



GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIA: A REVIEW OF EXTANT LITERATURE

OFILI, P.N (Ph.D) & AKPOYIBO, A. G. (Ph.D)

Department of Business Administration
Delta State University, Abraka
Email: pnofili@delsu.edu.ng

&

AKPOYIBO, A. G.(Ph.D)
Department of Business Administration.
Delta State University, Abraka
Email: gakpoyibo@delsu.edu.ng

Abstract

Entrepreneurs are driven by competitive advantage to penetrate new markets with strategic innovative performance for high returns on their investment. The competitive dynamics in global business permits the emergence of green entrepreneurship in Nigeria in order to improve industrial economy through social protection of natural ecosystem as well as enhances support for economic transformation. Green entrepreneurs are thus negotiating varying tensions between their business activities, environmental philosophies, and wider contexts at the intersection between the green economy and the mainstream economy. Findings revealed that business performance in Nigeria can be achieved through an enabling policy framework on energy efficiency generation and distribution, green technology, capacity building, market and investment. Green business practices in entrepreneurship is driven by organizations' -friendly environment corporate for products and services and also contributes to the sustainability of the environment. The study identified green economic policies and green business practices as panacea to achieve business performance. It concludes Government at all levels is now engaged in making policies for sustaining green energy renewal for the economy to strive as green entrepreneurs are able to identify opportunities in green market which involves innovations, risk taking, investment, market acceptability etc. These are enabled with a green outlook which government has to create enabling environment for sustainability and growth of green businesses in Nigeria. It recommends among others that government should promote environmental sustainability as priority for economic growth. Due to continuous dynamics of the environment, government should make efforts towards constant review of environmental laws and policy framework.

Keywords: green entrepreneurship; green economic policies; green business practice, ecopreneurship.

Introduction

Over the years, natural resources have continued to deplete due to severe damage arising from negative business practices which have resulted in environmental pollution, flooding, global warming, etc. Though these have caused global damage, efforts toward analyzing these threats with appropriate approaches to minimize their effect on strategic business performance in different environment is pertinent (Ataman, Jimi-Oni, Senkan&Olusola, 2018). The process of going green in an emerging green market has made green entrepreneurs to take advantage of old market practice associated with failure (Dean & McMullen, 2007). They have identified prospects and challenges in the environment which aid in setting up ventures with green

outlooks with emphasis on innovation, flexibility, efficiency, revenue growth, relationship management, market acceptability etc (Esty& Winston, 2009; Ambec&Lanoie, 2008). With this recognition was the emergence of Project Green Initiative in 2017 in Nigeria which serves to educate stakeholders in various sectors of the economy toward sustaining green environment for green entrepreneurial activities.

Nigeria is faced with high rate of unsustainable business practices where various organizations have not toed the ethical practice to preserve the environment. The unusual damages on the natural environment and incessant manifestation of pollutions among others have gradually created the imperative of green entrepreneurship in relation to the recommendations of World

Commission on Environment and Development (1987) on sustainability. The recognition of these threats to the environment has constituted conscious actions by environmental stakeholders to adopt emergency sustainability to minimize environmental damages that may affect the future (Anabaraonye, Chukwuma&Eriobu, 2019). There is need for business performance to improve with environmentally friendly practices with the aim of investing in societal needs without undermining the moral responsibility of preserving nature. This has offered leverage to entrepreneurs in contemporary market to build competitive advantage and penetrate the markets with strategic innovative performance with high returns on investment. This paper becomes a resource to identify green economic policies and green business practices in Nigeria as factors that influence green entrepreneurship for sustainable business performance.

Conscious actions to the environment are pertinent in minimizing damages for sustainability through advocacies for green consumption for long term survival of organizations. In Nigeria, having a problem free transition to green entrepreneurship is not easy because it is faced with the challenges of green economic policies and green business practice. The recognition that green environment creates significant opportunities to entrepreneurs has made government and environmentalists to draw a framework for green environment. This is with the aim of combating and to combat environmental challenges for entrepreneurial success as well as enable unemployed youth become eco-entrepreneur in the society. Also, the lack of support from government in assessing fund to address issues on green entrepreneurship which has the potency to attract customers and retain them after these customers have full access to their products and services. This objectives of the study tends to examine the effect of green entrepreneurship on business performance in Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Green Entrepreneurship

Green entrepreneurship as a concept is multifaceted and researchers have described it using words like eco-oriented start-up, born green firms, green start-up etc for proper understanding. This is as a result of lack of acceptable or universal definition which is the activity of consciously addressing environmental and social problems and need, and coming up with brilliant innovative entrepreneurial ideas that will bring a solution to them. These ideas have a high level of risk which has a positive effect on the natural environment while at the same time it helps maintain financial

sustainability. (Muo& Adebayo-Azeez, 2019; Damirel, Cher Li, Rentocchini&Tamvada, 2017). The concept of green entrepreneurship emanates from rising pollution, climate change and global warming, and natural resources scarcity which constitute strategic environmental concern to stakeholders in business (Ataman, et al., 2018; Sharma &Kushwaha, 2013). It has attracted responsiveness to ensure that consumer behaviours are aligned to green market which offers varieties of opportunities for green entrepreneurs in their efforts towards green production or green supply chain recycling and building (Chitri, 2015). Green entrepreneurship has been conceptualized in diverse ways, Sharma and Kushwaha (2015) view it as collection of environment and entrepreneur to have environmental entrepreneur as innovators in green economy with priority in assessing the environment and economy to ensure that social development and human factor are aligned towards creating jobs, innovations as economic opportunities in the society (Demuth, 2014).

Green entrepreneur creates social value and business model for environmental and economic profitability which is posited by Bakari (2013). This result to green business with less adverse impact on the environment both globally or locally and it requires principles of sustainability in all business decisions to have friendly environment for products and services (Gevrenova, 2015). Similarly, Huang (2010) opines that green entrepreneurship helps to address social and environmental need using entrepreneurial ideas to assess the level of risk, financial sustainability and effect environmental challenges on the natural environment. In the same vein, Bakari (2013) and Schapper (2016), note that the practices of green entrepreneur are aimed at recycling, reducing and reusing resources for the sustainability of the environment and economy. This requires actions directed at preventing waste, pollution, and energy saving. Hence, green entrepreneurs are innovative solution providers of goods and services produced and consumed based on business model which contribute to greener economy (Demuth, 2015; Hossam, 2015).

Business performance entails the outcome of business activities in relation to the state of efficiency and productivity. It may be financial performance in relation to growth, profitability etc or non-financial performance in relation to customer satisfaction, internal processes; efficiency etc. Therefore, improved performance as requirement for organization's success to is determined measured their extent of an organization objective (Makanga& Paul, 2017; Eniola&Ektebang, 2014). In green

entrepreneurship, business performance consists of operational and competitive performance either in manufacturing or service industry which are aimed at optimizing growth, expansion and profitability for the stakeholders as organizations strategically engage in short and long-term goals of the organization.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Green entrepreneurship is claimed to have the potential to be “a major force in the overall transition towards a more sustainable business paradigm” (Schaper 2002), with green entrepreneurs offering “exemplary solutions for a social transformation” (Isaak 1998). Thus their actions and motivations stem from the desire to tackle specific environmental problems, or to change their sectors so that alternative and more sustainable products and practices become more widespread, and challenge ingrained practices (Gibbs 2009). More radical perspectives may also seek revolutionary transformation through post-capitalist thinking (Gibson-Graham 2008; Shear 2014), reconceptualising entrepreneurship and challenging the corporate work-to-spend cycle (Bradley and Hedrèn 2014). Such entrepreneurial behaviours may be part of a broader ontological shift in what entrepreneurialism might entail and how we envisage ‘the economy’ (cf. Gibson-Graham 2008), and re-envisaging what it means to be an ‘entrepreneur’.

This conceptual framework harness variables in relations to green entrepreneurship such as green economy policies, green business, environmental sustainability and business performance. Hence, the model below shows framework for assessing green entrepreneurship for business performance:

2.2 Impact of Green Economic Policies on Business Performance

The emergence of green economy as new pattern of sustainability is targeted at achieving harmonious development and protection of the environment to ensure that the industrial economy does not in any way hurt human health. This is based on sustainable development and interdependence of social protection, natural ecosystem and economic growth (Huang, 2010). The possibility of achieving a green economy requires strategic attention in apprehending issues of climate change and ensuring that diverse sectors in the country are green by promoting environmental sustainability (Ataman et al. 2018). A specialist report on direct benefits of green economy indicates that over sixty countries across the globe have identified with green economy as a means of trading off economic progress with environmental sustainability (EMG Report 2020).

This affirms that green economy presents vision for growth which peoples’ liv development. Barua (2012) stresses that green economy is consistent with sustainability in order for development to be achieved, therefore, policymakers must align their interest to this possibility where opportunities and growth of an economy is envisaged for development and creation of job to the youth. For instance, in Nigeria there is great need for government to have policy framework that can enhance growth where manufacturing, jobs and investment have to be realized while ensuring that the costs of keeping green energy are affordable for consumers. Hence, government must strike a

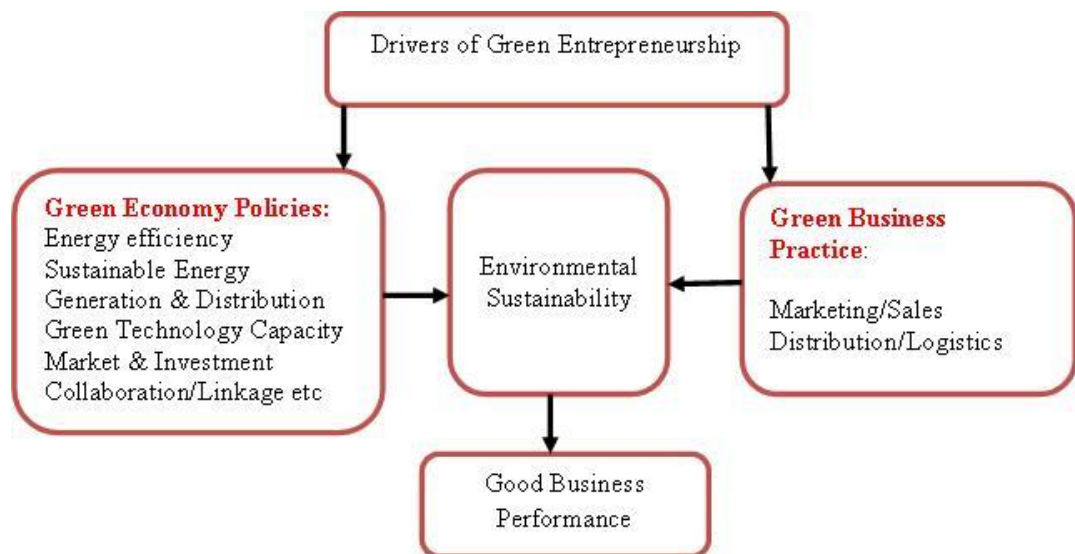


Figure 1: Driver of Green Entrepreneurship Source: Amadi, 2017

balance that would help in effective management through policy framework for effective business performance by green entrepreneur.

A study by Ataman, Jimi-Oni, Senkan&Olusola, (2018).suggested the possibility of achieving green entrepreneurship through partnership in Nigeria. This implies that partnership with international organizations would provide green businesses as variousstakeholders, institution, government etc consider green entrepreneurship an opportunity for sustainable development in Nigeria. The importance of green economy policies cannot be overemphasized in a developing country such as Nigeria. It enhances both social and economic gains. Fareed (2015) notes that significant initiatives have been developed for positive benefit on green investment and it requires integration as comprehensive strategy to scaled up sustainable development. For instance, clean energy has environmental and economic objectives which must be delivered as long-term benefit of the society. Strategic policy framework on green growth has helped in determining consumption decisions and clean energy economy. Though this policy is an indicator of energy efficient, it is intended to promote clean energy economy such as renewable energy standard; waste reduction; energy efficiency; and job retaining.

Delmas and Pekovic (2012) investigated effect of green business practices on employee"s job satisfaction. They were set out to solve the problem of how a firm"s environmental commitment affects its productivity and employee job satisfaction. The methodology used for the research was survey design through the collection of data from a survey of employees at 5,220 frenches companies, randomly selecting two employees from each company for a pool of more than 10,000 people. Companies that had voluntarily adopted international standards and labels such as "trade" "and companies with International Organization for Standardization's ISO 14001 certification, a voluntary industry standard programme, were also considered green for the purposes of the study. Their finding shows that on average, employees at companies that observe eco-friendly practices were 16 percent more productive as well as have more job satisfaction than average employees. Employees

in such green firms are more motivated, receive more training and benefit from better interpersonal relationships. The employees at green companies are therefore more productive and have more job satisfaction than employees in more conventional firms.

In a study done in France, Delmas and Pekovic (2012) investigated the effect of green business practices on employee"s productivity in French green companies. They were set out to solve the problem of how a firm"s environmental commitment affects its productivity. The methodology used for the study is survey design which includes the collection of data from a survey of employees at 5,220 frenches companies, randomly selecting two employees from each company for a pool of more than 10,000 people. Companies that had voluntarily adopted international standards and labels such as "trade "and companies with International Organization for Standardization's ISO 14001 certification, a voluntary industry standard programme were also considered green for the purposes of the study. "It's a counterpoint to people thinking that environmental practices are detrimental to the firm." The research findings include that companies that adopt eco-friendly green practices have employees that are more productive than those that do not. On average, employees at companies that observe eco-friendly practices were 16 percent more productive than average employees. Delmas (2012) further states that adopting green practices aren't just good for the environment, "It's good for your employees and it's good for your bottom line. Employees in such green firms are more motivated, receive more training and benefit from better interpersonal relationships. The employees at green companies are therefore more productive than employees in more conventional firms" (Delmas 2013).

Though, the task of having energy policy right is rigorous, Lawson (2010) opines that the policymaker requires good understanding of factors that could shape the demand and supply for energy with adequate plan to transit to global economy. In addition, some of the policies framework for achieving global energy economy that could impact business performance includes the following:

S/N	Policies Framework	Impact on business performance
1.	Policy on energy efficiency	The policy integrate energy for cost-effectiveness through formulation of strategy on National Energy Efficiency to ensure that Nigeria has an action plan, regulation or standard for energy efficiency
2	Policy on sustainable energy	Sustainable energy must have the objective of transiting to green economy for both renewal energy and other alternative sources. It requires government raising renewable energy to 20 percent and 30 percent share in 2020 and 2030 respectively as final energy consumption. Dedication by government to subsidize and step-up R&D on renewal energy and other technologies as alternative sources will drive transition to green Economy
3	Policy on generation and distribution	This policy framework in Nigeria brings energy security through diversified energy mix such as Independent Power Plant and cogeneration for sustainable renewal energy
4	Policy on green technology capacity building	This policy is driven to enhance green growth in Nigeria among stakeholders by providing programme for quality energy efficiency to boost the local economy for effective business performance. This would require R&D, training, seminar, technological transfer, foreign investment and joint venture.
5	Policy on market and investment	It is expected to emerge to cover up the insufficiency of private investment and public finance on renewable energy. It requires commercial activities in providing the needed processes, products or services for energy efficiency. It covers green investment in agriculture, fisheries, building, waste management etc requires strategic investment for lucrative green technologies
6	Policy on Collaboration/linkage	This requires long term consideration to harmonize mechanisms for national energy renewal. The framework collaborates in delivery of activities of green economy with government organizations such as Nigeria Atomic Energy, Nigeria Society of Engineer, Energy Commission of Nigeria, Nigeria Environmental Society etc.

Source: Amadi, 2017

Based on the above policies framework, it is observed that green economy is a factor for promoting social equity and wellbeing of human and it enhance reduction in environmental risk. The sustainability in development in Nigeria is

achieved through green economy with possibility of green growth or economic growth where the natural resources continuously provide the needed environmental services for our wellbeing (Anabaraonye, et al., 2019; UNEP,

2011). This implies that this new engine of growth to a country must be built on innovative system where economic activities would enhance the well-being of people, flourish natural environment with competitiveness and business growth. Business performance at this juncture would improve where renewal energy becomes a mechanism for growth and innovation in every industry in Nigeria. Improvement in energy security and significant environmental and public health would also be actualized. For instance, a report by Bishop (2014) on the benefit of green growth in Ethiopia revealed that the basis green growth strategy is to eradicate poverty through focus on structural transformation and economic growth of the country. This would require improvement in agricultural productivity, infrastructure development such as IT, development of private sectors, management of urbanization, energy, transport, roads etc. hence, in a climate resilient and resource efficiency manner, the above objectives can be achieved un green growth strategy. This is applicable in Nigeria where there is policy framework to build climate resilience and management of trade-offs for sustainable development.

Empirical Review

In a related study Wenbo. J. (2018) Green Entrepreneurial orientation for firm performance: A dynamic perspective in China, the study examined the relationship between green determined from the population of 5705 drawn from management, middle and lower cadre of the selected manufacturing firms using Cochran (1977) statistical formula. A stratified sampling technique was also used to determine the proportional allocation of questionnaire to management cadre, middle cadre and lower cadre. Designed questionnaire and personal interview were used for primary data collection. The questionnaire was structured on 5-point Likert scale. The validity of the instrument was ascertained using content validity. The instrument was checked for reliability using test re-test method through Cronbach alpha, with a value of 0.90, which shows consistency in the items of survey. Data were analyzed and the hypotheses were tested using linear regression analysis. Probability level of significance was given at 5%. Data were presented using simple percentages. Findings revealed that green business initiatives had significant and positive effect on the selected manufacturing firm, productivity ($r=0.756$, $F=346.024$; $T=18.602$; $p=0.000$). In conclusion, the implementation of green business practices, principles and processes will lead to very positive

entrepreneurial orientation and firm performance is moderated by green technology dynamism and knowledge transfer and integration. We tested the research hypotheses using data from 264 Chinese firms. The results indicate that green entrepreneurial orientation has positive influences on both environmental and financial performance. In addition, green technology dynamism only negatively moderates the relationship between green entrepreneurial orientation and environmental performance, while knowledge transfer and integration positively moderates the relationships between green entrepreneurial orientation and environmental and financial performance. This study enhances our understanding on green entrepreneurial orientation, described as a dynamic capability, can exploit new ideas and encourage innovativeness, show a propensity to catch potential opportunities, and take risks in transforming the social economy into the social-ecological economy. This study provides suggestions for firms to achieve competitive advantages under conditions of uncertainty and for effective knowledge transfer and integration. Chukwuka, & Eboh, (2018), examined the Effect of Green Business Practices on Organisational Performance of selected manufacturing firms in Nigeria, the study adopted the survey design. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the 10 manufacturing firms in Nigeria. A sample size of 543 respondents was

outcome that will be visibly manifested in the organization and the environment
Delmas and Pekovic (2012) investigated effect of green business practices on employee's job satisfaction. They were set out to solve the problem of how a firm's environmental commitment affects its productivity and employee job satisfaction. The methodology used for the research was survey design through the collection of data from a survey of employees at 5,220 French companies, randomly selecting two employees from each company for a pool of more than 10,000 people. Companies that had voluntarily adopted international standards and labels such as "trade" "and companies with International Organization for Standardization's ISO 14001 certification, a voluntary industry standard programme, were also considered green for the purposes of the study. Their finding shows that on average, employees at companies that observe eco-friendly practices were 16 percent more productive as well as have more job satisfaction than average employees. Employees in such green firms are more motivated, receive more training and benefit from better interpersonal relationships. The employees at green companies are therefore more

productive and have more job satisfaction than employees in more conventional firms.

Singh and Panackal (2014) investigated youth ecopreneurship: A key for success of first generation entrepreneurs. This study examines how youth involvement in ecopreneurship can lead to youth employment and the host community profitability. Using ISM structural modeling as a methodology, study found that there is a strong link between entrepreneurship and environmentalism. They also found that there is a strong link between eco-opportunity and youth employment. They assert that eco-opportunity creates green jobs for environmental conscious youth. There are numerous job opportunities in green business because the sector is underutilized. Green business opportunities have not been harnessed, so more employment opportunities still hover around ecopreneurship practices. They recommended that youth should embrace eco-opportunity for job creation and host

community development.

Discussion of Findings

From the review of extant literature the study finds as follows:

Various studies have affirmed green business practice as source of profit optimization in business and also minimize environmental impact associated with business operations, and Performance issues in developing countries are resolved through green business initiative which affect several areas of an organization (Chukwuka & Eboh, 2018). The importance of green business practice as an initiative is aimed at achieving eco-innovation that would enhance competitive advantage (Klimova & Zlek, 2011).

Also findings show that to achieve success in green entrepreneurship, organization that seeks to adopt green business practice for distribution/logistics must engage in the following practices (Larkin, 2008; Wankel, 2008; Negi & Anand, 2014) limiting travel distance and securing raw materials and finished goods; the organization is expected to secure greener building as multi-level warehouse with efficient materials used in the construction of the building; cutting the cost of transportation and trips to save space in the warehouse; creating partnership with suppliers, sharing of fleets and available space in the warehouse; the distance between customers and warehouse has to be identified for cost saving; movement of goods has to be limited to prevent carbon emissions in line with legislation; bio-fuels and greener technologies must be used as alternatives in distribution; centralization of distribution has to be adopted for in-transit packaging of products. These strategies are relevant in green business

practices in order to promote green and sustainable environment for business.

Conclusion

The following were the conclusions made:

- i. Government at all levels is now engaged in making policies for sustaining green energy renewal for the economy to strive as green entrepreneurs are able to identify opportunities in green market which involves innovations, risk taking, investment, market acceptability etc. These are enabled with a green outlook which government has to create enabling environment for sustainability and growth of green businesses in Nigeria.
- ii. Sustainable development as a thrust of green entrepreneurship requires adoption of green economic policies such as energy efficiency which seeks to integrate energy for cost-effectiveness to regulate energy efficiency; generation and distribution policy which brings energy security through diversified energy mix in Nigeria; market and investment policy cover green investment in agriculture, fisheries, building, waste management etc requires strategic investment for lucrative green technologies etc.
- iii. Also, green business practices such as marketing/sales, and distribution/logistic are necessary measure for business growth. Hence, sustainable environment becomes visible through the policy framework of government in Nigeria for improve business performance.

Recommendations

The competitive dynamics in global business permits the emergence of green entrepreneurship in Nigeria to improve industrial economy through social protection of natural ecosystem which enhances support for economic transformation aimed at creating green jobs and promoting sustainability, growth and harmonious development. It is therefore recommended that;

- i. Government should promote environmental sustainability as priority for economic growth in a green economy and have priority for sustainability by promoting green economy in diverse sector based on the principles of environmental sustainability.
- ii. Policy makers should consider opportunities in green economy and

- developed sustainable policies to drive business performance of green entrepreneurs.
- iii. In order to achieve green growth in Nigeria, government should ensure continuous review of policy framework to accommodate the dynamics of the environment.
 - iv. Organizations should have social consciousness as priority in protecting and preserving the natural resources through continuous adoption of green business practice to minimize negative environmental impact.
 - v. Green entrepreneurs should sustain partnership with stakeholders and procure greener technologies in distribution and encourage in-transit packaging of products to promote green and sustainable environment for business in Nigeria.

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