Center for Management Science Research
ISSN: 3006-5291 3006-5283 Volume 3, Issue 8, 2025

INSPECTING THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFIC SERVANT LEADERSHIP AND GREEN TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM EMERGING MARKET

Samar Rahi[1], Muhammad Bilal Ahmad[2], Aleena Syed[*3], Dr. Muhammad Usman[4], Saqib Farid Sheikh[5]

[1,2,*3,4]*Hailey College of Banking and Finance, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan*
[5]*Department of Management Sciences, University of Gujrat, Pakistan*

[3]leenashah181@yahoo.com

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18059255

Keywords
Green transformational leadership; Environmental specific servant leadership; Green psychological Climate; Sustainable tourism.

Article History
Received: 28 October 2025
Accepted: 12 December 2025
Published: 26 December 2025

Copyright @Author
Corresponding Author: *
Aleena Syed

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the impact of green transformational leadership and environmental specific servant leadership towards sustainable tourism. Moreover, the mediating role of green psychological climate is examined between environment specific servant leadership and sustainable tourism. Similarly, the mediating role of green psychological climate is also tested between green transformational leadership and sustainable tourism. This research is designed on positivist research paradigm. Therefore, hypotheses are tested through empirical data. Data were collected from 300 employees working in 3 star hotels located in Punjab province of Pakistan. The data were analysed through partial least based structural equation modelling approach. Results have disclosed significant impact of green transformational leadership and environmental specific servant leadership on sustainable tourism. Moreover, statistical findings have also shown that GPC mediates the relationship between green transformational leadership and environmental specific servant leadership and Sustainable. In theoretical perspective this study has unveiled key antecedents of green psychological climate and hence contributes to literature. Similarly, conceptualizing linkage between green transformational leadership and sustainable tourism is substantially contributes to green tourism literature. This study has directed that policy makers could enhance sustainable tourism by improving transformational leadership, environmental specific servant leadership and psychological climate. This study is significant as it is first to investigate environmental specific servant leadership in the context of sustainable tourism. Similarly, this study has unveiled key antecedents of green psychological climate namely green transformational leadership and environmental specific servant leadership.

INTRODUCTION

As there are increasing natural disasters on this planet that are causing footprint of climate change, the businesses throughout the world are trying to adopt innovative strategies that preserve environment (Sajid, et al., 2021). It is very tough for organizations to adopt corporate greening and many

companies are still struggling to implement it. Many employees of corporate world are still reluctant to accept it despite all the efforts of management team (Laura & Graves, 2018). Therefore, various research areas have been emerged, aiming to discover more insightful significant factors that are related to employees' behaviour. As there are many researches that are being conducted to examine the green behaviour of employees therefore it is very important to understand that how those behaviours are significant for their work practices (Afsar & Umarani, 2020). Literature suggests that success of an organization is based on the decisions and performance of its employees. Therefore, in order to understand an organization's environmental sustainability, its employee's environmental conduct is very important. As the environment is continuously deteriorating by human activities and there is a significant role of employees of organizations in saving the environment, Employee voluntary green behaviour has emerged as an extra role behaviour (Norton, et al., 2021).

Formerly a leader's role was considered for enhancing the commitment of employees towards their organization. This concept makes it comprehensible that Environmental specific servant leadership makes employees who are working in a company more committed to protecting and preserving the environment. ESSL develops a culture that nourishes not only the development and growth but also enhance the innovation skills of employees thus, encouraging PEBs (Victoria, et al., 2016).

Tourism and hospitality sector is mostly considered as service sector that includes several small-scale businesses, restaurants and hotels. The current study focuses on investigating two leadership styles ESSL and ESGTL on sustainable Tourism in Pakistan. ESSL is a leadership style that is recognized by motivation to inspire and support employees in their professional tasks to accomplish the environmental goals of the organization. As in the current study we consider Environmental Specific Servant leadership as a contextual catalyst that increase the level of green behaviour of employees, the current research has the potential to add to the body of knowledge of green management literature by presenting a new perspective of leadership on green behaviour of employees.

Literature Review

Sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism has many dimensions, out of which economic and sustainable development are more prominent. Sustainable development leads to ecosystem sustainability, equality, community participation and prosperity. As a concept, Sustainable tourism is continuously developing. To satisfy the needs of tourists and local community, and to provide more developmental opportunities in future, literature suggests that the principles of sustainability are not easy to apply and this phenomenon also applies to tourism because it is very difficult to maintain an equilibrium between environmental protection and resource exploitation (Mehraj, Zubair, & Shamim, 2024). The first problem that occurs due to Tourism is environmental damage that leads to cultural change and then economic deterioration as well. The only solution to these problems is sustainable tourism which can save the environment while meeting the ever increasing needs of future generations. There are many principles behind this concept of sustainable tourism comprising of social, environmental and economic dimensions. Sustainable tourism is intended to enhance the productivity, protect the cultural legacy and natural environment and keep the balance in environment to bring justice (Tien, et al., 2019).

The early stage of sustainable tourism development, environmental conservation shall be emphasized but one cannot ignore the social and economic factors for sustainability. This is the reason that sustainability is defined with three main aspects that includes environmental social and economic so that it covers all the areas of sustainable development. Sustainable Tourism Development is considered as a broad concept that contains many systems in it. These systems include environmental, social system and economic system that enhances the efficiency of the resources (Tien, et al., 2019) .Literature suggests that ST is a kind of tourism that uses the principles of sustainability to bring a change in the traditional tourism. Sustainable tourism has capability of finding ways to get the maximum benefits and positive impact of tourism (Tsung, Fen, Chang, & Yan, 2018).

Green Psychological Climate

Green Psychological Climate (GPC) refers to Employee assessments about environmental sustainability within their organization constituting eco-sustainability perception (EP) which stands as a vital part of sustainable tourism. GPC contributes to the culture of an organizations let the employees practice sustainable work practice that support sustainability for development according to the sustainable development theory at this present time (Bhutto, et al., 2021).

Previous research has dedicated attention to GPC in tourism but present studies have built upon evidence showing how supportive green surroundings encourage workplace employees which leads to resource-conservation and waste-prevention practices for tourists (Haseeb, Muhammad, Mamdough, & Salih, 2023). The GPC operates as both an intermediary factor and compilation point for green leadership practices such as environmental-specific servant leadership and green transformational leadership that links to sustainable tourism through its regulatory function against organizational values. GPC functions to maintain tourists' green experiences throughout their trip and it enhances the business's favourable reputation in eco-tourism toward encouraging friendly environmental consumption. These studies portray GPC as an antecedent psychological construct that ties firm sustainability pursuits to feasible, organizational employee improvements in the tourism sector (Bhutto, et al., 2021).

Green Transformational Leadership

Leadership of an organization makes an organization to adopt the principles of sustainability (Parvaneh, et al., 2021). Literature suggests that for green innovation, green creativity of employees is very important and it is only achieved in them when leader shows green transformational leadership (Jianfeng, Huanxin, Tachia, & Dongqing, 2018). Leaders who call themselves as green transformational leaders possess a vision that encourage the employees to enhance their green creativity (Mittal & Dhar, 2016), enhance green innovation (Usama, Robert, & Andrzej, 2019) lead to green mindfulness (GM) (Chen & chang, 2012) and a very positive effect on green passion and green performance (Masood, Kalyar, Fahad, & Imran, 2021). Current literature suggests that there is a very strong impact of green transformational leadership on green creativity but still there is a gap on how and when this leadership style leads to creativity. The current study will investigate how green transformational leadership influence sustainable tourism in hospitality industry of Pakistan.

Environmental Specific Servant Leadership

Environmental Specific servant Leadership is defined as a leadership approach that prioritizes environmental benefits over personal and organizational economic gains (Luu, 2022). The root idea behind this concept is that the leaders who prioritize the necessities of their followers' by depicting environmental friendly behaviour serve as motivational leaders (Maria, et al., 2020). According to literature, the employees who work under the guidance of servant leader, have higher level of environmental concern than the employees who do not. Basically the concept of environmental specific servant leadership is grounded in the principles of Servant Leadership and it , emphasize on depicting pro-environmental objectives for both the society and organization (Luu, 2022).



Figure 1 Structural Framework

Hypotheses

H1: Green Transformational leadership positively influences Sustainable Tourism.
H2: Environmental Specific Servant Leadership Positively influences Sustainable Tourism.
H3: Green Psychological climate mediates the relationship of GTL and ST.
H4: Green Psychological climate mediates the relationship between ESSL and ST.

Methodology

The current study is quantitative and has employed cross sectional data collection technique. The population is the employees of 3 and above star hotels of Punjab with focus on tourism domain. The researcher has used the convenience sampling technique because all the hotels could not be approached to get the data. The data was collected through structured questionnaire that was distributed to the managers and employees of 3 and above star hotels. To measure the Green transformational leadership, Chin &Chang's six item scale was used. Green Psychological Climate was measured through Norton et al's five item scale. For Environmental specific servant leadership, 6 item scale of Elshear et al 2023 was used. For Sustainable tourism, khan et al 3 item scale was used.

Data Analysis

Measurement Model

As shown in Table, the reliability analysis indicates that all of the constructs meet the standard for internal consistency and convergent validity. The results suggest that the scale has reliable values, between 0.709 and 0.878. Likewise, both rho_A and Composite Reliability (CR) are higher than 0.70 which shows that the constructs are consistent. All constructs now have Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values over 0.50, with the lowest being 0.533 and the highest 0.592. This means that each construct is explaining significantly more than half of the changes seen in the indicators. In general, the measurement model demonstrates high reliability and validity which makes it suitable for additional analysis.

Reliability Analysis Table 1.1

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Environmental Specific Servant Leadership	0.799	0.804	0.846	0.557
Green Psychological Climate	0.815	0.818	0.859	0.533
Green Transformational Leadership	0.878	0.888	0.901	0.583

Sustainable Tourism	0.709	0.751	0.786	0.592

Discriminant validity analysis according to the Fornell-Larcker approach is shown in Table The square root of the AVE for each construct (shown down the diagonal) should be higher than its correlations with any other construct (shown in the other cells). All constructs in the table meet this requirement: the square root of AVE for Environmental Specific Servant Leadership (ESSL) (0.597), Green Psychological Climate (GPC) (0.658), Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) (0.695) and Sustainable Tourism (ST) (0.540) are all larger than their correlations between constructs. As a result, all the constructs are measured separately, showing that the model has good discriminant validity.

Validity Analysis Fornel Likert Table 1.2

Factors	Environmental Specific Servant Leadership	Green Psychological Climate	Green Transformational Leadership	Sustainable Tourism
ESSL	0.597			
GPC	0.356	0.658		
GTL	0.513	0.339	0.695	
ST	0.386	0.316	0.343	0.54

The Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is presented in Table and is a new and rigorous method for checking discriminant validity. To ensure discriminant validity, HTMT values between two constructs should usually be no higher than 0.85 (or 0.90 at times). The HTMT values for all measures are below 0.85, ranging from 0.388 to 0.592 which proves that each construct is unique in this study. As a result, HTMT analysis proves that all constructs in the model are distinct from each other.

Validity Analysis (HTMT) Table 1.3

Factors	**ESSL**	**GPC**	**GTL**
ESSL			
GPC	0.434		
GTL	0.592	0.388	

ST	0.484	0.389	0.403

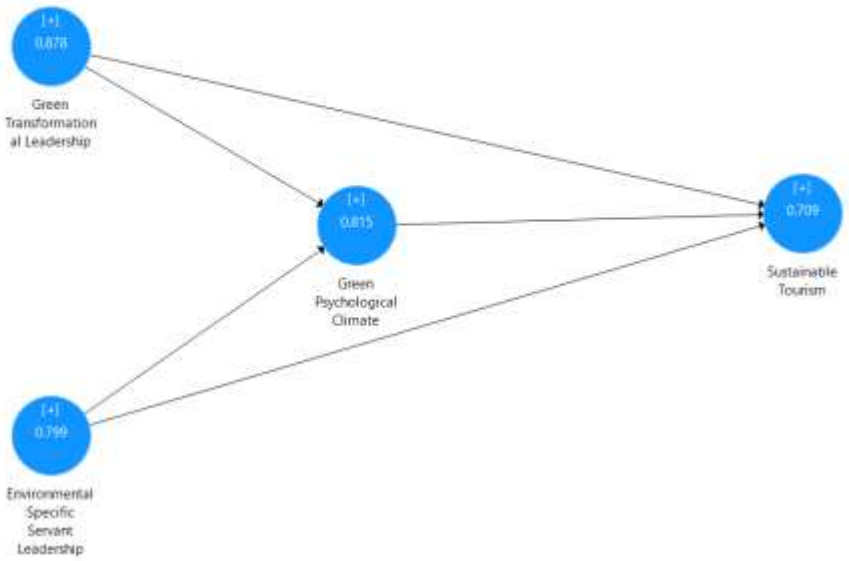


Figure 2 Measurement Model

Structural Equation Model

Table presents the results of the structural equation model (SEM) analysis, focusing on the direct effects among the study constructs. The findings reveal several statistically significant relationships, as indicated by their corresponding t-statistics (greater than 1.96) and p-values (all equal to 0.000, i.e., < 0.05), confirming strong evidence against the null hypotheses. Firstly, ESSL has a significant and positive effect on GPC, with an original path coefficient of 0.247 and a t-value of 5.05. This suggests that when leaders exhibit environment-focused servant leadership behaviors, they effectively foster a psychological climate within organizations that supports green values and practices. Similarly, ESSL also shows a strong direct impact on ST (β = 0.241, t = 5.839), implying that leadership behaviors aligned with environmental stewardship directly contribute to the promotion of ST practices.

GPC itself significantly influences ST (β = 0.176, t = 3.726), indicating that a workplace climate that emphasizes ecological awareness and responsibility can positively shape behaviors and policies that align with ST outcomes. Moreover, GTL has a significant positive effect on GPC (β = 0.212, t = 4.539), showing that transformational leadership that integrates environmental goals can significantly enhance the GPC within an organization. Lastly, GTL also directly affects ST (β = 0.160, t = 3.743), reinforcing the role of visionary, environmentally conscious leadership in promoting sustainability within the tourism sector. In summary, all direct paths tested in the model are statistically significant and positive, indicating a well-fitting model where both ESSL and GTL play vital roles in shaping the GPC and promoting ST outcomes. These results highlight the importance of integrating environmentally-oriented leadership styles in organizational strategies to foster a culture of sustainability.

Direct Effect Table 1.4

Factors	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
ESSL -> GPC	0.247	0.247	0.049	5.05	0.000
ESSL -> ST	0.241	0.248	0.041	5.839	0.000
GPC -> ST	0.176	0.174	0.047	3.726	0.000
GTL -> GPC	0.212	0.213	0.047	4.539	0.000
GTL -> ST	0.16	0.165	0.043	3.743	0.000

Mediation Analysis

The results of the mediation analysis evaluated the links between ESSL, GTL, GPC and ST. The interaction pathways are both significant, confirmed by t-values of more than 1.96 and p-values below 0.05. The data show that GPC mediates the effect of ESSL on ST (β = 0.044, t = 2.834, p = 0.005) (Hair, Jeffrey, Risher, & Christian, 2019) Therefore, approaches to servant leadership focused on environmental protection impact ST and also help create a green attitude among company members. It looks like a key part of servant leadership's impact on ST is by increasing environmentally supportive attitudes and practices among employees.

In a similar way, GPC is found to mediate the link between GTL and ST (β = 0.037, t = 2.634, p = 0.009). Therefore, leaders who inspire staff with a strong environmental outlook can support ST both by their actions and by promoting acceptance of green practices among employees. All things considered, the mediation analysis points out that GPC is the key factor that explains how both servant and transformational environmentally-oriented leadership support ST. It shows why creating a green workplace culture helps ensure that leadership actions support long-term sustainability.

Mediation Analysis Table 1.5

Factors	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values

ESSL -> GPC -> ST	0.044	0.043	0.015	2.834	0.005
GTL -> GPC -> ST	0.037	0.038	0.014	2.634	0.009

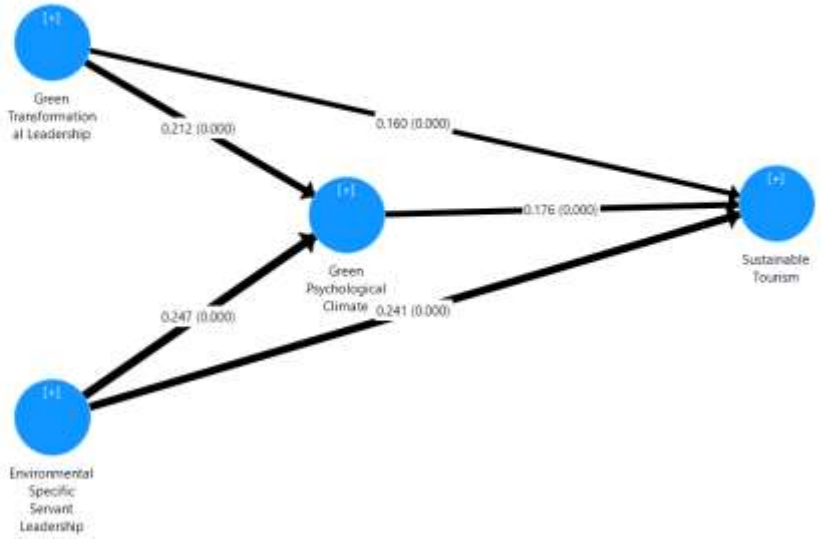


Figure 3 : Structural equation model

Discussion

The research shows that the hypothesized relationships among leadership styles, GPC and ST have strong evidence. Both ESSL and GTL strongly impact the sustainable success of tourism. ESSL is directly linked to a higher GPC (β = 0.247, p < 0.001) and ST (β = 0.241, p < 0.001). As a result, when leaders behave with an environmental focus, the workplace becomes more environmentally friendly and also benefits the sustainability of tourism. In addition, GTL plays a major role in creating a positive GPC (β = 0.212, p < 0.001) and helps promote ST (β = 0.160, p < 0.001). It follows from these findings that leaders who value a strong vision, inspire workers and are committed to the environment help create a positive workplace and achieve sustainability.

Besides, the GPC is positively linked with ST (β = 0.176, p < 0.001), proving that making tourism organizations environmentally supportive plays a significant role in meeting their sustainability goals. The results from mediation analysis confirm that GPC is a key mediator. These findings reveal that ESSL improves ST by boosting GPC (β = 0.044, p = 0.005) and GTL does so by the same route (β = 0.037, p = 0.009). The findings suggest that some of the positive outcomes of environmentally aware

leaders in tourism happen because they create a green mental atmosphere.

The study points out that leadership plays a role in ST through direct and indirect ways. It stresses that good leadership focuses on respecting the environment and that companies should establish a mental setting that helps workers follow green practices. Mediation by a green-focused internal environment makes servant and transformational leadership highly effective in supporting ST.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research shows that the hypothesized relationships among leadership styles, GPC and ST have strong evidence. Both ESSL and GTL strongly impact the sustainable success of tourism. ESSL is directly linked to a higher GPC and ST. As a result, when leaders behave with an environmental focus, the workplace becomes more environmentally friendly and also benefits the sustainability of tourism. In addition, GTL plays a major role in creating a positive GPC and helps promote ST. It follows from these findings that leaders who value a strong vision, inspire workers and are committed to the environment help create a positive workplace and achieve sustainability.

Besides, the GPC is positively linked with ST (β = 0.176, $p < 0.001$), proving that making tourism organizations environmentally supportive plays a significant role in meeting their sustainability goals. The results from mediation analysis confirm that GPC is a key mediator. These findings reveal that ESSL improves ST by boosting GPC (β = 0.044, p = 0.005) and GTL does so by the same route (β = 0.037, p = 0.009). The findings suggest that some of the positive outcomes of environmentally aware leaders in tourism happen because they create a green mental atmosphere. The study points out that leadership plays a role in ST through direct and indirect ways. It stresses that good leadership focuses on respecting the environment and that companies should establish a mental setting that helps workers follow green practices. Mediation by a green-focused internal environment makes servant and transformational leadership highly effective in supporting ST.

Research Contribution

The research has significant practical implications for not only hospitality industry but also for other organizations who prioritize saving the environment. By creating a positive green psychological climate organizations can make their employees feel more responsible and create encourage them for green behaviours. It promotes environmental sustainability and also reinforces the organizational identity and makes goals of the organization and employee's interests on the same line. Leaders can promote sustainable tourism and effectively motivate and guide the employees towards sustainable practices and they can make sure that , environmental goals are incorporated into behaviours and daily operations. Practically this study guides leaders and managers of tourism and hospitality industry for fostering green actions. Green transformational leadership and Environmental specific servant leadership have a very important role to promote sustainable behaviours. Therefore hotel management are supposed to develop their human resource to be environmentally focused. This strategic intervention shall play a very crucial role for implementing eco-initiatives effectively and developing a commitment to sustainable practices within the company. This goal can be achieved by conducting the training of the current leaders either by sending them abroad for learning the international dynamics of sustainability.

REFERENCES

Afsar, A., & Umarani, W. (2020). Transformational Leadership &Innovation work Behavior:The Role Of Motivation to learn tas complexit and innovation climate. *European journal of innovation Management*.

Bhutto, T., Ramsha, F., Shalini, Talwar, Amandeep, & Dhir. (2021). Green inclusive leadership and green creativity in the tourism and hospitality sector: serial mediation of green psychological climate and work engagement. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*.

Chen, y. s., & chang, h. (2012). The Determinants of Green Product Development Performance: Green Dynamic Capabilities, Green Transformational Leadership, and Green Creativity. *Journal of Business Ethics*.

Hair, F. j., Jeffrey, J., Risher, M. S., & Christian, M. R. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *Emerald*.

Haseeb, U. ,., Muhammad, Z., Mamdough, A. A., & Salih, A. F. (2023). ESG and firm performance: The rarely explored moderation of sustainability strategy and top management commitment. *Journal of Cleaner Production*.

Jianfeng, J., Huanxin, L., Tachia, C., & Dongqing, H. (2018). The Continuous Mediating Effects of GHRM on Employees' Green Passion via Transformational Leadership and Green Creativity. *Sustainability*.

Laura, M., & Graves, a. (2018). The role of employees' leadership perceptions, values, and motivation in employees' provenvironmental behaviors. *Journal of cleaner production*.

Luu, T. (2022). How and when to activate hospitality employees' organizational citizenship behavior for the environment in South Korea and Vietnam. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* .

Maria, S., Faisal, Q., Faisal, M., Ariza, Montes, & Heesup, H. (2020). Ethical Leadership and Employee Green Behavior: A Multilevel Moderated Mediation Analysis. *Sustainability*.

Masood, N., Kalyar, Fahad, A., & Imran, S. (2021). Green mindfulness and green creativity nexus in hospitality industry: examining the effects of green process engagement and CSR. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.

Mehraj, D. W., Zubair, A. D., & Shamim, A. S. (2024). The impact of community empowerment on sustainable tourism development and the mediation effect of local support: a structural equation Modeling approach. *COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT*.

Mittal, S., & Dhar, R. (2016). Effect of green transformational leadership on green creativity: A study of tourist hotels. *Tourism Management*.

Norton, T., Hannes, Z., Stacey, L. P., Ashkanasy, Neal, & M. (2021). Bridging the Gap between Green Behavioral Intentions and Employee Green Behavior: The Role of Green Psychological Climate. *Journal Of Organizational Behaviour*.

Parvaneh, Saeidia, Lorenzo, A. A., Sayedeh, Parastoo, S., & María, I. V. (2021). How does organizational leadership contribute to the firm performance through social responsibility strategies? *Heliyon*.

Sajid, R., Muhammad, N., Muhammad, F., Laura, M. C., Lucia, N., Constantin, V., & andSultan, S. (2021). Corporate Social Responsibility and Employee Green Behavior in the Hospitality Industry: A Cross-Country Study. *Sustainability*.

Tien, M., Homer, C., Wu, J., Ta, M., Wang, & Min, R. W. (2019). Community Participation as a mediating factor on residents' attitudes towards sustainable tourism development and their personal environmentally responsible behaviour. *Current Issues in Tourism*.

Tsung, H., Fen, H., Chang, H., & Yan, F. L. (2018). Segmentation by recreation experience in island-based tourism: a case study of Taiwan's Liuqiu Island. *Journal Of Sustainable Tourism*.

Usama, A., Robert, S., & Andrzej, K. (2019). Creativity enables sustainable development: Supplier engagement as a boundary condition for the positive effect on green innovation. *Journal of Cleaner Production*.

Victoria, K., Wells, Danae, M., Diana, G. S., Babak, T., & Clair, M. (2016). Heritage tourism, CSR and the role of employee environmental behaviour. *Tourism Management*.