

The Influence of High-Performance Work Systems on Firm Sustainability in CWG Plc, Lagos State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

In today's dynamic and competitive business environment, firms are increasingly challenged to develop internal capabilities that support long-term sustainability. High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) are recognized as key mechanisms for enhancing employee skills, motivation, and participation, which in turn strengthen organizational performance and resilience. This study examined the influence of HPWS on firm sustainability using CWG Plc in Lagos, Nigeria, as a case study. A descriptive survey design was employed, and 175 questionnaires were distributed to employees, of which 127 valid responses were analyzed. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression techniques. Findings reveal that all HPWS dimensions, employee training and development ($r = 0.594$, $p = 0.001$), performance-based compensation ($r = 0.571$, $p = 0.001$), and employee participation in decision-making ($r = 0.587$, $p = 0.001$), have significant positive effects on firm sustainability. Multiple regression analysis shows that HPWS explains 58% of the variation in firm sustainability ($R^2 = 0.58$), with training and development ($\beta = 0.344$, $p < 0.001$), performance-based compensation ($\beta = 0.287$, $p = 0.001$), and employee participation ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$) being significant predictors. The study concludes that HPWS, when implemented holistically, enhances operational efficiency, innovation, and long-term organizational performance. Recommendations include strengthening training programs, improving performance-based compensation, promoting employee participation, and integrating HPWS components as a coordinated system to maximize sustainable outcomes. This research provides empirical evidence that comprehensive human resource practices are critical for sustaining competitive advantage in emerging economy contexts such as Nigeria

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1. INTRODUCTION

With the current dynamic and highly competitive business world, organizations are being compelled to build internal capacities that allow them to be sustainable and competitive. The problem of high rates of technological changes, fluctuations in the market, and the changing needs of customers have exacerbated the necessity of firms to use strong and dynamic management practices. In that regard, organizational sustainability, including long-term economic, social, and environmental performance, has taken the form of a crucial issue in the companies that want to survive and develop (Ma et al., 2023; Kuhner et al., 2025). High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) is one of the most important internal processes that enable organizations to improve performance and increase sustainability. HPWS are a combination of human resource practices including employee training and development, compensation

plans that are based on performance, employee involvement in decision-making, and talent management, which is aimed at ensuring that employees enhance their qualities, motivation, and chances to act positively towards organizational objectives. It is well-known that these systems can promote the productivity of employees, their innovation, and the overall performance of the organization (Eniola et al., 2023; Larasandi and Satrya, 2025).

The recent researches have provided evidence that HPWS are important in enhancing organizational resilience and sustainability. HPWS can help organizations to increase their operational efficiency and sustain performance in the long term by promoting employee engagement, adaptability and innovative behavior. Companies investing into the high-performance work practices are in a better position to establish sustainable capabilities that promote competitiveness and sustainable growth (Hanu and Khumalo, 2023; Eniola et al., 2023).

Likewise, in the Nigerian environment, especially in the technology industry, companies like CWG Plc are in very competitive and innovative frameworks where human resource is central to the organizational achievement. CWG Plc is a knowledge-based organization, which leans on skilled employee, the process of learning and performance systems to ensure that its operations are maintained and it continues to remain competitive in the digital economy. This renders it a good case study to analyse the role of HPWS in the sustainability of firms.

Although the significance of HPWS is acknowledged, there remains an insufficient amount of empirical data on the direct impact of these systems on the sustainability of the firm, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. The existing literature has put more emphasis on the correlation between HPWS and the performance, innovation, or productivity of employees, without paying much attention to how it contributes to the long-term sustainability of the organization (Eniola et al., 2023; Larasandi and Satrya, 2025).

In addition, most of the existing literature is concentrated in developed economies, and there is little focus on the emerging markets where companies are faced with special problems like infrastructural shortage, economic uncertainty, and stiff competition. This leaves a knowledge void on how organizations in such settings use HPWS to attain sustainable performance results (Hanu & Khumalo, 2023).

Moreover, though previous research recognizes the value of human resource practices in organizational success, it has not been able to substantiate the role played by individual elements of HPWS, including training, compensation and employee involvement that have a combined impact on the sustainability of firms. This is because of incomplete analysis of the organizations to develop effective human resource planning strategies to boost long-term performance (Wang et al., 2025; Liang and Wu, 2026).

Thus, this paper aims at filling the gaps by comparing the impact of High-Performance Work Systems on firm sustainability on the case study of CWG Plc. The research proposes empirical evidence on how the organization can use human resource practices to drive productivity, innovation, and sustainable performance in the competitive business environment (Larasandi and Satrya, 2025; Ma et al., 2023). The principle aim of the research is to investigate the effects of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) on the sustainability of firms.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Examine the effect of employee training and development on firm sustainability in CWG Plc, Lagos State.
- ii. Assess the influence of performance-based compensation on firm sustainability in CWG Plc, Lagos State.
- iii. Evaluate the effect of employee participation in decision-making on firm sustainability in CWG Plc, Lagos State.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS)

The term High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) can be used to describe a set of combined human resource practices meant to help improve employees by boosting their competence, motivation, and possibilities to make worthy contributions to the organization. These are usually training and development, compensation that is based on performance, involvement of employees in decision making as well as knowledge sharing systems. The essence of HPWS is the transformation of human capital into its strategic value which can be used as the key driver of organizational performance and sustainable development (Eniola et al., 2023). HPWS are not isolated practices but a system, which implies that the overall impact of a combination of several HR practices would have a stronger organizational performance than other practices in isolation. According to empirical evidence, HPWS are the ones that enhance the productivity of employees, their innovation, and organizational effectiveness to a large extent as they align the workforce capabilities with the strategic objectives. Moreover, HPWS contribute to the intrinsic motivation and engagement of employees, which is important in the contemporary organizations as the driving forces of innovation and performance.

Firm Sustainability

Firm sustainability is described as the capability of an organization to ensure long term performance when it balances the economic, social and environmental goals. It extends beyond temporary profitability to incorporate resilience, flexibility and unceasing value delivery. The sustainable companies are the ones, which are able to react to alterations in the environment efficiently, control resources and remain competitive in the long run (Ma et al., 2023; Liang and Wu, 2026). Within the realm of modern organizations,

sustainability is becoming associated with internal capabilities like human resource practices, innovation and learning within the organization. Companies that invest in employee growth and strategic Hr systems have higher chances of performing sustainably because of greater efficiency, innovation, and flexibility (Kuhner et al., 2025).

Firm sustainability is a condition within an organization that allows the organization to sustain itself over a long period of time through balancing the economic, social, and environmental goals. It is not just limited to short-term profitability but also resilience, innovation and management of resources in a responsible manner. This idea is usually described in the framework of Triple Bottom Line, which focuses on profit, people, and planet as interrelated components of sustainable performance (Fauzi et al., 2010). The sustainable firms develop long term value through incorporation of ethical business, stakeholders interests as well as environmental responsibility in their business. This increases flexibility, competitiveness, and survival of an organization in the ever changing business environments (Blits et al., 2025).

The Relations between HPWS Dimensions and Sustainability.

i. Training and Development of employees.

Training also improves the knowledge, skills and competencies of the employees so that they would be able to adjust to the changing business environments. It promotes innovation and enhances organizational efficiency hence leading to sustainability. Training is regarded as an ability-enhancing practice in HPWS, and it provides employees with the abilities they need to work efficiently and contribute to long-term organizational objectives (Bos-Nehles et al., 2023; Jiang et al., 2012).

ii. Performance-Based Compensation

Performance-based reward systems encourage employees to attain organizational objectives. These systems increase the productivity and strengthen the behavior that helps the organization succeed in the long term. The performance-based compensation is a motivation practice that motivates employees to work harder, commit and act discretionately to enhance organizational performance and sustainability (Liao et al., 2009; Campbell et al., 1993).

iii. Involvement of the Employees.

Involvement of employees promotes sharing of knowledge, creativity and commitment. Companies which encourage involvement are also likely to attain a high quality of decision and sustainable performance. Participation is an opportunity-enhancing practice that enables the employees to share ideas and apply their competencies in an effective way and, as a result, enhance innovation and long-term organizational performance (Miao et al., 2021; Bos-Nehles et al., 2023).

2.2 Theoretical Review

Ability -Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Theory.

The AMO theory assumes that the ability, motivation, and opportunity are the three significant factors of employee performance, a function. These elements form the basis of HPWS, which are aimed at improving the skills of the employees (ability), motivate on performance (motivation), and offer avenues to participate (opportunity) (Appelbaum et al., 2000).

The theory describes the effect of HPWS on organizational results due to better employee performance and interest. It has been proven that in case organizations successfully engage in AMO-based practices, the organizations receive greater performance, innovation, and sustainability, as the combination of these practices helps the workers become more capable and willing to fulfill organizational objectives (Bos-Nehles et al., 2023; Lai et al., 2025).

Resource-Based View (RBV)

Resource-Based View (RBV) claims that the companies have a sustainable competitive advantage that occurs when they have valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources. One of the most important strategic resources in this theory is human capital. HPWS contribute to the value of human capital that develops skills, knowledge and commitment of employees. With the right implementation, such systems allow organizations to develop a set of distinctive capabilities that competitors do not easily copy and thus facilitate long-term sustainability (Eniola et al., 2023; Hanu and Khumalo, 2023).

2.3 Empirical Review

The empirical evidence has always revealed a close connection between the High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and the performance of the organization, its innovation, and sustainability. To illustrate, it has been demonstrated that the experience of employee regarding HPWS has a positive impact on their innovative behaviour via knowledge sharing and the development of social capital, and these aspects are fundamental to long term organizational success (Arshad et al., 2024). Moreover, it has been identified that HPWS can greatly increase organizational ambidexterity the capability to balance exploration and exploitation by making knowledge management systems more effective, thus, leading to efficiency and innovation (Elashry et al., 2024). Besides, other researchers state that HPWS are crucial to maintaining organizational resilience and adaptive performance in times of crisis, which means that organizations that have a well-developed HR can be more resilient to environmental shocks and be able to perform (Hanu and Khumalo, 2023).

More recent research by a study in Nigeria showed that HPWS can lead to a substantial improvement in innovative work behaviour in terms of sharing knowledge and creativity of workers, which proves that HPWS can be relevant in the emergent economies where innovation and flexibility are the key to surviving (Amoozegar et al., 2025). Besides, a systematic review of empirical literature on HPWS and its effects on employee results reveals that HPWS do have an impact on employee resilience, flexibility, and

organizational sustainability yet indicated that much of the current literature is dominated in developed economies and that more research is required in developing economies like Nigeria (Qizi et al., 2025).

Gap in Literature

Yet, in spite of the increasing amount of literature, there are a number of gaps. To begin with, research on the association between HPWS and employee level outcomes (performance and innovation) is very common whereas little is done regarding firm level sustainability outcomes. Secondly, the majority of empirical research has been carried out with developed economies and there is not much evidence of emerging markets such as Nigeria where the business environment is more volatile and resource constraints which are even stronger. Finally, some of the available literature tends to analyze elements of HPWS separately, as opposed to examining them as a system, and in effect, the overall impact of these elements on the sustainability of firms. The research paper attempts to fill these gaps by focusing on how HPWS as a whole system impacts sustainability of a firm in a Nigerian setting as a case study of CWG Plc.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research design that was used in this study was descriptive survey research design to explore the impact of High Performance Work Systems (HPWS) on firm sustainability in CWG Plc, Lagos, Nigeria. Descriptive design was selected as it makes it possible to collect and analyze data on practices related to human resources and their sustainability-related results without controlling the research setting and generalize the results using the trends observed among employees (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The target group was the entire full-time employees of CWG Plc in Lagos who are exposed to organizational processes and outcomes such as the human resource, operations, IT development, project management and customer delivery units. According to the internal company documents and company profile, the population that was available in this study was estimated to be 310 employees (CWG Plc HR Department, 2026). To determine an appropriate sample size, the Taro Yamane (1967) formula was applied.

$$n = N / \{1 + N(e)^2\}$$

Where:

- n = sample size
- N = population (310)
- e = margin of error (0.05)

$$n = 310 / \{1 + 310(0.05)^2\}$$

$$= 310 / \{1 + 0.775\}$$

$$= 310 / 1.775 \approx 175$$

Thus, a sample of 175 respondents was selected for the study.

Overall, the respondents were then selected by applying a simple random sampling method to the list of eligible employees, which guaranteed that all eligible employees had an equal opportunity to be included and thus minimized selection bias and maximized representativeness of the results (Saunders et al., 2019).

The researcher used a structured questionnaire (based on valid scales adapted to the study context) to collect primary data through a structured questionnaire. It was shown that information on dimensions of HPWS was gathered in the questionnaire on employee training and development, performance-based compensation, and employee involvement in decision-making, and aspects of firm sustainability, such as operational efficiency, the success of innovation, and long-term strategic performance. Measures were taken on a five point Likert scale, that is between 1 = Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree. Academic supervisors and human resource experts were used to review the questionnaire in order to achieve content validity and a pilot test was done with 20 respondents who worked in another technology firm in Lagos in order to establish reliability where all the scales had a higher value than the Cronbach alpha level of 0.70 which indicated a high level of internal consistency (Gliem and Gliem, 2003).

The administration of questionnaires was done with the permission of the management of CWG Plc. The respondents were provided with the clear instructions and guaranteed of the confidentiality. The data was gathered when at work and analyzed with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics version 28. Berge, percentages and means were utilized as descriptive statistics to summarize the demographic and variable distributions, whereas Pearson correlation and multiple regression were the inferential statistics that were used to investigate the connections between HPWS dimensions and the results of firm sustainability. The level of statistical significance was determined at $p < 0.05$. Ethical issues were observed in the course of the research, informed consent was given to all members of the research team, anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed, and the voluntary nature of participation was stressed out (no penalties were given to non-participation).

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter entails data collection and interpretation of data based on 127 valid responses out of the 175 questionnaires distributed to the employees of CWG Plc, Lagos, on High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) and its impact on the sustainability of the firm.

4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	74	58.3
Female	53	41.7
Total	127	100.0

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

More male employees (58.3%) responded than female employees (41.7%), indicating a fairly balanced gender representation in the workforce.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 25	12	9.4
25–35	48	37.8
36–45	41	32.3
46–55	18	14.2
Above 55	8	6.3
Total	127	100.0

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

The largest group of respondents falls within the productive age of 25–35 years (37.8%), followed by 36–45 years (32.3%), suggesting that the workforce is predominantly young to mid-career.

Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Qualification

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
O’Level	7	5.5
OND/HND	18	14.2
B.Sc.	52	40.9
Master’s	38	29.9
Ph.D.	12	9.5
Total	127	100.0

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

The majority of respondents hold a Bachelor’s degree (40.9%), followed by Master’s degrees (29.9%), indicating a well educated workforce capable of providing informed insights.

Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 2 years	13	10.2
2–5 years	37	29.1
6–10 years	45	35.4
Above 10 years	32	25.2
Total	127	100.0

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

Most respondents have between 6–10 years of experience (35.4%), indicating that respondents are experienced and familiar with organizational systems.

4.2 Analysis of Research Variables

4.2.1 High-Performance Work Systems

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics for HPWS (Employee Training & Development)

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Training prepares employees for changes	127	3.84	0.79
CWG Plc invests in skill building	127	3.77	0.82
Training enhances work performance	127	3.81	0.75
Overall Mean		3.81	

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

Respondents agree that training and development are practiced and contribute positively to organizational performance.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for Performance Based Compensation

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Compensation linked to performance	127	3.74	0.84
Reward systems motivate employees	127	3.68	0.88
Performance pay improves output	127	3.71	0.82
Overall Mean		3.71	

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

Respondents agree that performance-based pay motivates employees and contributes to productivity.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Participation

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Employees are involved in decision making	127	3.69	0.90
Participation improves work outcomes	127	3.76	0.87
CWG Plc encourages employee input	127	3.72	0.84
Overall Mean		3.72	

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

Respondents generally agree that employee participation is encouraged and contributes to better outcomes.

4.2.2 Firm Sustainability

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics for Firm Sustainability

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
CWG Plc maintains operational efficiency	127	3.79	0.81
Innovation is encouraged at CWG Plc	127	3.83	0.77
Long term performance is sustainable	127	3.75	0.83
Overall Mean		3.79	

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

Respondents agree that sustainability outcomes, such as efficiency, innovation, and long term success, are evident at CWG Plc.

4.3 Test of Hypotheses

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.9: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Firm Sustainability	Sig. (p)
Training & Development	r = 0.594**	0.001
Performance Based Pay	r = 0.571**	0.001
Employee Participation	r = 0.587**	0.001

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

Key: r = Pearson correlation coefficient; p = significance level

All HPWS dimensions have positive, significant relationships with firm sustainability at $p < 0.01$, indicating that higher levels of HPWS practices are associated with higher sustainability outcomes.

4.3.2 Regression Analysis

Table 4.10: Multiple Regression Results

Predictor Variable	Beta	t value	Sig.
Training & Development	0.344	4.12	0.000
Performance Based Pay	0.287	3.55	0.001
Employee Participation	0.312	3.92	0.000
R²	0.58		

Source: Researchers Computation, 2026

The regression model shows that HPWS explains 58% of the variation in firm sustainability ($R^2 = 0.58$). Training, compensation, and participation are all significant positive predictors of sustainability. Training has the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.344$, $p < 0.001$).

Discussion of Findings

This research was based on how High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) affects the sustainability of firms at CWG Plc, Lagos, Nigeria. According to the descriptive analysis, the employees tend to view HPWS dimensions employee training and development, performance based compensation, and involvement in organizational decision making, positively affecting organizational performance and sustainability.

The analysis of the correlation shows that all the dimensions of HPWS are significantly related to firm sustainability. In particular, the strongest relationship is formed between training and development ($r = 0.594$, $p < 0.01$), and next comes employee participation ($r = 0.587$, $p < 0.01$) and performance-based compensation ($r = 0.571$, $p < 0.01$). The implication of this is that training employees on skills, involving employees in decision-making and performance rewarding would play a vital role in improvement of operational efficiency, innovation and sustainability over the long-term. These results are consistent with the AMO theory, and it says that ability, motivation, and opportunity-enhancing practices stimulate performance among employees and, consequently, organizational performance (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Bos-Nehles et al., 2023). Moreover, the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory helps to justify how human capital with the development and efficient management via HPWS is transformed into a distinctive resource that can be maintained to provide competitive advantage (Eniola et al., 2023; Hanu and Khumalo, 2023).

According to the results of the regression analysis, HPWS accounts 58% of the variation in the sustainability of the firms ($R^2 = 0.58$), which confirms the system-wide effect of the practices. Training and development turned out to be the most influential predictor ($\beta = 0.344$), which underscores the need to keep on enhancing the skills of the employees to keep up with technological and market changes. Sustainability is also largely predicted by performance-based pay ($\beta = 0.287$) and decision-making participation ($\beta = 0.312$), which further prove the importance of motivation and employee engagement in their attainment of strategic organizational results.

On the whole, the research proves that, when holistically applied, HPWS does help to bring about resilience, innovativeness, and efficiency in operations, which are some of the components of firm sustainability. These results are aligned with prior studies that have found out that HPWS is effective in add value to the productivity of employees, innovation, and adaptive organizational performance of the emerging economy and developed economy (Eniola et al., 2023; Hanu and Khumalo, 2023; Amoozegar et al., 2025; Arshad et al., 2024).

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes with the finding that the High-Performance Work Systems are important in improving the sustainability of firms at CWG Plc. Training and development of employees, remuneration based on performance, and involvement in decision-making are all elements that help in the efficient running of an organization, innovation and ultimate long-term organizational success. The results affirm that through all-inclusive HR activities, investing in human capital enhances the capability of the firm to adjust, stay afloat and continue performing in the dynamic business world. This has been most influenced by training and development, which stresses the necessity of a constant increase in skills to facilitate the strategic goals. The recommendations are based on the above findings.

- CWG Plc can maintain its organized training and development programs on the employees, to advance them on new technologies and innovative practices as well as cross functional skills so as to achieve better adaptability and sustainability of the work forces.
- The management must put transparent rewarding systems based on performance where employees who perform well get rewarded. These systems will not only motivate personnel, but will also promote discretionary effort and make the objectives of personnel in line with those of the organization.
- The company ought to establish systems that allow the employees to contribute to strategic and operational decision making. Employee involvement in planning and problem solving will enhance the commitment, innovation, and the quality of decision.

- iv. CWG Plc ought to implement the elements of HPWS as an integrated system and not isolated concepts. Synergistic will maximize the contribution towards sustainability where training, compensation, and participation are used to improve the performance of the firms.
- v. To improve operational outcomes and sustainability performance, the organization should review the effectiveness of HPWS initiatives on a regular basis, with the help of employee feedback, performance measures and innovation indicators, which should be used to improve HR practices.
- vi. Since the effectiveness of HPWS has been proven, other technological and knowledge-driven companies in Nigeria must apply the same integrated HR to improve the adaptability, innovativeness and long-term sustainability.

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