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Green Leadership Practices and Organizational Sustainability Performance: A Conceptual Framework

By

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ABSTRACT: The world is facing a growing challenge of environmental degradation, social inequalities, and economic strains but most organisations still face the challenge of integrating the concept of sustainability in leadership practises and strategic decisions. Even with the increase in interest in sustainability, there are still gaps in information about how the holistic approach of the green leadership practise affects the performance of the organisation in terms of sustainability. It is in this context that the general goal of this research is to formulate an inclusive conceptual framework that tries to describe how the green leadership practises affect the sustainability performance of an organisation. In particular, the paper examines the role of environmental vision and commitment, responsible and ethical leadership, employee green empowerment, green decision-making orientation, stakeholder environmental involvement, and green role modelling in influencing the results of sustainability. The conceptual research approach is employed in the study and solely uses secondary data collected in the form of lectures, peer-reviewed books, conference discussions, reports, newspapers, and historical texts on the leadership and sustainability subject. The study is based on systematic literature review and conceptual analysis and synthesises theoretical and empirical evidence related to sustainability leadership, the stakeholder theory, and the resource-based perspective. This discussion indicates that integrated sustainability performance which includes environmental, social, and economic performance is enabled by green leadership practises. The paper suggests that the organisations should institutionalise the green leadership practises at both strategic and operational levels to promote the long-term sustainability performance. Summing it up, the suggested conceptual framework is a solid ground on the basis of future empirical research and can result in some practical recommendations to better leaders and policymakers, who may be interested in enhancing the sustainability of organisations.

KEYWORDS: Green leadership practices, Organizational sustainability performance, Ethical leadership, Employee green empowerment, Stakeholder engagement.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The issue of sustainability has become a burning issue in companies around the globe, with companies being subjected to the mounting pressure to incorporate environment-related topics, social issues and economic factors in their processes (Aragon-Correa and Sharma, 2003; Wijaya et al., 2025). Sustainable practises have ceased to be an elective option around the world, and leaders are nowadays being considered key agents of environmental awareness and corporate social responsibility (Boiral, Baron, &

Gunnlaugsson, 2014; Wu, Awang, and Ahmad, 2025). In their turn, the strategic capability identified as green leadership has been seen to influence the pro-environmental behaviours of the employees, their ability to make ethical decisions, and the commitment of the organisation to sustainability (Ababneh, 2021; Cheikh and Zhussupova, 2025). Fields Within the wider context of the global community, sustainability performance can be positively affected by leadership styles focused on environmental vision, ethical responsibility, and stakeholder involvement through the alignment of human, technological, and other organisational resources with sustainable development goals (Aliyu and Kumar, 2022). Firms encompassing the green human resource management issues such as employee empowerment and initiating environmental awareness activities record better environmental and organisational performance (Adu Sarfo et al., 2024; Ababneh, 2021). In the same vein, technological development in the management of innovation, digital management, and sustainability indicate that they can be both optimised to gain a competitive edge (Kumar, Mohammed, Raj, and Balasubramanian, 2024; Mohammed and Kumar, 2022).

On a regional level, in Africa, organisational-sustainability performance is found to have a strong connexion to the responsible and green leadership practises, mediated by the stakeholder engagement and green employee empowerment (Adu Sarfo et al., 2024; Zhang, Ahmed, and Nauman, 2023). In West Africa, it is indicated that organisations that embrace environmentally responsible leadership practises increase their operational efficiency and green practises of employees, which leads to the sustainability objectives of the region (Aliyu and Kumar, 2022; Shanmugam and Aliyu, 2022). Organisations are currently becoming aware of the role of green leadership in Nigeria to attain sustainable business performance in Nigeria. It has been demonstrated that providing leadership, ethical values and behaviours, and employee involvement can help achieve the organisational performance and contribute to the national sustainability agenda of a specific country (Wu, Awang, and Ahmad, 2025; Yang et al., 2020). Furthermore, through its implementation, strategic talent management and

entrepreneurship innovation into leadership activities enable a business to establish stronger links between the goals and objectives of the business and the environment, establishing a sustainable development trajectory in the Nigerian business environment (Aliyu and Kumar, 2022; Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2024).

On the whole, the background shows that green leadership practises entailing the aspects of environmental vision, moral responsibility, worker empowerment, orientation in decision-making, stakeholder, and role modelling are the critical factors to increase the performance of organisational sustainability at the global, regional and within Nigeria.

1.2 Problem Statement

In the modern world, organisations are becoming more complex because of the escalated demands on environmental, social and economic sustainability (Schaltegger and Wagner, 2011; Aliyu and Sundararajan, 2025). Although the imperatives of sustainability are getting increasingly popular among organisations, a lack of alignment between strategic sustainability targets and actual performance outcomes is common among organisations that do not fully integrate the concept of green leadership practises (Widjanarko et al., 2025; Xiao, Rehman, and Zhang, 2021). The key problem that appears to be very critical is that there is gap between the formal sustainability policies and the actual behaviours in the organisation. There are cases where leaders do not exemplify green conduct or develop green organisational cultures to enable employees to engage in environmental sustainability projects (Robertson and Barling, 2013; Wengang et al., 2023). Equally, poor training on green and deficiency of green skills curtail the ability of employees to make a significant contribution towards sustainability goals (Yafi, Tehseen, and Haider, 2021). The contextual factors that contribute to these problems in the framework of emerging economies, resources, lack of awareness of environmental standards, and commitment to appropriate responsible leadership models, are heightened in such economies as Nigeria (Muhammed and Sundararajan, 2024; Sundararajan and Mohammed, 2023).

Lack of responsibility combined with the absence of integrated green leadership practises such as

ethical responsibility, stakeholder engagement, and role modelling also delays the attainment of organisational sustainability performance and weakens competitive advantage (Özkazanc et al., 2022). Moreover, they show that managerial influence in the short-term is critical in determining the behaviour of employees to be sustainable, although a significant number of organisations do not have systems capable of promoting consistent approach to sustainability on the part of employees at every level (Paillé, Mejía Morelos, Raineri, and Stingl amber, 2019). The identified gap highlights the necessity of a multidimensional perspective of green leadership that would combine organisational culture, leadership behaviour, and involvement of the staff to promote environmental, social, and economic sustainability outcomes (Robertson and Barling, 2013; Schaltegger and Wagner, 2011). Therefore, this study aims at addressing the issue of inadequate incorporation of green leadership practises to impede performance in organisational sustainability giving the conceptual framework concept of how to merge leadership interventions in organisational contexts at the global, regional and national levels.

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is both theoretical and practical in meaning because it contributes to knowledge and can be applied in the organisational setting.

This research piece is relevant to the available literature in that it provides a gap in our knowledge of the multidimensionality of green leadership practises and the overall effects of them on organisational sustainability performance (Ahmad, et al., 2021). Although previous studies have studied leadership styles or environmental initiatives independently, few studies have observed the convergence of environmental vision, ethical leadership, employee green empowerment, and decision-making orientation, stakeholder engagement, and green role modelling into unified system (Bansal and Roth, 2000; Delmas and Toffel, 2008). The study contributes to the theoretical discussion through its contribution to the conceptual framework of the theoretical study of how green leadership practises can lead to sustainable organisational outcomes when applied together (Epstein et al., 2014; Garccia-Morales et al., 2012). Also, the investigation contributes to the

field of knowledge on the global and Nigerian levels, providing information that can be applicable in the context of emerging economies, where sustainability practises are under development (Shanmugam & Aliyu, 2022; Mohammed and Sundararajan, 2024).

In the managerial sense, the implications of the study findings have practical implications in regard to the organisations that are aimed at improving the rate of sustainability performance via effective leadership. The understanding on ethical and responsible leadership, employee empowerment, and stakeholder engagement could help managers develop environmentally aware organisational cultures capable of encouraging pro-environmental behaviours and sustainable practises (Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2024; Ahsan and Khawaja, 2024). Knowing how green leadership affects the environmental sustainability, organisations can introduce environmental performance improvement, innovation, and long-term capacity of organisations to withstand (Doppelt, 2017). Also, the study can be used by policymakers, human resource practitioners, and corporate leaders as the benchmark when designing interventions and leadership programmes that resonate the organisational goals with the overall intention of ensuring environmental, social, and economic sustainability (Garcia-Morales et al., 2012; Ahmad, Ullah, and Khan, 2021).

On the whole, the conceptual void in I/O literature that the study fills and the fact that it offers both practical solutions to managing an organisation in a sustainable setting inspire its demand among both scholars, practitioners, and policymakers (Doppelt, 2017; Zollo et al., 2025).

1.4 Research Objectives

The main aim of this research is to come up with a conceptual model that analyses how green leadership practises affect the performance of the organisation in terms of sustainability. In order to accomplish this, the research proposes the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the role of environmental vision and commitment in promoting sustainable organizational outcomes.

2. To assess how ethical and responsible leadership contributes to employee pro-environmental behaviour and sustainability performance.

3. To explore the influence of employee green empowerment on achieving environmental, social, and economic sustainability goals.

4. To investigate the impact of green decision-making orientation on strategic sustainability initiatives within organizations.

5. To analyze the role of stakeholder environmental engagement and green role modeling in fostering organizational sustainability performance.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the research objectives, the study seeks to answer the following key questions:

1. How does environmental vision and commitment influence organizational sustainability performance?

2. In what ways does ethical and responsible leadership impact employee green behaviour and overall sustainability outcomes?

3. How does employee green empowerment mediate the relationship between leadership practices and sustainability performance?

4. What is the effect of green decision-making orientation on organizational strategies for sustainability?

5. How do stakeholder environmental engagement and green role modeling enhance organizational sustainability performance?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Green Leadership Practices

The green leadership practises have become very important in providing organisation sustainability performance both at global, regional and local levels. They are a multidimensional one that incorporates the concept of environmental accountability in leadership behaviour, organisational culture, and decision-making, thus enhancing environment-conscious practises and sustainable results (Alam and Kamal, 2025; Singh, Del Giudice, Chierici, and Graziano, 2020).

a. Environmental Vision and Commitment

Environmental vision and commitment are the declarations made by a leader on both proactive articulation of long-term environmental objectives, strategic alignment with eco-friendly practises, and commitment to the development of environmentally-friendly organisational culture. Sustainability efforts are defined and guided by the leaders with an effective environmental vision,

they inspire employees to be involved in green activities and embed sustainability practises throughout organisational operations (Aliyu, 2024; Gunay, 2025). Empirical research has shown that those organisations that have visionary and green leaders are more capable of incorporating environmental objectives into the underlying business strategies leading to greater environmental performance and competitive advantage (Alhassan, 2025). Environmental vision is associated with green innovations, the ongoing enhancement of sustainability, and the building of organisational habits, the primary focus of which is the ecological stewardship (Singh et al., 2020). In the African and West African-based organisations, where resource scarcity and regulatory disconnects may also pose a sustainability challenge, a dedicated vision of the ecological environment can assist organisations to be proactive and use domestic capabilities to grow sustainably (Shanmugam, Aliyu, and Senthilkumar, 2024). In Nigeria, effective leaders are those that show a good level of environmental commitment towards their personal behaviours and organisational culture so that the firms can be able to achieve sustainable development goals (Aliyu, 2024).

b. Ethical and Responsible Leadership

Ethical and responsible leadership is concerned with observance of moral values, equity, openness, and responsibility in the making of decisions within an organisation especially those that concern the environment. This kind of leadership is vital when it comes to supporting ethical green behaviour, promoting responsible pro-environmental behaviour among staff, and having sustainability initiatives provided in a responsible manner (Robertson and Barling, 2022; Saleem, Qadeer, Mahmood, Ariza-Montes, and Han, 2020). Ethical green leaders are not merely acting as role models but they also influence organisational norms and values which promote environmental protection. This involves the incorporation of sustainability criterion in performance evaluation, reward system and corporate governance mechanisms. International studies suppose that ethical leadership moderates the connexion amid leadership practise and environmental implications in a positive manner through the establishment of trust and commitment

amid workers (Chreif and Farmanesh, 2022; Elkhweildi, V etbuje, Aljuhmani, and Alzubi, 2025). Ethical leadership in African organisations promotes compliance with green laws and social responsibility practises whereas in the case of the Nigerian firms, it reinforces the role of pro-environmentally behavioural employees in the organisation and the implementation of sustainable corporate strategies (Robertson and Barling, 2022).

c. Employee Green Empowerment

Employee green empowerment is the process of equipping the employees with the relevant autonomy, the resources, and competencies required to contribute positively towards the sustainability initiatives. This involves educating on green practises, creating environmental consciousness and ensuring innovations by its employees aimed at environmental challenges (Alhassan, 2025; Gunay, 2025). Employees who feel empowered tend to exercise organisational citizenship behaviour towards the environment, initiate green project (s), and overall sustainability performance of the firm (Singh et al., 2020). The research studies and practises around the world point to the fact that empowerment of employees raises the environmental performance by developing a motivated workforce, able to introduce green initiatives (Alam and Kamal, 2025). In nations such as Africa and West Africa where infrastructural and regulatory barriers impact on organisations, employee empowerment is a strategic process to attain sustainability by means of localised programmes and community activities. In the context of Nigeria, employee empowerment related to the green agenda has been attributed to increased levels of innovation, energy conservation, waste minimization, and the sustainability of the organisation in general (Shanmugam et al., 2024).

d. Green Decision-Making Orientation

Green decision-making orientation is described as integration of sustainability into both strategic and operational decisions within the organisations in a systematic manner. Green decision-making orientation leaders are focused on environmental, social, and economic outcomes in the context of policy making, allocating resources, corporate goal setting and achievement (Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2023; Khanet al., 2023). Such a strategy will allow companies to embed sustainability across every layer of decision-making, including investment strategies or supply chains to become aware of any threats that may affect the environment and use opportunities to create competitive advantages in the long-term (Zhu and Sarkis, 2006; Ibarra-Cisneros et al., 2024). Internationally, green decision-making was attributed to improved organisational resilience and utilising green innovations especially in sectors where a growing number of environmental laws were enacted to curb environmental pressures (McDaniel and Rylander 1993). Applying sustainability in decision-making helps in the African context to ensure efficiency of the resource use, adherence to the emerging environmental policies and enhancement of the reputation of the companies (Paillé, Valéau, and Renwick, 2020). Green decision-making practises are positively related to organisations in Nigeria, which better align with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and also have better environmental, social and economic performance (Aliyu & Shanmugam, 2023).

e. Stakeholder Environmental Engagement

Stakeholder environmental engagement focuses on the partnerships with internal and external stakeholders such as employees, suppliers, customers, regulators, and communities in a bid to realise sustainability goals (Hameed et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2020). The process of stakeholder's participation in sustainability efforts enables the co-creation of solutions, increase accountability, and trust to foster the effectiveness and reach of green strategies (Zollo et al., 2025). The studies show that active stakeholder involvement mediates the effect of green leadership on the organisational sustainability performance by promoting knowledge-sharing, resources mobilisation, and participatory decision-making (Paillé et al., 2020; Gilal et al., 2019). In emerging markets like West Africa, cooperation among stakeholders is specifically significant in order to overcome the infrastructural barriers and regulatory obstacles so that the companies could reach their sustainability goals in joint projects and cooperation (Aliyu et al., 2024).

f. Green Role Modelling

Green role modelling is the leadership behaviour that should provide a good role model of

sustainable practises and motivate employees to use environmental-friendly behaviours (Althnayan et al., 2022; Mohammed et al., 2024). Leaders who are seen to clearly display the green behaviours like energy efficiency, waste reduction and sustainable use of resources, build a culture of sustainability that allows the members of the organisation to jostle with those behaviours. It has been observed that having a green role model reinforces environmental commitment among employees, sustainability programme participation, and organisational performance in general (Lo and Sheu, 2007; Lopez-Gamero et al, 2009). In the world, it has been associated with an increase in the levels of green innovation and green management systems, whereas in Africa and Nigeria, green role modelling has been used to create awareness, motivation, and involvement among employees, where sustainability is in the initial stages of developing into a strategic focus (Sundararajan and Mohammed, 2024).

2.1.2 Organizational Sustainability Performance

Organisational sustainability performance means the capacity of an organisation to deliver results that are inclusive of environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and financial feasibility (Paillé et al., 2020; Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2023). In this study, it is a unidimensional construct, that includes environmental, social, and economic dimensional ways or aspects in combination to give a holistic determination of organisational success in sustainable development. Organisational resilience, competitive advantage and legitimacy among stakeholders also require sustainability performance. Companies that have a high sustainability performance not only meet the regulatory and social requirements, but also improve its reputation, efficient operations and future profitability (Zhu and Sarkis, 2006; Lo and Sheu, 2007). It is the operational consequence of the implementation of green leadership principles in organisational strategy, culture, and operations (Paillé et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2023).

Dimensions and Measurement

- **Environmental Performance:** Includes energy efficiency, pollution reduction, waste management, and adoption of green technologies (Zhu & Sarkis, 2006; Gilal et al., 2019).

- **Social Performance:** Encompasses community engagement, employee well-being, and promotion of equitable practices (Aliyu & Shanmugam, 2023).

- **Economic Performance:** Relates to financial outcomes, cost savings from resource efficiency, and long-term economic sustainability (Mohammed et al., 2024; Ibarra-Cisneros et al., 2024).

The methodologies used to measure it tend to consist of such concepts as composite indices, scorecards, and performance indicators that can measure both quantitative (e.g., energy usage, emissions reduction) and qualitative (e.g., stakeholder satisfaction, employee engagement) aspects (Paillé et al., 2020; López-Gamero et al., 2009). Longitudinal assessment has also been noted to be relevant due to its ability to embrace dynamic gains when green initiatives are sustained (Zhu and Sarkis, 2006, Sundararajan and Mohammed, 2024). Finally, the performance of organisation sustainability indicates the overall consequences of the green leadership practises in terms of the environment, society, and economy. It is true that a positive environment is created by leaders who incorporate sustainability in the decision-making process, can effectively involve stakeholders, and demonstrates beneficial and practical sustainability behaviour at a global, regional, and national level (Aliyu et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2023; Althnayan et al., 2022).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical model of the present research offers the conceptual conceptualization upon which the connexion between the independent variable, which is Green Leadership Practises, and the dependent variable, the Organisational Sustainability Performance, is reviewed. It determines the theoretical sources that present how the multidimensional green leadership practises impact the sustainability results within the organisations.

2.2.1 Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory is the theory which was advanced by Wernerfelt (1984) and Barney (1991), and according to which, organisations gain sustainable competitive advantage due to the use of valuable, rare, inimitable, non-substitutable (VRIN) resources. Human and organisational resources, including

green leaders, green competencies in employees, and green culture in organisations are strategic resources that allow firms to carry out sustainable practises successfully with regards to green leadership (Aragon-Correa and Sharma, 2003; Aliyu, Shanmugam, Senthil, and Kumar, 2024). The green leadership practises, such as Environmental Vision and Commitment, Ethical and Responsible Leadership, and Employee Green Empowerment can be regarded as one of the distinctive organisational capabilities that would be hard to replicate by rivals, which would increase sustainability performance (Bansal and Roth, 2000; Zhu, and Sarkis, 2006). RBV offers an explanation of how firms may transform the leadership practises into organisational processes, facilitating the long-term economic, environmental, and social performance (Paillé et al., 2020; Ibarra-Cisneros et al., 2024).

2.2.2 Stakeholder Theory

Freeman (1984) came up with the Stakeholder Theory, which is based on the argument that organisations are not existing in isolation but rather they are part of a network of relationships with their internal and external stakeholders and their actions ought to factor in the interests of these groups. It is the responsibility of green leadership to consider stakeholder involvement such as employees, suppliers, customers, communities, and regulators among others in the realisation of sustainability-related objectives (Hameed, Khan, Islam, Sheikh, and Nauman, 2023; Yang, Sun, Zhang, and Wang, 2020). Engaging the stakeholders in making environmental decisions can increase compliance, improve innovation, and enhance legitimacy of organisations, which in the end results in improved sustainability outcomes (Zhang, Ahmed, and Nauman, 2023; Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2023). The theory also elucidates how the green decision-making orientation and green role modelling have their effects on the overall behaviour of the organisational members towards sustainable practises (Althnayan et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2020).

2.2.3 Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV)

Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) is an offshoot of RBV and it holds that environmental capabilities of firms can be a source of competitive advantage (Hart, 1995). NRBV also focuses on upstream environmental practises, including pollution prevention, product stewardship, and sustainable innovation, which green leadership practises prompt. Leaders who incorporate sustainability within the strategic direction of the organisation with green vision, ethical leadership, or empower the employees encourage the capacity of the firm to use natural resources in an effective manner and to develop environmentally friendly solutions (Aragon-Correa and Sharma, 2003; Singh, Del Giudice, Chierici, and Graziano, 2020). The idea of NRBV fits the theme of the study by emphasising the ability of organisations to convert environmental issues to sustainable growth opportunities, arranging leadership roles-based performance in a sustainable organisation in a quantifiable way (Paillé et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2023).

2.2.4 Rationale for Theory Selection

These three theories when combined (RBV, Stakeholder Theory, and NRBV) offer a strong framework on how green leadership practises can address sustainability outcomes. RBV describes how distinct leadership resources are utilised as strategic assets. The Stakeholder Theory focuses on the significance of cooperation and interaction towards sustainable results. NRBV associates environmental capabilities and proactive approaches to performance and competitive advantage. These theories combined contend to artificially offer a multidimensional approach to analysing the contribution of green leadership practises to organisational sustainability performance under this consideration; environmental vision, ethical orientation, employee empowerment, decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and role modelling in both developed and developing regions like Africa and Nigeria.
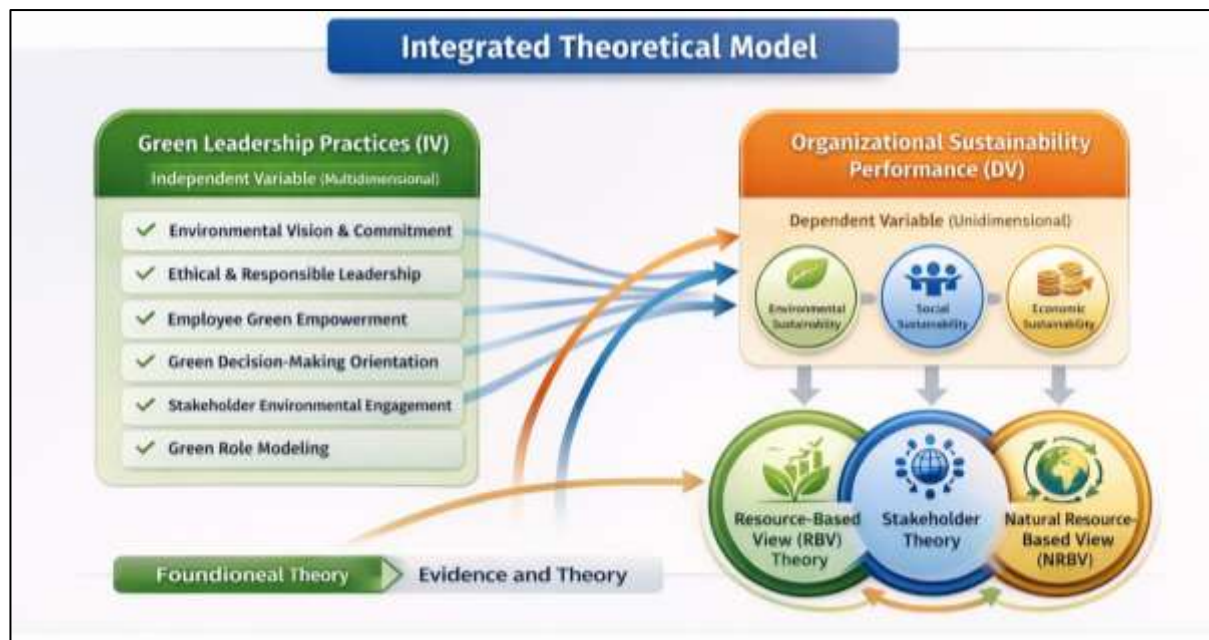
2.2.5 Integrated theoretical Model

Figure 1: Integrated Theoretical Model of Green Leadership Practices and Organizational Sustainability Performance
Source: Developed by the researcher (2026)

The holistic theoretical model depicts that Green Leadership Practises as a multidimensional independent variable has a collective impact on Organisational Sustainability Performance as a unidimensional outcome that entails environmental, social and economic sustainability. This model has shown that all the dimensions of leadership such as environmental vision and commitment, responsible and ethical leadership, employee green empowerment, green decision-making orientation, stakeholder environmental engagement and green role modelling are synergistic and not isolated in influencing the provision of sustainable organisational performance. The model is supported by the Resource-Based View (RBV) into which green leadership practises are considered to be easy to analyse and hard to replicate but are precious internal capital improving performance in the long term. Stakeholder Theory describes the capacity to align organisational operations with standards of the employees, communities, regulators, and customers, to promote the outcomes of social legitimacy and sustainability through ethical conduct, stakeholder engagement, and responsible decision-making. The Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) also supplements the model emphasising the way in which environmentally focused leadership competencies help prevent pollution, achieve eco-efficiency, and sustainable use of resources. In general, the model offers a consistent theoretical interpretation of green leadership practises changing the strategic intent into comprehensive sustainability performance, which can serve as a strong point of conceptual and empirical investigation.

2.3 Linkages Between IV and DV

This part lays out the conceptual inlet avenues by which the dimensions of Green Leadership Practises (independent variable) play-out in Organisational Sustainability Performance (dependent variable). The connexion is based on the theoretical framework, which relies on Resource-Based View (RBV), Stakeholder Theory, and Natural Resource-Based View (NRBV) to demonstrate how the leadership practises can lead to sustainability outcomes.

2.3.1 Environmental Vision and Commitment → Sustainability Performance

A leader who has a high level of environmental vision indicates the clear path to undertake through the initiatives of sustainability, indicating the organisation priorities and mobilising the resources towards a long-term environmental, social, and economic objectives (Alam and Kamal, 2025; Singh, Del Giudice, Chierici, and Graziano, 2020). Leaders have the ability to achieve sustainability by integrating sustainability in the strategic platforms which means that sustainability does not only occur in the processes, products, and

services. This convergence is better managing the environmental performance and helping comply with regulations and adding to the economic resilience due to effective resource use (Paillé et al., 2020; Zhu and Sarkis, 2006).

2.3.2 Ethical and Responsible Leadership → Sustainability Performance

Ethical leaders are role models, and they encourage integrity, fairness, and transparency in the environmental practises (Robertson and Barling, 2022; Saleem et al., 2020). Ethical leadership leads to faith among employees that they are pro-environment, it increases stakeholder confidence, and promotes compliance with sustainability standards, thus raising the organisational image and sustainability (Zollo, Bettinazzi, Neumann, and Snoeren, 2025; Ahmad, Ullah, and Khan, 2021).

2.3.3 Employee Green Empowerment → Sustainability Performance

The ability of employees to engage in sustainability programmes will promote the idea of innovativeness and green behaviours (Alhassan, 2025; Gunay, 2025). Employees will feel empowered and more inclined to bring energy efficiency, waste, and environment-friendly operation ideas hence enhancing environmental and social sustainability results. According to the RBV, employee empowerment produces unmatched, unfamiliar capabilities, which lead to sustainability-related competitive advantage (Aliyu, 2024; Singh et al., 2020).

2.3.4 Green Decision-Making Orientation → Sustainability Performance

The inclusion of sustainability in operational and strategic decision-making helps to make all the organisational actions take into account environmental, social, and economic effects (Khan et al., 2023; Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2023). Green decision makers are leaders who promote innovation in products and process, decrease associated environmental risks, and increase efficiency, which add up to significant changes in the performance of an organisation in terms of its sustainability (Ibarra-Cisneros et al., 2024; Paillé et al., 2020).

2.3.5 Stakeholder Environmental Engagement → Sustainability Performance

By actively interacting with internal and external stakeholders, i.e. employees, suppliers, regulators, communities, etc, the co-creation of sustainability solutions is achieved, as well as alignment with societal and environmental expectations (Hameed, Khan, Islam, Sheikh, and Nauman, 2023; Zhang, Ahmed, and Nauman, 2023). The partnership boosts innovation in green and builds the legitimacy and social licence of the organisation to exist (Aliyu, Shanmugam, Senthil, and Kumar, 2024; Kim et al., 2020).

2.3.6 Green Role Modeling → Sustainability Performance

By presenting sustainable behaviours over an extended period, the leaders make employees emulate those behaviours, which enforces an environmental responsibility culture within an organisation (Elkhweildi et al., 2025; Alam and Kamal, 2025). Green role modelling helps to make sure that sustainability principles will be practised at all levels, which is interpreted in better environmental, social and economic results (Gunay, 2025; Singh et al., 2020).

2.4 Empirical Review

The existing empirical data concerning green leadership practises and organisational sustainability performance indicate an increment in the acknowledgement of the central role of leaders in the promotion of environmentally responsible conduct in organisations. The research found that globally, leaders who assume ethical values, show a desire to achieve environmental goals, and involve employees in sustainability efforts have shown a great impact on environmental performance in organisations (Rihal et al., 2025; Oktaysoy et al., 2025). The works in manufacturing and service industries emphasise that green transformational leadership solicits employee involvement in green activities, innovations and boasts of environmental awareness, which subsequently positively impacts on organisational sustainability performance (Liu and Yu, 2023; Sundararajan and Mohammed, 2022). Additionally, technological applications and digital platforms have become the drivers of endorsing green leadership by facilitating successful monitoring, communication, and training of the sustainability-focused behaviour (Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2024).

The empirical study in the context of Africa and West Africa focuses on how ethical leadership contributes to the pro-environmental performance

of employees and the green culture in the organisation. Ensuring that the leadership practises are responsible, which may encompass stakeholder involvement and the empowerment of employees to embrace sustainable practises have been seen to yield better environmental results in the organisations (Islam et al., 2021; Khan and Khan, 2025). The conclusions made in academic institutions, SMEs and manufacturing organisations in the area reveal that ethical and green leadership does not only enrich the performance of the organisation in terms of long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability, but also high performance in terms of on green organisational citizenship behaviour (Hu et al., 2025; Alzghoui and Aboalganam, 2025). This highlights the need to integrate green leadership practises (environmental vision, ethical behaviour, stakeholder collaboration, and role modelling) that are multidimensional and add to the strategic management of organisations.

In the Nigerian context, the literature has emphasised that leadership interventions are highly demanded in addressing challenges in terms of sustainability as the environmental and regulatory pressures increase. Empirical studies have shown that those organisations with a proactive green leadership practise have better quality of environmental compliance, innovation of green process and sustainability outcomes (Delmas and Toffel, 2008; Mohammed and Sundararajan, 2024; Egri and Herman, 2000). Moreover, it has been suggested that the combination of ethical, responsible, and empowerment-concentrated leadership styles does not only increase employee participation in sustainability activities but also contributes to the achievement of other organisational goals, including competitive advantage and social responsibility (Chreif & Farmanesh, 2022; Anser et al., 2021). These studies, in combination, establish a strong basis on which conceptualising the direct and indirect relationships of multidimensional green leadership practises with organisational performance sustainability in global, regional and national levels is possible.

2.5 Research Gap

Regardless of the increasing number of the studies on the subject of green leadership and organisational sustainability, there are a number of significant gaps in the research that would warrant further development of the concept. Theoretically, the available research results have either investigated the dimensions pertaining to a single aspect of leadership, including ethical leadership, green transformational leadership, or employee empowerment, or have studies with a not-very-long scope, i.e., environmental outcomes, thus providing limited consideration of multidimensional green leadership practises to the overarching models of organisational sustainability performance (Rihal et al., 2025; Oktaysoy et al., 2025). There is thus a necessity to establish frameworks that consider a variety of dimensions of leadership such as environmental vision, ethical behaviour, employee empowerment, green decision-making, stakeholder involvement and role modelling so as to gain an insight into how each of these influences organisational sustainability outcomes (Liu, and Yu, 2023).

In terms of context, empirical data continue to focus on developed economies, specifically North America, Europe and East Asia with not numerous studies in terms of emerging markets and developing countries like those found in Africa and West Africa (Islam et al., 2021; Khan and Khan, 2025). The organisations in these localities usually have distinct challenges such as regulatory restriction, insufficient technological infrastructural facilities and cultural differences that determine the efficiency of green leadership intervention. In turn, context-specific conceptualization is required to comprehend the extent to which multidimensional green leadership practises can be used to achieve sustainability performance in these settings (Hu et al., 2025; Aliyu and Shanmugam, 2024).

Procedurally, the past body of research has primarily utilised quantitative research designs or cross-sectional analyses and many studies have utilised surveys or cross-sectional data, which may not capture the dynamic and integrative character of interactions in green leadership and sustainability (Sundararajan and Mohammed, 2022; Gonzalez-Benito and Gonzalez-Benito, 2006). In addition, most of the current research does not consider the relationship between ethical, strategic and operational leadership behaviour and therefore the explanatory value of the research

findings is minimal. To overcome these methodological constraints, there is need to develop multidimensional conceptual frameworks that are holistic and that can inform future empirical research as well as practise especially where organisations ask themselves to make holistic sustainability achievements (Delmas and Toffel, 2008).

2.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The research concept of the study displays the correlation between the relation of Green Leadership Practises (IV) to Organisational Sustainability Performance (DV). The independent variable is multidimensional, which included the Environmental Vision and Commitment, Ethical and Responsible Leadership, Employee Green Empowerment, Green Decision-Making Orientation, Stakeholder Environmental Engagement and Green Role Modelling. All these dimensions of leaders have a direct effect of the dependent variable (Organisational Sustainability Performance) that includes environmental sustainability, social sustainability and economic sustainability. The structure is informed by the Resource-Based View (RBV), the Stakeholder Theory, as well as the empirical research that revealed the importance of leadership in achieving sustainable behaviours and outcomes in organisations (Alam and Kamal, 2025; Singh et al., 2020; Paillé et al., 2020). It postulates a positive relationship in which the sustainability performance and green leadership practises are directly conceived by each other to promote greater sustainability of the organisation.
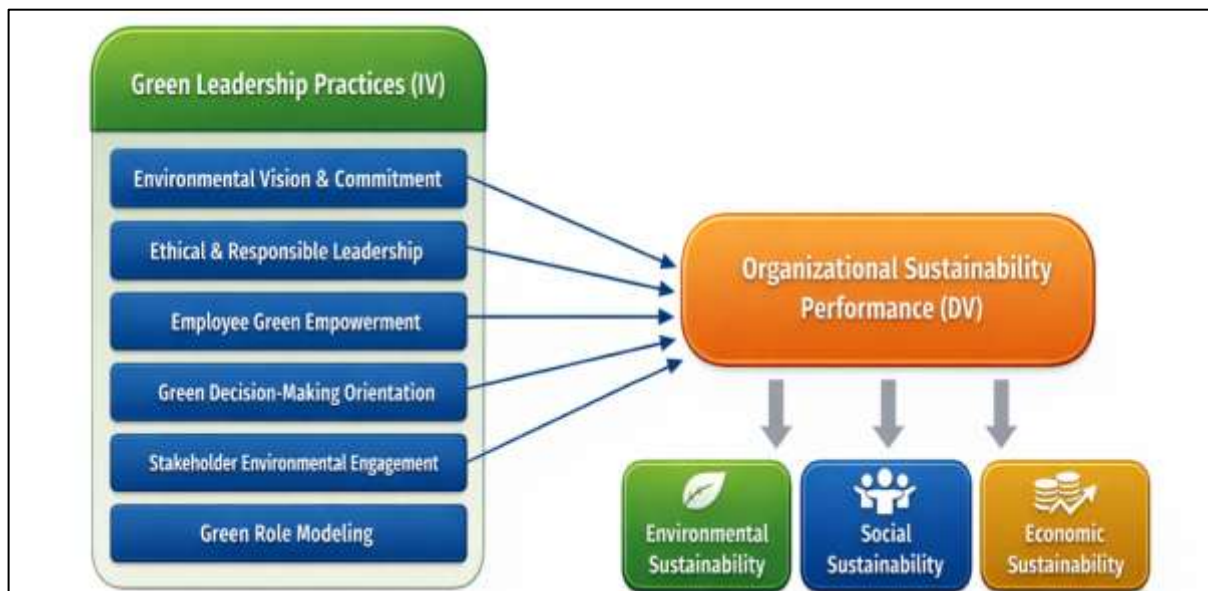

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of Green Leadership Capabilities and Environmental Innovation
Source: Author's conceptualization (2026)

The conceptual framework reflects that multidimensional green leadership practises directly lead to organisation sustainability performance. Complementary to each other, each dimension of leadership fulfils a specific purpose, but they are mutually reinforcing because strategic vision and ethical leadership shape organisational priorities; employee empowerment and role modelling promote the development of the sustainable culture; decision-making orientation is concerned with the possibility to ensure that sustainability is integrated into the operations; stakeholder engagement helps to develop collaboration and provide greater impact on the environment and society. All these practises have increased environmental, social, and economical performance to uphold the idea that robust green leadership is essential in promoting holistic organisational sustainability.

3.0 Research Methodology

The conceptual research approach applied in this study is suitable as it is considered the appropriate method in the exploration of the multidimensional relationship between green leadership practises and organisational sustainability performance in a theoretically based approach. Utilising the

conceptual analysis, as opposed to primary data collection, the study is supposed to combine the information found in the existing academic literature, formulate patterns and create an integrative framework explaining how the different dimensions of green leadership can lead to sustainability impacts. The approach enables a holistic comprehension of the constructs and filling this gap on the current literature. The method of selection of literature implies the systematic review of the secondary sources, such as peer-reviewed journals, books, and conference proceedings, and trustworthy organisational reports. The preference is made to the recent publications that contain empirical evidence or theoretical information about green leadership, ethical leadership, employee empowerment, sustainability management, and other practises in companies. It stresses on the research that is done worldwide, especially in Africa, West Africa and Nigeria to achieve contextual activity.

Conceptual analysis approach is employed to incorporate the theoretical views, empirical evidence and practical information into a synthesised theory. This entails the mapping of the multidimensional independent variable green leadership practises to the unidimensional dependent variable performance of sustainability in the organisation. It involves the comparison of findings based on studies, making of linkages, and pointing out the processes that help to determine how leadership behaviours contribute to sustainability outcomes. This approach helps the study to not only synthesise the existing knowledge, but it is also used to suggest a well-organised conceptual framework on how future research and organisational practise can be conducted.

4.0 Findings of the Study

The conceptual analysis of the current research provides the following corresponding results based on the outlined research aims alone:

1.   One of the driving forces of organisational sustainability performance is environmental vision and commitment as leadership commitment towards environmental values offers the strategic direction and the long-term perspective of sustainable results.

2.   It is found out that ethical and responsible leadership is a key factor which influences employee pro-environmental behaviour, increases trust, accountability, and moral responsibility which all serve to increase sustainability performance.

3.   Employee green empowerment also plays a significant role towards the goal of green sustainability because employees are able to contribute actively towards environmental and social sustainability and also decision-making that flex toward social and environmental sustainability.

4.   Green decision-making orientation enhances strategic sustainability programmes by incorporating environmental policy in organisational planning, allocation of resources, and decision making in terms of operations.

5.   The environmental stakeholder engagement and green role modelling mutually enhance sustainability performance of organisations by encouraging collaboration, legitimacy, and diffusion of environmentally friendly practises both to the immediate and external environment.

5.0 Recommendations of the Study

In the absolutely direct relation to the research objectives and the findings of the same, the study presents the following recommendations:

1.   Environmental vision and environmental commitment should be institutionalised in organisational operations, by introducing sustainability targets in corporate mission statement, corporate leadership strategies, and long-term planning processes.

2.   Green behaviour and sustainability results that can be achieved through ethical and responsible leadership practises should be promoted by leaders to help increase the level of green behaviour and sustainability of employees.

3.   The management can increase green empowerment among the employees by providing trainings, participative decision making and employee incentive system that will improve employee participation in sustainability programmes.

4.   It is suggested that organisations should move to green decision-making models to incorporate environmental considerations in strategic, tactical and operational decision-making in a systematic manner.

5.   The policy makers and leaders are encouraged to encourage environmental

stakeholder engagements, and green role modelling through creation of partnerships, open communication and exemplary leadership behaviours that reinforced the performance of sustainability in organisations.

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