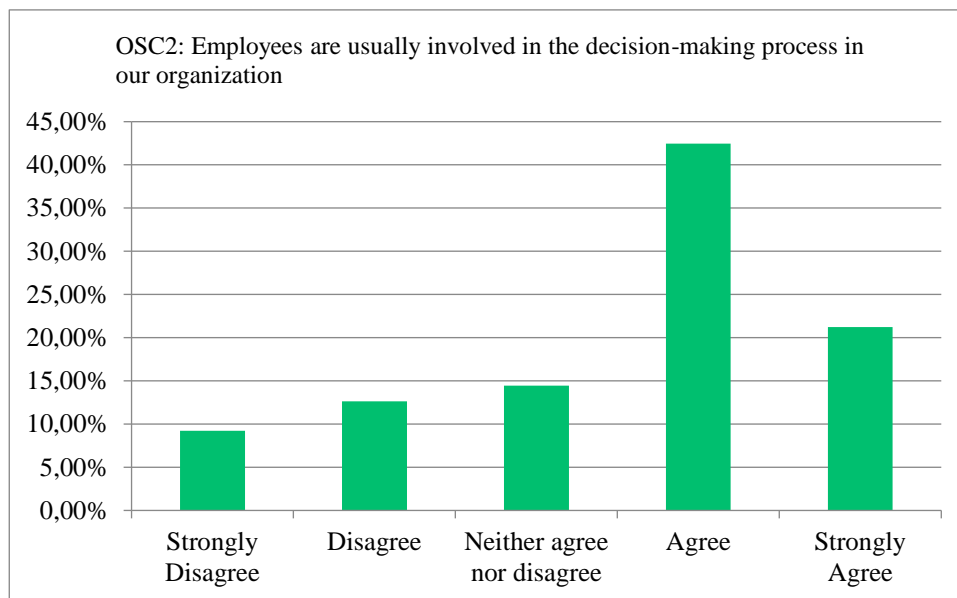


(Source: Field survey, 2021)

Figure 1 shows that 4.60% of the respondents strongly disagree, 9.51% disagree, 11.04% neither agree nor disagree, 54.60% agree, and 20.25% strongly agree with the statement concerning the level of the decision-making process from the corporate greening practices point of view. Ideally, employees that perceive their organization's decision-making process as non-discriminatory tend to be motivated and exhibit a high level of pro-environmental behaviours that will help the organization in its sustainability drive.

3.1.3 Pictorial Representation of Employee Involvement

Figure 2 Involvement

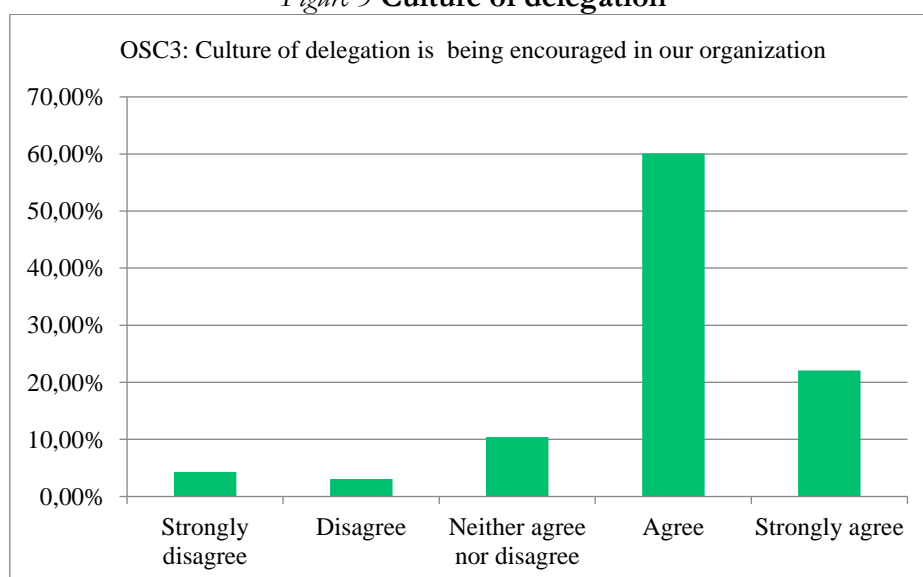


(Source: Field survey, 2021)

Figure 2 shows that 9.23% of the respondents indicate strongly disagree, 10.62% disagree, 14.46% neither agree nor disagree, 42.46% agree, and 21.23% strongly agree respectively to the statement concerning the tenet of employees’ involvement in relation to corporate greening practices decisions. Ordinarily, employees who are given the opportunity to superintend over certain aspect(s) of organization’s objectives, particularly sustainability-related matters, tend to display a high sense of worthiness. Hence, they improve the corporate greening practices to help the organization in its sustainability drive.

3.1.4 Pictorial Representation of Culture of Delegation

Figure 3 Culture of delegation



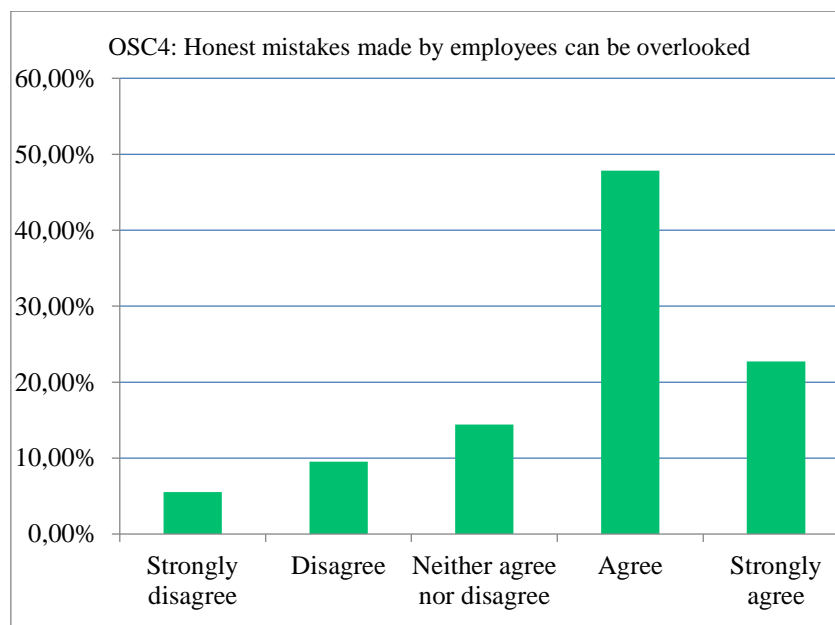
(Source: Field survey, 2021)

Thus, Figure 3 shows that 4.29% of the respondents indicate strongly disagree, 3.07% disagree, 10.43% neither agree nor disagree, 60.12% agree, and 22.09% strongly agree respectively to the statement concerning the culture of delegation, which suggests that delegation is thriving in the oil and gas downstream sector of the oil and gas industry in southwest Nigeria. Of course, these practices will encourage the employees to take ownership of the accident prevention process while helping the organization in its sustainability drive.

3.1.5 Pictorial Representation of the Principle of Fairness

Figure 4 shows that 5.52% of the respondents strongly disagree, 9.51% disagree, 14.42% neither agree nor disagree, 47.85% agree, and 22.70% strongly agree, respectively, to the statement concerning the principle of fairness on the part of their organizations. Logically, chances are that the employees who believe in the presence of fairness in respect of the organization overlooking some of the honest mistakes made by them tend to go beyond the minimum official requirements to get the job done effectively. This is particularly true with respect to health, safety, and environmental management at the workplace, hence helping the organization drive its sustainability.

Figure 4 Principle of fairness

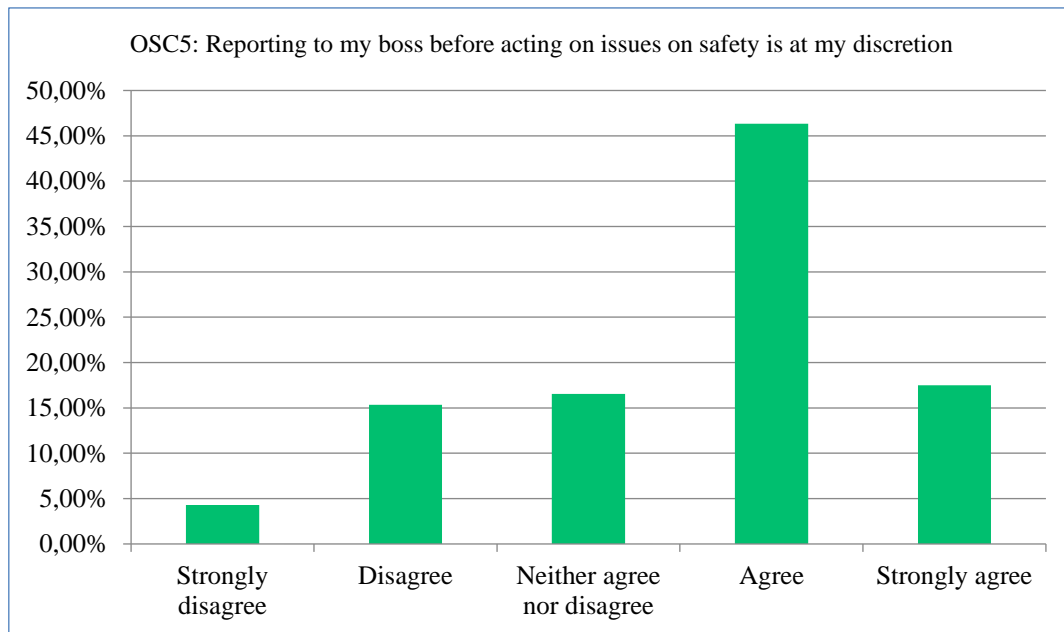


(Source: Field survey, 2021)

3.1.6 Pictorial Representation of Reporting Model

Thus, Figure 5 shows that 4.29% of the respondents strongly disagree, 15.34% disagree, 16.56% neither agree nor disagree, 46.32% agree, and 17.48% strongly agree, respectively, to the statement concerning the reporting model in their respective organizations. Traditionally, an unambiguous reporting model tends to improve performance in organizations, particularly in terms of corporate greening practices for sustainability. Thus, configuring the organizational structure to promote employees' pro-environmental behaviours will empower them to solve sustainability-related problems. Hence, it results in a successful experience of corporate greening practices that help the organization drive sustainability while improving its green reputation.

Figure 5 Reporting model



(Source: Field survey, 2021)

CONCLUSIONS

The study findings showed that centralization structure (OSC) though had a positive relationship with the CG, but its effect was insignificant on the on the CG practices of the investigated downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. The peculiarity of this result is that the centralization structure, though it has some level of capacity to provide the employees with a clear direction on CGP matters, does not have the tendency to aid the effective and efficient attainment of the organizational sustainability set goal stemming from its inability to employees along. Therefore, OSC may not be enough to adequately prepare the employees, particularly the lower-level managers, most of whom work at the operational levels, to take ownership of sustainability-related challenges (accidents) embedded in their tasks, which requires them to pay careful attention to the details towards helping their organization in sustainability drives. Particularly, apart from the possibility of OSC degenerating to over-centralization with time if care is not taken, it tends to affect CG practices negatively. The study hence concluded that OSC lacks the capacity to predict the desired level of CG practices needed to promote sustainability practices in the downstream sector in southwest Nigeria. Hence, the limitations of these findings include the ability to combine more than a construct of organizational structure in the study as well as the failure to use an interview technique of data collection, which can enable the researchers to gain more insight into the phenomenon investigated. However, the findings can still be useful for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the study findings, it is recommended that managers deemphasize reliance on the use of centralization in controlling the employees as it fails as a structural element to improve the employees' pro-environmental behaviours required to help the organizations to promote sustainability. Instead, consider it is blended with other structural elements like professionalization and formalization to foster more democratic relationships among the members of the organization. Expectedly, this will enable

them to feel free to exercise their rights as part of the organization without fear of prejudices while using their initiatives towards driving effective corporate greening practices as true corporate citizens. Lastly, researchers who may be interested in similar topics in their future studies can consider a mixed method of data collection, additional constructs of organizational structure, and possibly focus on multiple or different sectors other than oil and gas.

RESEARCH ETHICS STATEMENTS

This study did not require research ethics approval. The participants provided informed consent as an answer to the question before accessing the questionnaire.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire for the Study

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CORPORATE GREENING QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is meant to elicit information concerning centralization structural element contribution to employees’ pro-environmental behaviour in the pursuance of green initiatives in the downstream sector of southwest Nigeria.

CONFIDENTIALITY CLAUSE

The responses provided under this request shall be treated confidentially and strictly used for academic purposes.

SECTION ONE (DEMOGRAPHIC DATA)

This section aims to collect employee's biodata for proper profiling of the respondents. Kindly indicate (by ticking) which of the classification best corresponds with your status based on the statement below.

- i. Experience: Below 5years (1) 5years and above (2)
- ii. Education: Undergraduate (1) Graduate (2) Postgraduate (3)
- iii. Company: 11Energy/Mobil (1) Ardova/Forte (2) Conoil (3) MRS (4) Ovh/Oando (5) Total (6)
- iv. Department: Operation/production (1) Sales/marketing (2) Other (3)

SECTION TWO (ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE DATA)

This section seeks to collect data on independent variable constructs. Please indicate your level of agreement with those statements according to this Likert scale keys:

5= Strongly Agree; 4= Agree; 3= Neutral; 2=Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

OSC	Centralization	5	4	3	2	1
OSC1	Key decisions are made at the top levels in our organization.					
OSC2	Employees are usually involved in the decision-making process in our organization.					
OSC3	Culture of delegation is encouraged in our organization.					
OSC4	Honest mistakes made by employees can be overlooked					
OSC5	Reporting to my boss before acting on issues on safety is at my discretion.					

SECTION 3 (CORPORATE GREENING (CG) DATA)

This section seeks to collect information on dependent variable which represents employees’ pro-environmental behaviour towards sustainability. Please indicate your agreement or otherwise with the following statements using the following Likert scale keys:

5= Strongly Agree; 4= Agree; 3= Neutral; 2=Disagree; 1= Strongly Disagree

CG	Corporate greening practice	5	4	3	2	1
CG1	Our organization identifies its environmental protection obligation and place emphasis on active environmental management as an integral part of its corporate strategies to gaining competitive advantage.					
CG2	Our organization is committed to using more resource inputs known for causing little or no harm to the environment.					
CG3	Our organization has committees on sustainability in view of protecting stakeholders and nature.					
CG4	Our organization identifies green practices like regular equipment maintenance to prevent unnecessary wastages.					
CG5	Our organization is aware of emerging forces of green consumerisms and their market influence and it has since adjusted its operations and products accordingly.					

APPENDIX 2: Summary of Model Output

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
OSC1	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.6411	1.19873	1.437
OSC2	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.7385	1.30617	1.706
OSC3	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.7853	1.27094	1.615
OSC4	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.7945	1.27126	1.616
OSC5	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.6288	1.13692	1.293
CG1	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.9847	1.36655	1.867
CG2	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.9356	1.34696	1.814
CG3	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.9172	1.31356	1.725
CG4	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	3.0583	1.41192	1.994
CG5	326	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.8497	1.34466	1.808

Model Summary

Multiple R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
.549	.301	.272

Dependent Variable: CG

Predictor: OSC

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares
Regression	97.905
Residual	227.095
Total	325.000

Dependent Variable: CG

Predictor: OSC