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We also acknowledge the time, effort, and professionalism demonstrated throughout the development of this volume. Your collaboration and responsiveness have been invaluable in bringing this project to fruition.

Thank you for your commitment to knowledge creation and for helping shape a more sustainable future for education in Africa.

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10

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CHALLENGES FACING IMPLEMENTATION OF GREEN SCHOOL POLICIES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines the concept of green schools and the role of green school policies in promoting environmental sustainability within the educational system, with particular focus on Nigeria. The paper explores the meaning and components of green schools as institutions that integrate eco-friendly practices into their infrastructure, curriculum, and daily operations. It further discusses green school policies as structured frameworks that guide the implementation of sustainability practices in schools. The study highlights the importance of these policies in fostering environmental awareness, improving students' health, enhancing teaching and learning, ensuring efficient resource utilization, and contributing to national and global sustainable development goals. Adopting a qualitative review method, relevant literature from textbooks, journal articles, and policy documents was analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject. The findings reveal that despite the numerous benefits of green school policies, their implementation in Nigeria is hindered by several challenges, including



inadequate funding, low environmental awareness, weak policy enforcement, poor infrastructure, resistance to change, insufficient training, and weak institutional coordination. The study concludes that while green school policies are essential for sustainable development in education, deliberate efforts must be made by government and stakeholders to address these challenges and ensure effective implementation.

Keywords: Green schools, Green school policies, Schools, Policies

10.0. Introduction

The growing concern over environmental degradation, climate change, and resource depletion has increased the need for sustainable practices across all sectors of society, including education. Schools, as centers for knowledge transmission and value formation, play a crucial role in shaping attitudes and behaviors toward the environment. In response to these global challenges, the concept of green schools has emerged as an innovative approach to integrating environmental sustainability into the education system. A green school is not only concerned with academic instruction but also with creating an eco-friendly environment that promotes responsible use of natural resources and environmental stewardship among learners. In recent years, governments and educational stakeholders around the world have recognized the importance of embedding sustainability into school systems through well-defined policies. Green school policies provide a structured approach for implementing environmentally friendly practices in schools. These policies outline guidelines on energy conservation, waste management, water usage, environmental education, and sustainable resource management. By institutionalizing such practices, schools are better positioned to contribute meaningfully to environmental protection and sustainable development.

In the Nigerian context, the need for green school policies is particularly important due to the increasing environmental challenges facing the country, such as deforestation, poor waste management, pollution, and the effects of climate change. Schools can serve as strategic platforms for addressing these challenges by educating young people and modeling sustainable practices. However, despite the recognized importance of green school policies, their implementation in Nigeria remains limited and faces several obstacles. This study therefore seeks to examine the concept of green schools and green school policies, highlight their importance,



and analyze the challenges militating against their effective implementation in Nigeria. By doing so, the paper contributes to ongoing discussions on how education can be leveraged as a tool for promoting environmental sustainability and national development.

10.1. Literature Review

▪ Concept of Green School

A green school refers to an educational institution that consciously integrates environmental sustainability into its physical environment, curriculum, management practices, and community engagement. It is a school designed and managed in a way that reduces negative environmental impacts while promoting ecological awareness and responsible behavior among students and staff. Green schools go beyond conventional schooling by embedding environmental values into everyday activities. This includes efficient use of energy and water, proper waste management, tree planting, use of renewable energy sources, and maintaining a healthy and eco-friendly learning environment. Greening the campus or schools is all about reducing wasteful practices. The use of non-conventional sources like solar energy and biomass energy can efficiently meet an educational institution's energy needs. The University can also purchase environment-friendly supplies and conduct an effective recycling program. Thus, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability should be the two pillars upon which the green campus concept needs to be based (GIETU 2021). Green campus or schools are programmes meant for higher institution to promote environment sustainability through conservation of natural resources like water and biodiversity, optimize energy efficiency and manage waste within and outside the school environment. Green campus is an organized programme that is designed for maximization of nature environment and protection and to provide support for sustainable resources within the school environment (Ogunode, Daniel, & Daniels, 2024). Green initiatives have become a phenomenon globally now. This has taken seriously all parties regarding the process of environmental sustainability. Sustainable Development Goals had been used as a guideline towards this agenda (Isa, Sedhu, Lop, Rashid, Nor, & Iffahd, 2021; Lozano, Lukman, Lozano, Huisinigh, & Lambrechts, 2013).

The green school programs encompass the establishment of sustainable infrastructure facilities inside educational institutions. Consequently, it is an infrastructure capable of empowering individuals. Any initiative that empowers individuals constitutes an endeavour in peace-building. The establishment of green facilities in schools is essential for achieving educational objectives and promotes environmental peace-building, as a sustainable school environment and infrastructure are vital for effective curriculum delivery. The global green school program encompasses the formulation of national policies on green school initiatives, the domestication



of these policies by state governments, the allocation of specialised funds for the implementation of green schools, monitoring and evaluation processes, the establishment of school units and student clubs, and the development of school policies focussing on: green curriculum, green classrooms, green facilities, school gardens, clean energy, waste management, digitalisation of teaching and learning, recycling, reduction of paper usage, and the enhancement of green school infrastructure facilities. The establishment of sustainable infrastructures will undoubtedly contribute to environmental peace-building (Ogunod, Akuh, Ayoko, & Ayeni, 2025). Green school may incorporate features such as natural lighting and ventilation, school gardens, recycling programs, and environmental clubs. The concept also emphasizes teaching students about sustainability, climate change, conservation, and responsible consumption. Thus, a green school serves both as a learning space and as a model of environmental stewardship (Aggarwal 2017).

- **Concept of Green School Policies**

Green school policies are formal guidelines, rules, and strategic frameworks developed by educational authorities or school management to promote environmental sustainability within schools. These policies provide direction on how schools should operate in ways that are environmentally friendly and socially responsible. Such policies typically cover areas like energy conservation, waste reduction, water management, environmental education, and sustainable procurement. They may also include procedures for monitoring environmental performance and ensuring compliance with national or institutional environmental standards.

Green school policies are important because they move sustainability efforts from informal practices to structured and measurable actions. They ensure consistency in implementation, assign responsibilities to stakeholders, and create accountability mechanisms. In essence, these policies serve as the foundation for transforming ordinary schools into environmentally sustainable institutions.

10.2. Importance of Green School Policies

- i. **Promotion of Environmental Awareness and Responsibility**

Green school policies play a vital role in creating awareness about environmental issues among students, teachers, and the wider school community. By integrating sustainability into school operations and curriculum, students develop a deeper understanding of environmental challenges such as pollution, climate change, and resource depletion. This awareness encourages responsible behavior, such as conserving water, reducing waste, and protecting natural resources.



Over time, students carry these values into their homes and communities, contributing to broader societal change.

Improvement of Students' Health and Well-being

A key importance of green school policies is their contribution to a healthier learning environment. Policies that promote clean air, proper sanitation, safe water, and reduced exposure to harmful substances help improve students' physical health. For example, ensuring good ventilation and natural lighting reduces respiratory problems and eye strain. Clean surroundings and proper waste disposal minimize the risk of diseases. A healthy environment enhances students' concentration, attendance, and overall academic performance.

ii. Cost Savings and Efficient Resource Utilization

Green school policies encourage efficient use of resources such as electricity, water, and materials. Practices like energy conservation, use of solar power, rainwater harvesting, and recycling help reduce operational costs over time. Although initial investment may be required, the long-term financial benefits are significant. Schools can redirect saved funds to other important areas such as instructional materials and infrastructure development. Thus, green policies support both environmental and economic sustainability.

iii. Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

Green school policies enrich the teaching and learning process by providing practical and experiential learning opportunities. Environmental concepts are not only taught theoretically but also demonstrated through real-life activities such as gardening, waste sorting, and conservation projects. This hands on approach makes learning more engaging and meaningful. It also helps students develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a sense of responsibility toward the environment. Teachers, in turn, adopt innovative teaching methods that align with sustainability goals.

iv. Contribution to National and Global Sustainable Development Goals

Green school policies align with broader national and global efforts toward sustainable development, including goals related to quality education, climate action, and environmental protection. By implementing these policies, schools contribute to building a generation that is environmentally conscious and capable of addressing sustainability challenges. In the Nigerian context, green school policies support national development priorities by promoting resource



conservation and environmental protection. Globally, they contribute to achieving sustainable development targets, ensuring a better future for coming generations.

10.3. Method

This study adopted a qualitative review approach. Relevant literature was sourced from textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles, policy documents, and official publications on environmental education and educational management. The materials were carefully selected based on their relevance to the concepts of green schools and green school policies.

Content analysis was employed to examine and synthesize the information obtained from these sources. Key themes such as definitions, policy frameworks, and importance were identified and discussed systematically. The review method enabled a comprehensive understanding of the subject without the use of primary data.

10.4. Result and Discussion on Challenges Militating against implementation of Green School Policy in Nigeria

Effective implementation of green school policies in Nigeria faces a number of structural, financial, administrative, and socio-cultural constraints. These challenges are deeply rooted in the broader realities of the Nigerian education system and national development priorities. The following are seven major challenges, discussed in detail:

- **Inadequate Funding**

One of the most critical challenges confronting the implementation of green school policies in Nigeria is inadequate funding. Environmental sustainability initiatives such as waste recycling systems, renewable energy installations (e.g., solar panels), tree planting, and eco-friendly infrastructure require significant financial investment. However, many public schools in Nigeria operate under limited budgets that are barely sufficient to cover basic needs like staff salaries, classroom materials, and infrastructure maintenance (Adnyana, & Sudaryati, 2022). As a result, school administrators often prioritize immediate operational concerns over long-term environmental initiatives. The absence of dedicated funding streams or grants for green projects further weakens implementation efforts. Without financial commitment from government and stakeholders, green policies remain largely theoretical.

- **Poor Awareness and Environmental Literacy**

Another major constraint is the low level of awareness and environmental literacy among school administrators, teachers, students, and even policymakers. Many stakeholders do not fully



understand the concept of green school policies or their long-term benefits, such as improved health, cost savings, and environmental protection. In some cases, environmental education is treated as a peripheral topic rather than an integral part of the curriculum. Teachers may lack the knowledge or training required to integrate sustainability practices into their teaching. Consequently, green initiatives are poorly implemented or ignored entirely, as stakeholders do not perceive them as essential (Adnyana, Mahendra, & Raza, 2023).

- **Lack of Policy Enforcement and Monitoring**

Although Nigeria has policies related to environmental sustainability and education, enforcement remains weak. Government agencies responsible for overseeing education and environmental standards often lack the capacity, coordination, or political will to ensure compliance. There is also limited monitoring and evaluation of green initiatives in schools. Without clear accountability mechanisms, schools are not compelled to adopt or sustain environmentally friendly practices. In many cases, policies exist only on paper, with little or no practical implementation at the school level (Association for promoting sustainability in campuses and communities 2021).

- **Inadequate Infrastructure**

The state of infrastructure in many Nigerian schools poses a significant barrier to green policy implementation. A large number of schools lack basic facilities such as functional classrooms, clean water, sanitation systems, and electricity. Under such conditions, introducing advanced green infrastructure like energy-efficient buildings, waste management systems, or water conservation technologies becomes extremely difficult. Additionally, overcrowded classrooms and poorly maintained school environments limit opportunities for implementing environmental practices such as school gardens or recycling programs. The infrastructural deficit therefore undermines the feasibility of green school initiatives (Center 2024; Dada & Ogunode, 2024).

- **Resistance to Change**

Resistance to change among stakeholders is another challenge. School administrators, teachers, and even students may be reluctant to adopt new practices, especially when they involve additional responsibilities or changes to established routines (Ogunode & Ukozor, 2025). For instance, introducing waste segregation, energy conservation habits, or environmental clubs may be perceived as extra work without immediate benefits. Cultural attitudes and traditional practices may also conflict with certain sustainability measures. This resistance slows down the adoption and institutionalization of green policies in schools.



▪ **Insufficient Training and Capacity Building**

Effective implementation of green school policies requires trained personnel who understand sustainability principles and can translate them into practical actions (Ogunode, & Johnson, 2025). However, many teachers and school leaders in Nigeria have not received adequate training in environmental education or green practices. Professional development programs rarely focus on sustainability, leaving educators ill-equipped to drive green initiatives. Without capacity building, even well-designed policies cannot be effectively implemented, as those responsible for execution lack the necessary skills and knowledge (Center for green school 2023).

▪ **Weak Institutional Framework and Coordination**

The implementation of green school policies often requires collaboration between multiple agencies, including ministries of education, environment, and health. In Nigeria, coordination among these institutions is often weak or fragmented (Ogunode, 2025). This lack of synergy leads to duplication of efforts, policy inconsistencies, and gaps in implementation. Furthermore, the absence of a clear institutional framework specifically dedicated to green schools makes it difficult to define roles, responsibilities, and implementation strategies. As a result, efforts to promote sustainability in schools are uncoordinated and ineffective (Center for green school 2022).

10.5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study established that green schools and green school policies are critical components of modern educational systems aimed at promoting sustainability. Green schools provide a practical framework for integrating environmental consciousness into everyday school activities, while green school policies offer the structure and direction needed for effective implementation. The importance of these policies extends beyond the school environment, influencing students' attitudes, behaviors, and contributions to society. However, for these benefits to be fully realized, there must be deliberate efforts to address existing challenges and ensure that sustainability becomes a core aspect of educational planning and management. The future of education, particularly in developing countries, depends significantly on the ability to align educational practices with environmental sustainability.

The challenges militating against the effective implementation of green school policies in Nigeria are multifaceted, ranging from financial and infrastructural constraints to issues of awareness, capacity, and governance. Based on the findings, the study recommend the following:

- 1) Governments should allocate specific funds to support the implementation of green school initiatives, including infrastructure development and environmental programs.



- 2) Educational authorities should develop clear and enforceable green school policies, with monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure compliance.
- 3) Teachers and school administrators should receive regular training on environmental education and sustainable practices to enhance their capacity to implement green policies effectively.
- 4) Environmental education should be fully integrated into school curricula at all levels to promote awareness and practical engagement among students.
- 5) Schools should collaborate with communities, non-governmental organizations, and private sector partners to support green initiatives and create wider impact.
- 6) Government and stakeholders should prioritize the provision of basic facilities such as water, sanitation, and electricity, which are essential for implementing green practices.
- 7) Regular awareness programs should be organized to educate students, staff, and the community on the importance of environmental sustainability.

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Concluding Synthesis

The second edition of *Sustainable Education in Africa* advances the discourse on educational transformation by offering a deeper, more nuanced interrogation of the structural, technological, and socio-economic forces shaping education systems across Nigeria and the African continent. Building upon the foundations established in the first edition, this volume expands its analytical scope to incorporate emerging paradigms such as digital ecosystems, artificial intelligence–driven educational planning, climate-responsive education, and the evolving nexus between education, economic resilience, and sustainable development.

A cross-chapter synthesis reveals that sustainable education in Africa is no longer a singular policy objective but a dynamic, multi-layered process requiring systemic alignment across governance, infrastructure, pedagogy, and innovation ecosystems. The contributions collectively underscore that while technological advancements—particularly in digital learning platforms, data analytics, and artificial intelligence—offer unprecedented opportunities to enhance access, efficiency, and quality, their transformative potential remains contingent upon enabling environments characterized by robust infrastructure, policy coherence, institutional capacity, and equitable resource distribution.

The volume further highlights the persistence of entrenched structural challenges, including chronic underfunding, socio-economic inequalities, policy inconsistencies, insecurity, and weak institutional frameworks. These constraints continue to limit the scalability and sustainability of educational reforms. Notably, the second edition places greater emphasis on the interconnectedness of these challenges, illustrating how deficits in governance, economic stability, and social inclusion directly impact educational outcomes.

Importantly, this edition reframes education as a strategic driver of national competitiveness, innovation, and social cohesion within a rapidly changing global landscape. It reinforces the imperative for education systems to move beyond traditional models toward adaptive, inclusive, and future-oriented frameworks that are responsive to both global trends and localized realities.

Ultimately, this volume contributes to advancing scholarly and policy-oriented conversations by offering integrated insights that bridge theory, practice, and innovation. It serves as a critical resource for stakeholders seeking to navigate the complexities of educational transformation while fostering systems that are resilient, inclusive, and aligned with sustainable development imperatives.

Implications for Practice

Drawing from the expanded insights of this second edition, the following strategic implications are proposed for policymakers, educational leaders, practitioners, and development partners:

Policy Innovation and Systems Thinking:

Governments should adopt adaptive, data-driven policy frameworks that integrate sustainability, digital transformation, and inclusivity into long-term national development strategies. Emphasis should be placed on policy continuity, monitoring mechanisms, and cross-sectoral coordination.

Digital Transformation and Emerging Technologies:

There is an urgent need to scale investments in digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence applications, and smart learning environments. Educational systems must harness technology not only for access but also for personalized learning, predictive planning, and administrative efficiency.

Sustainable Financing Models:

Beyond traditional funding mechanisms, innovative financing approaches—including public-private partnerships, education bonds, and international development funding—should be explored to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience of education systems.

Capacity Development for the Future Workforce:

Continuous professional development must evolve to include digital competencies, interdisciplinary teaching approaches, and innovation-driven pedagogy. Educators should be equipped to prepare learners for emerging global labor markets.

Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice:

Policies and interventions must go beyond access to address systemic inequalities affecting marginalized groups, including gender disparities, rural-urban divides, and learners with special needs. Inclusive education should be embedded as a core principle rather than a peripheral objective.

Research, Data, and Evidence-Based Practice:

Institutions should strengthen research capacity and promote the use of real-time data analytics to inform decision-making, policy formulation, and educational innovation.

Strengthening Institutional Resilience:

Education systems must be designed to withstand disruptions such as economic shocks, pandemics, and conflicts by incorporating flexible delivery models, blended learning systems, and crisis-responsive policies.

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:

Sustainable transformation requires coordinated engagement among governments, academia, industry, civil society, and international organizations to leverage expertise, resources, and innovation.

Editors' Note

The editors are pleased to present the second edition of *Sustainable Education in Africa*, which reflects an expanded and enriched body of knowledge responding to the evolving complexities of education systems within the continent.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the contributing authors whose scholarly contributions demonstrate exceptional rigor, depth, and forward-thinking perspectives. Their work not only builds upon the foundations of the first edition but also introduces new dimensions that address contemporary challenges and emerging opportunities in education.

We also acknowledge the invaluable role of peer reviewers, editorial board members, and institutional collaborators whose commitment to academic excellence has ensured the credibility, relevance, and quality of this publication. Their contributions have been instrumental in shaping this volume into a comprehensive and impactful resource.

This second edition is conceived as more than an academic compilation; it is a strategic platform for advancing dialogue, informing policy, and inspiring innovation in education across Africa. It reflects our collective commitment to fostering educational systems that are inclusive, resilient, and aligned with sustainable development goals.

It is our expectation that this volume will serve as a catalyst for further research, interdisciplinary collaboration, and transformative action, ultimately contributing to the continuous evolution of education systems across the continent.