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GREEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS SUCCESS OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN THE SOUTH-SOUTH REGION OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of green entrepreneurship on the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria. The study is guided by three (3) research questions and hypotheses. Sixty (60) food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria make up the population of the study. A census approach was adopted in order to study the entire population, and 340 managerial staff from these 10 food and beverage manufacturing firms make up the respondents of the study. A structured questionnaire was used to solicit data from the study respondents; the data generated were analyzed using Simple Linear Regression analysis to test the hypotheses. Findings from the study indicated that a significant positive relationship exists between green entrepreneurial innovation, initiative, marketing, and business success. The study concluded that green entrepreneurial innovation, initiative, and marketing have been shown to be essential drivers of business success. This study recommended that food and beverage firms should adopt various sustainability practices in order to enhance their overall performance.

Key Words: Green, innovation, initiative, marketing, environment, performance, sustainability.

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Introduction

Green entrepreneurship has become a significant concept in the contemporary business environment, especially within the food and beverage manufacturing sector. This approach puts emphasis on sustainable practices that not only focus on reducing environmental impact but also enhance economic viability. Achaku, Agbeaze, Ekoja and Asortse (2022) opined that the idea behind green entrepreneurship is premised on the fact of entrepreneurs' ability to expand ideas and implement new concepts that ensure the safety of citizens and the environment. In the South-South region of Nigeria, where oil and gas, and industrial activity play a critical economic role, green entrepreneurship is becoming known as a route to attaining business success and at the same time addressing crucial environmental challenges.

Though the food and beverage industry in Nigeria is one of the most important contributors to its GDP, it is still faced with many sustainability issues, including resource depletion, waste management, and pollution. Chukwukadiba and Nnamadi (2023) assert that actions by manufacturing enterprises have directly and actively aggravated water and air pollution, including environmental degradation and damage. Green entrepreneurship provides innovative solutions that are in tandem with global sustainability goals and at the same time cater to local market needs. By adopting environmental protection compliance practices such as farming organically, waste recycling, and efficient energy production processes, making it possible for firms to easily differentiate themselves in a market that is competitive.

Nevertheless, there is an increasing awareness among consumers regarding environmental issues. As consumers become increasingly aware of ecological impacts and their purchasing decisions, businesses that prioritize sustainability will likely achieve a competitive advantage. Within this context, green entrepreneurship not only enhances environmental stewardship but also improves consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Ekanem, Akpan, Ekanem, and Edem (2023) maintained that green business practices are important elements that enhance a company's value directly or indirectly. Green entrepreneurship is seen as a supportive strategy with the ability to create a competitive, innovative, and sustainable positioning for manufacturing firms (Enyi, Kwahar, Hanmaikyur, Adudu & Jato, 2023).

In the South-South region of Nigeria, a lot of initiatives have been carried out to facilitate green entrepreneurial practices among food and beverage manufacturers. These include policies of the government which are positioned to encourage sustainable agricultural practices and investments by the private sector in eco-friendly technologies. The interplay of these factors establishes a conducive environment for green entrepreneurs to succeed and at the same time contribute favorably to both local economies and global sustainability efforts. The United Nations Global Compact's sustainable development principles stress the importance of environmental protection and sustainability in achieving sustainable development goals (Nnabugwu & Odieli, 2023).

This study into green entrepreneurship within the food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria’s South-South region explores its importance in enhancing business success through sustainable practices. It underscores the potential for innovation and growth when businesses embrace environmentally responsible strategies.

Statement of the Problem

Ojobor (2024) explained that Southern Nigeria is an area with oil-related environmental issues and poor infrastructure making it difficult to adopt sustainable processes. Firms within this region face higher upfront and operating cost, negatively affecting short-term profitability and scalability. In view of the above Akpabot et al (2024) affirmed that supply-

chain and sourcing challenges affect green claims and gains from product quality of food and beverage firms. He further explained that inconsistent raw material quality, unsustainable/illegal land use limit firms trying to commercialize green product. Also, Guo (2022) posited that South-South food and beverage firm's face bottlenecks accessing capital, technical training, green credit line and markets for the development of premium green products as a result, high potential green project fail to excel or provide sustained business success. Food and beverage firms that are able to adopt sustainable practices, experience weak consumer awareness of certified green products, poor traceability/labeling and launch of corporate sustainability, thereby limiting the capability of these firms to transform green practices into bigger premium sales or prices (Anyaogu, 2024).

Limited empirical research exists on green entrepreneurship's impact on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in Nigeria, particularly in the South-South region. Several studies (including Enyi et al., 2023; Nyamogosa & Obonyo, 2022; Nnabugwu & Odieli, 2023; Shobha C & Akashdeep, 2023, amongst others) have investigated green entrepreneurship and firm sustainability; while few others have linked theirs to firm performance (such as Achaku et al, 2022; Chukwukadiba & Nnamani, 2023). However, there is still no study linking it to the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms. And as well as within the geographical scope of the South-South region of Nigeria. Additionally, in practical terms, there is an urgent need to define green entrepreneurship within the business strategy context, and application models to achieve business success. As previous literature has not explicitly examined green entrepreneurship implications on business success, this study aims to investigate how green entrepreneurship influences the business success of food and beverage firms located in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Research Questions

The research questions below were drafted for this study.

- **i.** What is the influence of green entrepreneurial innovation on the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria?
- **ii.** What is the influence of green entrepreneurial initiatives on the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria?
- **iii.** What is the influence of green entrepreneurial marketing on the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The null (H_0) hypotheses below were formulated for this study.

H_{01}: There is no significant positive influence of green entrepreneurial innovation on the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no significant positive influence of green entrepreneurial initiatives on the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

H_{03}: There is no significant positive influence of green entrepreneurial marketing on the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Framework

The study variables are supported by two theories: Stakeholder Theory (Independent Variable) and Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory (Dependent Variable).

Stakeholder Theory Edward Freeman (1984)

Stakeholder theory was first propounded by R. Edward Freeman in 1984 in his book Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach. According to the stakeholder theory of organizational management and business ethics, employees, creditors, suppliers, local communities, and other stakeholders are all impacted by company entities. It discusses ethics and values in business management, including those pertaining to social contract theory, market economy, and corporate social responsibility. Valentinov and Roth (2024) asserted that notable stakeholder theorists consider a business as a set of value-adding collaborations among groups with a legitimate interest in each aspect of the operations of the organization upon which the organization depends to accomplish its objectives. The approach urges managers to focus on the long-term rather than only short-term earnings. Positive relationships with stakeholders help businesses develop loyalty, trust, and long-term success. Gutterman (2023) highlighted the fact that every stakeholder group is in a unique position to contribute in a particular way to the company's wealth, which will benefit all stakeholders, not just the contributor.

The relevance of this theory to this study is based on the premise that green entrepreneurship is more likely to be successful when entrepreneurs are agile to exogenous pressures (from competitors, regulators, customers) through the development of "green dynamic capabilities", which is the ability to adapt, adopt new technologies, innovate product and process design in line with environmental goals. In view of the above-mentioned, Widyantoro et al (2025) contended that pressures from stakeholders have a positive influence on green capability, which also enhances green innovation and financial performance. In support of Widyantoro et al (2025) contention, Guo and Wang (2022) asserted that stakeholder pressure solidifies the positive effect environmental entrepreneurial orientation has on environmental innovation and firm performance.

Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory

Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory was propounded by John Elkington in the 1990s in response to the traditional accounting's narrow, finance-only view. The main idea of this theory is centered on the idea that business success is based on the three interrelated performance dimensions: People, Planet, and Profit by widening the performance lens. Miller (2020) posited that Triple Bottom Line can be categorized into “three P’s” (profit, people, and planet). Okpikpi et al (2024) asserted that TBL is anchored on three bottom lines of "economic progress, environmental sustainability, and social justice". Triple Bottom Line Theory encourages businesses to pursue sustainable value creation that is of benefit to communities, the environment, and shareholders. The conventional object of a sustainable business strategy is based on its positive impact on the environment, society, or both, and at the same time, is beneficial to shareholders (Miller, 2020).

The relevance of this theory to the study is based on the premise that TBL framework provides businesses with the tool to address sustainability problems and should be factored when evaluating firm performance. Pérez et al (2022) contended that businesses that integrate environmental and social considerations enable them anticipate physical risks (impacts of climate on supply chains), regulatory change (e.g., carbon pricing, labour regulation), and reputational shock. In addition, Nogueira (2025) posited that businesses that strategically integrate principles of TBL can improve their strategic position and competitive edge.

Green Entrepreneurship

Within the framework of green entrepreneurship, "green" refers to environmentally sustainable practices that seek to reduce the ecological impact of business activities. Nwankwor, Odanwu, Osarosee and Arumede (2024) defined entrepreneurship as the process of spotting business ideas and gaps, resource deployment matching these ideas and gaps, taking the necessary risks, not minding the amount of resources currently owed, and establishing the venture to fusion for the benefit of the entrepreneur and society. Green entrepreneurship refers to a specialized style of entrepreneurship that focuses on inventing and executing commercial solutions with the goal of addressing environmental concerns while fostering social change. Green entrepreneurship is a systematic approach that assists entrepreneurs in gaining the backing of key stakeholders so they can actively pursue their ventures (Adebanjo, Faloye & Adudu, 2024). The primary characteristic that sets green entrepreneurship apart from traditional entrepreneurship is the pursuit of a business model that generates social and environmental value in addition to financial success. Among other things, the green entrepreneur engages in ecotourism, energy efficiency, recycling, organic agriculture, sustainable mobility, renewable energy, and the number of green jobs that are linked to these new endeavors (Bakari, 2013). If green entrepreneurial ventures are to thrive, deliberate efforts must be taken to integrate the major actors with the environment in a way that supports their short-term and long-term aims.

Dimensions of Green Entrepreneurship

The following indices were used to measure green entrepreneurship: green innovation, green entrepreneurial orientation, green entrepreneurial initiatives, green entrepreneurial pro-activeness, green entrepreneurial motivation, and green entrepreneurial social responsibility (Nnabugwu & Odieli, 2023). Others have also adopted these dimensions, which include Enyi et al. (2023), Al Shammre et al. (2023), Achuka et al. (2022). This study utilizes and adopts the following dimensions, showing the manifestations of these variables within the framework of the study they are green entrepreneurial innovation, green entrepreneurial initiative, and green entrepreneurial marketing.

Green Entrepreneurial Innovation: Green entrepreneurial innovation is the creation and application of new business concepts, goods, services, or procedures that prioritize environmental sustainability while simultaneously aiming for economic viability. Olalekan, Jesuleye, Adepoju and Omolara (2020) asserted that green entrepreneurial innovations are innovations that use ecological developments to build a sustainable environment and are commonly referred to as "eco-innovation" (also known as environmentally friendly innovation, sustainable innovation, or green innovation). It involves the use of creative concepts that lead to the creation, production, and promotion of new goods that are noticeably more unique and ecologically friendly than existing or rival goods (Chukwukadiba & Nnamadi, 2023)

Green Entrepreneurial Initiatives: Green entrepreneurial initiatives are companies or projects that are created with an emphasis on promoting eco-friendly practices and environmental sustainability. These programs seek to solve environmental issues while generating revenue. These initiatives involve innovative strategies or products that address environmental challenges, reduce carbon footprints, and support sustainable development. Hamza, Abdulahi and Gyaryal (2021) maintained that GEI is the ability to convert ideas into action through innovation, creativity, and risk-taking, and also the capacity to organize and oversee projects that preserve natural resources. Numerous green entrepreneurship initiatives

make use of cutting-edge technology like 3D printing to cut down on material waste or blockchain to increase supply chain transparency.

Green Entrepreneurial Marketing: Green entrepreneurial marketing consists of businesses implementing eco-friendly procedures and marketing tactics to solve environmental issues, draw in eco-aware customers, open up new markets, and spur innovation. GEM is the production and delivery of goods to customers who are aware of their influence on the environment while yet satisfying their requirements (Alabo & Anyasor, 2021). Green entrepreneurial marketing integrates sustainability principles into all aspects of a business's operations, from product design to supply chain management. This holistic approach ensures that every decision made by the company aligns with its commitment to environmental responsibility (Abiodun, Iyobhebhe & Okundalaiye, 2024).

Business Success

Business success is commonly referred to as the accomplishment of specific goals and objectives within an organization's operations. In today's fast-paced and ever-evolving market, business success requires more than just a great product or service. It's about creating sustainable growth, maintaining customer satisfaction, and adapting to changes in the industry and society. Whether you're a startup, a growing company, or an established enterprise, the road to business success involves strategic planning, innovation, and a focus on building strong relationships with customers and stakeholders. Financial performance is an index of business success that is a subjective measure of how effectively a firm utilizes its assets to generate revenues from its primary business activities. It serves as an indicator of the overall financial health of a company over a specified period, typically assessed through various financial statements and metrics (Bamgboye, 2024). Customer satisfaction is another crucial component of business success due to its direct impact on customer loyalty, brand reputation, and profitability. Customer satisfaction refers to how well a company's products or services meet or exceed customer expectations. It encompasses every interaction a customer has with a brand, from initial awareness through post-purchase experiences. High levels of customer satisfaction indicate that customers feel valued and appreciated, which can lead to repeat purchases and long-term loyalty (Akintunde, 2023). A key component of the formula for corporate success is optimizing operational efficiency, which can be a quick route to better performance and increased revenues. Companies that optimize their operations to maximize productivity and decrease waste frequently find themselves ahead of the curve. Osazefua (2019) believed that a business's overall performance and efficiency are strongly associated. Efficient operations are related to making the best use of an organization's resources. Businesses need to efficiently produce their output from input in order to flourish and thrive.

Review of Prior Empirical Study

Scholars have explored green entrepreneurship in relation to food and beverage manufacturing firms' Success. Enyi et al. (2023) carried out a study on Green Entrepreneurial Practices and the Sustainability of Manufacturing SMEs in North Central Nigeria. The survey method was adopted by the study, and the study sample size was 327 employees from selected manufacturing SMEs located in North Central Nigeria. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data from the questionnaire administered. The study findings confirmed that there is a significant positive relationship between green entrepreneurial practices and manufacturing SMEs' sustainability. The study concluded that for manufacturing SMEs to remain sustainable, they should adopt green entrepreneurial practices in their operations.

Achaku et al (2022) carried a research on Green entrepreneurship and the performance of small and medium enterprises in North-Central Nigeria. 1,233 respondents from 6 states and Abuja form the population of the study. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. Analysis of data from the questionnaire was carried out using simple linear regression techniques. Findings from the study indicated that green entrepreneurship negatively impacts the environment and performance of SMEs. The study concluded that compliance with green entrepreneurial practices gives businesses a competitive edge and improves their performance.

A study titled "Sustainability Reporting among Nigerian Food and Beverages Firms" was conducted by Isa (2014). The study sample size comprises 6 firms picked randomly from Nigeria's stock exchange list. A cross-sectional method was adopted in this study. Data from the administered questionnaire were subjected to analysis using by regression analysis method. The study, in its findings, revealed that reports on environmental activities showed that sustainability positively impacts the operations of food and beverage firms in Nigeria. The study also suggests that future researchers should explore a sample that is larger sample and an inter-industry analysis to provide a wider picture of Nigeria's sustainability reporting.

Nyamogosa and Obonyo (2022) carried out research on Sustainable Business Strategies for Fast-Food Restaurant Growth: Fast-Food Restaurant Managers' Perspectives in Lake Region Economic Block, Kenya. The study sample size was 208 restaurant managers across the Economic Block in the Lake Region of Kenya. SPSS, using the descriptive regression method, was adopted to analyze the data collected. Findings showed that economic sustainability strategies, social responsibility strategies, and environmental sustainability strategies significantly influence the growth of fast-food restaurants. The study contributed to the existing body of knowledge on how fast-food restaurant success has been impacted by sustainable business practices.

Chukwukadiba and Nnamani (2023) explored a study on the effect of green innovation on the competitive advantages of manufacturing firms in Enugu state, Nigeria. The study sample of 328 was arrived at using the trek formula. The survey research design was adopted by the study. Structured questionnaires and oral interviews were used to solicit data from respondents. The study adopted Person Product Moment Correction and Linear Regression methods for analyzing the data with the aid of SPSS ver.22. The study findings showed that there exists a positive relationship between green innovation and manufacturing firms' competitive advantages in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study recommended from the findings that firms should align consumers' preferences to green product innovation, and manufacturing firms should also endeavor to bring down operation costs through green innovation.

Methodology

This study adopted the survey design research method. This research design was adopted by this study because it seeks to establish the extent to which the predictor variable (green entrepreneurship) influences the criterion variable (business success) of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria. The population of the study is 60 food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria, which emanated from 10 food and beverage manufacturing firms from each of the 6 South-South states (Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Akwa-Ibom, Cross-River, Rivers) in Nigeria. These firms were chosen because they are the market leaders in these states according to the Nigerian Stock Exchange Report. The researcher adopted a census approach because the study population is under the researcher's control with a focus on four (4) managerial level staff (Operation

manager, Marketing and Sales Managers, R&D Manager, and supply chain manager) who form the respondents (240) of the study. A questionnaire was used in data collection and was validated by three expert researchers and was distributed in the frame of 4 copies per firm. 240 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents and 230 copies were completed successfully and returned. This gave a rate of retrieval of 95.8%. A modified Likert scale was adopted by this study which includes; Strongly Agree – 4, Agreed – 3, Strongly Disagreed – 2, Disagreed – 1, for the questionnaire. Nominal data type and hypotheses statements were tested by adopting a simple linear regression technique at a confidence level of 95% (i.e., 0.05 significance level).

Results

H_{01}: There is no significant influence of green entrepreneurial innovation on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Table 1:

Simple Linear Regression Analysis indicates a significant influence of green innovation on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.471[a]	.221	.241	.02624

a. Independent: (Constant), GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL INNOVATION

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	206.922	1	206.922	24.044	.000[b]
	Residual	1962.224	228	8.606		
	Total	2169.146	229			

a. Criterion Variable: BUSINESS SUCCESS
b. Independent (Constant), GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL INNOVATION

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.604	.155		17.020	.000
	GREEN ENTREPRENEURIALINNOVATION	.034	0.53	.462	2.571	.002

a. Criterion Variable: Business Success

Table 1 above shows the Model of Summary which revealed that the R-value of .471 is the strength of the influence of green entrepreneurial innovation on the business success of food

and beverage manufacturing firms, in the South-South region of Nigeria, while the R2 value of .221 was formulated to a percentage. The R2 value of 221 also showed that the predictor variable represents a 22.1% variance of the criterion variable. This result indicates that a positive influence exists between green entrepreneurial innovation practices and the business success of food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria. Entries in the ANOVA Table reveal that the calculated F-value of 24.044 and the Sig-value (.000) are not more than the level of significance (.05) at a degree of freedom 1 and 228. Going by this result, the null hypothesis that says that there is no positive significant influence of green entrepreneurial innovation on business success in the food and beverage manufacturing firm in, the South-South region of Nigeria was rejected. This indicates that there exists a positive significant influence of green entrepreneurial innovation on business success in the food and beverage manufacturing firms, in South-South Nigeria.

H_{02}: There is no significant influence of green entrepreneurial initiatives on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Table 2:

Simple Linear Regression Analysis indicates a significant influence of green entrepreneurial initiatives on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	604[a]	.384	.307	.0366

a. Independents: (Constant), GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	291.078	1	291.078	35.348	.000[b]
	Residual	1878.068	228	8.237		
	Total	2169.146	229			

a. Criterion variable: BUSINESS SUCCESS
b. Independents: (Constant), GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.921	.162		18.102	.000
	GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL INITIATIVE	.052	.077	.599	2.762	.000

a. Criterion Variable: BUSINESS SUCCESS

The table 2 above shows the Model of Summary which revealed that the R-value of .604 is the degree of the influence of green entrepreneurial initiatives on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms, in the South-South region of Nigeria while the R^2 value of .384 was formulated to percentage. The R^2 value of .384 also showed that the predictor variable represents a 38.4% variance of the criterion variable. This result indicates that there

exists a positive influence of green entrepreneurial initiatives on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms, in the South-South region of Nigeria. Entries shown in the ANOVA Table indicate that the calculated F-value of 35.348 and the Sig-value (.000) are less than the significant level of (.05) at 1 and 228 degrees of freedom. This result reveals that the null hypothesis, which says no significant influence exists between green entrepreneurial initiative and the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms of the South-South region of Nigeria, was rejected. This means that a significant relationship exists between green entrepreneurial initiatives and the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

H_{03}: There is no significant influence of green entrepreneurial marketing on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Table 3:

Simple Linear Regression Analysis indicating a significant influence of green entrepreneurial marketing on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.631[a]	.398	.396	.0314

b. Independents: (Constant), GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	116.837	1	116.837	8.369	.000[b]
	Residual	2052.309	147	13.961		
	Total	2169.146	148			

c. Criterion variable: BUSINESS SUCCESS

d. Independents: (Constant), GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING

Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.951	.162		18.201	.000
1 GREEN ENTREPRENEURIAL MARKETING	.052	.077	.614	3.711	.000

b. Criterion Variable: BUSINESS SUCCESS

The table 3 above result showed the Model of Summary, which revealed that the R-value of .631 is the degree of the influence of green entrepreneurial marketing on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in South-South region of Nigeria, while the R^2 value of .398 was formulated to percentage. The R^2 value of .398 also showed that the predictor variable represents a 39.8% variance of the criterion variable. This result indicates that there exists a positive influence of green entrepreneurial marketing on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria. Entries shown in the ANOVA Table indicate that the calculated F-value of 8.369 and the Sig-

value (.000) are less than the significant level of (.05) at 1 and 147 degrees of freedom. This result reveals that the null hypothesis, which says no significant influence exists between green entrepreneurial marketing and the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria, was rejected. This means that a significant relationship exists between green entrepreneurial marketing and the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria.

Summary of Findings of the Study

The study findings indicate that;

i. There is a significant influence of green entrepreneurial innovation on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms of the South-South region of Nigeria.

ii. There is a significant influence of green entrepreneurial initiatives on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms of the South-South region of Nigeria.

iii. There is a significant influence of green entrepreneurial marketing on the business success of food and beverage manufacturing firms of the South-South region of Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Green Entrepreneurial Innovation and Business Success

The study indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between green innovation and business success in food and beverage manufacturing firms of the South-South region of Nigeria. This study's findings point out that green innovation, eco-friendliness, sustainable processes, and product development are highly related to the success of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria. This study also showed that adopting green innovation practices positively influences loyalty and customer satisfaction, leading to enhanced business performance (Borico & Chima, 2023). Also, Ifekanandu and Ihuoma (2024) asserted that the younger generation, who is the major consumer base of these firms, is increasingly conscious about the environment. As a result, food and beverage manufacturing firms that innovate greenly are able to attract this set of customers, improve brand image, and enhance customer loyalty. To support the findings of this study, Sakhrekar, Gorde and Sayankar (2022) affirmed that green innovations often lead to reduced energy and resource consumption, resulting in lower operational costs. Firms that adopt energy-efficient technologies or sustainable sourcing may experience enhanced profitability. Soomro, Ghumro and Shah (2019) strongly observed that green entrepreneurial practices lead to enhanced competitive advantage for a business by adopting green entrepreneurial innovation.

Green Entrepreneurial Initiative and Business Success

The study indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between green entrepreneurial initiatives and business success in food and beverage manufacturing firms of the South-South region of Nigeria. To affirm this finding, Nguyen and Nguyen (2020) posited that green entrepreneurial initiatives can result from the desire for environmental sustainability, producing eco-friendly new goods, services, and procedures that boost the productivity of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria. In a study by Kadymov (2023), he explained that the potential for significant cost reductions is one of the most obvious benefits of putting green entrepreneurial initiatives into practice. By implementing energy-efficient procedures like LED lighting, purchasing energy-efficient equipment, and adequately insulating buildings, food and beverage firms can save on their power costs. In certain situations, these actions can result in energy consumption savings of

up to 75%. Martin (2024) maintained that as sustainability becomes more mainstream, food and beverage firms that implement eco-friendly practices early on can position themselves as industry leaders. By taking a proactive stance, businesses can broaden their networks and open doors for cooperation with like-minded groups. In conclusion food and beverage firms can seize new market segments that place a higher priority on sustainability by staying ahead of rivals who might be slower to implement green entrepreneurial initiatives.

Green Entrepreneurial Marketing and Business Success

The study indicates that there is a positive significant relationship between green entrepreneurial initiatives and business success in food and beverage manufacturing firms of the South-South region of Nigeria. Nyilasy, Gangadharbatla, and Paladino (2013) maintained that ethical green entrepreneurial marketing is favorable to successful business results. According to a study by Delmas and Pekovic (2019), they revealed that businesses that implement green entrepreneurial marketing practices may incur upfront expenses related to process reform and technology adoption, but they may also see long-term financial gains. In the same light, Sharma et al (2021) asserted that a variety of promotional initiatives are included in green marketing practices, which aim to emphasize a company's dedication to environmental sustainability. As a result, food and beverage manufacturing companies use green entrepreneurial marketing tactics to stand out in competitive markets, win their customers, and strengthen their brand equity (Leonidou et al., 2020). In addition, Nguyen and Nguyen (2020) further demonstrate that a successful green entrepreneurial marketing plan will boost market share, earnings, and sales. Environmental strategies will boost productivity, create new technologies, provide businesses with a competitive edge, and boost earnings. Green entrepreneurial marketing adoption by food and beverage manufacturing firms in Southern Nigeria will make it easier for their customers to obtain green items and these customers will be willing to pay a premium for green products, leading to boost in sales and revenue by extension.

Conclusion

Green entrepreneurship has shown to be an essential driver of business success for food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria. The increasing global concern on environmental protection, sustainability, and eco-friendly practices have led to consumer preferences shifting toward products that align with these values. South-South region food and beverage manufacturing firms that embrace green entrepreneurial practices such as optimizing energy consumption, reducing waste, sourcing sustainable ingredients, and adopting environmentally friendly packaging, have not only enhanced their brand image but also gained a competitive edge in the market. Also, when South-South food and beverage manufacturing firms integrate green entrepreneurial practices into their business models, they enhance operational efficiency, cut down costs, and enhance their image to consumers who are environmentally conscious. Businesses prevent penalties through compliance with local and international environmental regulations positioning themselves as sustainable production leaders.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were drawn from the study findings.

i. Food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria should focus on reducing their carbon emission and assisting local communities through securing raw materials from local, organic, and sustainable farms.

ii. Food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria should implement efficient waste management systems to reduce waste production and enhance the recycling of food scraps, packaging materials, and by-products.
iii. Food and beverage firms in the South-South region of Nigeria should change to biodegradable and eco-friendly packaging solutions to eliminate plastic waste.
iv. Food and beverage firms in South-South region of Nigeria should create and promote innovative, food products that are environmentally friendly which appeal to the increasing demand for plant-based and organic options.
v. A sustainability-focused marketing strategy that shows the commitment of food and beverage manufacturing firms in the South-South region of Nigeria to green entrepreneurial practices, eco-friendly manufacturing, and social responsibility should be formulated.

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