

Assessing the role of green recruitment and selection in enhancing human capital development in local government service commission, Ikeja, Lagos state

Avaliação do papel do recrutamento e seleção verdes no fortalecimento do desenvolvimento do capital humano na comissão de serviço do governo local, Ikeja, estado de Lagos

Evaluación del papel del reclutamiento y selección verdes en el fortalecimiento del desarrollo del capital humano en la comisión de servicio del gobierno local, Ikeja, estado de Lagos

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Received 14/03/2026; Accepted 03/06/2026.

ISSN: 2594-8040

To cite this paper: Arowolo, A. E. & Adigun, U. O. (2026). Assessing the role of green recruitment and selection in enhancing human capital development in local government service commission, Ikeja, Lagos state. *Journal of Perspectives in Management – JPM*, 10, e269942. <https://doi.org/10.51359/2594-8040.2026.269942>

Abstract: *This study investigates the role of green recruitment and selection (GRS) in enhancing human capital development (HCD) within the Ikeja Local Government Service Commission, Lagos State. The study adopted the quantitative research design. Using a survey of 331 employees, the study applied validated scales. Results show a positive relationship ($R = 0.608$, $R^2 = 0.370$) between GRS and HCD, with eco-friendly recruitment significantly boosting skills and competencies ($B = 0.750$, $p < 0.001$), while environmental awareness in selection had a negative effect ($B = -0.585$, $p < 0.001$). The findings suggest GRS address skills mismatches and improve service delivery. The study recommends digital recruitment and eco-focused job criteria for administrators, while urging policymakers to integrate GRS into HR frameworks to support national sustainability goals. It also fills a gap in GHRM research within Nigeria's public sector.*

Keywords: *Green Recruitment and Selection, Human Capital Development, Green Human Resource Management, Eco-Friendly Recruitment, Environmental Awareness in Selection, Public Sector.*

Resumo: Este estudo investiga o papel do recrutamento e seleção verdes (RSV) no fortalecimento do desenvolvimento do capital humano (DCH) na Comissão de Serviço do Governo Local de Ikeja, Estado de Lagos. O estudo adotou o delineamento de pesquisa quantitativa. Utilizando um levantamento com 331 funcionários, o estudo aplicou escalas validadas de Tang et al. (2018) e Vidotto et al. (2018). Os resultados mostram uma relação positiva ($R = 0,608$, $R^2 = 0,370$) entre o RSV e o DCH, sendo que o recrutamento ecologicamente correto impulsiona significativamente as habilidades e competências ($B = 0,750$, $p < 0,001$), enquanto a consciência ambiental na seleção apresentou um efeito negativo ($B = -0,585$, $p < 0,001$). Os achados sugerem que o RSV aborda incompatibilidades de habilidades e melhora a prestação de serviços. O estudo recomenda o recrutamento digital e critérios de contratação focados no meio ambiente para administradores, ao mesmo tempo em que insta os formuladores de políticas a integrar o RSV às estruturas de RH para apoiar as metas nacionais de sustentabilidade. O trabalho também preenche uma lacuna na pesquisa de GHRM (Gestão Verde de Recursos Humanos) no setor público da Nigéria.

Palavras-chave: Recrutamento e Seleção Verdes, Desenvolvimento do Capital Humano, Gestão Verde de Recursos Humanos, Recrutamento Ecologicamente Correto, Consciência Ambiental na Seleção, Setor Público.

Resumen: Este estudio investiga el papel del reclutamiento y selección verdes (RSV) en el fortalecimiento del desarrollo del capital humano (DCH) dentro de la Comisión de Servicio del Gobierno Local de Ikeja, Estado de Lagos. El estudio adoptó el diseño de investigación cuantitativa. Utilizando una encuesta a 331 empleados, el estudio aplicó escalas validadas de Tang et al. (2018) y Vidotto et al. (2018). Los resultados muestran una relación positiva ($R = 0,608$, $R^2 = 0,370$) entre el RSV y el DCH, donde el reclutamiento ecológico impulsa significativamente las habilidades y competencias ($B = 0,750$, $p < 0,001$), mientras que la conciencia ambiental en la selección tuvo un efecto negativo ($B = -0,585$, $p < 0,001$). Los hallazgos sugieren que o RSV aborda los desajustes de habilidades y mejora la prestación de servicios. El estudio recomienda el reclutamiento digital y criterios de empleo con enfoque ecológico para los administradores, al tiempo que insta a los responsables de la formulación de políticas a integrar el RSV en los marcos de RR.HH. para respaldar los objetivos nacionales de sostenibilidad. Asimismo, este trabajo llena un vacío en investigación de GHRM (Gestión Verde de Recursos Humanos) dentro del sector público de Nigeria.

Palabras clave: Reclutamiento y Selección Verdes, Desarrollo del Capital Humano, Gestión Verde de Recursos Humanos, Reclutamiento Ecológico, Conciencia Ambiental en la Selección, Sector Público.

1. Introduction

Human capital development (HCD) is one of the driving forces of organisational growth and sustainability, which involves the preparation of employees with skills and competencies for effective performance (Abbas et al., 2024). Strong HCD systems are the backbone of governance, policy implementation, and service delivery in public institutions (Olateju et al., 2020). Even if policies are designed well, limited results can be achieved without a competent workforce (Tian & Zhang, 2023). In recent years, there has been an increasing urgency of environmental issues that have impacted human resource practices through Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) (Jabbour & de Sousa, 2016). One of the main tenets of GHRM is green recruitment and selection (GRS), which focuses on recruiting employees whose skills are a blend of professional ability and environmental awareness (Mahoney, 2017). By integrating sustainability values into recruitment processes,

organisations can create a workforce that is equipped to contribute to both organisational and environmental objectives (Ahmad et al. 2022).

Globally, sustainability has increasingly been incorporated in job descriptions, interview questions, selection processes to make sure that the organisation has a workforce which is ready to cope with challenges such as climate change, resource management, etc. (Yong et al., 2023). In Africa such practices are expanding but in a fragmented way, limited by institutional and resource-related factors (Ogiemwonyi et al., 2023). Nevertheless, current development strategies such as the African Union's Agenda 2063 have placed emphasis on the importance of an intellectually capable workforce with a strong environmental awareness (African Union, 2015). In the context of Nigeria, GRS is still in its early stages but it is becoming very meaningful due to the environmental problems of pollution and waste management (Adigun, 2025). Local governments are the locus closest to citizens and are the key agencies in service delivery, but they are hampered by the weak HCD systems, nepotism, and weak merit-based recruitment (Oluwayemi et al., 2023). This paper concludes that the integration of GRS can complement HCD, enhance the provision of services, and can encourage environmental responsibility (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021). This study analyses the contribution of GRS toward HCD in the local governance context in Nigeria at the Local Government Service Commission, Ikeja, Lagos State.

Although HCD drives innovation and productivity, its integration with green recruitment and selection remains limited in Nigeria's public sector. Furthermore, issues of skills bottleneck, unemployment and rapid urbanization in Lagos State exert pressure on the ability of local government to provide services in the face of mounting environmental pressures (LGSC, 2024). Traditional HCD models characterized by underfunded training and rigid structures do not provide competences to employees required for sustainability (Shoaib et al., 2021; Piwowar-Sulej, 2021)

GRS is a strategic approach to align recruitment with sustainability objectives, which in turn enhances HCD (Katayan & Chauhan, 2023). While GRS studies in the global and private-sector settings have shown positive influence on employee behaviour and performance (Yong et al., 2023; Vanisri & Padhy, 2024), there are limited studies and that are limited to manufacturing and banking in Nigeria (Adigun, 2025; Ogiemwonyi et al., 2023). This lack of attention weakens the potential of local governments to combat skills shortages and create environmentally sustainable and resilient labor forces, reducing the chances of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In relation to Lagos State, agencies such as the Local Government Service Commission are also key institutions to adoption of GRS that will translate human capital strategy to a sustainable outcome.

The study examines the applicability of green recruitment and selection in enhancing human capital development within the Local Government Service Commission, Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. ascertain the contribution of environmental Awareness in Candidate Selection in enhancing human capital development
- ii. determine the role of eco-friendly recruitment in enhancing human capital development

2. Theoretical review and Empirical review

2.1. Theoretical Review

2.1.1. Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS)

Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) is an important aspect of Green Human Resource Management, which deals with the aspects of recruiting and selection of candidates who are environmentally aware (Renwick et al. 2013). Shoaib et al. (2021) noted that GRS employees have competence and values related to the sustainability goals of the organisation (Shoaib et al. 2021).

GRS evaluates potential candidates within the hiring process according to a set of eco-conscious criteria that favor candidates with recycling, waste reduction and environmental stewardship knowledge. Through the use of online platforms for recruitment using online interview and advertisements, GRS reduces paper usage, thus resulting in reduced environmental impact and operational costs (Katayan & Chauhan, 2023). The methodology also ensures that the workforce is prepared to support sustainable practices, and a culture of environmental sustainability.

2.1.2 Human Capital Development (HCD)

HCD is the process of developing employee skill, knowledge, experience, and education for better productivity of the employees and their contribution to the objectives of the organisation (Abbas et al., 2024). Its elements are skills (technical and interpersonal capabilities), knowledge (expertise and information), experience (scientific application) and education (formal training) which is crucial for innovation and organisational performance (Faugoo, 2024). Employees in the organisation are considered the most valuable asset (Spetch, 1994), and in the context of organisational development, HCD builds employee development capacity, thus enabling the organisation to be more competitive, resisting changes, and adaptive by generating real assets (performance) and intrinsic assets (organisational knowledge systems). The strategic investment is formative to building workforce capacity to enable effective organisational responses to the challenges of the economy and environment.

2.1.3. Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory to GRS

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory states that an organisation achieves competitive advantage through the integration of rare, valuable, unique and non-substitutable resources (Rao and Brown, 2024). Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) develops unique human capital assets through the recruitment of environmentally attuned candidates with specific environmental competencies and values aligned to sustainability objectives. These candidates with green skills (recycling, waste reduction, eco-friendliness) are a rare and valuable green workforce, that distinguish organisations such as Ikeja Local Government Service Commission (Mahoney, 2017; Katayan & Chauhan, 2023). The human capital is unique because of the professionalism coupled with the sustainability paradigm that is challenging to emulate. Integrating GRS into HR practices builds a workforce that drives sustainable service delivery and promotes environmental stewardship. This strategic harmonization of human capital with sustainability goals generates a competitive advantage.

2.1.4. Social Exchange Theory and GRS

Social Exchange Theory (SET) suggests that workplace relationships are characterized by reciprocal obligations between employees and the organisation, such that employee commitment and pro-organisational behavior are the result of organisational support. Eco-conscious hiring practices: GRS emphasizes sustainable hiring practices by demonstrating a firm's commitment to environmental goals, strengthening the bond between employees and the company's sustainable aspirations. When the Local Government Service Commission, Ikeja, values candidates who are green, employees see this as a helpful investment in the future and feel that they need to give back through pro-environmental behaviours such as reducing waste and conserving energy (Liu et al., 2022). This give-and-take relationship builds employee engagement, loyalty, and motivation to support organisational sustainability goals. GRS fosters trust and shared values, encouraging employees to show stronger commitment to green initiatives and organisational citizenship (Malik et al., 2021).

2.1.5. Theoretical Framework: Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, primarily attributed to Schultz (1961) and later expanded by Becker (1964), posits that individuals possess a stock of knowledge, skills, competencies, and abilities that can be enhanced through investments in education, training, and experience. These investments yield returns both for the individual (in the form of improved career outcomes and productivity) and for the organisation (in the form of enhanced performance, innovation, and competitive advantage). According to this theory, human capital is not merely a cost but a strategic asset that organisations must deliberately develop to achieve long-term success (Faugoo, 2024). In the context of this study, Human Capital Theory provides a critical lens for understanding how Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) contributes to HCD within the Local Government Service Commission, Ikeja, Lagos State. When organisations intentionally recruit candidates with sustainability competencies such as environmental awareness, eco-friendly practices, and green innovation skills are making a strategic investment in their human capital stock (Abbas et al., 2024). Specifically, eco-friendly recruitment practices attract individuals who possess not only technical job skills but also the environmental knowledge and values necessary to advance the Commission's sustainability objectives.

2.2. Empirical Review

2.2.1. Global Studies on Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS)

Global research on Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) highlights its role in fostering employee green behavior and organisational sustainability. Vanisri and Padhy (2024) conducted a systematic review, finding that GRS significantly enhances employee green behavior by attracting candidates with environmental awareness, leading to improved ecological performance in organisations. Their study emphasizes GRS's ability to embed sustainability values during hiring, encouraging behaviors like waste reduction and energy conservation. Similarly, Yong et al. (2023) explored GRS within Green Human Resource Management (GHRM) frameworks, revealing that organisations adopting GRS see increased employee engagement in green initiatives, such as recycling and sustainable innovation, due to the alignment of individual and organisational environmental values. These studies, primarily focused on private sectors like manufacturing and hospitality, demonstrate that GRS fosters a workforce committed to sustainability, enhancing organisational competitiveness and environmental outcomes.

A survey of the global literature on the topic of green human resource management in low-to-middle-income nations reveals a strong lack of research focused specifically on the green recruitment and selection practices, despite the increasingly strong pressure on organisations to be sustainable in terms of environmental practices. In Bangura and Lourens (2025), the systematic scoping review employed databases like Scopus, ABI/INFORM, ScienceDirect and Web of Science and the ResearchGate. Their results indicate that practitioners and scholars in the emerging economies are comparatively highly aware of the concept of green recruitment and selection, but the actual application is somewhat scattered and disproportionately spread across settings. It is indicated that the overall favourable views on these practices as effective ways of aligning talent acquisition with environmental goals are present, but the availability of strong, country-comparable empirical data is insufficient to make these conclusions general. Bangura and Lourens (2025) therefore state that increased international research is highly needed to advance theoretical understanding and generate practical implications of how green recruitment and selection systems can be applied and how effective they can be in various developing world context.

Even though the importance of green recruitment and selection (GRS) has been gradually acknowledged as a key aspect of green human resource management, the literature of GRS has not been fully mapped yet. Pham and Paillé (2020) conducted a systematic review which provides critical

empirical information about changing nature of GRS. The authors have conducted an analysis of 22 peer-reviewed studies published in 2008 -2017, which reveal that there is a great variety in how organisations incorporate environmental criteria in the process of selecting candidates. Empirical research shows that some companies are specifically using green criteria, but others use signalling of their values on the environmental front more when recruiting candidates. The review also revealed that there were major mediating processes such as; anticipated pride, perceived value fit, expected favourable treatment and perceived organisational green reputation that influence the attraction of job seekers to firms that claim strong corporate environmental sustainability (CES) practices. Moreover, individual aspects, including pro-environmental attitudes, socio-environmental consciousness, and the desire to have a meaningful work, environmental certifications, and expertise of the applicant empirically mediate the strength of these associations. All in all, the research contributes to the empirical knowledge on the effect of CES signals on the applicant perception and the subtle psychological mechanisms underpinning GRS efficacy.

2.2.2. Nigerian Studies on GHRM

In Nigeria, research on GHRM, including GRS, is predominantly centered on the private sector. Adigun (2025) investigated GHRM practices in Nigerian manufacturing firms, finding that GRS positively influences employee green behavior by prioritizing candidates with eco-conscious competencies, resulting in improved environmental performance. Oluwayemi et al. (2023) focused on the banking sector, noting that GRS enhances employee commitment to sustainability through targeted recruitment strategies, though limited to profit-driven contexts. These studies underscore GHRM's effectiveness in private enterprises but reveal a critical gap in public sector applications, particularly in local government settings like the Local Government Service Commission, Ikeja. The private sector focus limits insights into how GRS can address public sector challenges like skills mismatches and underfunded training programs.

A recent empirical study by Akpa et al. (2022) highlights the critical role of the green human resource management practices and the green work-life balance programs in increasing the rate of employee retention in the hospitality industry in Nigeria. The paper addresses long-term issues in the industry such as high employee turnover, low employee motivation, rigid job design, and unfavorable employment terms in its study on the effects of environmentally sympathetic HRM practices on employee retention. Based on the primary data gathered among the hospitality firms in Lagos and Ogun States and using regression analysis, the authors found that green HRM components, such as green performance management, green employee relations, green disciplinary management, work-family balance and work-health balance, have a significant and positive effect on employee retention ($\text{Adj. } R^2 = 0.540$; $F_{4, 669} = 176.897$; $p = 0.05$). These results believe that poor retention in the industry cannot be blamed solely on compensation or lack of development but also closely associated with the lack of sustainable HRM models which can develop the supportive, flexible, and environmentally responsible working conditions.

The article by Lawal and Al'Hassan-Ewuoso (2023) was a conducted empirical study of how the green human resource management practices affect the employee performance in federal tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria. The authors employed a survey research design and selected 303 academic staff members used as a sample of 1,441 with the Taro Yamane formula and the selection of the three federal institutions that are in the state, which is the only one. The data were gathered through a well-structured questionnaire that was administered in a consistent manner and the validity and reliability of the questionnaire were established using the component factor analysis and the Cronbach alpha. The research used SPSS26 to both describe and infer with multiple regression. Findings revealed that green pay and benefits coupled with green communication had great and positive impacts on employee performance. The results indicate that there is strong positive

correlation between green HRM practices and employee performance, which supports the applicability of the environmentally oriented HR systems in improving the workforce performance in the tertiary educational contexts.

2.2.3 Gap in Literature

The existing literature highlights some of the gaps in the implementation of the green recruitment and selection (GRS) to human capital development (HCD) in the Nigerian local governments. Empirical studies conducted by Vanisri and Padhy (2024) and Yong et al. (2023) worldwide support evidence that GRS encourages environmental responsible employee behaviour and increases the sustainability of the organisation; however, both studies are mainly in the context of the private sector, which reduces the ability to generalise results to the context of the public sector. Furthermore, the studies related to low- to middle-income nations indicate the increased awareness of GRS but they also point toward their consistent inconsistencies in application and lack of strong empirical substantiation, which cannot be generalised (Bangura and Lourens, 2025). Pham and Paillé (2020) also highlight that organisations differ significantly in considering environmental requirements when recruiting staff, thus restricting the creation of standardised procedures and hampers the creation of a complete picture about effective processes.

In Nigeria, the body of existing scholarly literature on the topic has predominantly examined the activities of the privately owned sectors of the economy, including manufacturing and banking (Adigun, 2025; Oluwayemi et al., 2023), but with little coverage of the activities of state-owned institutions. Although we have evidence that green human resource management practices can enhance employee retention and performance in other sectors of the economy, including hospitality and tertiary education (Akpa et al., 2022; Lawal and Al'Hassan-Ewuoso, 2023), none of the studies undertaken to understand these issues within the local government service commissions. As a result, there is still a significant knowledge gap regarding how GRS can be used to assist HCD in the public sector of Nigeria, thus restricting the development of strategies that would help to create a competent, ecologically-conscious working population who can support the concept of local governance sustainability.

3. Methodology

Quantitative survey design was used as a way of providing objectivity, replicability and generalizability of the results. This method made it easier to develop numerical information that could be statistically tested to determine the relationship between variables. The design reduced bias in the researcher by using standardized instruments and enabled the researcher to make more inferences about the population. The study examined the associations and relationships between the independent variable dimensions (Eco-Friendly Recruitment and Environmental Awareness in Candidate Selection) and the dependent variable (Human Capital Development). The sample size was 19,991 Local Government Service Commission (LGSC), Ikeja, employees who are registered in the 2024 staff records (LGSC, 2024). In order to obtain a manageable sample size which is also representative, Taro Yamane (1967) formula was used with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error which gave the sample size of 392 respondents. In turn, proportional stratified sampling was employed to provide sufficient representation in all the departments.

A structured questionnaire which comprised three parts namely demographics, Global Recruitment and Selection (GRS) and Human Capital Development (HCD) was used to collect primary data. The GRS construct was assessed using two dimensions: (a) Eco-Friendly Recruitment (4 items) and (b) Environmental Awareness in Candidate Selection (4 items), adapted from Tang et

al. (2018). The HCD construct used twelve items adapted from Vidotto et al. (2018). Both measures were conducted using a five-point Likert scale, Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The questionnaires were distributed at work using the hardcopy and electronically through Google Forms to enable flexibility and a larger scope among the respondents and, thus, ensure maximum response rate. The expert review of three veteran scholars in the field of public administration, and measurement experts was used to establish content validity, as well as theoretical consistency with the literature. The adapted pedigree of the borrowed scales supported construct validity. The Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) scale reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.89 in the original study. Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha for the study sub-scale revealed: Eco-Friendly Recruitment (Cronbach's alpha of 0.84), Environmental Awareness in Candidate Selection (0.82) while Human Capital Development (0.85). However, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the overall scale was (0.85). Clarity and aptness of items were also further validated by piloting the questionnaire on 30 respondents hence increasing the credibility and accuracy of the measurement tools.

The Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS 26) was used to analyze the data. The demographic characteristics and response patterns were summarized using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations). The strength of relationship and the direction of relationship between Green Recruitment and Selection (independent variable) and the Human Capital Development (dependent variable) were tested using inferential statistics, i.e. Pearson product-moment correlation and simple linear regression analysis. All hypotheses were evaluated at 0.05 level of significance, which offers a strong statistical background of comparison of the effects of GRS on HCD among employees of LGSC.

ChatGPT (OpenAI, GPT-4) was used to improve sentence clarity, correct grammar, and standardize terminology throughout the manuscript. No AI-generated content was used for conceptual development, data analysis, or interpretation of results. All final content was reviewed, edited, and approved by the human authors, who assume full and exclusive responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the work.

4. Result

Three hundred and ninety-two (392) employees of the Local Government Service Commission, Ikeja were sampled, out of which 331 were valid responses, which gives an 84.4% response rate. The gender composition of the respondents was evenly split with 58% of respondents being male and 42% female. The largest demographics were 31-40 years (47%) followed by 41-50 years (28%), 21-30 years (15%) and above 50 years (10%), making for a mostly middle-aged workforce. In the area of education, 52% had bachelor's degrees, 30% higher national diploma degrees, 12% had master's degrees and 6% other qualifications indicating the well-educated sample. Work experience ranged from 1-15 years, with 45% having 6-10 years of service, 25% 11-15 years, 20% 1-5 years and 10% more than 15 years.

Prior to regression analysis, key assumptions were tested. Normality was assessed through skewness and kurtosis statistics, all within acceptable ranges (± 2). The Durbin-Watson statistic (1.94) indicated no autocorrelation. Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) ranged from 1.42 to 1.78, below the conservative threshold of 3.0, confirming absence of multicollinearity. Scatterplots of residuals against predicted values showed homoscedasticity. Table 1 shows the model summary of the contribution of green recruitment and selection on human capital development.

Table 1. Model Summary Result

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.608 ^a	.370	.366	.41354

a. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental Awareness in Candidate Selection, Eco-Friendly Recruitment

Source: This research (2025)

The regression model summary in Table 1 reveals that green recruitment and selection explains a substantial proportion of variance in human capital development within the study context. The correlation coefficient ($R = 0.608$) indicates a moderately strong positive relationship between the predictors (eco-friendly recruitment and environmental awareness in candidate selection) and human capital development. The R^2 value of 0.370 shows that the predictors explain 37% of the variation in human capital development. The adjusted R^2 (0.366) and low standard error (0.41354) confirm the model's reliability and good fit. Table 2 indicates the Anova result which shows the contribution of green recruitment and selection on human capital development.

Table 2. ANOVA^a Result

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.961	2	16.480	96.368	.000 ^b
	Residual	56.093	328	.171		
	Total	89.054	330			

a. Dependent Variable: Human Capital Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental Awareness in Candidate Selection, Eco-Friendly Recruitment

Source: This research (2025)

The ANOVA results (Table 2) strengthen the validity of the model. The regression sum of squares (32.961) is considerably larger than the residual sum of squares (56.093), highlighting that a significant portion of variance in human capital development is explained by the predictors. The F-statistic of 96.368, with a significance value of 0.000, confirms that the model as a whole is statistically significant. This indicates that eco-friendly recruitment and environmental awareness in candidate selection jointly exert a significant influence on human capital development, and the likelihood of this relationship occurring by chance is extremely low. Table 3 indicates the coefficient that shows the contribution of green recruitment and selection on human capital development.

Table 3: Coefficients Result

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.466	.137		25.342	.000
	Eco-Friendly Recruitment	.750	.077	1.283	9.786	.000
	Environmental Awareness in Candidate Selection	-.585	.099	-.778	-5.931	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Human Capital Development

Source: This research (2025)

Table 3 presents the coefficient table which shows the specific contributions of each predictor. Eco-friendly recruitment has a positive and statistically significant effect on human capital development ($B = 0.750$, $\beta = 1.283$, $t = 9.786$, $p < 0.005$). Conversely, environmental awareness in candidate selection shows a negative and significant effect on human capital development ($B = -$

0.585, $\beta = -0.778$, $t = -5.931$, $p < 0.005$). This indicates that environmental awareness in selection, though important, may not improve human capital due to weak recruitment structures or skill mismatches.

5. Discussion

The results indicate a moderate positive relationship between green recruitment and selection (GRS) and human capital development (HCD), consistent with international evidence (Vanisri & Padhy, 2024; Yong et al., 2023). This finding suggests that eco-friendly recruitment practices help attract talent whose values align with the organisation's sustainability orientation, thereby facilitating the development of human capital capable of advancing environmental goals. Such alignment validates earlier observations by Abbas et al. (2024) and Faugoo (2024), who found that green hiring signals organisational commitment, which in turn enhances employee motivation and skill acquisition.

From the perspective of the Resource-Based View (RBV), the positive effect of GRS on HCD implies that green competencies when systematically recruited and selected function as rare, valuable, and non-substitutable human capital assets. For the Commission, this represents a potential source of sustained competitive advantage, particularly as environmental mandates become more central to public-sector performance metrics. However, unlike previous studies that reported uniformly positive effects of green selection criteria (Yong et al., 2023; Adigun, 2025), the present study found that emphasizing environmental awareness in candidate selection produced a negative effect on HCD. This counterintuitive result warrants closer examination.

Drawing on Social Exchange Theory (SET), this negative effect can be explained by perceived imbalances in the exchange relationship between the employee and the organisation. When environmental awareness is prioritized over technical or functional skills, employees especially those in technical or operational roles may perceive that organisational expectations do not match their actual job demands or career development needs. Such perceived inequity diminishes reciprocal commitments, reduces engagement in development activities, and ultimately weakens HCD outcomes. This dynamic appears particularly pronounced in public-sector contexts, where rigid bureaucratic structures, politicized hiring processes, and mismatched selection criteria often prioritize symbolic attributes (e.g., stated environmental values) over demonstrable practical competencies (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021).

While the overall model fit was acceptable, the unexplained variance in HCD suggests that other variables not included in the current model such as organisational culture, green training intensity, leadership support for sustainability, and performance management systems also play meaningful roles (Malik et al., 2021). Comparatively, the success of green recruitment in private-sector organisations across developed economies (Yong et al., 2023; Vanisri & Padhy, 2024) has not been fully replicated in Nigeria's public sector. The Nigerian context presents unique implementation challenges, including institutional inertia, weak enforcement of environmental policies, rapid urbanization, and persistent mismatches between workforce skills and job requirements (Olonade et al., 2020). These contextual factors likely constrain the effectiveness of otherwise well-designed green selection practices.

Taken together, these findings point toward a practical imperative: hybrid GRS approaches that balance environmental awareness with core technical and behavioural competencies are necessary to enhance HCD in public-sector settings. Such hybrid models would recruit for both green values and job-relevant skills, thereby supporting sustainable public service delivery without sacrificing operational effectiveness.

6. Conclusions

The empirical data that was gathered in the course of this research suggests that the Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) plays a significant role in the improvement of the Human Capital Development (HCD) in the Ikeja Local Government Service Commission. The regression analysis found that the positive correlation between GRS and HCD. To be more specific, eco-friendly recruitment had a significant positive and statistically significant impact on HCD which proves that digital, paperless and sustainability-congruent recruitment practices were effective in candidates' attractions. This approach helps the commission recruit employees with necessary skills and competencies to strengthen the human capital.

On the other hand, the results showed that the environmental awareness in the candidate selection had a negative and significant impact on HCD. This trend suggests that although environmental awareness is vital, its prioritisation when not accompanied by the alignment with the core occupational competencies may create skill discrepancies, which eventually softens the human capital performance. In this respect, the results highlight the fact that GRS improves HCD only when technical and professional competencies agree with the sustainability criteria.

The research supports the view that the Green Recruitment and Selection (GRS) significantly improves the Human Capital Development (HCD) in the Ikeja Local Government Service Commission. Green recruitment was a powerful stimulus in the process of acquiring sustainability-focused skills and knowledge. However, the negative impact that environmental awareness has on the selection process suggests that environmental awareness that does not have relevant competencies limits its effectiveness. Comprehensively, GRS supplements HCD by incorporating sustainability in recruitment processes, and therefore, empowering local governments to meet their environmental and operational demands as well as promoting the sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

6.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Since the benefit of eco-friendly recruitment in HCD is significant and positive, the local government administrators should expand the use of electronic recruitment tools and online assessment systems as well as paperless documentation systems. These practices reduce environmental impact as well as contribute to the attraction of candidates with contemporary and sustainability competencies, which directly support HCD.
- ii. Considering the negative relationship between environmental awareness during the selection of candidates and HCD, policymakers are supposed to protect against environmental standards replacing fundamental job skills. They should include the environmental awareness into the selection, which should be conducted in combination with the technical knowledge, work experience, and job-related abilities, which will prevent hiring environmentally aware but deficient in skills individuals.
- iii. Given the overall high predictive ability of the model on HCD, the state and national policymakers are expected to institutionalize GRS principles in the human resources policy of the state. This kind of integration would strengthen the capacity of the workforce between ministries, agencies, and local governments, and therefore enhance the sustainability and development agenda of Nigeria.
- iv. Since the present model only explains 37 percentage points of the HCD variability, with the remaining 63 percentage points remaining unaccounted, further studies should be conducted on more local governments to determine whether these trends are present in other places. The generalisation of the findings and the need to determine additional factors that influence HCD in the Nigerian public sector would be easier with the help of comparative investigations.

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