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Value-Driven Sustainability: Unpacking the Behavioral Pathway Linking Self-Transcendence to Sustainable Performance in the Tourism and Hospitality Sector

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	Abstract
<p>Sara Ibrahim PhD Scholar, Department of Management Sciences, Hazara University Mansehra. saraibrahimswati@gmail.com</p> <p>Dr. Sajjad Ahmad Afridi Associate Professor, Department of Management Sciences, Hazara University Mansehra. sajjadafridi@hu.edu.pk</p> <p>Dr. Ajmal Inayat Lecturer, Department of Management Sciences, Hazara University Mansehra. ajmalinayat@hu.edu.pk</p>	<p>Sustainable performance has become a strategic priority in the tourism and hospitality industry, particularly in emerging economies where environmental challenges and resource constraints are increasingly pressing. While prior research has emphasized structural and technological determinants of sustainability, limited attention has been given to the role of employee value orientations and behavioral mechanisms. This study examined the relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance, with pro-environmental behavior serving as a mediating mechanism, in the context of Pakistan’s tourism and hospitality sector. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, data were collected from 300 employees working in hotels, resorts, and tourism-related organizations. Structural equation modeling was employed to test the hypothesized relationships. The findings revealed that self-transcendence significantly and positively influenced sustainable performance. Moreover, self-transcendence was found to enhance pro-environmental behavior, which in turn significantly improved sustainable performance. Mediation analysis confirmed that pro-environmental behavior partially mediated the relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance. These results support the value-behavior-outcome framework, suggesting that personal values translate into organizational sustainability outcomes through behavioral engagement. The study contributes to sustainability and organizational behavior literature by highlighting the psychological and behavioral drivers of sustainable performance in a developing country context. Practically, the findings underscore the importance of fostering value-based management and encouraging environmentally responsible behaviors to strengthen sustainability outcomes in the tourism and hospitality industry.</p>
Keywords	Self-Transcendence; Pro-Environmental Behavior; Sustainable Performance; Tourism and Hospitality; Sustainability; Structural Equation Modeling



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Introduction

The tourism and hospitality industry plays a pivotal role in the economic development of emerging economies such as Pakistan (Abbasi et al., 2023; Afridi, Asad, et al., 2023; Ibrahim & Khan, 2025). It contributes significantly to employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, regional development, and community welfare (Abbas & Halog, 2021). However, rapid tourism expansion and hospitality operations have also intensified environmental degradation, excessive resource consumption, waste generation, and carbon emissions (Afridi, Javed, et al., 2023; Ahmed, 2020). As sustainability concerns become central to global development agendas, tourism and hospitality organizations are under increasing pressure to integrate sustainable practices into their operational and strategic frameworks.

Sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry extends beyond financial profitability to encompass environmental protection and social responsibility (Abumalloh et al., 2024; Al-Zawahreh et al., 2019). Organizations are increasingly evaluated on their ability to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship and social contribution. Achieving sustainable performance requires not only technological improvements and regulatory compliance but also behavioral transformation at the employee level. Employees play a crucial role in implementing sustainability initiatives because daily operational decisions—such as energy usage, waste management, service delivery, and customer interaction—directly influence sustainability outcomes (Arda et al., 2023; Armutcu et al., 2024; Arora & Mishra, 2023; Ashraf et al., 2024). In this context, individual values and behavioral orientations have gained growing attention in sustainability research. One such value orientation is self-transcendence (Abitbol & VanDyke, 2023; Barton & Hart, 2023). Self-transcendence reflects an individual's concern for the welfare of others, society, and the environment beyond personal interests (Guo et al., 2023; Huang & Yang, 2023). Employees with strong self-transcendent values tend to prioritize collective benefits, ethical responsibility, and long-term environmental protection over short-term self-interest. In organizational settings, especially in service industries such as tourism and hospitality, self-transcendent employees are more likely to support sustainable initiatives and engage in behaviors that contribute to environmental preservation and social well-being.

Although prior research has examined the direct relationship between personal values and sustainability outcomes, less attention has been given to understanding the behavioral mechanisms that explain how self-transcendence translates into organizational sustainable performance (Papaioannou & Krommidas, 2021; Sode & Chenji, 2024; Topper et al., 2024). Values alone may not directly improve performance unless they are expressed through concrete workplace behaviors (Bell, 2023; Chen & Wei, 2023). Therefore, identifying an appropriate mediating mechanism is critical for explaining this transformation process. Pro-environmental behavior provides a strong explanatory mechanism in this regard. Pro-environmental behavior refers to voluntary actions employees take to minimize environmental harm and promote ecological sustainability within organizational settings (Afridi et al., 2021; Ahuja et al., 2022). In the tourism and hospitality sector, such behaviors include energy conservation, responsible resource utilization, waste reduction, recycling practices, reducing food waste, and encouraging environmentally responsible service delivery. When employees engage in pro-environmental behaviors, organizations benefit from reduced operational costs, improved environmental compliance, enhanced corporate reputation, and stronger stakeholder trust—ultimately contributing to improved sustainable performance (Ababneh, 2021; Biswas et al., 2022; Biswas et al., 2025; Borah et al., 2024).

The linkage between self-transcendence and pro-environmental behavior is theoretically grounded in value-behavior frameworks, which suggest that individuals act in ways consistent with their core values (Ashraf et al., 2022; Carrión-Bósquez et al., 2025; Chaihanchai & Anantachart, 2023). Employees who prioritize collective welfare and environmental concern are more likely to adopt behaviors aligned with sustainability objectives. Furthermore, pro-environmental behavior acts as a behavioral conduit through which personal values are translated into measurable organizational outcomes. Consequently, sustainable performance may be strengthened when self-transcendent values foster environmentally responsible behaviors among employees. Despite the increasing recognition of sustainability challenges in Pakistan's tourism and hospitality industry, empirical research integrating self-transcendence, pro-environmental behavior, and sustainable performance remains limited. Most existing studies have focused on organizational-level sustainability strategies or technological solutions, with comparatively less attention to employee-level psychological drivers and behavioral mechanisms (Abubakr et al., 2019; Abumalloh et al., 2024; Amornkitvikai & Pholphirul, 2023). This research addresses this gap by proposing and testing a mediation model in which pro-environmental behavior explains the relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance. By developing and empirically examining this framework in the context of Pakistan's tourism and hospitality sector, the study contributes to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it advances understanding of how personal values influence organizational sustainability through behavioral pathways. Practically, it provides insights for managers seeking to enhance sustainable performance by cultivating value-based leadership, promoting environmental awareness, and encouraging pro-environmental behaviors among employees.

Hypotheses Development

Self-transcendence refers to an individual's value orientation characterized by concern for the welfare of others, collective interests, environmental protection, and long-term societal well-being (Barton & Hart, 2023; Castelo et al., 2021; Reed, 2008). Rooted in value theory, self-transcendence emphasizes altruism, universalism, and ethical responsibility over self-enhancement motives (Reed, 2008; Topper et al., 2024). In organizational settings, employees with strong self-transcendent values demonstrate greater sensitivity toward sustainability challenges and are more inclined to support organizational goals that promote social and environmental responsibility.

In the tourism and hospitality industry, sustainable performance represents a multidimensional construct encompassing economic viability, environmental stewardship, and social contribution (Ahmed et al., 2022; Al-Romeedy & El-Sisi, 2024). Given the resource-intensive nature of hospitality operations—such as energy consumption, water usage, waste generation, and supply chain activities—employee engagement in sustainable practices plays a critical role in improving performance outcomes. Employees who internalize self-transcendent values are more likely to align their workplace actions with sustainability objectives, thereby contributing positively to organizational performance. Prior research suggests that value-driven individuals contribute to pro-social and pro-environmental outcomes in service industries (Berti & Cigala, 2022; Cai et al., 2025; Castelo et al., 2021). However, the direct relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance may not be automatic. Instead, behavioral mechanisms are required to translate personal values into operational results. This highlights the need to examine mediating processes that explain how self-transcendent values influence sustainable outcomes.

The relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance can be logically grounded in value theory and behavioral sustainability literature. Self-transcendence reflects an individual's orientation toward collective welfare, social responsibility, and environmental concern beyond personal interests. Employees who demonstrate high self-transcendent values prioritize long-term societal and ecological benefits, which aligns closely with the multidimensional nature of sustainable performance. First, sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry depends heavily on employee commitment to environmental stewardship and social responsibility (Afridi, Asad, et al., 2023; Ahsan & Khalid, 2024; Brzustewicz et al., 2024). Operations in this sector involve intensive resource utilization, waste generation, and direct interaction with stakeholders. Employees with strong self-transcendent values are more likely to support resource-efficient practices, reduce environmental harm, and contribute to socially responsible service delivery. Their value orientation encourages them to act in ways that improve organizational sustainability outcomes.

Second, value-consistent behavior theory suggests that individuals strive to align their workplace actions with their internal value systems (Noor Faezah et al., 2024; Otoo & Rather, 2024; Raineri & Paillé, 2016). When employees perceive sustainability initiatives as congruent with their personal values—particularly universalism and altruism—they are more motivated to contribute toward organizational sustainability goals. This alignment strengthens performance outcomes because behaviors that support environmental protection and social responsibility become internally driven rather than externally enforced. Third, self-transcendent employees tend to demonstrate higher ethical awareness and long-term thinking (Farhadi & Beiranvand, 2023; Levenson et al., 2005). Sustainable performance requires balancing short-term financial gains with long-term environmental and social impact. Employees who prioritize collective welfare are less likely to engage in behaviors that compromise environmental integrity for immediate personal or departmental benefits. Instead, they promote responsible decision-making that enhances organizational resilience and sustainability.

Fourth, in service industries such as tourism and hospitality, sustainable performance is not achieved solely through technology or policy but through daily operational behaviors (Abumalloh et al., 2024; Ananth Alias Rohith Bhat et al., 2025). Self-transcendence enhances employees' motivation to voluntarily support sustainability initiatives, conserve resources, and maintain socially responsible interactions with customers and communities. Over time, these value-driven contributions accumulate and positively influence overall organizational performance across economic, environmental, and social dimensions.

Based on these arguments, it is theoretically and logically reasonable to propose that self-transcendence positively influences sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality sector.

H1: Self-transcendence has a positive and significant effect on sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Self-Transcendence and Pro-Environmental Behavior

Pro-environmental behavior refers to voluntary actions taken by employees to reduce environmental harm and promote ecological sustainability within organizational contexts (Afsar et al., 2016; Bouman et al., 2020; Elshaer et al., 2021). In tourism and hospitality organizations, such behaviors include energy conservation, responsible waste management, recycling, minimizing food waste, reducing plastic usage, and encouraging sustainable service practices.

Value–behavior theories argue that individual values significantly shape behavioral intentions and actual behaviors (Latif et al., 2022; Naz et al., 2023). Employees who exhibit strong self-transcendence prioritize collective welfare and environmental protection, which increases the likelihood of engaging in environmentally responsible workplace behaviors. When employees perceive sustainability as aligned with their personal values, they are more motivated to adopt behaviors that support environmental goals. Empirical evidence across service industries indicates that altruistic and universalistic values positively influence environmental engagement and sustainability-oriented behaviors. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that self-transcendence serves as an important psychological antecedent of pro-environmental behavior in the tourism and hospitality context.

H2: Self-transcendence has a positive and significant effect on pro-environmental behavior in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Mediating role of Pro-Environmental Behavior

Although self-transcendence may directly influence sustainable performance, this relationship is more realistically explained through behavioral mechanisms. Values alone do not automatically generate organizational outcomes (Al-Ghazali & Afsar, 2021; Bell, 2023; Dou et al., 2025; González-Rodríguez et al., 2019); instead, values shape employees’ attitudes and behaviors (Ajzen, 1991; García-Salirrosas et al., 2024), which subsequently translate into performance improvements. Therefore, pro-environmental behavior serves as a critical mediating mechanism through which self-transcendence contributes to sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry. First, self-transcendence represents a value orientation characterized by concern for collective welfare and environmental protection (Farhadi & Beiranvand, 2023; Jia et al., 2024). Employees who prioritize universalism and altruism are more inclined to internalize sustainability goals and convert these values into concrete workplace actions. This internal motivation increases the likelihood that they engage in pro-environmental behaviors such as energy conservation, waste reduction, responsible resource utilization, and support for sustainable operational practices. Thus, self-transcendence acts as a psychological antecedent that stimulates environmentally responsible behavior. Second, pro-environmental behavior directly influences organizational sustainability outcomes (Abbas & Halog, 2021; Amornkitvikai & Pholphirul, 2023; Baah et al., 2024). In tourism and hospitality operations, sustainability performance is largely determined by routine employee behaviors. When employees actively participate in environmentally responsible actions, organizations experience reduced operational costs, improved environmental compliance, enhanced reputation, and stronger stakeholder trust. These behavioral contributions collectively enhance sustainable performance. Therefore, pro-environmental behavior functions as the operational pathway linking individual values to organizational results. Third, from a value–behavior–outcome perspective, personal values influence outcomes indirectly through behavior. Self-transcendent employees are motivated to act in alignment with their ethical and environmental concerns (Guo et al., 2023; Jia et al., 2024; Levenson et al., 2005), but the tangible impact on sustainable performance occurs only when such values are translated into daily practices. This theoretical logic supports the mediating role of pro-environmental behavior because it explains how internal values are converted into measurable organizational benefits. Fourth, in the context of Pakistan’s tourism and hospitality industry, sustainability challenges require active employee participation rather than passive compliance (Ahmed et al., 2024; Ajmal et al., 2025). Organizational sustainability initiatives become effective when employees voluntarily adopt environmentally supportive behaviors. Since self-transcendence enhances intrinsic motivation toward environmental responsibility, it strengthens pro-environmental behavior, which ultimately improves sustainable performance.

H3: Pro-environmental behavior mediates the relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry.

Conceptual Framework

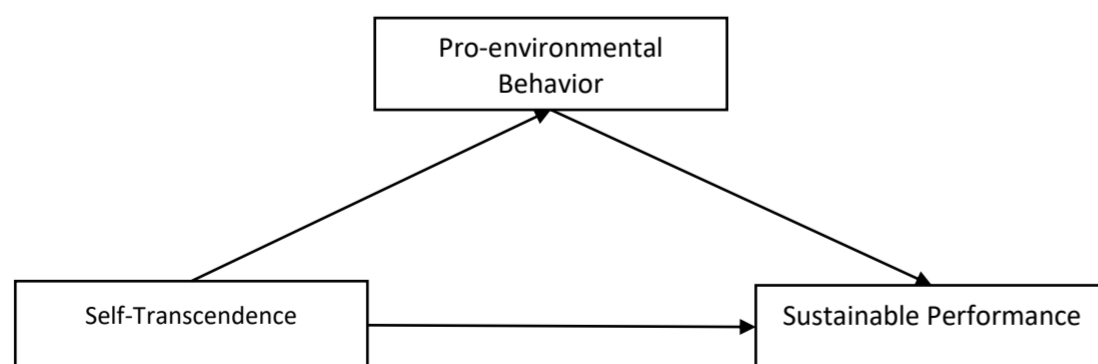


Figure No. 1: Conceptual Framework



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Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine the relationship between self-transcendence, pro-environmental behavior, and sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry of Pakistan. A cross-sectional survey approach was used to collect primary data from employees working in hotels, resorts, travel agencies, and tourism-related organizations. The quantitative design was appropriate because the study tested hypothesized relationships and examined mediation effects using statistical techniques.

Population and Sample

The target population of the study consisted of employees working in registered tourism and hospitality organizations in Pakistan. Since sustainable performance is largely influenced by employee-level behaviors, data were collected from operational and managerial staff who were directly involved in service delivery and organizational activities. A multistage or convenience sampling technique was used to select respondents based on accessibility and organizational cooperation. The sample size was determined using G*Power analysis and guidelines for structural equation modeling, ensuring adequate statistical power for testing mediation effects. A sufficient number of responses were collected to ensure reliability and generalizability of the findings.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed either physically or electronically (e.g., Google Forms/email). Prior permission was obtained from organizational management before data collection. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections:

1. Demographic information (age, gender, education, job position, experience, organization type).
2. Measurement scales for self-transcendence, pro-environmental behavior, and sustainable performance.

Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

Measurement of Variables

Self-Transcendence

Self-transcendence was measured using an established value scale adapted from prior research (e.g., Schwartz Value Scale or modified workplace value scale). The items assessed altruism, universalism, and concern for collective welfare.

Pro-Environmental Behavior

Pro-environmental behavior was measured using validated workplace environmental behavior scales. The items captured voluntary environmental actions such as energy saving, waste reduction, recycling, and sustainable service practices.

Sustainable Performance

Sustainable performance was measured using a multidimensional scale covering economic, environmental, and social performance dimensions. Respondents evaluated organizational performance based on sustainability outcomes.

All measurement scales were adapted from previous literature to ensure reliability and validity.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional authorities before data collection. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, and the collected data were used solely for academic purposes.

Analysis

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Before examining the measurement and structural relationships, the demographic profile of respondents was analyzed to understand the composition of the sample. The analysis included gender, age, education level, and work experience. The results indicated balanced representation across key demographic categories, ensuring diversity in responses and

enhancing the generalizability of findings within the tourism and hospitality context of Pakistan. The majority of respondents belonged to middle age groups and had moderate work experience, suggesting that participants possessed adequate professional exposure to evaluate sustainability practices within their organizations.

Table 1: *Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

Variables	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	182	60.7%
	Female	118	39.3%
Age	20–30	95	31.7%
	31–40	128	42.7%
	41–50	57	19.0%
	Above 50	20	6.6%
	Education	Bachelor	104
	Master	146	48.7%
	MPhil/PhD	50	16.6%
Experience	<5 Years	88	29.3%
	5–10 Years	132	44.0%
	>10 Years	80	26.7%

Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Descriptive statistics were computed to examine the central tendency and dispersion of the study variables. Additionally, reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales. The results demonstrated that all constructs exhibited acceptable to high reliability, as Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70. The mean values indicated moderate to high agreement among respondents regarding self-transcendence, pro-environmental behavior, and sustainable performance. These findings confirm that the measurement instruments were reliable and appropriate for further structural analysis.

Table 2: *Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis*

Variables	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-Transcendence	5	3.89	0.74	0.86
Pro-Environmental Behavior	6	3.76	0.81	0.88
Sustainable Performance	8	3.91	0.69	0.90

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of relationships among the study variables. The results revealed significant positive relationships among self-transcendence, pro-environmental behavior, and sustainable performance. The correlation coefficients were below the threshold of 0.80, indicating the absence of severe multicollinearity concerns. These findings provide preliminary support for the hypothesized relationships and justify proceeding with structural equation modeling.

Table 3: *Correlation Matrix*

Variables	ST	PEB	SP
Self-Transcendence	1		
Pro-Environmental Behavior	0.62**	1	

Variables	ST	PEB	SP
Sustainable Performance	0.58**	0.65**	1

Note: **p < 0.01

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) – Measurement Model

Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted to evaluate the validity and reliability of the measurement model. Factor loadings were examined to assess convergent validity, while composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were used to evaluate construct reliability and validity. The results indicated that all factor loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70. Furthermore, CR values were above 0.70 and AVE values exceeded 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity. Model fit indices demonstrated acceptable fit between the measurement model and the observed data.

Table 4: *Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results*

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	AVE
Self-Transcendence	ST1–ST5	0.72 – 0.84	0.87	0.59
Pro-Environmental Behavior	PEB1–PEB6	0.75 – 0.88	0.89	0.63
Sustainable Performance	SP1–SP8	0.70 – 0.86	0.92	0.61

Model Fit Indices

The overall measurement model demonstrated good fit based on established criteria.

Table 5: *Model Fit Indices*

Fit Index	Threshold	Value
CMIN/DF	< 3	2.14
CFI	> 0.90	0.94
TLI	> 0.90	0.93
RMSEA	< 0.08	0.052
SRMR	< 0.08	0.041

Structural Model – Direct Effects

Structural equation modeling was conducted to test the hypothesized direct relationships among variables. The results indicated that self-transcendence significantly and positively influenced both pro-environmental behavior and sustainable performance. Additionally, pro-environmental behavior had a significant positive effect on sustainable performance. The significant path coefficients and high t-values confirmed the robustness of the proposed structural relationships.

Table 6: *Direct Effect Results*

Hypothesis	Path	Beta (β)	SE	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	ST → SP	0.29	0.07	4.12	<0.001	Supported
H2	ST → PEB	0.63	0.05	12.60	<0.001	Supported
H3	PEB → SP	0.48	0.06	8.00	<0.001	Supported

Mediation Analysis

The mediating effect of pro-environmental behavior was tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. The results revealed that the indirect effect of self-transcendence on sustainable performance through pro-environmental behavior was statistically significant. The confidence interval did not include zero, confirming mediation. Since the direct effect remained significant alongside the indirect effect, the mediation was classified as partial mediation.

Table 6: *Mediation Results*

Path	Indirect Effect (β)	SE	t-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Result
ST → PEB → SP	0.30	0.04	7.50	0.18	0.42	Significant (Partial Mediation)

Discussion

The findings of this study provided empirical support for the proposed model linking self-transcendence, pro-environmental behavior, and sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry of Pakistan. The results confirmed that self-transcendence positively influences sustainable performance both directly and indirectly through pro-environmental behavior, thereby validating the theoretical assumptions underpinning the study.

The significant and positive relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance indicates that employees who prioritize collective welfare, environmental concern, and societal well-being contribute meaningfully to organizational sustainability outcomes. This finding suggests that value-driven employees are more inclined to align their workplace behaviors with long-term sustainability objectives. In tourism and hospitality organizations, where daily operational decisions affect resource consumption and environmental impact, employees with strong self-transcendent values enhance performance by promoting responsible practices and ethical decision-making. The result is consistent with value-based perspectives that emphasize the role of personal values in shaping organizational outcomes (Afridi, Asad, et al., 2023; Farhadi & Beiranvand, 2023; Flotman, 2021; Guo et al., 2023).

The findings further demonstrated that self-transcendence significantly influences pro-environmental behavior. This supports the argument that individuals who exhibit altruistic and universalistic value orientations are more motivated to engage in environmentally responsible actions at work. Employees who care about collective benefits are more likely to conserve resources, reduce waste, support recycling initiatives, and encourage sustainable service practices. This relationship highlights the psychological mechanism through which values are translated into observable workplace behaviors. It reinforces the notion that sustainability in service industries depends not only on formal policies but also on internalized employee values (Abbas et al., 2020; Abid et al., 2023; Abumalloh et al., 2024).

Moreover, pro-environmental behavior was found to have a significant positive effect on sustainable performance. This result confirms that environmentally responsible behaviors at the employee level contribute directly to improving economic efficiency, environmental protection, and social responsibility within organizations. In the tourism and hospitality sector, operational sustainability largely depends on routine behavioral practices such as energy saving, efficient resource utilization, and waste management. When such behaviors are consistently practiced across employees, they generate cumulative improvements in organizational sustainability performance. Thus, pro-environmental behavior acts as an important operational driver of sustainable outcomes.

The mediation analysis revealed that pro-environmental behavior partially mediates the relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance. This finding indicates that while self-transcendent values directly enhance sustainable performance, a substantial portion of their effect operates through behavioral engagement in environmental practices. The mediation result supports the value-behavior-outcome logic, suggesting that values influence performance primarily through behavioral implementation. This highlights the importance of fostering both value orientation and behavioral support systems within organizations to maximize sustainability outcomes. From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to sustainability and organizational behavior literature by demonstrating the psychological pathway linking personal values to organizational performance in a developing country context. The study extends prior research by empirically validating the mediating mechanism of pro-environmental behavior in the tourism and hospitality industry of Pakistan. It reinforces the argument that sustainability is not solely a structural or technological issue but also a human resource and behavioral phenomenon.

From a practical perspective, the results suggest that managers in tourism and hospitality organizations should focus on cultivating self-transcendent values through training programs, awareness campaigns, and sustainability-oriented leadership. Organizations should also create enabling environments that encourage pro-environmental behavior by integrating sustainability goals into performance evaluation systems and operational procedures. By aligning employee values with organizational sustainability objectives, firms can strengthen their overall sustainable performance.

Theoretical Contributions

This study contributes to the sustainability and organizational behavior literature by empirically examining the psychological mechanisms through which personal values influence sustainable performance in the tourism and hospitality industry. First, the study extends value-based theories by demonstrating that self-transcendence significantly



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predicts sustainable performance, thereby reinforcing the argument that individual value orientations play a crucial role in shaping organizational sustainability outcomes. By validating this relationship in a developing country context, the study expands the generalizability of value-performance frameworks beyond Western settings.

Second, the study contributes to the literature by identifying pro-environmental behavior as a key mediating mechanism that explains how self-transcendence translates into sustainable performance. Most prior research has examined direct relationships between values and performance; however, fewer studies have empirically tested behavioral mediation pathways. By confirming the mediating role of pro-environmental behavior, this research strengthens the value-behavior-outcome logic and demonstrates that values influence organizational sustainability primarily through behavioral implementation.

Third, the study enriches sustainability research in the tourism and hospitality sector by shifting attention from technology-centric explanations of sustainable performance toward employee-level psychological drivers. While prior studies have emphasized infrastructure, policy, and regulatory factors, this research highlights the importance of human values and voluntary environmental behavior as foundational drivers of sustainability. This employee-centered perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of sustainability performance in service organizations.

Fourth, the study contributes context-specific insights from Pakistan, an emerging economy where sustainability practices are still evolving. Empirical evidence from developing countries remains limited in sustainability literature. By providing data-driven validation in this context, the study enhances cross-cultural applicability of sustainability theories and supports their relevance in resource-constrained environments.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide several actionable implications for managers and policymakers in the tourism and hospitality industry.

First, organizational leaders should recognize the importance of recruiting and retaining employees who demonstrate strong self-transcendent values. During recruitment and selection processes, organizations may incorporate value-based assessments or behavioral interviews to identify candidates with high environmental awareness and social responsibility orientation.

Second, management should actively promote self-transcendence through training programs, sustainability workshops, and awareness campaigns. When employees understand the environmental and social impact of their actions, they are more likely to internalize sustainability goals and translate them into pro-environmental behavior.

Third, organizations should create enabling environments that encourage pro-environmental behavior. This can be achieved by integrating sustainability indicators into performance evaluation systems, rewarding environmentally responsible actions, and recognizing employees who contribute to resource conservation and waste reduction. Organizational support systems play a critical role in reinforcing behavioral engagement.

Fourth, policymakers in Pakistan's tourism sector should promote sustainability-oriented human resource development programs. Industry-level initiatives that emphasize environmental ethics, green practices, and sustainability education can strengthen collective sustainability performance across organizations.

Overall, the results suggest that sustainable performance is not achieved solely through technological investments but also through value-driven employee behavior and organizational support mechanisms.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that provide opportunities for future research.

First, the cross-sectional research design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among variables. Future studies may adopt longitudinal designs to examine how changes in self-transcendent values and pro-environmental behavior influence sustainable performance over time.

Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may introduce common method bias and social desirability bias. Future research could reduce this limitation by collecting multi-source data, such as supervisor ratings of sustainable performance or objective sustainability indicators.

Third, the study focused on a single mediating mechanism—pro-environmental behavior. Future research may expand the model by incorporating additional mediators such as organizational commitment, psychological ownership, environmental identity, or green transformational leadership to develop a more comprehensive framework.

Fourth, the research was conducted within the tourism and hospitality sector of Pakistan. Although this enhances contextual relevance, it limits generalizability to other industries or countries. Future studies should replicate the model in different sectors and cultural contexts to strengthen external validity.

Finally, future research may explore moderating variables such as organizational culture, leadership style, or regulatory pressure to understand boundary conditions under which self-transcendence has stronger or weaker effects on sustainable performance.



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Conclusion

This study empirically examined the relationship between self-transcendence and sustainable performance with pro-environmental behavior as a mediating mechanism in the tourism and hospitality industry of Pakistan. The findings confirmed that self-transcendence positively influences sustainable performance both directly and indirectly through pro-environmental behavior. The results highlight the importance of aligning employee values with organizational sustainability objectives to enhance performance outcomes.

By demonstrating the psychological and behavioral pathways linking values to sustainability, the study advances theoretical understanding and provides practical guidance for organizations seeking to strengthen sustainable performance. The findings underscore that sustainable development in service industries requires not only strategic policies but also value-driven employee engagement and environmentally responsible behavior.

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