

## The Role of Employees' Motivation Toward the Environment and Perceptions of the Green Organizational Climate in Their Green Behaviors

\* Gamze TEMİZEL<sup>a</sup> , Şafak ÜNÜVAR<sup>b</sup> 

<sup>a</sup> Selcuk University, Faculty of Tourism, Department of Tourism Management, Konya/Türkiye

<sup>b</sup> Selcuk University, Faculty of Tourism, Department of Gastronomy and Culinary Arts, Konya/Türkiye

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### Abstract

In an effort to gain a better understanding of the factors influencing employees' environmental behaviors at work, this study aims to explore the role of employees' motivation toward the environment on their green behaviors and their perception of a green organizational climate. For this purpose, guided by self-determination theory, a model was developed to prove that motivation toward the environment has a significant and positive effect on employee green behavior, green organizational climate perception has a significant and positive effect on employee green behavior, and green organizational climate perception has a mediating role in the relationship between motivation toward the environment and employee green behavior. Within the scope of the research, data were collected by survey technique by reaching (n=415) people selected by purposive sampling method among hotel employees serving in Antalya and Konya, Türkiye. According to the results of the study, it was revealed that motivation toward the environment has a significant and positive effect on employee green behaviors, and motivation toward the environment has a significant and positive effect on the green organizational climate perceptions of the employees, but the green organizational climate perception does not have a significant effect on employee green behaviors. It was also determined that green organizational climate perception does not have a mediating role in the relationship between motivation toward the environment and employee green behaviors.

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\* Corresponding Author

E-mail: gamzetemizel@gmail.com (G. Temizel)

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## INTRODUCTION

Environmental problems are the disruptions and issues that occur due to various human activities on the living and non-living elements that make up the environment and that negatively affect life. Humanity faces several pressing issues, including an expanding global population, rising demands, depleting natural resources, and worsening environmental issues. The global community has come to acknowledge the reality of the rapidly growing environmental problems and the threat they pose, which has prompted a search for solutions. Changes in human behavior will lead to a solution to the growing environmental issues caused by human behavior. At this point, understanding human behavior is an essential component of changing it (Ture & Ganesh, 2014). Therefore, environmentally significant behaviors of people in social, household, and corporate settings have been investigated in a number of empirical studies (Ones & Dilchert, 2012a; 2012b; Stek & Vlek, 2009; Stern, 2000; Von Borgstede & Biel, 2002; Temizel & Attar, 2022; Vincente-Molina et al., 2018; Ramus & Killmer, 2007; Ciocirlan, 2017; De Groot & Steg, 2008; Homburg & Stolberg, 2006; Paillé & Boiral, 2013). Research results indicate that environmentally friendly policies to be followed in organizations and green employee behaviors to support these policies will contribute to the protection of the environment. The implementation of environment management systems in organizational settings depends critically on the engagement and participation of employees (Daily & Huang, 2001; Ramus & Steger, 2000; Ones & Dilchert, 2012a; Ones & Dilchert, 2012b). Enterprises are consistently executing diverse strategies to guarantee environmental management via employee green behaviors such as recycling, waste reduction behaviors, and conservation (Robertson & Barling, 2013; Rubel et al., 2021).

Organizations are one of the major contributors to environmental problems (Ture & Ganesh, 2014). In a similar vein, the tourism sector has detrimental effects on the environment, including unplanned urbanization, waste management issues, and the occupation of agricultural land. The industry consumes a lot of energy and water as well. Nonetheless, the environment is a valuable asset to the travel and tourism sectors. Because of this, the interaction between tourism and the environment needs to be balanced sustainably. According to Morelli (2011), “Environmental sustainability” is “meeting the resource and service needs of current and future generations without compromising the health of the ecosystems that provide them” (Morelli, 2011). Green practices in the hospitality sector, such as water conservation, waste reduction through recycling, energy conservation with energy-efficient appliances (Kim et al., 2017), and educating customers and employees (Rahman et al., 2012) can foster environmental sustainability. Another important component to ensure sustainability is employees’ eco-friendly behaviors. The concept of “Employee Green Behavior” (EGB), also known as pro-environmental behavior, centers on how employees can use their environmental perspective in their workplaces to support the establishment of sustainable environmental conditions. Sensitive actions that either directly or indirectly hurt the environment as little as possible—or even help it—are considered green employee behaviors. Hotel employees face industry-specific challenges such as emotional labor, unsociable work hours, low pay, and unstable employment, so it may be difficult to expect them to exhibit extra-role environmentally conscious behaviors (Zientara & Zamojska, 2016). As a result, it's critical to foster a climate in the workplace that encourages environmentally friendly behavior among employees in these companies. Since the environment is a key component of tourism activities, green employee behaviors in the sector can help to lessen the negative effects of human behavior on it while also promoting tourism's sustainability.

Previous research on EGB examined both individual and organizational aspects, including organizational factors

like supervisory support, organizational policy, and organizational culture, as well as values and personal concern for the environment (Ture & Ganesh, 2014). The literature has stated that both external and individual motivation play a significant role in employees behaving positively toward the environment. Determining the kind of motivation driving people's environmental behavior is the goal of the concept of "Motivation Toward the Environment" (MTE). Green behaviors will be more frequently engaged in by workers who are highly motivated toward environmental issues (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021).

Employee attitudes and behaviors in an organization are a reflection of their perceptions. The green organizational policies that workers perceive in businesses have an impact on them (Norton et al., 2014). The term "Green Organizational Climate" (GOC) refers to the general opinion held by staff members regarding the company's dedication to environmental sustainability. Employees' perceptions of a green workplace environment are assumed to have a positive correlation with their demonstration of green behaviors (Zientara & Zamojska, 2016: 6).

In the literature, it has been stated that environmental belief, and organizational environmentalism (Ture & Ganesh, 2014), self-esteem (Gürsel, 2020), perception of green organizational climate (Norton et al., 2014), perception of organizational justice (Akbaba, 2019), environmentalist approaches of leaders (Robertson & Barling, 2013), green management policies of enterprises (Ture & Ganesh, 2014), organizational culture (Zibarras & Ballinger, 2011), and motivation toward the environment (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021) positively affect green employee behaviors among employees in different industries. Various studies in the literature have also focused on the green behaviors of hotel employees (Özalp & Erbaşı, 2021; Akbaba, 2019; Okumus et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2020; Peng & Lee, 2019; Zhang & Huang, 2019; Zientara & Zamojska, 2018; Kim et al., 2019; Chan et al., 2014; Chan et al., 2017; Yayla et al., 2020). Though the relationship between employees' green behavior and hotels' green practices is still poorly understood (Okumus et al., 2019: 194). Among the existing studies, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, no study has been found that investigates how employee MTE and GOC perception combine to predict EGB. In this direction, the current study was based on the assumption that if we increase the motivation of employees in organizations toward the environment and increase their perception of a green work climate, their green behaviors will also develop positively. Hence, the goal of this study is to investigate the effect of MTE on EGB and the effect of GOC perception on EGB. The study also investigates the mediating role of GOC on the relationship between MTE and EGB. Study results may help hotels put environmental sustainability into practice by developing employee-related strategies more effectively and implementing green practices.

## **Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development**

### **Employee Green Behaviors**

Businesses' ability to successfully implement environmentally friendly policies hinges on the personal convictions of their employees (Paillé et al., 2014), the actions they take on a daily basis (Davis et al., 2020), and their corporate attitudes towards environmental issues. Green or pro-environmental behaviors are those of employees' that care about the environment, support it, and try to do as little harm as possible. Ones and Dilchert were two of the first scientists to propose the employee green behavior (EGB) concept. According to the authors, it is any action taken by employees within a company that benefits the environment (Ones & Dilchert 2012a, b). Ture and Ganesh (2014) have also described the term pro-environmental behavior at work as "any activity, direct or indirect, undertaken by an individual at her or his workplace, which she or he thinks will improve or help to improve the natural environment."

The concept in the literature is known by various names, including corporate environmentalism (Banerjee, 2002), employee workplace green behavior (Dumont et al., 2017), environmentally friendly employee behaviors (Stern, 2000: 408), employee green behaviors (Ones & Dilchert, 2012b), environment-friendly behaviors (Ture & Ganes, 2014), pro-environmental behaviors (Steg & Vlek, 2009; Ture & Ganesh, 2014), and similar terms. Even though their names are different, all of the terms basically focus on employee attitudes towards reducing negative consequences for the natural environment. EGB addresses the conscientious actions of staff members, including acquiring knowledge about environmental issues, formulating strategies to mitigate the organization's environmental footprint, refraining from environmentally harmful practices (Graves et al., 2013: 81), and engaging in the company's green processes and corporate sustainability initiatives (Ture & Ganesh, 2014).

Workplace pro-environmental practices will not only help make organizations greener, but they will also stop further environmental deterioration (Robertson & Barling, 2013). This is why it is so important for organizations to encourage EGB. Employee actions that are environmentally friendly are often varied and voluntary. Both internal (personal) and external (organizational or situational) factors can have an impact on these behaviors (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021). Since the actions of green employees are voluntary, it is more crucial to comprehend internal / personal factors in order to make sense of these actions. Behavioral beliefs are important indicators for encouraging EGB (Graves et al., 2013; Norton et al., 2015).

### **Motivation Toward the Environment**

The concept “motivation toward the environment” (MTE) was initially developed by Pelletier et al. (1998) to explain why people engage in environmentally friendly behaviors and the kind of motivation that drives those behaviors. To predict people's environmental behaviors, Pelletier et al. (1998) used motivational subtypes categorized by the self-determination theory, a motivation and personality theory created by Deci and Ryan (1985). According to self-determination theory, people's behaviors are primarily determined by two types of motivation, known as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 236-240). A person's internal motivation drives a behavior when they carry out a choice or preference on their own, independent of other people's approval. If a person exhibits a behavior for approval and external rewards or to avoid punishment, it is external motivation that causes this behavior (Deci, 1972: 113). Amotivation is the state in which an individual lacks motivation for various reasons, such as not wanting to put effort into a behavior or believing it won't work (Rigby & Ryan, 2018: 136).

The MTE approach makes the assumption that voluntary employee behaviors, like adopting environmentally friendly workplace practices, will be partially driven by extrinsic motivation and positively influenced by intrinsic motivation. Therefore, it is assumed that employees with higher levels of MTE (especially intrinsic motivation) will be more supportive of the company's environmental policies and practices at work (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021; Aitken et al., 2016; Graves et al., 2013).

### **Green Organizational Climate Perception**

Organizational climate refers to the common perceptions of employees regarding the internal and external environment of the organization (Raja et al., 2019: 146), the working environment, and also organizational policies, practices and procedures (Schneider et al., 1998). Green organizational climate (GOC) is the common perception of employees about the policies and practices of the organization, including environmental initiatives developed to

support environmental sustainability (Chou, 2014). Based on their GOC perceptions, employees may concur on issues such as whether formal green policies are adopted by the company, whether daily operations align with the company's environmental objectives, and whether corporate procedures encourage sustainable actions within the company (Norton et al., 2012). Employees are assumed to be more inclined to participate in voluntary environmental behaviors when they perceive their workplace to have a GOC (Zientara & Zamojska, 2016). The GOC created in organizations through factors such as green management, green human resources management or environmentalist attitudes and behaviors of leaders will also positively affect the EGB.

### **Relationship Between Motivation Toward the Environment and Employee Green Behavior**

As previously mentioned, the success of environmentally friendly policies and practices implemented by businesses is significantly dependent on the support of their employees. For this reason, the question of what motivates employees to exhibit green behavior becomes important in organizations that aim to support environmental sustainability (Zientara & Zamojska, 2018: 1143). The literature on EGB contains a number of studies that concentrate on the elements that influence employees to act in an environmentally conscious manner. For example, Zibarras and Ballinger (2011) looked into how companies encourage their staff to act environmentally friendly in their study on UK businesses. The findings of the study underscored the significance of upper and middle level management's guidance and supportive role in shaping employees' environmental behaviors. According to the study by Nisar et al. (2021) that looks into the variables influencing green employee behavior, green human resources practices have a positive impact on employees' green behavior, which improves hotels' environmental performance.

Previous research stated that both external factors and individual motivation play a significant role in employees behaving positively towards the environment. In this context, Graves et al. (2019) examined how management and individual employee motivation affected Russian employees' green behavior. According to the results, managers' active environmental leadership approaches and employees' individual motivation towards the environment positively affect employees' green behavior.

According to Zelenski and Desrochers (2021) people's positive emotions (feelings towards nature and other) positively affect their environmental attitudes. In their research, Maqsoom et al. (2020) also examined the effects of factors such as motivation, behavioral intention and green awareness on the green behavior of employees. Consequently, depending on their level of personal awareness, workers who are well-informed and encouraged to practice environmentally friendly demonstrate higher levels of green behavior at work. According to another study investigating the effect of individual motivation on EGB (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko 2021), employees' intrinsic/autonomous motivation positively affects their voluntary environmental behavior.

As emphasized in the above studies, one of the methods used to determine the factors that individually direct employees to green behavior is motivation theories. One of these theories is self-determination theory, which was created by Deci and Ryan (1985). Based on the identification of factors that influence both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, the theory postulates that an individual's behavior is determined by their motivation type. Self-determination theory, which creates a broad framework for examining individual motivation, focuses on the reasons behind the choices individuals make without being influenced by external factors. According to this theory, the types of motivation that cause individuals' behavior vary as internal motivation, external motivation and amotivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 56-60). If a person performs a behavior by his/her own choice and personal preference, without any

reward, it is his internal motivation that causes this behavior. When it comes to extrinsic motivation, it is the case of exhibiting a behavior in order to avoid punishment or gain external rewards such as status, promotion and approval (Deci, 1972:113). According to the theory, a person will continue his autonomously determined behaviors without external incentives (Pelletier et al., 1998: 443). The concept of MTE is based on self-determination theory. The idea holds that people's motivation toward the environment has a positive impact on their engagement in environmentally friendly behaviors, whether they occur outside (Villacorta et al., 2003; Renaud-Dube et al., 2010; Aitken et al., 2016; Lavergne et al., 2010) or at work (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021; Hicklenton et al., 2019; Graves et al., 2013; Graves & Sarkis, 2018; Graves et al., 2019).

The theory of planned behavior (Azjen, 1991), which deals with the prediction of human behavior and suggests that attitudes influence behavior (Azjen, 2011), can also account for the positive relationship between MTE and EGB. This theory states that three factors influence people's actions: control beliefs, normative beliefs, and behavioral beliefs. When it comes to promoting EGB, behavioral beliefs are crucial indicators (Graves et al., 2013; Norton et al., 2015). Green behavior, such as recycling, energy conservation, purchasing eco-friendly products, or selecting more ecologically friendly modes of transportation, has long been thought to be strongly correlated with pro-environmental attitudes (Bamberg 2003). Therefore, we assumed that:

**H1:** MTE has a significant and positive effect on EGB.

### **Relationship Between Employee Green Organizational Climate Perception and Green Behavior**

Personal values and the environment in which one operates both have a significant influence on an individual's behavior (Zientara & Zamojska, 2016). According to Dumont et al. (2017) "GOC is the employee's perception of organizational environment related policies, practices, and processes that are reflected in organizational green values". Organizational climate is an effective tool for aligning employee motivation and efforts with organizational initiatives, goals, and aspirations (Zientara & Zamojska, 2016). EGB is influenced by psychological and social processes in the workplace, which make up the GOC (Dumont et al., 2017). Green organizational climates that are resource-efficient, environmentally conscious, and sensitive to environmental issues encourage their employees' green behavior. As a result, employees who feel that they work in a green climate will be more likely to engage in voluntary environmental behaviors.

A number of studies in the literature have investigated the relationship between GOC and EGB. Rubel et al. (2021) stated in their research that employees' green organizational climate perceptions are positively related to their green organizational behaviors. Ng et al. (2019) examined the relationship between academicians' perception of green organizational climate, environmental passion, and environmentally friendly employee behaviors. As a result, it was stated that employees' perception of GOC positively affects EGB. Similarly, Norton et al. (2012) assumed in their study that there would be positive relationships between GOC and EGS. As a result of his research on public and private sector employees, Coşkun (2022) stated that environmental passion, green transformative leadership and GOC positively affect EGB. Other research (Tahir et al., 2020; Norton et al., 2014) has similarly reported that EGB is positively impacted by employees' perceptions of a GOC across a range of industries.

The impact of GOC perception on green behavior among hotel industry employees has also been the subject of empirical research. Zientara and Zamojska (2018) conducted a study that looked at the connection between GOC and

green behavior among employees of 4- and 5-star hotels in Poland. According to the findings, environmental values and emotional organizational commitment in employees are positively related to green behaviors. In addition, GOC have a positive effect on EGB. Özalp and Erbaşı (2021), Mert and Arıkan Saltık (2023) and Yaşar (2023) obtained similar results in their studies focusing on the relationship between green organizational climates and employee green behavior among hotel employees in different cities of Türkiye and stated that GOC positively affects EGB.

Among similar studies available in the literature, no study focusing on the relationship between MTE and GOC has been found. However, it is assumed that there may be a theoretically meaningful and positive interaction between the concepts. Based this assumption and the above explanations and we proposed that:

**H2:** MTE has a significant and positive effect on GOC perception.

**H3:** GOC perception has a significant and positive effect on EGB.

The mediating role of organizational climate perceptions in the relationship between environmental approaches and green behaviors in organizations has also been investigated in the literature. According to Dumont et al. (2017), green human resources management will support the green behavior of employees. In addition, GOC perception has a mediating role in the relationship between green human resources management and green employee behavior. Norton et al. (2014) stated in their research that there are positive relationships between the perceived existence of an organizational sustainability policy and EGB. As a result of the research, it was also confirmed that employees' perceptions of GOC mediate the positive relationship between their perceptions of the existence of the company's sustainability policy and EGB.

In line with the results of similar studies in the literature, this study investigates the mediating role of employees' perception of GOC in the relationship between MTE and EGB. It is assumed that employees' perception of GOC will increase the positive relationship between MTE and EGB. Therefore, the following hypothesis was developed:

**H4:** GOC has a mediating role in the relationship between MTE and EGB.

## Method

### Participants and Procedure

The quantitative research approach was chosen for this study, and data was collected with survey technique. A survey form was used to collect data from employees working at five-star hotels in Konya and Antalya in Türkiye. The form consists of 20 statements to measure the participants' motivation toward the environment, 7 statements to measure their green behavior, and 8 statements to measure green organizational climate perceptions.

The sample of the research consists of the hotel employees selected by purposeful (deliberate) sampling method, one of the non-random sampling methods. In the purposive sampling method, which is preferred considering time and cost limitations, the decision about who will be included in the sample is made by the researchers.

To obtain data, the research focused on 5-star hotels with the assumption that they would be more sensitive to the environment due to their corporate structure. Konya and Antalya cities were preferred because they have a significant number of hotels in terms of 5-star establishments. The research was conducted in April and May 2024. To implement the surveys, the managements of various hotels serving in Konya and Antalya were contacted and permission was requested to administer the survey to their employees. In total, 13 hotels agreed to participate in the study. The data

was collected from the employees of these businesses on a voluntary basis. During the survey application process, 650 surveys were distributed and 432 of them returned. Out of the 432 surveys that were collected, 17 were excluded from evaluation for a variety of reasons, leaving 415 surveys for use in the study. The surveys were administered to all employees, regardless of department and whether they were managers or not. 52.5% of the 415 employees who took part in the study are men, and 47.5% are women. Of them, 52.8% work in Konya and 47.2% in Antalya.

Ethics committee permission was received for the research from Selçuk University Faculty of Tourism Scientific Ethics and Evaluation Board with the decision dated 03.04.2024 and numbered 733699.

## Measures

The aim of this research is to examine the mediating role of green organizational climate perception in the relationship between motivation towards the environment and green employee behaviors. In the research, motivation toward the environment is the independent variable, employee green behavior is the dependent variable, and green organizational climate perception is the mediator variable. In order to determine the motivation of the participants to exhibit environmentally friendly behavior, The Motivation Toward the Environment (MTE) scale, created by Pelletier et al. (1998) was used. The scale, which is based on motivation subtypes, classified according to self-determination theory, consists of 6 sub-dimensions (intrinsic motivation, integration, identification, introjection, external regulation, amotivation), each consisting of 4 propositions, and a total of 24 items. It was observed that in various researches (Hicklenton et al., 2019; Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021; Lavergne et al., 2010) intrinsic motivation, integration and identification sub-dimensions are generalized under the name of “autonomous motivation” and they were grouped in one category because all three motivation types involve a high degree of internalization and willpower. Additionally, introjection and external regulation are combined in a general category called “controlled motivation” because the behavior occurs as a result of being directed by others (for example, as a result of an external reward such as a bonus) or as a result of an influence directed at the person himself (for example, the person feels guilty if he does not perform the behavior). In this way, two subcategories were created: autonomous motivation and controlled motivation (Hicklenton et al., 2019: 2). In this study, the motivation toward the environment was examined in 20 questions and 2 dimensions (12 item autonomous motivation toward the environment subscale and 8 item controlled motivation toward the environment subscale). The dimension of the original scale measuring “amotivation” was not included in the study. The scale, which was evaluated with a 7-point Likert-type rating in the study of Pelletier et al. (1998), was used with a 5-point Likert-type rating, as in the studies of Graves and Sarkis (2018) and Ünüvar and Temizel (2022) (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

The Workplace Pro-environmental Behaviors (WPEB) scale, which was developed by Robertson and Barling (2013) and consists of 7 items and a single dimension, was used to measure EGB. Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = never, 5 = always).

To measure GOC perception in employees, the Green Work Climate Perceptions (GWCP) scale, which was developed by Norton et al. (2014) and consisting of 8 questions and two dimensions (perceptions of the organization and perceptions of co-workers subscales) was used. Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).



## Results

### Validity and Reliability of the Scales

To validate the scales used in the study, a multi-factor confirmatory factor analysis was performed using the SPSS AMOS 22 program. Initially, the fit indices produced by the measurement models designed to test the validity of the scales were not within acceptable limits, necessitating modifications. After these adjustments, five items were removed from the Autonomous Motivation Toward the Environment subscale and five from the Controlled Motivation Toward the Environment subscale of the Motivation Toward the Environment (MTE) scale. Additionally, two items were removed from the Workplace Pro-environmental Behaviors (WPEB) scale. Finally, one item was removed from the perceptions of the organization subscale and one from the perceptions of co-workers subscale of the Green Work Climate Perceptions (GWCP) scale. The details of these modifications are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Modifications to the Scales

Scales	Subscales	Number of Items	Removed Items	Type of Confirmatory Factor Analysis Performed
<b>MTE</b>	Autonomous MTE	12	5	Multifactor Confirmatory Factor Analysis
	Controlled MTE	8	5	
<b>WPEB</b>	-	7	2	
<b>GWCP</b>	Perceptions of the Organization	4	1	
	Perceptions of the Co-workers	4	1	

Since the fit values produced by the measurement models were within acceptable limits, the modifications were finalized and the fit values of the scales are given in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Fit Values of the Scales

Scales	X <sup>2</sup>	df	X <sup>2</sup> /df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
<b>MTE</b>	140,406	33	4,255	0,943	0,960	0,079
<b>WPEB</b>	14,739	5	2,948	0,985	0,973	0,069
<b>GWCP</b>	16,589	8	2,074	0,986	0,996	0,051
<b>Good Fit Values</b>			≤3	≥0,90	≥0,97	≤0,05
<b>Acceptable Fit Values</b>			≤4-5	0,89-0,85	≥0,95	0,06-0,08

After confirmatory factor analysis, explanatory factor analysis was conducted in the study. Factor loadings and reliability results of the scales are given in Table 3. In order to determine the size of the sample, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was calculated. The closer the results are to 1, the better, and if they are below .50, they are considered unacceptable (Best & Kahn, 2017). The existence of a relationship between the items was analyzed with the Bartlett test. The KMO coefficient of the scale (KMO=0.960) was determined to be above 0.50 and the Bartlett test significance value was determined to be 0.00. This shows us that the data obtained from individuals is suitable for factor analysis. In order to determine the factor structure of the scales, Component Matrix and Rotated Component Matrix – Varimax analyses were performed. Factor loadings are expected to be above 0.50 (Tavşancıl, 2002).

**Table 3.** Factor Loadings, Variance Explanation Percentage and Reliability Results of Scales and Items

Scale	Subscales	Items	$\lambda$	AVE
		<i>Why are you doing things for the environment?</i>		
MTE	Autonomous MTE	“For the pleasure I get in mastering new ways to help the environment”	0,803	46,948
		“For the pleasure of contributing to the environment”	0,779	
		“Because taking care of the environment is an integral part of my life”	0,871	
		“Because it seems to me that taking care of myself and taking care of the environment are inseparable”	0,898	
		“Because my environmental awareness has become a fundamental part of who I am”	0,888	
		“Because it is part of the way I have chosen to live my life”	0,822	
		“Because I think it is a good idea to do something about the environment”.	0,613	
	Controlled MTE	“Because other people would be mad if I didn’t do anything about the environment”	0,887	23,736
		“For the recognition I get for it from others”	0,882	
“Because my friends insist that I do”		0,868		
KMO = 0,844, Barttlet Test - Chi-square: 2692,345, df: 45, Sig: 0,000, Cronbach’s Alpha (Autonomous MTE): 0,916, Cronbach’s Alpha (Controlled MTE): 0,864, Cronbach’s Alpha (Full Scale): 0,844, Total Explained Variance: 70,684				
Scale	Subscales	Items	$\lambda$	AVE
GWCP	Perceptions of the Organization	“Our company is interested in supporting environmental causes”	0,772	73,386
		“Our company is worried about its environmental impact”	0,892	
		“Our company believes it is important to protect the environment”	0,721	
	Perceptions of the Co-workers	“In our company, employees try to minimize harm to the environment”	0,861	10,867
		“In our company, employees are concerned about acting in environmentally friendly ways”	0,852	
		“In our company, employees care about the environment”	0,862	
KMO = 0,885, Barttlet Test - Chi-square: 2034,774, df:15, Sig:0,000, Cronbach’s Alpha (Perceptions of the Organization): 0,878 Cronbach’s Alpha (Perceptions of the Co-workers): 0,921, Cronbach’s Alpha (Full Scale): 0,925, Total Explained Variance: 84,253				
Scale	Subscales	Items	$\lambda$	AVE
		<i>At my office</i>		
WPEB	-	“I print double sided whenever possible”	0,678	46,726
		“I put recyclable material (e.g. cans, paper, bottles, batteries) in the recycling bins”	0,604	
		“I bring reusable eating utensils to work (e.g. travel coffee mug, water bottle, reusable containers, reusable cutlery)”	0,591	
		“I take part in environmentally friendly programs (e.g. bike/walk to work day, bring your own local lunch day)”	0,744	
		“I make suggestions about environmentally friendly practices to managers and/or environmental committees, in an effort to increase my organization’s environmental performance”	0,780	
KMO = 0,750, Barttlet Test - Chi-square: 362,732, df: 10, Sig:0,000, Cronbach’s Alpha:0,706, Total Explained Variance: 46,726				

According to Table 3, 46,948 of the total explained variance of the MTE Scale is explained by the Autonomous MTE subscale, and 23,736 is explained by the Controlled MTE subscale. The total variance of the scale is 70.684. In order to prove the applicability of the scale, the internal consistency coefficient, that is, Cronbach's Alpha value, was examined. As a result of the analysis, the reliability coefficient of the entire scale was found to be 0.844. 73,386 of the total explained variance of the GWCP scale is explained by the Perceptions of the Organization subscale, and 10,867 by the Perceptions of the Co-workers subscale. It is seen that the total variance of the scale is 84.253. Cronbach's alpha value was found to be 0.925. The total explained variance of the WPEB scale is 46.726. Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be 0.706. As a result of the analyses, it is seen that the validity and reliability of the scales used are high (Büyüköztürk, 2006; Kalaycı, 2008).

## Descriptive Results

The mean, standard deviation and correlation values of the variables included in the study are presented in Table 4. According to the table, the mean value of the MTE scale is 3.37, the mean value of the GWCP scale is 3.43 and the mean value of the WPEB scale is 3.62. MTE has a positive relationship with GWCP ( $r=.454$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and WPEB ( $r=.311$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). There is also a positive relationship between GWCP ( $r=.211$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and WPEB ( $r=0.407$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

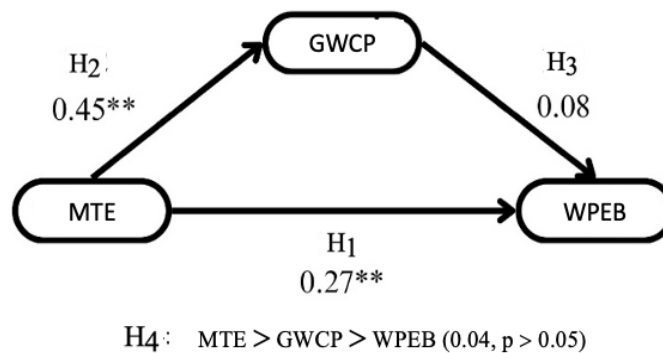
**Table 4.** Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Results

Variables	Mean	SD	MTE	GWCP	WPEB
MTE	3,37	,532	-	,454**	,311**
GWCP	3,43	,869		-	,211**
WPEB	3,62	,833			-

SD: Standard Deviation; \*\* $p < 0.01$ ,

## Testing the Research Model

The research model showing the hypotheses results is summarized in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Results of the Mediation Model

Figure 1 illustrates a simple mediation model. In this model, mediation analysis was performed to measure the direct, indirect and total effects of motivation toward the environment on employee green behavior and the green organizational climate perceptions of the employees. The research model was tested using PROCESS software developed by Andrew F. Hayes for SPSS (Hayes 2013). The PROCESS software program tests the entire model and the indirect effect (mediation effect) of the mediator variable (Edwards & Lambert 2007; Preacher, Rucker & Hayes 2007). PROCESS regression results for the research model are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Regression Coefficients of the Research Model

Variables	GWCP		WPEB	
	$\beta$	95% CI	$\beta$	95% CI
MTE	0.45**	0.60, 0.88	0.27**	0.26, 0.58
GWCP			0.08	-0.01, 0.18
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.20		R <sup>2</sup> = 0.10		
F (413.0000) = 107.18**		F (412.0000) = 23.59**		

\*\* $p < 0.01$

According to the regression analysis results in Table 5, MTE positively affects WPEB ( $\beta = 0.27$ ,  $SE = 0.08$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and GWCP ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $SE = 0.07$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Accordingly, hypotheses H1 and H2 were supported. According to the research results, GWCP ( $\beta = 0.08$ ,  $SE = 0.05$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) does not affect WPEB. Therefore, H3 was not supported.

Table 6 shows the direct, indirect and total effects of MTE on WPEB and GWCP of the employees. As seen in the table, the 95% confidence interval for indirect effects (5,000 bootstrap samples) includes zero. This finding does not confirm the indirect effect. GWCP does not mediate the relationship between MTE and WPEB ( $\beta = 0.04$ ,  $SE = 0.02$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). So GWCP was not a significant mediator. According to these findings, the H4 hypothesis was not supported. The direct effect of MTE on WPEB is 0.27 ( $SE = 0.08$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), the total indirect effect is 0.04 ( $SE = 0.02$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ), and the total effect is 0.31 ( $SE = 0.07$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 6.** Direct, Indirect, and Total Impacts

Variables	Direct Impact	Boot SE	95% CI
<b>MTE-WPEB</b>	0.27**	0.08	0.26,0.58
	<b>Indirect Impact</b>		
<b>MTE-GWCP-WPEB</b>	0.04	0.02	-0.01,0.08
<b>Total Impact (Direct+Indirect)</b>	0.31**	0.07	0.34,0.63

\*\* $p < 0.01$ . The bootstrap samples for the bias-corrected range are 5,000.

## Conclusion and Discussions

This study started from the question “how do hotel employees’ green behaviors relate to their motivation about the environment and the green climate within the company?”. To this end, we tested (1) the effect of employees’ motivation toward the environment on their green behaviors and (2) the effect of employees’ motivation toward the environment on their green organizational climate perceptions, (3) the effect of employees’ green organizational climate perceptions on their green behaviors, and (4) the mediating role of green organizational climate in the relationship between motivation toward the environment and green employee behaviors. Based on the findings of the research, as expected employees’ motivation toward the environment has a positive effect on their self-reported green behaviors. Specifically, an employee is more likely to practice environmentally friendly habits at work, like recycling, reusing paper, and conserving energy, if he or she feels more motivated to do so. The results obtained align with the existing literature on the topic, since the previous research has found positive relationship between motivation (autonomous) and green behaviors in employees (Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021; Hicklenton et al., 2019; Graves & Sarkis, 2018; Graves et al., 2013; Graves et al., 2019) and other individuals (Lavergne et al., 2010; Aitken et al., 2016; Renaud-Dube et al., 2010). As a result, our findings build upon earlier research on the positive outcomes of motivation in green behaviors. The effect of motivation toward the environment on employees’ green organizational climate perceptions were also tested. The results confirm the significant and positive effect of motivation toward the environment on green organizational climate perception. Accordingly, employees are more likely to perceive green work climates if they have higher levels of motivation toward the environment. Since, to the best of the authors' knowledge, there is no study investigating the relationship between employees’ motivation toward the environment and their green organizational climate perceptions, it was not possible to determine whether the research findings were consistent with the literature.

The research questioned the effect of employees’ green organizational climate perceptions on their green behaviors. The results confirmed the significant positive relationship between variables but didn’t confirm the significant and positive effect of green organizational climate perceptions on green behaviors. The obtained results are in agreement with the relevant literature highlighting the significant relationship between green organizational climate and employee green behavior (Hickleton et al., 2019; Tahir et al., 2020; Rubel et al., 2021) but they are not

in agreement with the literature emphasizing the direct positive impact of green organizational climate perception on green behaviors (Coşkun, 2022; Zientara ve Zamojska, 2016; Özalp & Erbaşı, 2021; Chou, 2014; Yaşar, 2023; Mert & Arıkan Saltık, 2023; Norton et al., 2014; Norton et al., 2017).

Finally in the study, the mediating role of green organizational climate in the relationship between motivation toward the environment and green employee behaviors was investigated. Previous research confirmed the mediating role of green organizational climate in the relationship between; perceptions of the presence of a sustainability policy of the organization and employee green behavior (Norton et al., 2014); green transformational leadership and employee green behavior (Coşkun, 2022); green human resources management and employee green behavior (Dumont et al., 2017; Rubel et al., 2021). Potential mediators are needed to more completely understand the mechanisms by which motivation toward the environment impacts employee green behaviors. Therefore, we tested the green organizational climate perceptions of employees as a mediator variable. But the findings of the study didn't confirm the mediating role of green organizational climate in the relationship between motivation toward the environment and green employee behaviors. Accordingly, the positive relationship between motivation toward the environment and green behaviors was not mediated by green organizational climate perceptions of the employees'.

### Implications

According to the findings of this study, participation in green behaviors is encouraged when employees feel more motivated to protect the environment and have a positive sense of green climate in their work places, which could have a greater positive impact on the environment. Therefore, discovering efficient strategies to support employees' motivation for environmentally friendly behavior is crucial for organizations.

Several implications for hotel managers can be suggested as a result of the study. The findings may provide clues to managers on how to improve the sustainable environmental performance of businesses. It can also offer suggestions on how to enhance environmentally conscious employee behaviors in companies.

Research results indicate a strong and positive correlation between employees' commitment to environmentally friendly behaviors at work and their level of motivation toward the environment. The results also show that employees' perceptions of a green organizational climate and their green behaviors are positively correlated. Thus, the study emphasizes how critical it is to provide an environment at work where employees are not only supportive of but actively encouraged to engage in sustainable environmental initiatives.

A management style that openly embraces green practices has the power to profoundly influence employees' attitudes and motivate them to follow suit. Furthermore, promoting a green workplace culture and communicating the organization's environmental policies to staff members within the organization will boost morale. Hoteliers must not only communicate with their staff members, but more importantly, they must explain to them the organization's focus on resource efficiency, waste management, minimizing the use of chemicals, etc. (Zientara & Zamojska, 2016) to increase their intrinsic motivation toward the green behaviors at work.

Managers can adopt practices that will create a work environment that naturally motivates employees to adopt green behaviors. Companies can also foster eco-friendly work climates that enables staff members to create autonomous motivational states and, as a result, participate in more voluntary green behaviors (Tian et al., 2020).

Green human resources management also promote employee green behaviors and encourage green organizational

climates (Dumont et al., 2017; Rubel et al., 2021). By planning frequent training and development programs, businesses can educate staff members about the environmental effects of their individual actions. It might be feasible to cultivate sustainable environment culture within the company in this way.

Research results emphasize the positive effect of motivation, both autonomous and controlled motivation, on green employee behaviors. Accordingly, as well as using external incentives and rewards to increase employees' positive attitudes toward green behaviors, managers should appeal to individual values and goals (Graves et al., 2019; Budzanowska-Drzewiecka & Tutko, 2021). Nevertheless, it should be investigated that awards and monetary incentives can effectively promote environmentally conscious behavior among employees (Graves et al., 2018).

Leadership is also an important factor in creating and maintaining a GOC and motivating EGB. Green policy communication and implementation could be facilitated by leaders (Robertson & Barling, 2013). Graves et al. (2018) stated that environmental transformational leadership provided by employees' first-degree managers is critical for the effectiveness of environmental initiatives. Businesses that wish to motivate staff members to participate in green behaviors should make sure that managers are capable of offering transformational leadership when it comes to environmental issues (Graves et al., 2013). Therefore, by adopting green habits themselves, managers and leaders should serve as role models for their staff. Employees will be more motivated to protect the environment if leaders model similar behaviors for themselves and their subordinates.

### **Limitations and future research**

In the study, self-reported actions of hotel employees (e.g. turning the lights off when not used or printing double sided) serving in two different cities in Türkiye were used to understand the green behavior of hotel employees. Despite using an adequate and diverse national sample, the findings cannot be generalized to the overall Turkish employees. Besides, the results are in a sense limited to a single country and culture specific. This situation creates a limitation in terms of generalizability of the results.

The data obtained in the research to measure green employee behavior is self-reported. Because of this, the results are restricted to the participants' perceptions of themselves. Rather, more accurate conclusions may be drawn from data gathered through observing and reporting workers' real actions in the workplace. Future studies may also employ multiple data collection techniques (e.g., surveys and observation) together to analyze subject in dept (Graves et al., 2019).

Employees in the hospitality sector provided data for the study. In addition to the hotels, data from food and beverage establishments and travel industry personnel can be used in future research to look at green employee behaviors in the industry as a whole.

Although mediation analysis was performed, employing a correlational and regression research design, the study has a quite simple model. In future studies, it is recommended to add additional variables (e.g. influence of leadership style, performance appraisal, rewards, training) and various control variables (e.g. age, gender, working department) to improve the research design and to further examining the factors that promote green employee behaviors.

The study replicates previous findings suggesting the positive relationship between motivation toward the environment and green employee behaviors. The MTE scale developed by Pelletier et al. (1998) was used to measure this relationship. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, the scale was used for the first time in Türkiye to

determine how motivated employees in the hospitality sector were about the environment. This is notable for the study's contribution to the literature despite its limitations.

## Declarations

All authors of the article contributed equally to the article process. There is no conflict of interest that the authors should declare. Ethics committee permission was received for the research from Selçuk University Faculty of Tourism Scientific Ethics and Evaluation Board with the decision dated 03.04.2024 and numbered 733699.

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## **Appendix 1. Motivation Toward the Environment Scale**

“Why are you doing things for the environment?”

“Items for autonomous motivation”

1. “For the pleasure I get in mastering new ways to help the environment”.
2. “For the pleasure I get in improving the quality of the environment”.
3. “Because I like the feeling I get when doing things for the environment”.
4. “For the pleasure of contributing to the environment”.
5. “Because taking care of the environment is an integral part of my life”.
6. “Because it seems to me that taking care of myself and taking care of the environment are inseparable”.
7. “Because it is part of the way I have chosen to live my life”.
8. “Because my environmental awareness has become a fundamental part of who I am”.
9. “Because it is a sensible thing to do something about the environment”.
10. “Because it is the way I have chosen to contribute to the environment”.
11. “Because it is a reasonable thing to do something about the environment”.
12. “Because I think it is a good idea to do something about the environment”.

“Items for controlled motivation”

13. “Because I think I’d regret not doing something about the environment”.
14. “Because I’d feel guilty if I didn’t do anything about the environment”.
15. “Because I’d feel bad if I didn’t do anything about the environment”.
16. “I’d be ashamed not to do anything about the environment”.
17. “Because other people would be mad if I didn’t do anything about the environment”.
18. “For the recognition I get for it from others”.
19. “Because my friends insist that I do”.
20. “To avoid being criticized”.

“Workplace Environmental-friendly Behavior Scale”

1. “I print double sided whenever possible”.
2. “I put compostable items in the compost bin”.
3. “I put recyclable material (e.g. cans, paper, bottles, batteries) in the recycling bins”.
4. “I bring reusable eating utensils to work (e.g. travel coffee mug, water bottle, reusable containers, reusable cutlery)”.

5. "I turn lights off when not in use".
6. "I take part in environmentally friendly programs (e.g. bike/walk to work day, bring your own local lunch day)".
7. "I make suggestions about environmentally friendly practices to managers and/or environmental committees, in an effort to increase my organization's environmental performance".

"Green Organizational Climate Scale"

"Items for perceptions of the organization"

1. "Our company is worried about its environmental impact".
2. "Our company is interested in supporting environmental causes".
3. "Our company believes it is important to protect the environment".
4. "Our company is concerned with becoming more environmentally friendly".

"Items for perceptions of co-workers"

5. "In our company, employees pay attention to environmental issues".
6. "In our company, employees are concerned about acting in environmentally friendly ways".
7. "In our company, employees try to minimize harm to the environment".
8. "In our company, employees care about the environment".

## Appendix 2. Ethics Committee Permission

Evrak Kayıt Tarih ve Sayısı: 03.04.2024-733699

T.C.  
SELÇUK ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
TURİZM FAKÜLTESİ  
BİLİMSEL ETİK DEĞERLENDİRME KURULU

Toplantı Tarihi ve Karar Numarası: 01.04.2024-195/11

Toplantı Gündemi: Bilimsel Etik Başvurularının Değerlendirilmesi

Bilimsel Etik Değerlendirme Kurulunca Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Gamze TEMİZEL, “Çevreye Karşı Motivasyonun Çalışanların Yeşil Davranışlarına Etkisinde Yeşil Örgüt İklimi Algısının Aracı Rolü” başlıklı çalışmalarının, gereken yerlerden izin alınması koşuluyla yapılmasının etik açıdan uygun olduğuna oy birliği/oy çokluğu ile karar verilmiştir.